



## Mentor Role Description

### Role information

<b>Role title</b>	In2science Mentor
<b>Program</b>	In2science STEM Peer Mentoring Program
<b>University partners</b>	La Trobe University, The University of Melbourne, Deakin University, RMIT University
<b>Commitment type</b>	Voluntary (unpaid)
<b>Time commitment</b>	Approximately 2-3 hours per week during a 10-week placement period
<b>Location</b>	Participating Victorian secondary schools (in-class mentoring) or remote (eMentoring)
<b>Reports to</b>	In2science Program Coordinator (at respective university)
<b>Eligibility</b>	Current undergraduate (second-year or later) or postgraduate student enrolled in a STEM-related degree at a partner university
<b>Program models</b>	In-class mentoring or eMentoring

### About In2science

In2science is Victoria's leading STEM peer mentoring program, operating since 2004 through a multi-university partnership. The program places university STEM students as peer mentors in Victorian secondary schools, with a particular focus on schools serving communities where students face barriers to accessing STEM pathways.

Since its establishment, In2science has worked with approximately 85,000 students, placed over 4,000 mentors, and partnered with more than 200 schools. The program operates through two primary delivery models:

- **In-class mentoring:** Mentors attend Year 7–10 STEM classrooms once per week for a 10-week period, working alongside classroom teachers as role models, teaching aides, and STEM experts.
- **eMentoring:** Mentors work remotely with one or two eMentees once per week for 10 weeks, connecting the program to regional and outer metropolitan Victorian students.

In2science also offers the Mentor Leaders Program (MLP), which matches exceptional In2science mentors with early-career STEM professionals for additional professional development opportunities.

## **Role overview**

An In2science Mentor volunteers their time and STEM expertise to support secondary school students in Victorian schools. Mentors act as positive role models, classroom aides, and near-peer supporters, helping students to develop confidence in STEM subjects, build aspirations for further study, and understand the pathways available to them in STEM careers.

This is a voluntary role that complements and supports, but does not replace, the work of the classroom teacher. Mentors are expected to engage with students in a structured, consistent, and professional manner throughout their 10-week placement.

## **Role expectations**

Mentors are expected to complete a set of required activities before and during their placement. These commitments are in place to ensure mentors are well-prepared, students receive consistent support, and the program maintains its quality and accountability standards.

### Required commitments

- Pre-placement training (~5 hours) - Complete a training session run by your Program Coordinator, held in-person where possible or online if required. This covers program expectations, communication skills, and classroom scenarios.
- eMentoring training (~2 hours) - eMentors only. Complete eMentoring-specific training prior to commencing an eMentoring placement. This covers platform use, remote communication guidelines, and appropriate boundaries for online mentoring.
- 10 weekly sessions (~1 hour) - Attend your scheduled weekly sessions across the full 10-week placement period. Additional time is required for travel (in-class mentors only) and preparation (eMentors only).
- Mid-placement meetup (~2 hours) - Attend a mid-placement check-in with your Program Coordinator and fellow mentors. This is held in-person where possible, or online if required. The check-in provides an opportunity to reflect on your progress, raise any concerns, and receive support.

Whilst every effort should be made to complete all placement sessions, In2science recognises that circumstances outside a mentor's control (such as school timetabling changes, public holidays, illness, or unexpected school closures) may occasionally affect the total number of sessions completed.

In2science also offers additional events to provide mentors with the opportunity for professional development, networking, and to foster a sense of community amongst mentors from all of our partner universities.

### Optional commitments

- End-of-placement meetup - Mentors gather at the end of each semester to reflect on the placement experience and connect with peers. Held in-person where possible, or online if required.
- Program events - Throughout the year, In2science may host additional events such as networking evenings, social gatherings, professional development sessions, and other learning opportunities. Mentors will be notified of these by their Program Coordinator.

- In2science Awards Night - An annual celebration recognising the contributions of In2science mentors, partner schools, and university staff. Award categories recognise outstanding mentors, schools, and program contributors. All mentors are invited to attend.

## **Key responsibilities**

### 1. Student engagement and support

- Build positive, respectful relationships with secondary school students across Year 7–10.
- Support student learning in STEM subjects by acting as a STEM expert and near-peer mentor.
- Encourage students to engage with STEM content and classroom activities.
- Share personal experiences of studying STEM at university to inspire student aspirations.
- Foster a growth mindset and help students develop confidence in their STEM abilities.

### 2. In-class mentoring (where applicable)

- Attend assigned classrooms once per week for the full 10-week placement period.
- Work constructively alongside the classroom teacher, following their direction and supporting the lesson plan.
- Circulate among students during class activities, providing encouragement and answering questions.
- Adhere to all school policies and procedures, including those relating to student safety and conduct.

### 3. eMentoring (where applicable)

- Connect remotely with one or two eMentees once per week for the full 10-week program.
- Engage in structured, purposeful conversations that support student learning and STEM pathway awareness.
- Follow the eMentoring program guidelines and use only approved communication platforms.
- Maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in all communications with eMentees.

### 4. Program administration and compliance

- Complete all required pre-placement training and onboarding, including child safety modules.
- Maintain a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) and provide evidence to the relevant Program Coordinator.
- Attend scheduled mentor briefings, training sessions, and program events as required.
- Complete post-session check-ins and surveys in a timely and accurate manner.
- Communicate proactively with the Program Coordinator regarding any concerns, absences, or issues.
- Respond to communications from the Program Coordinator in a timely manner.

### 5. Professional conduct

- Represent In2science and the partner university with professionalism and integrity at all times.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, teachers, and school staff.
- Respect the confidentiality of student information and school communities.
- Behave in accordance with In2science's values of equity, authenticity, reciprocity, and collaboration.

- Notify the Program Coordinator immediately of any concerns relating to student wellbeing or safety.

## **Selection criteria**

### Essential criteria

- Currently enrolled in an undergraduate (second-year or later) or postgraduate STEM-related degree
- Ability to commit to the full 10-week placement and attend consistently each week
- Holds (or is willing to obtain) a current Victorian Working with Children Check prior to placement.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with young people from diverse backgrounds.
- Genuine commitment to supporting students who face barriers to STEM participation and higher education.

### Desirable criteria

- Experience working, volunteering, or tutoring with children or young people in any capacity.
- Personal experience of regional, rural, or low socioeconomic backgrounds relevant to program communities.
- Ability to communicate in languages other than English.

## **Performance expectations**

Mentors are expected to meet the following standards throughout their placement. These expectations form the basis for coordinator feedback and, where necessary, may result in a mentor's placement being discontinued.

- Attends all scheduled sessions unless an absence is communicated to the Program Coordinator in advance.
- Arrives on time for every session.
- Actively engages with students during sessions; does not remain passive or use personal devices inappropriately during class time.
- Completes check-ins and surveys within the timeframes specified by the Program Coordinator.
- Responds to Program Coordinator communications within 48 hours. Proactively raises any concerns or issues without delay.
- Maintains appropriate professional relationships with students at all times, in accordance with In2science guidelines and school policies.
- Adheres to child safety obligations at all times, including mandatory reporting requirements.
- Represents In2science and the partner university positively in all interactions with schools, students, and community members.

In2science is committed to maintaining high-quality, safe, and effective placements for students and school partners. Where concerns arise, the Program Coordinator will seek to address them through a supportive conversation in the first instance. Placement discontinuation will be considered where issues cannot be resolved or where the safety or wellbeing of students or the mentor is at risk.

### **What In2science offers mentors**

In addition to the opportunity to make a genuine difference in the lives of young Victorians, In2science mentors receive:

- Comprehensive pre-placement training and ongoing support from a dedicated Program Coordinator.
- A formal certificate of participation upon successful completion of a placement.
- Recognition of professional skills development, including communication, leadership, and teaching.
- Access to the Mentor Leaders Program (MLP) for exceptional mentors seeking additional professional development.
- Opportunities to connect with other mentors and attend a range of professional development events.
- A genuine contribution to equity in STEM education across Victoria.