

GAIN Neurodiversity Reverse-Mentorship Scheme

What is it?

This is a reverse mentorship scheme pairing neurodivergent employees at all levels within your company with more senior individuals.

What is the purpose?

Neurodiversity is a relatively new topic of conversation in corporate DE&I spaces. As members of GAIN, your company recognises the value and importance of fostering neuroinclusive workplaces, but are still in the process of learning what this means and how best to support neurodivergent employees. At the same time, many neurodivergent people have deep insights to offer but have historically been excluded from the spheres of influence where their voices can be heard.

The GAIN neurodiversity reverse mentoring scheme aims to build bridges of communication between neurodivergent employees at all levels and more senior individuals. Leaders, line managers, C-suite and other senior employees will have the opportunity to learn about neurodiversity from people with direct lived experience and gain valuable insights into the complex, nuanced and interconnected ways our strengths, challenges and needs can be met. Neurodivergent employees can benefit from career development opportunities through this scheme, gaining insight and expertise from an experienced senior member of the company as well as building connections within the company.

Eligible mentees may be from a variety of career backgrounds in the industry, but all will have some level of decision-making capacity regarding neurodiversity initiatives within their company. Eligible mentors can be employed at any level but must be neurodivergent. For the purposes of this scheme we accept self-identification of neurodivergence to be eligible.

Who Is Eligible?

Any GAIN corporate member company may sign up to participate in the mentorship scheme, and individuals within member companies can volunteer to participate at will. However, in order for an individual nominee to be eligible, they need to meet the following eligibility criteria:

Mentees must

1. Be employed at a GAIN corporate member company
2. Be an individual member of GAIN, or sign up as one
3. Be in a decision-making role within their own company. Roles can include, but are not limited to
 - a. EWG chairs
 - b. EWG executive sponsors
 - c. Steering Committee members
 - d. Senior HR employees
 - e. C-suite
 - f. EXCOM
 - g. Line managers and department leads in general

4. Have a basic understanding of neurodiversity and a desire to create active change within their company culture to foster neuroinclusive working environments
5. Be willing and able to commit to the minimum level of active participation in the mentorship scheme

Mentors must

1. Be employed at a GAIN corporate member company
2. Be an individual member of GAIN, or sign up as one
3. Have direct, personal lived experience of neurodivergence, whether formally diagnosed or self-identified. As an example this can include, but is not limited to
 - a. Autism
 - b. ADHD
 - c. Dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia
 - d. Tourette's
 - e. Other neurodivergent conditions
4. Be willing to disclose to GAIN and their assigned mentee their neurodivergent condition, and further be willing to speak with their assigned mentee on the topic of neurodiversity both from a general perspective and reflecting on their own personal experiences in the workplace
5. Be willing and able to commit to the minimum level of active participation in the mentorship scheme.

What is the commitment?

Participants will be paired for a period of 6 months.

Participants will supply GAIN with a completed one-page-profile document that will be shared with their peer upon pairing. GAIN will supply a template for this.

Participants must complete a mentorship agreement form confirming their commitment to participation. These forms are completed collaboratively with both participants and outline:

- The goals each participant has for their own participation
- A brief summary of the experience they have to offer
- Outlines of what mentors and mentees would consider personal criteria for a successful mentoring relationship
- An agreed frequency of meetings (we recommend 4-6 weeks)

Mentorship pairings will be responsible for managing their relationship with each other and maintaining communications, although GAIN will check in mid-way through the pairing to provide direction where needed, and can be contacted as required for additional support.

Participants will submit feedback and report to GAIN at the beginning, mid-point and close of the mentorship period when requested. Either party may submit additional feedback at ad-hoc times if they deem appropriate. Feedback form templates will be supplied by GAIN.

At the end of the mentorship period, participants will complete an evaluation of the scheme to confirm if their pairing was of value, using the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation. Mentors may then choose to re-enter the scheme again and be paired with a new mentee.

GAIN reserves the right to remove from the current mentorship opportunity and exclude from future peer mentorship opportunities any individual who

- Fails to meet stated commitments to their fellow participant during a previous pairing
- Is shown to have dishonestly represented their eligibility
- Acts in ways that may bring the mentorship scheme and GAIN into disrepute, or may call into question the validity of their participation

Kirkpatrick Model of Evaluation

- **Level 1: Reaction** – The degree to which participants find mentoring favourable, engaging and relevant to their jobs. Measure from satisfaction feedback surveys.
- **Level 2: Learning** – The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in mentoring. Measure from stated learning objectives.
- **Level 3: Behaviour** – The degree to which participants apply what they learn during mentoring when they are back in their jobs. Measure from feedback and confirmation of any new initiatives, schemes or plans. Post-mentorship interview with mentors to confirm.
- **Level 4: Results** – The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of mentoring. GAIN to set internal targeted outcomes which may include increased participation in GAIN initiatives, increased commitment to active involvement in neurodiversity pilots and projects, etc.