

# MENTORED PATHWAYS








*Connecting education and careers for every student*

## Partner Guide

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# OVERVIEW

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## The Education-to-Career Gap

The skills gap for students entering the workforce is a top issue for employers. While more than half of U.S. employers report difficulty finding qualified workers to fill vacant positions, only 42% of worldwide employers believe graduates are adequately prepared for work. Much of the gap employers cite falls into three areas of career readiness:

- Experience and passion for the work
- Professional skills: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and leadership
- Alignment between student preparedness and industry needs

Currently, industry looks towards schools to provide a career-ready workforce. Unfortunately, the average student to guidance counselor ratio in the U.S. is 500:1, resulting in a scarcity of effective career counseling. Meanwhile, educators do their best to create exposure to career pathways for students, despite limited resources.

So how can students successfully prepare for careers despite these challenging circumstances? The answer depends upon industry involvement. **Only industry professionals can provide the knowledge, long-term support, and industry connections that students need for career success.** Why? Because industry professionals have already been there and know what it takes to be competitive in their fields. As such, they are uniquely qualified to guide students toward career opportunities and provide an authentic mentored pathway to success.

## The Solution: Mentors from Industry

At Mentored Pathways, we've connected students with mentors from industry for over 22 years. In that time, we've learned that if students receive industry support while building the following three assets, their chances of achieving career and academic success skyrocket:

1. **Portfolio of authentic work** in the student's chosen area of interest
2. **Career and academic plan** that meets the standards of industry
3. **Professional network** of industry leaders and experts in the student's area of interest

Through our virtual mentoring platform, Mentored Pathways creates a bridge between industry leaders and students. In doing so, we help organizations build a diverse talent pipeline, enhance the leadership skills of their employees, and support the communities in which their employees live.

## How to Partner with Mentored Pathways: Easy as 1,2,3

When students connect with industry leaders and experts, there's no stopping their career and academic success. Join a visionary group of organizations who understand that an education is more than just career exposure. It's about authentic engagement with industry. It all starts with you:

1. **Complete our simple two-page partner agreement**
2. **Recruit employee mentors:** Anytime, anywhere, virtual mentoring is easy, rewarding, and fun
3. **Contribute funding:** A full year of mentoring is just \$25 per student per month!

## Mentored Pathways Approach

Mentored Pathways has guided students on their paths to successful careers for over 22 years. Through flexible, convenient, virtual communication, Mentored Pathways supports students to tackle real industry problems and create and execute competitive plans for their futures. To date, **over 3,000 Mentored Pathways mentors have helped nearly 48,000 students in 22 countries** to engage in authentic STEM work and pursue meaningful careers. Students are supported one-to-one by industry professionals every step of the way to develop three critical career assets: portfolios of work, career & education plans, and professional networks.

Our online platform supports collaboration between students and industry professionals, while respecting busy school and work schedules. For example, a high school student from Louisiana received solid career support from a mentor based in Switzerland through the following process:

1. The student's teacher worked with Mentored Pathways staff to develop the career project
2. The mentor chose to support the student working on this project
3. The teacher guided the student and mentor throughout the project

The student and mentor communicated twice per week through the Mentored Pathways secure collaboration platform. The mentor had complete flexibility to communicate with the student anytime, anywhere, while never creating a conflict with his busy work schedule.

## CURRENT PARTNERS

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**And many more!**

# RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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*"I have been participating as a mentor for 16 years. As I reflect back over the years, I am not sure who benefited the most, the students or myself. When I spend time with students developing career plans, I also learn about different career paths and opportunities, which in turn helps me to be intentional about my career development path, and to keep goals in front of myself. Having these goals set before me helps me to have a more fulfilling career."*

- Scott Zeigler, Merck

## Young Adults Who Were At-Risk for Falling Off Track But Had a Mentor Are:

55% more likely to enroll in college

78% more likely to volunteer regularly

90% are interested in becoming a mentor

130% more likely to hold leadership positions.

Our partner companies provide real, life-changing impact for youth and their communities. Mentored Pathways maximizes the impact of your contributions to our youth's work. Reciprocally, companies gain substantial benefits for their own employees and agencies.

- **Access & cultivate a skilled talent pool**  
We connect partners with a diverse group of young people who want to develop the skills necessary to succeed in your field. You have the opportunity to target your influence and build your own talent pipeline of skilled and diverse employees – your next generation of leaders.
- **Develop your internal talent**  
We cultivate transferrable leadership, communication and managerial skills in a safe environment every time your employees mentor.
- **Increase employee engagement**  
Employees want a company whose values match theirs. We provide real opportunities for this integration through scalable, flexible, convenient mentoring that supports employee growth. Virtual mentoring – just two emails weekly – makes mentoring accessible to almost everyone.
- **Support your own communities**  
Mentored Pathways also provides opportunities for you to choose where you serve students. Expand your current education initiatives and support the communities where your current and future employees work and live.

# PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

*You are uniquely positioned to provide support to students in a variety of ways, and we make it easy for partner companies to make an immediate impact.*

**FUNDING:** We work to impact entire communities. We are seeking partners that want to tackle the mounting challenges in the education-to-work pipeline. While no company can do this alone, we can overcome this hurdle together as a community. As a non-profit 501c-3 charity, Mentored Pathways welcomes contributions from all company matching programs, Dollars-for-Doers, grants, and discretionary funding sources to support schools in your community. Consider a financial partnership through our tailored partner program.



**MENTORS:** Partner company employees are perhaps our greatest assets. As mentors, they provide weekly, tailored virtual support to our students who are eager to learn more about their fields and what it takes to succeed. Consider pledging to support Mentored Pathways by generating interest and providing opportunities for employees to serve as mentors for our determined students.

We look forward to collaboratively supporting initiatives and communities most important to you.



# PROGRAM COMPONENTS

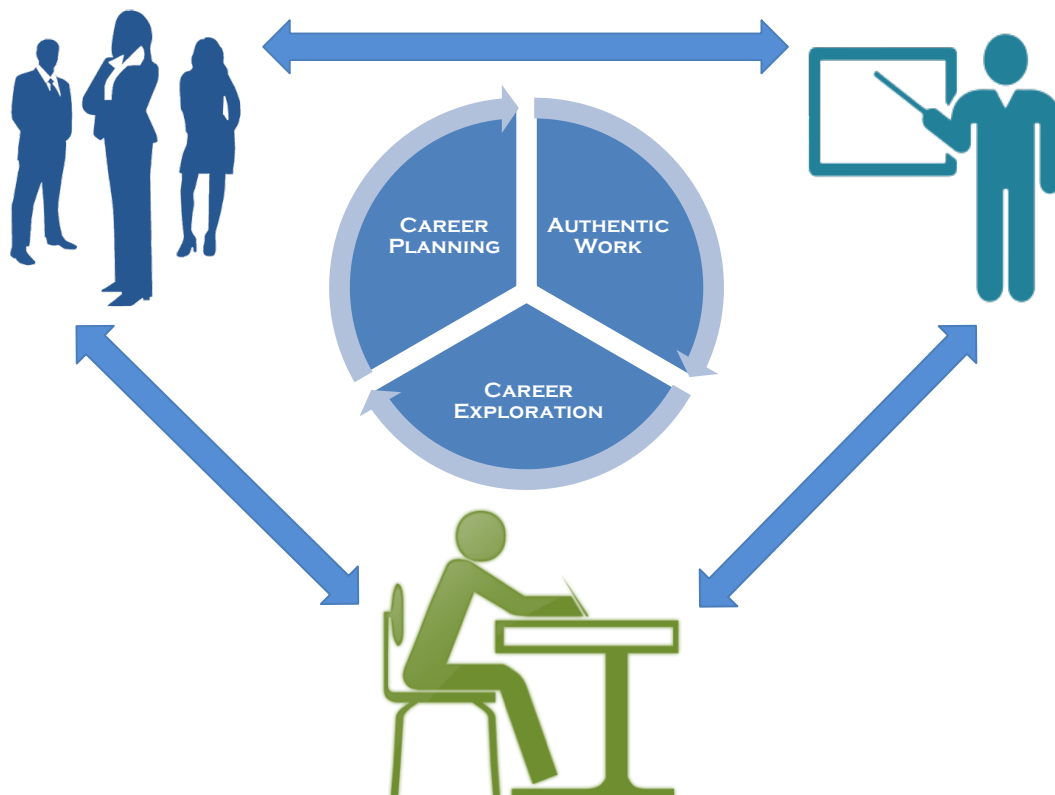
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**MENTORING:** Mentors and students enjoy one-to-one relationships that build powerfully as they communicate over the course of a year. To promote ease and flexibility, mentors and students communicate electronically twice each week at the times and places most convenient to them – all they need is internet access and their login for the Mentored Pathways secure website. Through authentic STEM work and career guidance, mentors work with students to tackle real-world problems in alignment with industry standards. Within these goal-directed relationships, students develop portfolios of work, iterative career plans, and professional networks. All communication between mentors and students is filtered, monitored, and archived through our secure website.

**MENTORS:** Our mentors are professionals from partnering companies in over 22 countries. Each mentor commits to supporting one young person in their exploration and pursuance of STEM and other careers through weekly communication on our secure platform for a minimum of one school year. All mentors are screened and directly supported by Mentored Pathways staff.

**STUDENTS:** We support hard-working and curious students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade through post-secondary.

**CURRICULUM:** Our authentic STEM work, career exploration, and career and education planning is structured by a customizable, student-centered curriculum. Our curriculum is informed by industry standards, needs, and direct input. Each specific project plan is developed through collaborative efforts of students, teachers, school leadership, and Mentored Pathways staff.





# OUR MENTORS

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## Mentor Impact

- **Authentic Industry Work**  
Mentors assist students to tackle authentic work in areas of their own interests. Through this collaborative relationship, students create portfolios of work that meet industry standards of excellence and can be refined through their post-secondary experiences.
- **Competitive Career & Education Plans**  
With the continued guidance of a mentor, students are challenged and supported to create and implement iterative, competitive career and education plans.
- **Professional Networks**  
Focusing on the transitions ahead, mentors help students establish powerful networks in their fields of interest, including successful alumni, hiring managers, and leading professionals.

## Mentor Benefits

Our mentors are nothing short of remarkable. They provide real, life-changing impact for youth, bridging a gap that many have difficulty traversing. Reciprocally, our mentors gain substantial benefits for themselves.

- **Skill development**  
We cultivate transferrable leadership, communication and managerial skills in a safe environment every time you mentor.
- **Values-driven**  
We provide real opportunities for integration of your work and personal values through scalable and efficient volunteer opportunities that support your own growth.
- **Accessibility**  
Our program provides flexible, convenient, virtual mentoring for today's professional. A commitment of just two emails weekly for one school year makes mentoring accessible to almost everyone.
- **Your children**  
Mentoring support is provided to all participating employees' children from middle school through postsecondary.

## Mentor Eligibility

1. Current employee of partner company with valid partner company email address
2. Commit to communicating with student twice each week for one school year
3. Complete application & screening process successfully



# RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

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Students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade through post-secondary participate in dynamic and intensive career mentoring to help them successfully connect their current education to their future professional worlds.

Mentored Pathways and company partners work in tandem to ensure effective program delivery and maximum impact for youth, mentors, companies, and their communities.

## KEY PLAYERS AND MEETINGS

### KEY PLAYERS

- **COMPANY CHAMPIONS:** Company-appointed contacts including an Executive Sponsor & Project Captain
- **MENTORED PATHWAYS LEADERSHIP:** Directors

### MEETINGS

- **PARTNERSHIP EXPLORATION**  
**Goal:** Provide program overview and discuss goals, expectations of each party, and partnership agreement.  
**Goal:** Provide overview of ideal “champions” and mentors.  
**When:** TBD  
**Participants:** Company leadership & champions, Mentored Pathways leadership
- **ONBOARDING**  
**Goal:** Review goals, program components, and expectations of each party. Finalize partnership agreement.  
**Goal:** Review characteristics of ideal “champions” and mentors, establish recruitment timelines and goals, and review opportunities and outreach materials.  
**When:** TBD  
**Participants:** Company champions, Mentored Pathways leadership
- **QUARTERLY CHAMPION CHECK-INS**  
**Goal:** Discuss progress, challenges, needs, and modifications for next quarter.  
**When:** Quarterly  
**Participants:** Company champions, Mentored Pathways leadership
- **ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP MEETING**  
**Goal:** Assess partnership, program, and student performance.  
**Goal:** Discuss program modifications and goals for following year.  
**When:** Annually  
**Participants:** Company leadership & champions, Mentored Pathways leadership

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY MENTORED PATHWAYS

<b>MENTORED PATHWAYS STAFF SUPPORT:</b>	<p>Mentored Pathways pairs vetted mentors in one-year, staff-supported mentoring relationships with students enrolled in the Mentored Pathways program. A multi-year curriculum is used to facilitate mentor-mentee interaction around career readiness skills and drivers of success. Mentored Pathways agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relationship management led by Director</li> <li>2. Facilitate mentor selection of mentoring relationships and projects</li> <li>3. Supply software platform for facilitating secure mentoring relationships</li> <li>4. Provide ongoing support for mentors</li> <li>5. Evaluate program impact on youth, mentors, and company</li> </ol>
<b>RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT:</b>	<p>Mentored Pathways works with company to develop and build a strong relationship between Mentored Pathways and company. Mentored Pathways agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate with company in a thorough process before commencement of relationship to ensure conditions are in place to maximize impact</li> <li>2. Participate in quarterly check-ins with company champions and at least one annual planning/assessment meeting with company leadership to monitor progress toward relationship goals and outcomes</li> <li>3. Communicate effectively with mentors and company throughout relationship</li> <li>4. Celebrate employee and company contributions</li> <li>5. Inform company of any material administrative or programmatic changes</li> </ol>
<b>PROMOTION:</b>	<p>Mentored Pathways agrees to promote relationship when and where appropriate through channels such as: annual reports, press releases, and online and social media properties.</p>
<b>MENTOR RECRUITMENT:</b>	<p>Mentored Pathways agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop mentor recruitment goals with company and support ability to meet goals</li> <li>2. Provide outreach materials and coaching to ensure that conditions are in place to maximize number of employees enrolled as mentors and company impact</li> <li>3. Help company to identify quality mentors to work with Mentored Pathways students for one year</li> <li>4. Communicate in a timely manner and seek to secure all applicable applications, consent, liability, and commitment forms on behalf of prospective mentors employed by company</li> <li>5. On-board and train appropriate company employees for Mentored Pathways program and software platform</li> </ol>

*\* Mentored Pathways retains the right to discontinue partnership with any company as well as decline or deny prospective or current mentors at any time.*

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY COMPANY

<b>COMPANY SUPPORT:</b>	<p>Company agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annually identify two champions with sufficient time, requisite authority, and appropriate capabilities to manage relationship, facilitate communication with leadership, and recruit mentors</li> <li>2. Actively promote Mentored Pathways and mentoring opportunities</li> <li>3. Provide time, support, and incentive for employees to be mentors</li> <li>4. Support access to funding: grants, Dollars-for-Doers, employee matching funds</li> <li>5. Work with Mentored Pathways to evaluate program impact</li> </ol>
<b>RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT:</b>	<p>Company agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate with Mentored Pathways in an onboarding meeting to ensure that conditions are in place to maximize company's impact on youth and Mentored Pathways impact on company</li> <li>2. In addition to the start-up meeting, participate in at least one planning/assessment meeting with Mentored Pathways leadership each year</li> <li>3. Inform Mentored Pathways of any material administrative changes at company,</li> <li>4. Help Mentored Pathways serve existing student demand in first year; in subsequent years, Mentored Pathways and company will work together to target specific populations and areas of company interest</li> </ol>
<b>PROMOTION:</b>	<p>Company agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate Mentored Pathways' role and the importance of the relationship to company leadership and employees during relationship</li> <li>2. Promote relationship when and where appropriate through channels such as annual reports, press releases, and online and social media properties</li> </ol>
<b>MENTOR RECRUITMENT:</b>	<p>Company agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop mentor recruitment goals with company and support ability to meet goals</li> <li>2. Communicate with employees and leadership about mentoring opportunities including but not limited to: employee newsletters, general and direct emails, volunteer sites, "word of mouth" promotion</li> <li>3. Identify employees who can serve as excellent mentors for Mentored Pathways students for a minimum of one school year</li> <li>4. Support completion of prospective mentor applications and procurement of liability and consent forms</li> <li>5. Provide ongoing support to prospective and current mentors to ensure fulfillment of expectations and commitment</li> </ol>