

Mentorship guidelines Start.VUB

Start.VUB is the incubator for entrepreneurial students of the VUB. The main mission of Start.VUB is to help and support the student-entrepreneurs of the VUB.

We thank our partners, *Start.LAB* and *Start it @KBC*, for providing some of the content and structure in this document.

This document explains the nature of the relationship between mentors and mentees. We also recommend mentors to read the full 'secret to great mentoring' provided by Start it@ KBC (<https://startit.be/mentorship-the-startit-way>).

What is the goal of the Start.VUB mentorship program?

Start.VUB is creating a pool of experienced mentors who can be assigned to *student-entrepreneurs*. They are defined as '**mentors**'.

Student-entrepreneurs or *mentees* are defined as those students selected by our jury to participate to the Start.VUB Program. They work on their *entrepreneurial project*, on their own or in teams.

Note: we are organizing separate workshops around specific themes that are of interest to all startups (for example on pricing, business modelling, sales, IP, etc.).

Who are our target mentors?

We are looking for experienced entrepreneurs or professionals (at least 10 years of relevant professional experience). Mentors are at a point in their career that they have the freedom, time and state-of-mind to help young entrepreneurs succeed and they want to pass on their knowledge and guidance.

What do we expect from mentors?

A commitment to open their network and use their experience as they see fit to provide solutions for the start-up. A commitment to meet at least once every 2 months with the student startup (face-to-face or on-line) for a duration of 3 hours. A commitment to be responsive to emails of the mentees. Mentors provide full confidentiality (NDA signed) and mention potential conflict of interests to the management of Start.VUB.

What do mentors get in return?

Mentors get to pass on their experience to the next generation and train the entrepreneurs that shape our future. Mentors become a member of our mentor network and will be invited to exclusive events and activities where they can meet the other mentors and student-entrepreneurs. At least once a year, startups in the program pitch in front of mentors.

Start.VUB does not financially remunerate mentors in return for their services. Mentees also don't pay any fee's for participation to the Start.VUB program.

How do we organize this?

2 times per year a call is opened for student startups that wish to apply (October – March). During each call a maximum of 10 entrepreneurial student projects is selected. Ideally, each project is coupled with one mentor. One mentor can coach multiple projects if he/she wishes to. A list in the form of a google doc of start-ups will be provided to mentors and a list of mentors will be provided to mentees. No contact information will be on the list. A mentor can put his name next to a start-up he/she is interested in and vice-versa. For each match Start.VUB will facilitate a first meeting.

How do we monitor the quality of the mentorship program?

After every jury we ask feedback to both the mentors and the mentees. Mentors can be removed from the program by the Start.VUB management (for example due to a lack of commitment towards the mentees). Student entrepreneurs can be removed from the program by the jury or by the management of Start.VUB (for example due to lack of commitment or advancement in the project). Discretion in all our communication is guaranteed.

This is a first draft of our mentorship guidelines and we appreciate and will take into consideration any feedback mentors have for Start.VUB and our mentorship program.