



LIFE CHANGING

VACRO Women's Mentoring Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Where is the training, and what does the training cover?

A. The training is held at the VACRO office Level 1, 116 Hardware St Melbourne. It is convened by Vi Lotter, who is a qualified trainer, and uses adult learning principles.

Over the three days, it covers ten modules including:

- Barriers to Reintegration
- Mental Health
- Addictive Behaviour
- The Strength-Based Approach and Motivational Interviewing

Q. What sort of a time commitment is required?

A. We ask that mentors commit a minimum of twelve months to the program.

- When matched, you will meet with your participant either weekly or fortnightly, depending both of your needs and schedules.
- It is also required that you attend group meetings on a monthly basis. These are held at both 10.30am and 6pm on the third Thursday of every month in the CBD.

Q. What kinds of things would I do with my participant?

A. This can be decided between you and your participant, based on your interests. Free or low cost activities might include:

- Having coffee
- Bargain hunting in op-shops
- Brushing up on your computer skills at your local library
- Attending a class at your local neighbourhood house
- Navigating public transport
- Going for walks.

Q. How long before I'm matched?

A. This can depend on a number of factors:

- Where you live / work / study – we don't want you to have to travel too far to mentor, so will work with you on where an appropriate location that is mutually convenient but allows for you each to have your space (ie not next door!)
- Your age, interests, and skills – where possible, we match based on the things each participant tells us they want in a mentor.
- It can take anywhere from the day you complete training, to several months.



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Q. If we go out for coffee, who pays?

A. Generally, you and your participant each get your own coffee.

- For initial meetings and review appointments, VACRO will cover the cost of coffees.
- Occasionally, the program receives grants which mean there is a small amount that can be spent between each pair- though there are better uses for this than coffee!

Q. How are mentors supported?

A. Mentors have access to:

- Debriefing with program staff
- Regular peer support
- VACRO's Employee Assistance Program.

Q. Am I too old / too young to be a mentor?

A. The VACRO Women's Mentoring Program requires volunteers to be eighteen years or older.

- If you are under the age of 25, it *may* take several months before we find a participant to match with you, as many of our participants want a mentor to be around their age or older. If you are under eighteen, or you're under 25 and don't want to have to wait to be matched with a participant, we can point you in the direction of volunteering opportunities elsewhere.
- So long as you have the capacity to understand and work within the boundaries of the VACRO Women's Mentoring Program, you are not too old to mentor.

Q. I have a criminal record. Am I able to be a mentor with VACRO?

A. Evidence of a criminal record will be dealt with sympathetically and confidentially.

Before the volunteer role is formally offered to the applicant, it must be approved by the CEO of VACRO and Department of Justice who fund the VACRO Women's Mentoring Program.

Q. Is there a mentoring program for men?

A. Not yet, but we're working on it! Please feel free to get in touch with us, and we can notify you in the future about men's mentoring opportunities.