

Lead for Life (L4L) Mentorship Component

What is “Lead for Life” and the mentorship component?

Lead for Life (L4L) is a four-year transformational journey for HKU students to acquire the characteristics needed for lifelong leadership – leadership, which is both life-giving to others and a way of life for themselves. The purpose is to help students flourish during their time at HKU, and to equip them to build flourishing communities afterwards. The programme starts August 27-28, 2021 with 200 students beginning their journey at an orientation with their mentors and mentorship groups.

The mentoring component is key to the individual transformation aspiration within L4L. Each mentor will be paired with a partner and together they will shepherd 10 students for the first year of their university experience. Students in the group will take turns rotating through a student-leadership position and will work closely with the mentors in this role. Mentors can re-enlist year to year if they wish to continue serving Hong Kong in this way.

Will I be provided training and ongoing support?

L4L is committed to providing deep training and support for its mentors. The first training session will take place on June 19th, 2021 with another session in the fall. Thereafter, L4L will provide two training sessions a year, which will focus not only on the craft of mentoring, but also character leadership training in the workplace, e.g., ‘wise leadership’, ‘conflict resolution’, ‘Design Your Life’, etc. Our commitment is to provide our mentors with training, which will also be applicable in their day-to-day professions. Regent College out of Vancouver will be providing some of this training along with mentoring experts here in Hong Kong. Normally, these training sessions will take place in person, but due to Covid, in many cases they will be conducted in a hybrid format, especially in the first initial training session. Additionally, L4L will be providing ongoing support through a dedicated professional who will help mentors navigate various situations, and simply check-in and provide ongoing encouragement as well as helpful tips.

What are the criteria to be a mentor?

Mentors will be chosen on the following criteria with an attempt to make the mentorship group as a whole consist of a mix of ages, ethnicities, industries, etc.:

1. *Commitment to the process and to the goals of L4L to “help students flourish during their time at HKU, and to equip them to build flourishing communities afterwards.”*

2. *Capacity to reflect.* As this is a character trait we are asking the students to develop, it needs to be evidenced in the mentors.
3. *Willingness and availability.* Transformation can best be realized as students experience the mentors coming alongside them, and that the students are not alone.
4. *"Otherness".* A sense that mentors lead from and live out of a sense of serving others and for the common good.
5. *Evidence of leadership, character and 'flourishing communities' in their own lives.*

What is expected of a mentor?

A mentor's role is to facilitate the development of the mentee as a leader

- a. He/she can be a resource coach, guide and advisor/friend.
- b. A mentor can provide perspective and accountability. He/she can help mentees think through their long-term goals, be a thinking partner, and provide unbiased independent advice and counsel on issues that the mentee may be working on.
- c. He/she can ask about the lessons learnt from other components of L4L Program and help mentees apply lessons learnt and tools shared.
- d. He/she can also be a sounding board for the service project that is part of the four-year programme, but a mentor is not expected to supervise any individual student project work.

It is anticipated that the mentor's time commitment will be 4-6 hours/month.

How is a mentor selected?

All mentors are high integrity leaders from many sectors of the community who have agreed to be a mentor to support the growth of the young aspiring students. There will be a nomination and selection process to build a pool of potential L4L mentors. A mandatory training session for those mentors asked to serve in this first-year's L4L cohort will be held on June 19th, 2021 (9:30-2:30). All prospective mentors are asked to reserve the date and time to attend the session.

What next steps should I take?

Extensive research has demonstrated that having mentors during one's 'emerging adulthood' is key to developing influential and effective leaders. L4L is committed to raising up next generation leaders of great character and effectiveness, and we need your help for this. If you are interested in finding out more information, contact either Francis Tsui, francis4m@gmail.com or Steve Gaultney, steveg@hku.hk and we would love to explore this opportunity with you.