

The Women's Foundation Mentorship Program

Background

Recognizing the challenges and barriers preventing women from obtaining positions of leadership and authority across all sectors in Hong Kong, The Women's Foundation would like to begin a mentorship program for aspiring and promising young female HK residents aged between 21 and 35 with the objective of building and enhancing their knowledge, skills, and confidence. The ultimate aim is to help increase the share of women in high level roles and positions in different fields.

The Program

The Mentorship Program will have three (3) components: One on One sessions, Speaker Series, and Community Work.

A. One on One Sessions

Mentors and mentees will be matched according to specific areas of work and interests based on the application. It is recommended that the matched mentors and mentees meet 6-8 times throughout the program year based on agreed schedule. In the meetings, they are encouraged to discuss and share information about important topics and issues related to work and life, such as work-life balance, lifelong education, career planning and career change, leadership, and networking. The topics/themes for discussion should be set based on what the mentees and mentors find most suitable and interesting.

B. Speaker Series

During the year long program, there would be four (4) speaker series for mentees where important information will be shared by identified speakers to help them advance their career goals and plans.

The proposed themes/topics are as follows:

1. Women in Charge: career goal setting, succeeding in the chosen field and women's issues at work
2. Women, Work and Family Life: doing the balancing act
3. Women and Leadership: working out solutions, leading the way and making changes.
4. Women and the Community: Reaching out and giving back

These sessions will form an interactive platform for attendees to learn, participate and share their own ideas and experiences while at the same time addressing specific issues/concerns related to the topic with other mentees and the speakers.

C. Community Work

The Women's Foundation would like to encourage giving back to communities and contribute to making positive changes in the lives of others whether in big or small ways. Mentees on their own will discuss and agree on a specific community project to work on. It is hoped that this activity will give them opportunity to engage and learn first hand different community and women's issues, at the same time working towards a project that will be able to reach out and help others.

Role of the Mentor

The mentor is expected to be a motivator, coach, role model and a friend, a person who is willing to commit time and share life's lessons, experiences, and knowledge with the mentee so that she can be inspired and motivated to achieve her goals.

The Mentee

The mentee is expected to be proactive, committed, and clear with her goals. She must demonstrate keen interest, leadership capability and willing to invest time in the program.

Principles and Guidelines

The Mentorship Program is meant to build relationships that will be meaningful to both mentors and mentees. It is a venue to learn and share lessons, aspirations, and ideas on how to succeed on their specific chosen career paths and achieve their life goals. With this, it is very important that the program be guided by principles that would ensure that the objectives of the program are achieved. These principles include: respect, commitment, flexibility, trust and confidentiality, and open communication.

Proposed Timetable of Activities

Month/ Activity	Sept '08	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '09	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Recruitment & Matching																
Speaker Series																
One on One Session																
Community Work																
Closing Ceremony																

About The Women's Foundation

The Women's Foundation (TWF), a registered Hong Kong charity founded in 2002, promotes the full participation of women and girls in all aspects of Hong Kong society by building resources to support change through research, education, public awareness and programs.

The Foundation's benchmark study "The Status of Women and Girls in Hong Kong 2006" shows that Hong Kong has an urgent need to empower women and girls, in particular in the areas of leadership, poverty and girls. The Foundation is now working with local NGO partners to develop programs and projects that tackle each of these three priority areas. A blueprint on ways to improve the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong can be found in the Foundation's latest report – "Closing the Gender Gap in Hong Kong – Conversations with the Community".