



D04.4 - Arqus Alumni Mentorship

Handbook and Guide

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D04.4 – Arqus Alumni Mentorship Handbook and Guide

INTRODUCTION

The Arqus Alliance is a strategic partnership between nine European universities aimed at enhancing academic excellence, mobility, and societal engagement. The current member universities of the [Arqus Alliance](#) are: the [University of Granada](#), the [University of Graz](#), the [Leipzig University](#), the [University of Lyon 1](#), [Maynooth University](#), the [University of Minho](#), the [University of Padua](#), [Vilnius University](#) and the [University of Wrocław](#).

As part of its commitment to fostering lifelong learning and professional development, the Arqus Alliance, through its Arqus Student Agora, is launching the Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme.

The Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme is an online programme that connects Arqus alumni, regardless of their field of study or current profession, with current students and recent graduates to provide mentorship, career guidance, and networking opportunities. The programme aims at supporting students in work-integrated learning and in transition to the world of work in transnational contexts.

Alumni who sign up to become mentors are expected to commit to a minimum of five months of mentoring, during which they will meet at least once a month with their mentee, provide feedback and advice on career-related topics, and share their professional network. The alumni will establish and maintain a positive and productive relationship with their mentee, setting clear expectations, and providing regular feedback and support throughout the mentoring period, empowering and inspiring the mentee to achieve their full potential and succeed in their chosen field.

The Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme is a unique opportunity for Arqus alumni to support the next generation of professionals. The program will serve as a vehicle for promoting Arqus's core values of academic excellence, mobility, and societal engagement by providing mentees with valuable insights and guidance to help them achieve their personal and professional goals. The aim is to provide the mentees with personalised guidance, advice, and support, developing skills, and making informed decisions about the Alliance.

This handbook is designed to provide guidance and resources for both mentors and mentees participating in the Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme. It includes information on the program's goals, expectations, and benefits, as well as practical tips on how to establish and maintain a successful mentorship relationship.

Whether you are an Arqus alumni looking to share your expertise and knowledge, a current student or recent graduate in one of the Arqus universities, seeking guidance and support as you navigate your career path, this handbook is a valuable resource for making the most of your participation in the Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme.

WHAT IS THE STUDENT AGORA

The Arqus Student Agora aims at promoting student participation and enhancing student engagement at Alliance level, enhancing the students' Arqus experience through student-led creative projects, accelerating students' personal and professional development, enhancing Arqus student services.

Arqus Student Agora has a very unique feature. Every university forms a group of “student contributors” that meet and design, together with the central team, the student-centred programmes included in the WP4. The contribution does not stop at the moment of implementation, but rather goes beyond the process and implies the yearly monitoring and updates of the deliverables

PART I MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK

DEFINITIONS

An Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme mentor is an Arqus alumni who volunteers to guide and support a mentee in their career development. Mentors are alumni of one of the Arqus Alliance universities, who have some experience and expertise in their field. Mentors are expected to have a passion for mentoring and a commitment to supporting their mentee's growth and development – they should be willing to share their experience, expertise, and knowledge, provide guidance and feedback, and act as a sounding board for their mentee's ideas and goals.

The mentor's role is:

- to help their mentee develop skills, expand their networks, and achieve their career goals.
- to provide guidance and advice based on their own professional experience and knowledge.

The mentor should be a good listener, able to provide constructive feedback.

The mentor's role is to support and encourage their mentee as they navigate the early stages of their career and help them achieve their goals. Mentors are expected to commit to a certain amount of time and availability during the entire duration of the programme and adhere to the programme's guidelines and code of conduct.

To make the process simpler, they are matched with a mentee who shares similar professional interests and goals.

An Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme mentee is a current student or recent graduate (up to one year) of one of the Arqus Alliance universities who seeks guidance and support in their career development. Mentees should have an idea of their career goals and aspirations and a willingness to learn and grow professionally. Mentees are selected based on their academic and professional achievements, interests, and goals. They are matched with a mentor who has similar professional interests and experience.

Mentees are expected to:

- be committed to their personal and professional development and to actively engage in the mentoring relationship.
- set goals for themselves and work collaboratively with their mentor to achieve them.

Mentees should be open to feedback and guidance, take initiative in seeking opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge, and adhere to the Programme guidelines and code of conduct.

GUIDANCE

- **Guidance for mentors**

Establish goals. Before meeting with your mentee, establish clear goals and objectives for the mentorship relationship. This will help you in guiding your conversations and ensure that you are providing valuable support and guidance.

Develop a plan. Work with your mentee to develop a plan for achieving their goals. This may include identifying potential job opportunities, building a professional network, or developing specific skills.

Be available. Make yourself available to your mentee for regular meetings and communication.

Provide feedback. Offer constructive feedback and guidance to your mentee, but also be sure to recognize their accomplishments and strengths.

Share your experiences. Share your own career experiences and lessons learned with your mentee. This can help them gain a better understanding of different career paths and industries.

Keep it confidential. Maintain confidentiality and respect your mentee's privacy. Do not share personal or sensitive information with others without their permission.

Be a role model. Lead by example and serve as a positive role model for your mentee. Demonstrate professionalism, ethics, and integrity in all your interactions.

- **Guidance for mentees**

Set goals. Set clear and specific goals for what you hope to achieve through the Mentorship Programme. It will help you to guide your conversations with your mentor and ensure that you are making progress towards your career aspirations.

Be proactive. Take initiative and be proactive in reaching out to your mentor. Schedule regular meetings and follow up on action items and feedback.

Listen and learn and be open-minded. Listen carefully to your mentor's advice and feedback and be open to learning from their experiences and perspectives. Sometimes their perspectives can be different from yours, take it as a chance to learn and discuss together.

Be respectful. Respect your mentor's time and expertise and be courteous in your communications and interactions.

Communicate effectively. Communicate your goals, needs, and concerns clearly and honestly with your mentor. Be open to feedback and willing to make changes based on their recommendations.

Take responsibility. Take responsibility for your own career development and be willing to put in the work and effort required to achieve your goals.

Express gratitude. Express gratitude and appreciation to your mentor for their time, guidance, and support throughout the Mentorship Programme.

BENEFITS

The Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme provides a valuable opportunity for both mentors and mentees to enhance their professional development, expand their network, and contribute to the broader Arqus Alliance community.

The benefits that the Mentorship Programme offers for both mentors and mentees include:

- **Professional development.** The Programme provides an opportunity for mentees to receive guidance and support from alumni mentors, helping them to develop their skills and knowledge, understand their future direction and achieve their goals. Mentors will also benefit from the programme, by having the possibility to connect and exchange ideas with other alumni mentors, asking for support and resources to the programme coordinators. This experience will be eventually added by both mentees and mentors in their professional curriculum.
- **Networking.** Mentees and mentors will have the opportunity to expand their network through the programme events and activities, which can lead to new career opportunities and connections.
- **Possibility to apply for funds, conferences and events.** Both mentees and mentors will have access to a broad range of events displayed on the Arqus website and newsletter regularly.
- **Career advancement.** The Programme can help both mentees and mentors gain the skills and knowledge needed to advance in their career, such as leadership, communication, and networking skills. The skills will be transferred through a series of facilitation workshops led by soft skills development experts.
- **Personal growth.** Mentees receive personalised feedback and advice from their mentor, helping them to identify and address areas for growth and development. Both mentees and mentors will receive feedback from facilitators during the soft skills development sessions.
- **Alumni engagement.** The Programme fosters engagement and connection among alumni of the Arqus Alliance universities, creating a community of professionals who can support and learn from each other.
- **Access to resources.** Both mentees and mentors will have access to a range of free soft skills building materials and training, including an expert-led training session, free access to courses offered by local universities.

- **Recognition.** Both mentors and mentees will be recognized for their contribution to the Programme and the broader Arqus Alliance community through a programme certificate and a recommendation letter upon request.
- **Publishing opportunity.** The pair will be offered the possibility to do a joint online publication on the Arqus website.

Both mentees and mentors will have the opportunity to know their alma mater and the Arqus Alliance from a different perspective.

RESOURCES

A continuously updating list of free career development resources that mentors and mentees of the Arqus Alliance Alumni Mentorship Programme can use to support their professional growth will be provided to the Programmes's participants.

Please note that all the available opportunities will be published on the Arqus Alliance's website: <https://arqus-alliance.eu/our-communities/arqus-student-agera/>.

- **Access to Arqus updates.** Participants will be able to know first-hand information directly from the Arqus website or by subscribing to the monthly newsletter.
- **Access to Arqus resources.** Participants can request access to the materials produced within all the Alliance actions and connect with the authors in case they need further information.
- **Skill-Building facilitation training.** In the initial phase of the Programme at least three training sessions will be organised with the objective to develop soft skills. Besides, in the following editions, an online course focusing on the training will be available online to all the participants. An open badge will be released after the course completion.
- **Online Networking Events.** Participants will have the possibility to attend the virtual career fairs of the universities, but also other career fairs they might be interested in. This way they will connect with other professionals in their field and learn about job opportunities.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive environment for all participants. As such, all mentors and mentees are expected to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

Respect and professionalism. Mentors and mentees should respect each other's backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives and behave professionally and respectfully towards each other.

Confidentiality. Mentors and mentees are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect each other's privacy. Any personal or sensitive information shared during the mentorship relationship should be kept confidential.

Communication. Mentors and mentees should communicate regularly and effectively with each other. Any changes in the mentorship relationship (e.g. scheduling conflicts) should be communicated promptly.

Commitment. Mentors and mentees are expected to commit to the Mentorship Programme for the duration of the program. Any changes to the level of commitment should be communicated promptly to the Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme coordinators.

Feedback. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to provide constructive feedback to each other throughout the mentorship relationship. Any concerns or issues should be raised with the Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme coordinators.

PART II PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

OBJECTIVES

- To provide a platform for Arqus alumni and to support the personal and professional growth of current students and recent graduates.
- To facilitate meaningful connections and networking opportunities between alumni, and students or recent graduates.
- To offer guidance and support for participants to achieve their career goals, develop new skills, and enhance their personal and professional growth.
- To create a community of like-minded individuals who can share their experiences, knowledge, and skills.
- To enhance the cooperation between Arqus partner universities and facilitate the mobility of students, graduates and young professionals among them.

ELIGIBILITY

- **Eligibility for mentees:**

The Mentorship Programme is open to all current students and recent graduates (up to one year) of Arqus partner universities.

To be eligible, mentees should have an interest in the Arqus Alliance, career orientation and be willing to actively engage in the programme.

Mentees should be willing to commit to the programme's duration, attend all required meetings, and complete any necessary tasks or assignments.

A positive attitude towards learning, personal growth and willingness to accept feedback and guidance from mentors is strongly encouraged.

Minimum Qualifications, Skills, and Experience:

There are no specific academic qualifications or degree requirements to participate in the Mentorship Programme. However, participants should have a demonstrated commitment to Arqus activities as well as to personal and professional growth. Participants should possess good communication and interpersonal skills and be able to build relationships with their mentor and other participants. Participants should have a willingness to learn and take initiative in pursuing their career goals.

Specific Requirements:

- English language (B2 proficiency).

Cross-university forms of mentorship are also available and encouraged.

- **Eligibility for mentors:**

To be eligible, mentors must be alumni of one of the Arqus activities (mobility, summer school, Arqus Café, etc.) held in all partner universities.

Mentors must have a minimum of one year experience in their field of expertise and be willing to share their knowledge and experience with their mentees.

Mentors must be available to meet with their mentees regularly (at least once a month) throughout the duration of the program. It is important that mentors have good communication skills to effectively mentor and guide their mentees. The commitment to the Mentorship Programme and willingness to invest time and effort to help the mentees achieve their career goals is fundamental.

Lastly, mentors are required to have a positive and constructive attitude towards mentees and support them in achieving their goals and aspirations. They are not meant to provide any psychological advice, however a certain ability to interact, awareness about gender and diversity issues as well as the ability to handle intercultural situations are important assets; the Programme values a positive attitude and support for the mentees' goals and aspirations.

MATCHING

The mentor-mentee match is critical to the Mentorship Programme's success. Mentorship Programme coordinators are very important in this process. If they can match two individuals who are a good fit, the rest should be an enriching experience.

Description of the matching process

The Mentorship Programme coordinators will consider a variety of factors traced through the application form, when matching mentors and mentees. These will include stated preferences and goals, skills, experience, area of interest, career goals, but also preferred language of communication. The coordinators will consider the mentors' areas of expertise and experience and match them with mentees who have similar interests and career goals.

The coordinators will then communicate with mentors and mentees to introduce them and facilitate their initial meeting where they can discuss their goals for the programme. A written agreement will be provided for the matched tandem. The written agreement will include expectations and goals of the mentee but also who is responsible to set up the meetings. After the initial meeting, the coordinators will ask both the mentor and mentee for feedback on the pairing and make any necessary adjustments to ensure a successful match.

PAIRING PROCESS

Mentors and mentees will be encouraged to communicate regularly throughout the programme, via means of remote communication.

The Mentorship Programme coordinators will provide support and guidance to participants throughout the programme, offering suggestions for communication and facilitating conversations, when necessary. The coordinators will also provide regular opportunities for feedback from both mentors and mentees to ensure that the programme is meeting their needs and goals. The Mentorship Programme coordinators will be available to provide additional support to participants throughout the programme. The coordinators will offer training or resources to help participants develop new skills or knowledge. It is important to note that the matching process may take more than four weeks, and participants should be patient and open to feedback and suggestions from the coordinators to ensure a successful match. The success of the Mentorship Programme relies on the commitment and engagement of both mentors and mentees.

TIME COMMITMENT

The Mentorship Programme requires a minimum set time commitment from both mentors and mentees to ensure a successful and meaningful experience. Participants should expect to commit to the programme for at least five months. On the first meeting, mentees should state what their objectives are, so that mentors may adjust accordingly, regarding frequency of the meetings and duration of their mentor-mentee relationship. Mentors and mentees will be expected to meet regularly throughout the programme, at least once every four weeks, to discuss progress, goals, and any challenges or issues that may arise. In addition to regular meetings, mentees may also be required to complete additional assignments or tasks as part of the programme. Likewise, mentors should invest some time into facilitating, monitoring and reviewing the tasks performed by their mentee and passing on the results to the coordinators. Besides the mentor-mentee meeting and the coordination meetings, participants shall attend the training at the start of the programme and shall prepare individually for each session. It is important that participants are aware of the time commitment required before they apply to the Mentorship Programme. This will ensure that they are able to commit the necessary time and energy to the programme to get the most out of the experience. The Mentorship Programme coordinators will provide guidance and support during the first month of the programme to help participants manage their time and schedule meetings effectively. In addition, they will organise a midterm check meeting and a final assessment meeting and will have a supervising role throughout the whole programme.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Mentors and mentees are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect each other's privacy. All discussions and interactions between mentors and mentees should remain confidential, unless explicitly agreed upon otherwise. Any personal or sensitive information shared during the mentorship relationship should be kept confidential. An agreement between the parts will be signed digitally during the first meeting.

PROFESSIONALISM

All participants in the Mentorship Programme are expected to behave professionally and with respect towards each other.

Mentors and mentees should communicate clearly and regularly, responding promptly to messages and scheduling meetings in a timely manner. They are expected to meet at least once per month. Participants should set clear boundaries and expectations at the outset of the mentorship relationship. Mentors should provide guidance and support to mentees without overstepping professional boundaries, such as by offering personal advice or attempting to influence career decisions. Mentees should be receptive to feedback and open to learning, actively seeking out opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge.

Any concerns or issues that arise during the Mentorship Programme should be addressed promptly and professionally by all parties involved, with the support of the Mentorship Programme coordinators, if necessary.

Maintaining a professional and respectful attitude throughout the Mentorship Programme, will help participants build strong and meaningful relationships that can benefit them both personally and professionally.

EVALUATION

The Mentorship Programme coordinators will evaluate the success of the programme based on several criteria, including mentor and mentee satisfaction report, skills development, and networking. The Mentorship Programme coordinators will use surveys, interviews, or other methods to gather feedback from participants on the effectiveness of the programme.

The evaluation process will enable the Mentorship Programme coordinators to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in the programme. This will benefit future participants, with the ultimate goal of providing a more effective and valuable experience for all participants.

If you have any inquiries, reach the Arqus Student Agora at student-agera@arqus-alliance.eu

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