

# YWCA NextStep Mentorship Program

## Mentee Applications

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1) What is NextStep Mentorship Program?

NextStep is a **free** career-based mentorship program that connects **adults (any age)** who have recently graduated from a post-secondary institution with one-to-one, group and peer mentorship opportunities. If you're eligible, you will:

- have the chance to be matched one-to-one with a mentor to develop your professional goals
- be invited to a series of professional development workshops and networking mingles with other mentees and mentors. (Topics include networking skills, information interview skills, leadership skills and self-esteem/confidence).

**Note:** We can't guarantee that a one-to-one mentorship match will be made. See question #15 for details.

#### 2) Am I eligible for NextStep?

NextStep is open to adults who meet the following criteria:

- Unemployed (or working less than 20 hours per week) at the time of program admission
- Live in Metro Vancouver (The region extending *north* to the North Shore, *east* to Maple Ridge & Langley and *south* to Surrey & White Rock)
- Permitted to work in Canada (NextStep accepts applicants eligible to work in Canada on work permits)
- Completed post-secondary education between **Fall 2011 to Fall 2015** (minimum of 1 year ago from the time of program application, and a maximum of 5 years ago)
- Conducting a professional job search without success for at least 1 year (12 months) at the time of program admission
- Seeking employment in professional or skilled careers
- Keen, motivated and open to learning from a mentor
- Able to make a 6-month commitment to the program

#### 3) When does the program start?

For the 2016-2017 program year:

- Information sessions are held from **September 2016 - January 2017**.
- The first one-on-one mentee-mentor matches will be made **mid-October 2016**. Matches last for 6 months.
- NextStep professional development workshops and networking mingles begin in **February 2017**.

#### 4) What is the program time commitment?

NextStep is a part-time commitment.

- As a mentee, you're expected to remain active in your job search and professional development.
- Mentee-mentor matches have a **minimum of 1 in-person meeting per month for 6 months**. Mentors provide mentees between 3-6 hours of support per month (including email, phone calls, etc.).
- Workshops and networking mingles are held on **weekday evenings twice per month, beginning in February 2017**.

#### 5) What is the NextStep application process?

- **Pre-screening:** Complete the pre-screening questionnaire to find out if you're eligible and submit your resume. Pre-screening begins August 2016 and is available at <https://ywcavan.org/nextstep>.
- **Information session:** If you match the NextStep eligibility criteria, we'll invite you to an information session. If you want to apply to the program, complete an application form (supplied after the session). Information sessions will be held September 2016 - January 2017 on weekday mornings at the YWCA Program Centre, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, 535 Hornby Street, Vancouver.
- **Intake interview:** Interviews are held on the same day as the information session. When you're invited to the information session, we'll also ask you to choose a 30-minute intake interview timeslot on the same day. The interview provides the opportunity for us to learn more about you and your mentorship goals.
- **Invite into program:** Eligible applicants will be invited into the program. If you're not eligible, we'll refer you to other services and resources.
- **Research survey:** If you're invited into the program, we'll email you a **brief** online survey. Important: Please complete the survey within 2-3 days of receiving it. Following your survey completion, we'll notify you if you've been randomly assigned to the one-to-one mentorship stream or the group & peer mentorship stream.

#### 6) I currently work more than 20 hours per week. Am I still eligible for NextStep?

Maybe. If you're working more than 20 hours per week in a "survival job" that is not using the knowledge and skills you gained from your post-secondary education, you may be eligible for the program. Call us at 604.895.5859 to discuss your situation.

#### 7) What geographical areas do you serve?

NextStep accepts clients who live in Metro Vancouver. (This is the region extending *north* to the North Shore, *east* to Maple Ridge & Langley, and *south* to Surrey & White Rock).

**8) I am in Canada on a work permit. Am I eligible to apply for NextStep?**

Yes. We accept applicants eligible to work in Canada on work permits.

**9) I have *not yet completed* a post-secondary credential. Am I eligible for NextStep?**

No. NextStep is designed for individuals who have **completed** at least one post-secondary credential. If your credential is in progress, you are not eligible.

**10) I completed my post-secondary education *less than 1 year ago*. Am I eligible?**

No. When you apply to the program, you're required to have been out of school for 1 year (12 months). Currently we're accepting applications from graduates who completed their credential between Fall 2011 - Fall 2015. NextStep accepts mentee applications from August 2016 - January 2017.

**11) I completed my post-secondary education *over 5 years ago*. Am I eligible for NextStep?**

No. The program is for recent post-secondary graduates. Currently we're accepting applications from individuals who obtained a credential between Fall 2011 - Fall 2015.

**12) I am taking part-time courses at a post-secondary institution. Am I eligible for NextStep?**

Maybe. You must meet all of the NextStep eligibility criteria. If you're ready and able to work full-time in your field, and are also taking part-time courses to further upgrade your skills, you're likely eligible. Call us at 604.895.5859 to discuss your situation.

**13) What are the educational and professional backgrounds of NextStep mentees?**

NextStep accepts clients from a range of backgrounds.

**Education:** We accept any level of post-secondary education (certificate, diploma, bachelor's, master's, or PhD) from any recognized Canadian or international post-secondary institution.

**Professional fields:** We accept applicants from a wide range of areas, including but not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accounting</li><li>• Architecture</li><li>• Business development &amp; administration</li><li>• Communications</li><li>• Counselling psychology</li><li>• Engineering</li><li>• Environmental sustainability</li><li>• Financial services</li><li>• Health care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human resources</li><li>• Information technology</li><li>• Marketing</li><li>• Non-profit administration</li><li>• Sciences</li><li>• Social services</li><li>• Supply chain management</li><li>• Sustainable design</li><li>• Tourism &amp; hospitality</li><li>• Urban planning</li></ul>
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**14) Who are NextStep mentors?**

NextStep mentors are professionals established in their careers. Mentors work in a wide range of industries (see above) and volunteer their time with the program.

**15) If I join NextStep, will be able to work one-to-one with a mentor in my field?**

When you're accepted into NextStep, you have a **50% chance** of being assigned a one-to-one match with a mentor.

NextStep is a research project on best practices in mentorship. Program mentees are **randomly assigned** into one of two streams:

- **One-to-one mentorship stream:** 50% of mentees will be *randomly assigned* to work one-on-one with a mentor in their field (or related field). You'll also be invited to attend a series of 10 professional development workshops and networking events.
- **Group and peer mentorship stream:** 50% of mentees will be *randomly assigned* to the series of 10 professional development workshops and networking events.

**16) I don't meet the NextStep eligibility criteria. Where else can I go for assistance?**

- Connect with a WorkBC Employment Services Centre near you:  
[www.WorkBCCentres.ca](http://www.WorkBCCentres.ca)
- YWCA-operated WorkBC Employment Services Centres:  
<https://ywcavan.org/programs/employment-programs-services/ywca-workbc-centres>
- For women: Connect with YWCA FOCUS@Work Program  
<https://ywcavan.org/programs/employment-programs-services/employment-programs/focus-work>

**Questions?**

Please contact NextStep at 604.895.5859 or email [nextstep@ywcavan.org](mailto:nextstep@ywcavan.org).