



OUR STORY

Kilfinan Australia was established in 2014, based on a simple concept which involves matching senior corporate and public sector executives with for-purpose leaders to provide confidential, free, one-on-one mentoring.

The relationships are intended to support and further enhance the leadership capability of for-purpose leaders by drawing on the strengths, experience and wisdom of senior executives, and enhance the mutual understanding between the corporate and for-purpose sectors.

Kilfinan has facilitated over 360 matches across Australia since its inception. The feedback from both mentees and mentors has been overwhelmingly positive, with all parties reporting they are benefiting enormously from their relationships.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in the mentoring program, mentees must be currently working as a CEO or leader in a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission.

A photograph of a person's hands writing in a notebook on a desk. The desk also has a laptop, a keyboard, and a potted plant. The background is a bright window with a view of a city.

"You don't know what you don't know. A mentor can help. She's helped me look at situations with a different lens. It's really good to have a sounding board, someone who has walked in these shoes and understands what has worked in other sectors."

Deb Childs, Kilfinan Mentee
CEO Helping Minds

OUR MENTORS

A mentoring relationship is built on mutual trust, respect and communication, and provides both mentor and mentee with a wide range of personal and professional benefits – ultimately leading to improved performance in the workplace, growth and better social outcomes. As a leader of a for-purpose organisation, having a trusted mentor outside of your organisation can be invaluable.

As accomplished peers, mentors can draw on their own experiences to offer fresh perspectives by being impartial and confidential listeners; conceptualise different ways of approaching issues; challenge mentees to identify priorities and create action plans; and think creatively about new sources of support and ideas.

Our mentors are chosen for their extensive business experience and bring a range of skills and interests to the mentoring relationships to help mentees think through challenging issues in their roles. They advise Kilfinan mentees on a broad range of topics, each depending on their circumstance and needs. Some common areas include:

LEADERSHIP ISSUES

- Decision making
- Managing key stakeholders
- Managing staff

GOVERNANCE

- Governance structure, systems & processes
- Chair relationship
- Board management

ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- Operations
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Public relations

SUSTAINABILITY

- Funds development
- Funds management

STRATEGIC ISSUES

- Strategic development
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Change management
- Enabling growth
- Innovation
- Partnerships and collaboration

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Role confidence
- Career planning
- Succession

A full [list of our mentors](#) appears on our website.



“The mentoring program from Kilfinan is different. The motivation is different. People are here because they want to help or they want quality support. It is a privilege to be able to do it. It’s been so satisfying to see someone grow – that’s the payback.”

John Craven
Kilfinan Mentor

THE MATCHING PROCESS

Finding the right mentor and mentee can take time. This process could be as short as four weeks but could take longer. At Kilfinan, we are dedicated to identifying the best possible match and prioritise this over an expedited process. We use a five-step process to match mentees and mentors.

SELF EVALUATION

After determining eligibility, we will ask you to provide us with your CV and complete an online self-evaluation to help articulate any particular issues and goals you would like to work on.

1

MEET WITH US

We will then meet together to explore your skills and experience, current role, organisation, and personal preferences, as well as elaborate on the challenges and issues to be addressed in a mentoring relationship. This information is then used to identify an appropriate mentor with complementary skills and experience.

2

MATCHING

If, following the meeting, you would like to proceed, we will identify a potential mentor, and send them your information. If the potential mentor agrees to an initial meeting, you will then be sent their information to review. If your proposed mentor looks like a suitable match, the next step is for you to advise us that you are interested and to contact the mentor to arrange an initial meeting.

3

INITIAL MEETING

Both you and your proposed mentor will then have an initial meeting to determine if you would like to work together and think you can build a trusting, effective working relationship. This initial conversation is an opportunity to get to know more about each other's skills, experience, and discuss what each of you expect from the mentoring process.

4

MENTORING AGREEMENT

If both parties agree to continue, you will be required to sign a Mentoring Agreement. The agreement outlines your mutual expectations, obligations to each other, as well as your learning needs and development goals.

5

If at any point the mentee or mentor feels the match is not the right fit, Kilfinan should be informed as soon as possible so we can work toward identifying a more suitable one. Early intervention will provide us the best opportunity to resolve any issues. We are committed to protecting confidentiality for both mentors and mentees and will address any potentially uncomfortable situations sensitively.



"It's a lonely job—not many not-for-profits get the executive support they need. You have to be an entrepreneur, on top of governance, ethics, plus your program delivery, you have to make money and be financially smart. The work is fulfilling and important—without Kilfinan many people would drown."

Lesley Podesta
CEO, Alannah & Madeline Foundation

THE MENTORING PROCESS

The structure and framework for your mentoring match is up to you and should be considered flexible and evolving. It can be adapted to both of your needs and expectations as required and as the relationship progresses. We have put together some best practice recommendations you may choose to follow as you both get started.

SCHEDULING MEETINGS

Mentees are the driving force in scheduling and preparing agendas for meetings. We strongly encourage you to schedule regular meetings at the outset. At the start of your mentoring relationship, agree on a balance that suits both of you and be prepared to review your decision if there is a radical change of circumstances. We find meeting every 6 to 8 weeks is best, with possible telephone and/or email contact in between. As some scheduled meetings may be cancelled because of work priorities, we suggest scheduling a minimum of 10 meetings for the year. You are responsible for managing the logistics of the relationship, for example by emailing your mentor a few days before a planned meeting with an agenda of the issues you'd like discussed.

WHERE TO MEET

The only guideline is to meet where both mentor and mentee feel comfortable. It could be over a coffee or in the mentor's office. A neutral, 'private' space is usually best. Another flexible option is to consider holding some meetings by phone or video conferencing.

LENGTH OF MEETINGS

The typical meeting lasts about one and a half to two hours, but it will depend on the frequency of your meetings and agenda at hand.

GETTING STARTED

At the first meeting after being officially matched, we strongly recommend that you both discuss and agree on the following:

- An outline of what each expects from the mentoring process and how it will be achieved. It can also be useful to discuss measurements of success.
- Clear goals and issues to work through in your relationship. The online self-evaluation you completed prior to being matched is a useful starting point. The issues brought up in the evaluation should not be considered set in stone but should help you both settle on some broad topics and objectives and provide a framework from which subsequent meetings can develop.

PROGRESS AND FEEDBACK

Additionally, we recommend that at the beginning of the relationship you set a formal review timetable to monitor how progress is being made in addressing the agreed goals. Good relationships not only focus on the topics for discussion but also on how the relationship itself is working. Setting up some simple agreements on how and when you will provide feedback to each other to measure your progress can provide a framework to discuss issues before they become a problem.

MENTORING CHECKPOINTS

We ask you to contact us should there be any issues with your mentoring relationship you don't feel you can resolve together, if you have any questions, or if you wish to draw your mentorship to a close.

On top of the regular due diligence, you will be asked to report progress at regular intervals. There are two checkpoints in the first year and a single check in for each year thereafter. We ask that you be prompt and honest in providing this confidential feedback, whether it is positive or negative. The information we gain through this process helps us support our mentors and mentees, measure the effectiveness of our program, and understand how best to improve.

FIRST SIX MONTHS

Six months after matching, we will check in with you both, and ask for your feedback on the quality of the mentorship thus far.

1

ANNUALLY

You will be asked to review your progress with your mentor, decide whether or not you wish to continue working together, and report the outcome of that discussion to us. Additionally, you will be required to complete a confidential evaluation and rate the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring program.

2

UPON COMPLETION

At the conclusion of your mentorship, you will be asked to provide feedback on it's quality and effectiveness. At this stage, you will be eligible to join our Alumni Program, including the opportunity to participate in our Alumni Advisor Program.

3



“Circumstances vary so widely as do individual’s capabilities that you can’t establish a set of universally applicable rules. One of the things I’ve learned is that nobody is actually anything by themselves. I can look back on my own career and appreciate the assistance I’ve received from individuals.”

Lindsay Tanner
Kilfinan Mentor

THE KILFINAN MENTORING COMMUNITY

While every mentoring relationship exists autonomously, it is also part of the broader Kilfinan community. To that end, Kilfinan Australia offers additional programs and events for our mentees.

MENTEE PEER GROUP PROGRAM

We understand the critical need of for-purpose leaders to connect, collaborate and innovate with each other. As a way to further support the leaders we work with, we offer the Mentee Peer Group Program: an opportunity for mentees to confidentially communicate with peers who are facing similar issues and challenges. As part of the program, mentees are matched into small working groups where they can strategise, explore opportunities, and gain access to fresh ideas and perspectives.

ROUNDTABLE EVENTS

Kilfinan and The Funding Network co-deliver roundtable events in select cities and online. The discussions are designed to be interactive, productive and focused, and aim to have CEOs leave the session with actionable ideas for their organisations.

PAVE THE WAY

The benefits of mentoring are invaluable and we are committed to providing it at no cost to for-purpose CEOs who contribute so much to Australia’s social, cultural, health and environmental needs.

If, at the end of your mentorship, you feel like you’ve received significant value from the program, consider making a [donation to Kilfinan Australia](#) to pave the way for another for-purpose leader in our community to experience the benefits and support from the program.

MENTEE MEETINGS

Mentee Meetings are an excellent opportunity to network with peers and productively discuss challenges and topics relevant to the for-purpose sector. The events are offered online as well as face-to-face and are kept small and space-limited to encourage open communication, transparency, and participation. *Chatham House rules apply.*

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP EVENTS

Kilfinan brings together industry leaders and subject matter experts to speak on topics relevant to the for-purpose sector in select cities. In addition to being informative and thought-provoking, these events are a great opportunity to network with the larger Kilfinan community, including mentors, mentees, corporate partners and other stakeholders.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my mentor advise me or my organisation?

The mentor's role is to mentor you as an individual. The intent is that your mentor helps you think through challenges and problems and find solutions. Your mentor should remain independent and committed to confidentiality.

How long should a mentoring relationship last?

Some relationships last for a number of years. However, most mentees and mentors find that the relationship comes to a natural end when it is clear that the agreed-on issues to be addressed have been resolved. It can be useful to set up an expected end date for the relationship. We find the average length of time for a productive mentoring relationship is about two years, however, following a review, some mentoring pairs may set new goals and continue working together beyond this time.

Do I have to really like my mentor?

'Chemistry' is important, and the relationship will struggle to be successful if rapport is lacking. Sometimes the two parties can be initially unsure of each other partly because each is unfamiliar with the other's experience and work environment. The key is that you respect and make the effort to understand each other.

Should my mentor meet my organisation's chair or staff?

Kilfinan Australia is a confidential service, so there is no expectation that your mentor should have contact with your chair, board members or any of the staff, unless you believe this would be helpful.

What if I am thinking about leaving the organisation?

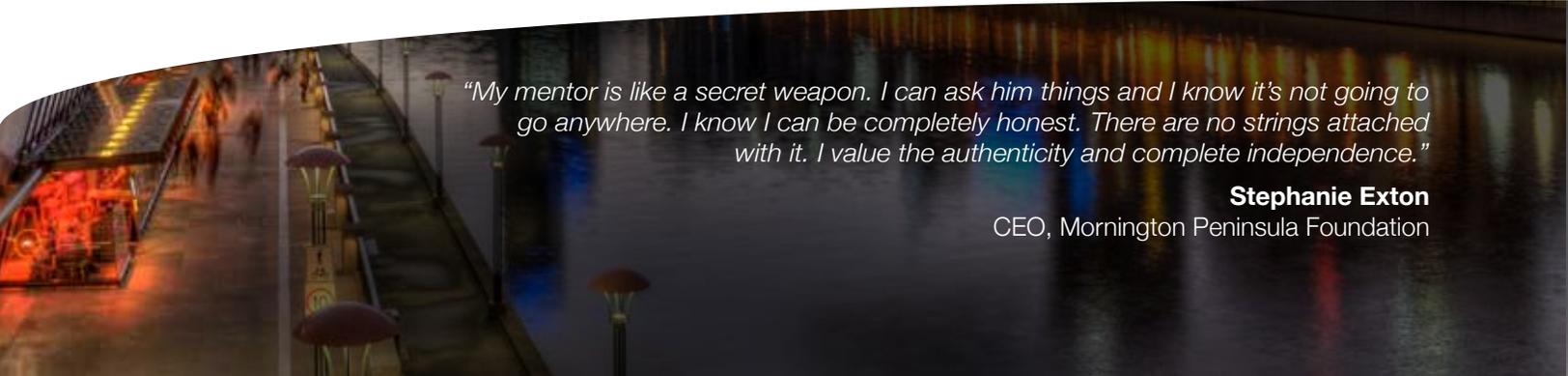
The confidentiality rules apply. Your mentor is entrusted with looking after your best interests. Your mentor can help review opportunities and your reasons for considering leaving – helping you test whether this is a good choice. Mentees often present succession planning as one of the issues they wish to explore with a mentor.

Why is the relationship confidential?

The individual is being mentored not the organisation, so decisions about whether you share the fact that you are being mentored can be decided together.

What if I haven't heard from my mentor for an extended period?

We highly recommend making the next appointment to meet before you close the current meeting. Experience suggests that it is preferable to keep the relationship continuous as this creates maximum benefit. The onus for arranging meetings rests with you but if your mentor fails to respond to your suggestions to meet, then this may indicate that the relationship should be drawn to a close. Kilfinan can assist if this occurs.



"My mentor is like a secret weapon. I can ask him things and I know it's not going to go anywhere. I know I can be completely honest. There are no strings attached with it. I value the authenticity and complete independence."

Stephanie Exton
CEO, Mornington Peninsula Foundation



"NFP's are critical to the fabric of our economy and are often overlooked. They are significant organisations that are big contributors to our economy. I thought, 'That's a place where I can put my experience on the table and help someone else be better at what they do.' I wanted to be able to help someone else be the best they can be."

Vanessa Guthrie
Kilfinan Mentor

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

MENTEE OBLIGATIONS

Specific obligations of mentees participating in Kilfinan Australia's mentoring program are as follows.

i. Schedule and prepare for meetings:

The mentee is required to set up the initial meeting with the mentor to determine if they would like to work together going forward and inform Kilfinan of the outcome of that meeting. If both parties decide to continue, the mentee will lead the relationship going forward including scheduling meetings and preparing agendas as required.

ii. Mentoring Agreement:

The mentee and mentor are required to sign a Mentoring Agreement outlining mutual expectations, obligations to Kilfinan and each other, as well as the mentee's learning needs and development goals.

iii. Provide feedback to Kilfinan at scheduled intervals:

The mentee agrees to provide feedback to Kilfinan at six months, annually, and at the close of the relationship. We ask that mentees be prompt and honest in providing this feedback, whether it is positive or negative. Feedback is confidential and will cover how the mentoring relationship is proceeding, and how the mentee is progressing with their stated goals. This feedback will be used to collate anonymous data on the quality and effectiveness of Kilfinan's service and mentoring program.

iv. Report issues and/or changes of circumstance:

If there are any issues with the progress of the mentoring relationship, the mentee (as appropriate) should contact Kilfinan directly at the earliest opportunity. Likewise, the mentee is required to report to Kilfinan any change of roles, organisation, and/or contact details, as this may affect the mentee's eligibility to continue with the mentoring program.

v. Maintain confidentiality:

The mentee commits to not sharing with anyone outside the mentoring relationship any personal circumstances relating to the other person. This includes not speaking about personal issues or using the other person's name during any Kilfinan Australia events unless previously agreed. Our full privacy policy can be viewed [on our website](#).