



Aurora – information for selecting a mentor

We do not manually assign Aurora mentors and instead encourage Aurorans to reach out through local networks and using local area contacts.

We suggest looking to have your Aurora mentor in place a minimum of 2 weeks before your cohort begins.

Who can be an Aurora mentor: Aurora mentors may be male or female and do not have to have completed Aurora themselves. The mentor should be more senior than the Auroran and have management or leadership experience. The mentor will be expected to give the Auroran an understanding of internal politics and organisational culture. They need to get on with the Auroran, have sufficient time available to meet approximately 4-6 times during the Aurora cohort, have strong listening skills and be able to ask good, open questions to help the Auroran develop their problem-solving skills and develop further. Their role is to facilitate learning and support development.

What is the time commitment to be an Aurora mentor: Ideally, you should meet for a minimum of 4 one hour conversations aligned to the 4 Aurora development days. This can be done virtually or in person and you can decide between yourselves who arranges the meetings. An introductory meeting before the cohort begins is useful, to get to know each other and discuss objectives and boundaries for the meetings. A further meeting at the end of the cohort to wrap up conversations is also beneficial. This means a minimum of 6 hours of development discussion. However, should you both agree to continue the discussions beyond the end of the Aurora initiative then this is also encouraged and should be agreed between yourselves.

What to look for in an Aurora mentor: Before beginning Aurora or selecting a mentor you should consider:

- Your reasons for attending this particular development initiative
- What your learning objectives are
- What do you wish to achieve

Your responses to these questions will help you gain insight for the type of mentor you would find beneficial. Bear in mind that Aurora is a *leadership* development initiative this is a great opportunity for you to reach out-with your usual network or subject area to connect with someone from a different area or background. This can help give you a very different perspective and has been extremely beneficial for Aurorans in the past.

Before approaching someone to be your mentor, try to be clear on what you would like from them and how you would like to be supported. Many Aurora mentors have not completed the initiative themselves and this shouldn't make any difference. They are there to impart their knowledge of leadership and management, navigating the politics of the institution and to challenge you to make the most of your development opportunity.

Does my mentor need to work for the University of Edinburgh: Not necessarily, if they are able to support you as above and work in a relevant organisation which relates to your role i.e. NHS or another university then this is fine – as long as you are happy with your selection.

AdvanceHE have created some [guidance for mentors](#) which you should share with your chosen mentor and further support and guidance is available on our [Mentoring website](#).