

# Call for mentors to participate in pilot program in 2019

The Mentor Support Network is launching a unique pilot program in 2019 to assist young people from a refugee background living in the Hunter Region achieve their educational and career goals.

As part of that program, the young people who are selected to participate will be provided with a mentor over a 13 week period, commencing in February 2019.

Young people from refugee backgrounds have enormous potential to be active participants in and contributors to the Hunter Region. Their engagement as active citizens has significant and long-term benefits for each young person, their families, and our local community.

However, they often face challenges in accessing the support they need to navigate the demands of settling in a new country. The experiences unique to these young people can include:

- the stress of adapting to a new culture and language
- the dependence of their parents for support in understanding the Australian way of life
- adjusting to new education and employment systems
- determining career and other life goals in a different environment than their parents, wanting to exercise more independence, autonomy and freedom



The program aims to assist them to:

- remain enrolled in high school or educational institute during the term of the program
- increase their confidence in their ability to engage with their studies
- make well informed decisions about their future
- increase their knowledge of training opportunities and further education
- pursue opportunities in a chosen career, resulting in employment and advancement

## How you can help

We are looking for volunteers to be mentors in our pilot program. This would suit a mentor who:

- has at least 5 years' experience in a workplace (or is self-employed)
- has a keen interest in learning about other cultures
- is comfortable dealing with a young person who may have had prior traumatic experiences
- is able to work with a young person whose family is not familiar with Australian norms and may have differing views

- is willing to share details of their personal and professional experiences with their mentee

This is an opportunity to play a significant role in empowering a young person in our community. By contributing your time, talents and networks, you can make a genuine and positive difference in the life of a disadvantaged Australian.

## What's involved?

Mentors will need to:

- be able to attend training sessions with the Mentor Support Network, depending on his or her experience. Sessions will be held at the offices of Northern Settlement Services in Hamilton on **Saturday 2, 9 and 16 February 2019 from 9:30am to 12:30pm**
- be able to attend an event at the offices of Northern Settlement Services in Hamilton on **Monday 18 February 2019 from 4:30pm to 6:30pm** to meet the student participants and be matched with a mentee, which will take place after the completion of the training sessions
- commit to a **13 week program** to meet with their mentee once a week at the Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre between 4:30pm and 6:00pm, commencing **4 March 2019**. The sessions will be held in a group environment so there will be an opportunity to work with other mentors
- have, or who can obtain, a Working With Children Clearance from the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian ([www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au)) - this is at no cost to you
- be willing to participate in a program evaluation process at the end of the 13 week period
- have a genuine interest in supporting young people from refugee backgrounds, and are able to work sensitively and appropriately in a culturally diverse setting

## How to apply

If you would like to register your interest in becoming a mentor for this program, please complete the short online application form by clicking <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/msn-mentor-application> or pasting the address into your browser before **5:00pm on Friday, 14 September 2018**. We will then call you to discuss your application.

**The Mentor Support Network would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation and Northern Settlement Services, without whose assistance this program would not be possible.**