IDF NYC Mentorship FAQ

1. ## What is IDF's commitment to diversity and inclusion within the mentorship program?
    - **"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."**
      - Martin Luther King Jr.

    - The system is broken and needs work; there is systemic racism within our society and within our own industry. Through partnerships, digital and local events, shared content and community outreach, our local leaders are committed to continue to use our platform to promote people of all colors and creeds. We hope that in some small way we are helping to close the gap by fostering a diverse community where we openly exchange ideas, speak freely and celebrate each others' differences and backgrounds.

2. ## Do I have to live in the five boroughs of NYC to participate in the mentorship program?
    - We do our best to prioritize matching mentors/mentees who are geographically located within the five boroughs of New York City as we are a local group.
    - As many of us are currently connecting in remote environments due to the global pandemic, our leadership team will do our best to make as many matches as possible.
    - If that means we link a mentee in NYC with a mentor in another city/time zone, we'll do it, and vise versa, so long as the mentor/mentee pair desire to participate at a distance.

3. ## How are mentors and mentees paired?
    - Our leadership team utilizes our Mentorship Opt-In form data filled out by mentees and mentors to collectively match participants based on their interests and preferences. The more detail a mentee/mentor provides, the better our leadership team can match them with an appropriate mentor/mentee.
    - We do our very best to recruit an ample number of mentors to ensure that everyone gets matched. That said, we can't guarantee that everyone who fills out

the form will be matched. It all depends on the number of people who sign up and their areas of expertise/interest.

4. Who will I be mentoring?
   ○ Our previous mentees have been students and career changers who are studying, working professionally, and/or interning in the specializations of UX design, UX research, interaction design, service design, product management, visual design, UI design, design thinking and front end development.
   ○ We prioritize matching mentees and mentors located in the five boroughs of New York, with some exceptions when mentors/mentees express openness to being paired with mentors in different time zones.

5. How long does the program run?
   ○ Six months
   ○ Cohort 1 starts in January
   ○ Cohort 2 starts in June

6. Will the personal and professional information I share with the Mentor/Mentee be kept confidential?
   ○ We recommend that you both fill out and sign a Mentorship Agreement (we provide a template for this in our Mentorship Guidelines doc) that indicates what you both are comfortable sharing and/or keeping confidential with each other.

7. How much time do we expect mentees and mentors to contribute?
   ○ This is up to the paired individuals. We recommend a minimum of one meeting a month for one hour, but pairs have elected to meet more frequently, digitally and in person according to their own desires and availability. We recommend one meeting every two weeks to help cement mentee progress and goal setting.

8. Why mentor through the IDF NYC Mentorship Program?
   ○ We want our industry to have a powerhouse of mentoring opportunities to raise the bar for everyone involved. We've taken it upon ourselves to create an ecosystem of mentorship because we saw too many mentees are operating without mentors. Honestly, we think anyone who can mentor, should mentor, through any program. We realize there are other programs running. We think

that's great! We want to support and collaborate with them and we plan to make our methods and successes available to other programs as we learn and grow.

9. What kind of support does the IDF NYC leadership team provide as a framework?
   - Mentorship Guidelines
   - Mentorship Operating Agreement template
   - Pre-Cohort Webinars on *How to be a Great Mentor/Mentee*
   - Post-Cohort meetups to gather feedback on successes and areas for improvement. *The Feedback Sessions*
   - Retrospective write ups on what we've learned from past cohorts and what we plan to improve.
   - In person events during cohorts, when we are not experiencing events like global pandemics that put our health, safety and wellbeing in jeopardy.

10. Do I have to join the Interaction Design Foundation to become a mentee or mentor?
    - **No**! Our mentorship program is intended to support our five boroughs community, and our extended network of professionals around the country, and abroad.
    - An IDF membership gives you access to the available educational content that IDF has created for the global community of interaction design.
    - Local IDF groups all over the country support the educational experience by facilitating community around the educational experience.

11. Does my IDF membership fund my local leadership team to run the Mentorship Program?
    - Nope. Our leadership team is made up of amazing volunteers who stand beside the idea that education should be affordable, accessible, and of great quality. We support the educational mission of IDF with our time and our energy.

12. How much experience do I need to be a mentor?
    - We think anyone can be a mentor, especially since reverse mentorship has been on the rise. Our mentorship program is loosely based on the nurturing and friendship models, rather than a hierarchical model reliant upon age and seniority.

- ○ We also ask our mentors and mentees what kind of a pairing they are looking for to pair individuals as best we can.
- ○ We recommend you participate in any mentorship program as a mentee first, before volunteering to be a mentor for our program. *That said, if you have many years of experience in the field and have managed others previously in a professional capacity, you're probably more than qualified to mentor. Reach out to our leadership team if you're on the fence in our [Slack Workspace](#), or by email.

13. I just learned about the field of Interaction Design. I'm thinking about transitioning careers. Should I apply for the mentorship program?
   - ○ We think so. Coming from different professional backgrounds, we all have transferable skills and having a mentor might be a way to help you identify them and define your roadmap.
   - ○ If you just discovered our field yesterday, we would definitely suggest you check out some educational opportunities first to see if you are interested in the subject matter.
   - ○ If you've done that work and you're interested, it never hurts to apply and tell us what you've done so far so we can pair you with a mentor appropriate to your level of experience.

14. I just graduated from college during the Covid-19 outbreak, and I'm looking for my first professional job. Where can I find help?
   - ○ Our mentors can definitely help you. Apply!
   - ○ This is a crazy time to be applying for jobs and having someone in your corner to be your cheerleader through the process is a smart move.
   - ○ Also join our [Slack Workspace](#) and connect with other folks there, especially our #jobs channel.

15. Where does the mentorship program take place?
   - ○ During Covid-19 our mentorship program is remote, and digital.
   - ○ When we can safely gather and not endanger the health, safety and welfare of our participants we will meet in person, in NYC again from time to time.
   - ○ Our leadership team is based in New York City (typically) and we run our operations from all five boroughs.

16. Who runs the mentorship program?
    ○ Every member of the NYC IDF local group leadership team has a hand in our mentorship program.

17. How can I get involved and support the mentorship program?
    ○ Become a mentee so you can become a mentor.
    ○ Sign up to be a mentor
    ○ Send our Mentorship Opt-In form to anyone you know who might benefit from being involved in our program. The most current link is usually posted in our Slack Workspace
    ○ Sign up to help out our leadership team with individual projects here and/or express your interest in a longer term commitment.

18. I still have questions. Who can I contact?
    ○ Email our Support and Programs Lead at tenaya.idf@gmail.com

19. Where do I go for more information?
    ○ To connect with our NYC Interaction Design Foundation group go to https://www.interaction-design.org/local-group/north-america/united-states/nyc
    ○ DM any of our local NYC leaders in our Slack Workspace
    ○ Email our Support and Programs Lead at tenaya.idf@gmail.com

20. As more and more people become vaccinated, will we meet in person or digitally with our mentor/mentee?
    ○ We recommend you and your mentor/mentee talk about what you both are comfortable doing upfront.
    ○ Due to Covid-19 our 2020 and 2021 cohorts have been meeting digitally over Zoom and phone calls.
    ○ Prior to Covid-19 mentors and mentees did meet in person, and we recommend this when it is safe to do so.

21. What are the Start and End dates for each Cohort?
    ○ We run two cohorts per year, running typically six months from start to finish.
    ○ Most years we start in January and June, and end in June and December.
    ○ The best place to stay up to date is our Slack Workspace #mentorship channel.

○ The chart below also outlines our typical important dates (and can get a little funny if things like Covid-19 or insurrection take place). 🙄

Important Dates	Start	End
Cohort 1	January 20th	June 20th
Cohort 2	June 20th	Dec 20th