

Do you want a mentor?

As mentee:

- you get a mentor as a support to you and your prospective business
- learn more about Swedish society and get new contacts
- broaden your outlook, get new ideas and new knowledge
- learn from others' experiences

Who can be a mentee?

Women with foreign backgrounds who are eager to start their own business, and learn about what this involves, can be mentees. You can apply if you are seeking work, are a student or already working, and dream of being able to start your own business.

What type of person should a mentee be?

There is no formal profile for what type of person you should be, but it is easier if you:

- are both curious and dedicated
- dare to take the initiative
- dare to be yourself
- are willing to share your experiences and cultural background.



More business start-ups through Men's Mentorship

Men's Mentorship is a project that aims to promote entrepreneurship for women with foreign backgrounds. The project will inspire and motivate mentees, and give them knowledge in entrepreneurship. The hope is that more of them will want to start their own business, and in this way strengthen long-term economic and social growth in the region.

You can also become a mentor or mentee!



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Do you want to be a mentor?

You can:

- contribute to economic growth, increased integration and diversity in the business world
- contribute to greater competence in committees and boards, share knowledge and experiences
- see another individual grow and develop
- take the opportunity to develop your cultural competences
- broaden your network and develop your business

Who can be a mentor?

You can become a mentor if you are a Swedish man and have run your business for some time. The mentee is a woman with an immigrant background, who has the ambition to start her own business. As mentor, you willingly share your knowledge, experience and contacts.

What type of person should a mentor be?

There is no formal profile for what type of person you should be, but it is easier if you:

- are open to new perspective
- have the ability to coach and inspire
- can take initiative and are, at the same time, a good listener
- are willing to share your knowledge and contacts
- are able to act as a sounding board



Men's Mentorship strengthens women's business

Why we want more women to be entrepreneurs

There are primarily two reasons usually given for why it's important that more women get the opportunity to start their own business: increased growth and increased equality.

It has been emphasised, not least at government level, that from an economic growth perspective, Sweden needs more and growing businesses, for sustainable growth and increased employment. More new businesses lead to a more diverse and dynamic commercial economy, which makes a region less economically vulnerable. And as a far higher proportion of business owners are men, women are regarded as an underused resource when it comes to the much needed expansion in business enterprise. Women, quite simply, form a bigger base for the recruitment of new business entrepreneurs. All in all, it can be argued that equality is an important foundation stone for being able to create increased economic growth.

People with foreign backgrounds who want to start their own business often don't get the same chances and support to carry this through. This can be due to limited language or inadequate knowledge of the regulations governing enterprise in Sweden. Often too, contact with public agencies and bureaucracy is seen as a barrier.

IKF's project, Men's Mentorship, focuses therefore on personal contacts in a dynamic network. The project provides the opportunity for personal back-up and support from someone who has themselves started a business and has experience of what is involved.

The project offers men with entrepreneurial experience the opportunity to take part in work around equality, integration and regional economic growth. As mentor, you get an insight into the obstacles that a competent woman with a foreign background can face in establishing herself as an entrepreneur – an experience which also widens the mentor's competences.

Meet Micael, Suzana and Nathalie

Micael

"Being a mentor is both enjoyable and interesting. You are forced to put your own knowledge to the test."

In just under a year, Micael has had two mentees, Suzana and Nathalie. For Micael mentorship has meant, amongst other things, daring to challenge. Why did you do that? Do you think you could have got a different result if you'd done things another way? It's about getting thoughts and reflection going, giving concrete tools that my mentee can manage herself.

"For me, mentorship is about discussing how you do things and why."



Photo: Eva Rendl

Suzana

Suzana's shop in the Triangeln shopping centre, was already up and running when Micael came into the picture.

Suzana had a clear plan from the beginning, but then everything became a bit more difficult than she had imagined.



Photo: Eva Rendl

"I have got new ideas, which we've started to apply in the business. We've also got help with working out a functioning structure."

What Suzana primarily needed was help with structuring the work. Now she's got it organised with, amongst other things, more effective meetings and long-term planning. Suzana also thinks it's important that the personal chemistry works – and it did with Micael as mentor.

Nathalie

Nathalie is studying at Malmö högskola. As project work, she and a colleague developed an award-winning business idea. The business will build a website for the Öresund region.

Nathalie and Micael have discussed the outline business plan, potential customers, content and layout of the webpage. They've also talked about legal issues. Important doors have opened for Nathalie. Now she is in the start-up phase, publishing the website.

"Through my mentor, I've reached a large and valuable network. He's introduced me to lots of important people. He really is the right man for the mentoring task!"



Photo: Niklas Jonsson

A multi-cultural meeting place for economic growth

The Organisation for International Women in Malmö, IKF, is independent of religion and politics, and works with women of all nationalities. All the organisation's activities are built on the fundamental democratic values of integration, equality and the prevention of racism and oppression.

IKF acts as a meeting place and a centre for information, education, employment and growth. We start processes that aim to increase economic growth. The organisation is in a process of continuous development, and works on both local and international levels.

The project Men's Mentorship is run by IKF and funded by IKF, Nutek and the European Regional Development Fund.



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Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth

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