



THE
CATALYST
COLLECTIVE

About Us

- Set up in November 2020
- Run entirely by and entirely for Black women and girls
- We believe that mentoring can be a powerful intervention in the lives of young women

About Us

We recruit, train, match and support professional Black women with Black teenagers for mentoring relationships.

Our Values

Celebration: We celebrate Black girls and Black women unapologetically.

Authenticity: We see you, and you can bring all of yourself to this space.

Support: We are the bridge - supporting you on the journey between where you are and where you are going.

Community: We are a community - we have each other's backs and we learn from each other's experiences.

Joy: We are joyful - like sunflowers, we turn towards the light and each other.

Our Purpose (what our girls tell us...)

‘It’s easier to see yourself in the person sitting in front of you. It’s a lot more realistic and it makes you realise you can achieve the same sorts of things!’

‘...this matters a lot to me. The only other black people I come into contact with are my family. The majority of my teachers are white and male, and I don’t feel able to identify with them, as I am aware that they have particular privileges that I don’t have. It’s nice to see someone who is the same as me, and to be able to learn from their experiences and apply them to my own journey.’

How does the
programme work?

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WHO: Our mentoring programme is for girls aged 13-18 (in school years 9-13). The vast majority of mentees are in Year 10 and Year 12.

Students will attend one of our partner organisations – these are either secondary schools or extra-curricular organisations like supplementary schools. We also have an Open Access Mentoring Programme, allowing students to self-refer to the programme each January.

How does the programme work?

WHEN: This year we're running 3 cycles of the programme:

- September – July (meeting monthly)
- Mid-October – July (meeting 3-4 weekly)
- January – July (meeting 3 weekly)

How does the programme work?

WHERE: Mentoring can take place virtually and in person. Some pairs will meet online for the whole programme, others will mix between the two. Increasingly, mentees prefer the option to meet their mentors in person.

In person meetings need to take place in a mutually convenient public location, such as a coffee shop or museum, and do not start until at least half way through the programme.

We also host group events in person.

How does the programme work?

WHAT: Pairs set up to two goals at the beginning of their year to work towards. Alongside these, meetings should focus on a variety of other activities, skill development and areas of interest. 1:1 sessions are supplemented with group socials and careers events. We also provide a resource pack full of recommended activities and session plans.

Answering your questions

Where do mentors need to be located?

- This year, our partner schools are mostly in London, with some mentees located in the midlands.
- Mentors can be based anywhere in the UK, but proximity to London helps for mentees with a strong preference for in person mentoring.
- We always lead with mentor and mentee interests and compatibility, but try to make geographically suited matches too.
- We ask all mentors and mentees to attend an end of year celebration event which takes place in London.

What is the time commitment?

- Meetings take place once every 3-4 weeks and are usually 1 hour.
- Mentors may need up to an additional 30 mins - 1 hour per month for meeting preparation, recording details of mentoring and catching up with the Catalyst team.
- After a few months pairs should get into a regular rhythm of meetings. However, some flexibility is always required (on both sides).
- Mentor Coordinators will also check in once a month - through call, email, messages or if preferred, an online meeting.

What experience do I need to have?

- We know that a whole range of people can make brilliant mentors, with or without lots of experience.
- We don't require our mentors to have mentored before, or to have worked with this age group before. We think we can offer the training and support needed to do this brilliantly.

What experience do I need to have?

- What is most important is having the right qualities to make a great mentor to a young person which includes:
 - Flexibility and Openness
 - Patience and Resilience
 - Creativity and Communication skills
 - Kindness
 - Embodying our Catalyst values
- If you do have substantial experience of working with young people and mentoring, that's also great! We sometimes have young people assigned to the programme who could benefit from a really experienced mentor.

Who will my mentee be?

- Catalyst mentees are all Black girls (of African, Caribbean, or Black mixed heritage).
- They will be aged 13-18 (although we have a few pilot programmes in the works with slightly older and slightly younger age groups!)
- They will have a range of future aspirations – some will be really clear on these, others will not.
- Matching is a careful process that happens after we've met all the mentees and all the mentors.

Who will my mentee be?

- Matching is based on skills, experiences and interests. All mentors will have a chance to state their preferences and we'll make a recommendation of who we think you could work well with.
- If you do have strong preferences - please do let us know at interview. We'll always do our best to meet that interest. If you have very specific requirements, it might be harder or take longer to match you, but we'll always do our best!

What support will I receive?

- All mentoring pairs will have a mentoring coordinator from The Catalyst Collective. They'll be your first port of call for all questions, queries and to act as a sounding board throughout the year.
- We provide suggested session plans based around key themes that mentees may wish to work on.
- We circulate a monthly newsletter with tips, reminders and advice.
- Any safeguarding concerns should be escalated immediately to the Catalyst Designated Safeguarding Lead (more safeguarding support and training will be provided on programme training in a few months).

Becoming a mentor

Am I eligible to become a mentor?

Catalyst mentors **must**:

- Be Black women (of African, Caribbean, Other, or Black mixed heritage).
- Have a clean enhanced DBS record (we conduct these checks).
- Attend mandatory mentoring and safeguarding training before the beginning of the mentoring relationship.
- Commit to the full mentoring programme, making the necessary time available each month to meet with your mentee.

Am I eligible to become a mentor?

- Catalyst mentors **do not** have to have gone to university or be from any specific career or educational backgrounds, as we know that a diverse range of mentors leads to excellent mentoring matches!
- We welcome mentors from a wide age range – and in particular want to encourage young professionals to apply. You do not have to have significant career experience to offer something valuable to a young person.

Am I guaranteed a mentee?

- We'll do our best to match all interested mentors with a strong match for this academic year. However, we always want to prioritise making the best possible matches for both mentors and mentees, which means we can't guarantee that all potential mentors will be successfully paired up.
- We're seeking to build a brilliant database of Black women, so we can make effective matches as they arise throughout the year.
- If we can't successfully match you, we will keep in touch with future opportunities, including later matching, careers talks and other programmes we hope to run.

What happens next?

Applications and DBS application

Interviews and DBS document check

Matching and Referencing

- **TODAY:** Applications are live. The application form takes around 3 minutes to complete.
- **June - September:** After you've completed your EOI form, you'll be invited for an interview with the team (usually with Chloe our Recruitment Coordinator). We'll ask you to complete an onboarding form which takes around 10 minutes and a DBS check if you don't already have one.
- **September – December:** We'll let you know when we think we've found you a match!

Getting Started

Training

Kick off meetings

1:1 Mentoring begins

- **September – December:** Ahead of beginning mentoring, we'll invite you to mentor training.
- **September/October/January:** When you're trained, we'll host 'Kick Off' meetings, to introduce you to your mentees in a group setting. Following your introduction, 1:1 mentoring will begin.

Any other
questions?