Mentorship Programme

A mentorship program connects experienced professionals with young learners to guide, inspire, and support their growth in a particular field. Mentorship is especially crucial to bridge knowledge gaps, boost confidence, and encourage students—particularly girls—to explore careers in ICT & STEM. Employee volunteering is perfectly aligned with a mentorship programme or activity.

💡 Inspiration Corner | Suggested ideas

"Virtual Code Buddies" for Beginner Coders

- It's a great opportunity for your company's employees to act as **mentors** for students in basic coding skills in weekly/monthly virtual coding sessions using Scratch (for 6-12) or Python (for 13-18), through a partnership with local schools.

Timeframe: 3 months – one-off activity or repetitive in different schools each year (4 sessions of 1/1:30 hour each, monthly).

Promotion: Use company's social media and internal newsletters to engage employees. Following necessary communication with the school, the activity can be shared on the school's website.

"Mentor Café"

- Students can rotate between different volunteer **mentors** in 15-minute "career speed-dating" style conversations, with various themes in order to spark more interest. Ideas:

- **Speed Mentoring ("Career Speed-Dating" Style):** Organize short, 5-minute rotating mentoring sessions where students meet with various volunteers.

- **Lightning Talks:** Focus on providing specific insights, such as career highlights, recent innovations, or their personal journeys. After each talk, host a Q&A game via an online tool, encouraging students to be active.

- **STEM Show & Tell:** Ask each mentor to bring a hands-on item—a prototype or experiment they've worked on. This could be a 3D-printed model. Let students touch, feel, and interact with the STEM items, creating an unforgettable learning experience.

- **STEM Myth Busters:** A myth-busting session where mentors debunk common misconceptions around STEM fields (e.g., "Girls don't excel in engineering").

📋 Checklist

Step 1: Define purpose, goals & audience

- ❑ Align with the company's CSR strategy (e.g., supporting digital literacy, gender equality or other)
- ❑ Identify the target audience (e.g. ages 6-12 or 13-18)

Step 2: Internal communication & select mentors	❑ **Present the idea to leadership** and related teams for approval
	❑ **Engage employees** from tech, engineering, and digital roles as mentors
	❑ **Offer incentives** (e.g. certificates, a specific recognition, time-off)
Step 3: Format & activities	❑ Decide between **virtual or in-person** mentorship
	❑ **Pick activities** based on age & skill level: e.g. 13-18 years → studies mentoring
	❑ **Partner with local schools** through the appointed EU Code Week National/Regional Hubs (see Appendix B in Resources & Supporting Assets file)
Step 4: Logistics & Promotion	❑ **Set a timeline** (e.g., a one-day event, a 6-month program, or a year-long initiative), depending on resources (financial, human etc.)
	❑ **Promote your initiatives** through company's social media pages, newsletter, partners' networks and school outreach
	❑ **Allocate a budget** – for materials, virtual platform, or event space
Step 5: Post-launch metrics & impact	❑ Celebrate contributions by tracking both individual and **team progress** — highlight top mentors and the impact of their efforts on social media
	❑ **Share success stories** to multiply visibility and inspire others (e.g. via social media posts, or a series of blog posts on company's website)
	❑ **Assess impact** and decide **to scale or modify the program** for the next time

⭐ Bonus Tips

- Through a well-designed **"Challenge"** approach, you can motivate mentors to actively engage by completing actions like mentoring a female student in tech, or participating in a career panel for underrepresented youth.

- Offer **special recognition or rewards** for the most active mentors — such as digital badge, a LinkedIn endorsement, exclusive networking opportunities, or professional development sessions. This gesture reinforces your organization's culture of giving back, while showing employees that their contribution to mentoring the next generation truly matters.

🗐 Case Studies

Company/Program	Description
IBM P-TECH (US, France, Germany, Spain, UK)	The project launched in 2011 with the support of New York City Department of Education, the City University of New York and the New York City College of Technology. IBM's employees' mentor high school and early university students aged 14-21, providing career advice, project coaching, and technical skill-building, focusing on underrepresented groups (e.g., girls in STEM). Mentors guide students through technical education combined with workplace skills, through virtual mentoring, workshops or even hackathons.

SAP Young Thinkers Program (Global)	SAP employees mentor and teach (acting as "learning facilitators" too) young students (aged 10-25) basic digital and computational thinking skills. They conduct online/face-to-face coding workshops (e.g., Snap!, Python), design thinking sessions, and app prototyping activities, through strong collaborations with schools and educational organizations.
Women4CyberGreece	The 6-month-programme is designed to help women improve their skills and advance their cybersecurity careers at all levels. Mentors provide personal and professional guidance, share their experiences, and help mentees identify and achieve career goals. It is held in collaboration with various industry partners. The partnering entities provide volunteer mentors (women and men of all levels) to the W4C Greece programme.
Women in Research (WIRe) **Global Network**	WIRe offers locally-matched mentoring opportunities in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, London, New York, San Francisco, and Sydney as well as remote opportunities. An interested mentee may also request a "virtual" mentor too. Throughout the program, mentees leverage the success of their mentor by asking questions about work/life balance, professional growth and more, while mentors have an opportunity to grow their leadership and mentoring skills in a one-to-one environment. WIRe also runs "Worldwide Events", offers "Annual Webinar Series" and "WIRe+ sponsored webinars", as well as the "Global Scholarship Fund".
Linkoping Science Park Brilliant Mentors of the Future programme	In this innovation hub, they are matching people in leading positions in local/regional companies with students. It aims at creating intercultural connections between universities and companies. The mentor and the mentee meet and discuss subjects that are relevant, interesting and developing for both parties. They also implement an "reversed mentorship" model. The younger talent takes on the role as a mentor for the more senior person within an organization. The aim is to share experience and bring new perspectives and knowledge to decrease the gap between generations.

🔧 Tools/Resources

- Mailchimp: Build customized, user-friendly and creative email templates.
- Mentimeter: Survey and polling presentation tool – AI presentations, quizzes and more, that can be used to gauge opinions or knowledge of your audience.
- Trello: coordination of mentoring activities & task management. You may set up "Mentorship Journey Boards" to see employees' milestones.

📢 Communication Templates

Check out the General Guidelines & Templates for Communicating Your Activities in Appendix C in Resources & Supporting Assets file as well as the editable versions of the internal email announcement and social media posts examples.