



Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme

Best practice case studies

Introduction and overview

The Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme was launched in 2017 as part of the University of Nottingham's activities to develop an inclusive culture. It signalled a personal commitment from Vice-Chancellor Professor Shearer West CBE to support senior leaders with protected characteristics more fully.

An annual programme open to senior leaders across all job roles in the university, it combines personal 1:1 mentoring meetings with the Vice-Chancellor; shadowing a minimum of two senior university meetings – one of these being a University Executive Board meeting; Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessments; and connecting together as a mentee group.

Now in its third year, 26 individuals have been mentored personally by the Vice-Chancellor. 57 unsuccessful applicants have also been matched to alternative Executive Board and other senior leader mentors, demonstrating the university's continued commitment to supporting and developing the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) agenda through personal connections.

This case study provides an insight into the experiences of one of the unsuccessful candidates who were matched to an alternative mentor, their reasons for applying, and what they gained from the experience, even though they didn't make it onto the programme.

For further information about the University of Nottingham's Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme, contact Carol Steed, Leadership and Management Director.
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Dr Bagus Muljadi, Assistant Professor, Chemical and Environmental Engineering
University of Nottingham.

Q. Why did you apply for the Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme?

A. I wanted to grow my leadership skills and understand what I needed to improve in order to grow the impacts of the Indonesia Doctoral Training Partnership, and the UK-Indonesia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Sciences that I helped establish.

Q. Are there specific challenges you believe you faced that you thought this programme could help you overcome or deal with more effectively?

A. Unfamiliarity with British culture: I have never been educated in the UK; and the highly interdisciplinary background that may become a hindrance to progress in my career. The real-life examples from the mentor have been beneficial; I find it useful to learn from her experience when facing similar challenges.

Q. You weren't successful in gaining a place on the programme because of the high volume of applicants, but you were offered an alternative option – what happened and how did that work out for you?

A. I was offered a mentorship opportunity with Dame Jessica Corner, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange. I found that Jessica's expertise, and roles clearly benefit my aspirations. I noticed that the programme was tailored perfectly to my expectations and ensured that I received what I hoped for.

Q. Has engaging with an alternative mentor had any impact on you, your learning and/or your career, and if so, how?

A. Yes. So far, it has helped me in developing a concrete plan to further my career and provided the direction through which I need to develop my research.

Q. Are there any specific elements of learning that you have found useful, and have you been able to apply these into your workplace/working practices?

A. Among many other important insights I gained from the mentorship, it has made me aware of the importance of teamwork and building long-lasting relationships with colleagues across the university. I have applied this principle since.



Q. What advice would you give to others who might be considering getting involved in a mentoring programme?

A. Many may be skeptical of the benefits of the programme. To those I would advise that experiences of leaders and mentors are invaluable. There are insights to be derived from these experiences that are unobtainable elsewhere.

Q. Are there any other insights or thoughts that you wish to share?

A. Another way of looking at mentorship is that it provides you with a real-life, fine-tuned “model” with which you can test your concepts/ideas and – to some degree – predict the outcomes without having to undergo failures. It will be more effective if you come with a series of plans (as input variables), and take charge of your own career.



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