

## BUDDY PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### 1 Objective

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The Australian Pro Bono Centre (Centre) has designed a buddy program with the following overarching objectives:

- (1) to assist signatories to the National Pro Bono Target (**Mentees**) with emerging and developing pro bono practices by partnering them with experienced pro bono coordinators with more mature pro bono practices (**Mentors**) in order to grow their participation in pro bono legal assistance
- (2) to connect members of the pro bono community to ensure the delivery of best practice pro bono work
- (3) to learn how to better support new signatories

### 2 Aims

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The specific aims of this program are to equip Mentees with the following tools and resources from Mentors:

- An overview of the pro bono community
- Access to information on the best ways to develop and plan a pro bono program
- Practical advice on maintaining a pro bono program
- Potential opportunities for cross-collaboration within the pro bono community

### 3 Expectations

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#### 3.1 Mentor role

Mentors are expected to:

- Keep all commitments regarding the scheduling of mentoring contact and meetings
- Be willing to share their personal experiences
- Have the skills to develop others. These skills include active listening; asking powerful, open-ended questions; self-reflection; providing feedback; and being able to share stories that include personal anecdotes, case examples, and honest insight

#### 3.2 Mentee

The Mentee agrees to:

- Keep all commitments regarding the scheduling of mentoring contact and meetings

- Maintain a sense of open-mindedness and possibility in respect to the value of advice, suggestions and ideas proposed by the mentor
- Be clear about their goals, needs, and wants

### 3.3 Length of mentorship

The Centre envisages that this mentoring relationship will consist of a minimum of 4 meetings per year.

## 4 Program structure

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### 4.1 Initial meeting

We would recommend doing the following during your first meeting:

- Articulate and agree on expectations and purpose of the mentoring relationship
- Set objectives and schedule dates for reviewing them
- Agree on frequency of face-to-face meetings and/or telephone meetings, with a schedule of dates
- Articulate mechanisms for communicating between meetings (for example, email or phone)
- Agree on what actions to take if problems arise
- Set a date for final review and closure

### 4.2 Other topics that you might wish to discuss

While there is no set structure as to what topics should be discussed during the mentoring, it may be useful to discuss the following topics, which our research has found to be helpful in running a successful pro bono practice:

- Developing a strong pro bono culture and the importance of leadership support within the Mentee's firm
- Developing strong pipeline of pro bono opportunities, including developing relationships with CLCs and referral schemes and organisations
- Best practice pro bono (for example):
  - Having a policy and strategy plan
  - Setting a target and budget
  - Adequate credit and recognition
  - Having a strategic risk management plan
  - Evaluation measures

### 4.3 Withdrawing from the program

If a participant wishes to withdraw from the program, we ask that they provide written notice to both the Centre and their fellow participant.

## 5 Confidentiality

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To ensure all participants feel comfortable when discussing personal opinions or topics of a sensitive or confidential nature, mentors and mentees are expected to keep the contents of all mentoring discussions confidential.

## 6 Privacy

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Both participants must handle all personal information (including contact details) of their counterpart in the program with care and not share the information without permission.

## 7 Feedback

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The Centre welcomes feedback from all participants on the Buddy Program. To provide such feedback or for further information about the Buddy Program please contact the Australian Pro Bono Centre by email ([info@probonocentre.org.au](mailto:info@probonocentre.org.au)).

We look forward to hearing from you.