

## **Guiding Lights Circle**

### **IESNYC Mentorship Program Guidelines**

#### **2026–2027 Program Cycle**

##### **Objective**

The IESNYC Guiding Lights Circle Mentorship Program aims to support and guide the next generation of lighting professionals through mentorship, connection, learning, and professional development within the lighting community.

The program is designed to create meaningful mentor-mentee relationships that encourage open conversation, industry insight, personal growth, and long-term professional connection.

For mentees, the program provides access to guidance, perspective, and support as they navigate the early stages of their careers. For mentors, the program offers an opportunity to give back, share experience, strengthen leadership skills, and help support the continued growth of the lighting community.

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##### **Program Duration**

The 2026–2027 mentorship program will run for nine months, beginning in September 2026 and concluding in June 2027.

Applications will open on July 6, 2026.

The application deadline is August 21, 2026.

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##### **Program Structure**

###### **1. Monthly One-on-One Meetings**

Mentors and mentees are expected to meet at least once per month throughout the program.

In-person meetings are strongly preferred, as the program is built around meaningful connection, conversation, and relationship building. Meeting times and locations should be scheduled at mutually convenient times by the mentor and mentee.

Participants are encouraged to come prepared with topics, questions, goals, or areas of discussion to help guide each monthly conversation.

## **2. Group Workshops and Educational Programming**

Group workshops and educational programs may be offered throughout the cycle to support professional development, industry awareness, and personal growth.

Topics may include career development, communication, leadership, networking, industry pathways, personal branding, or other subjects relevant to emerging professionals in the lighting community.

Participation in group programs is strongly encouraged, as these sessions provide additional opportunities to learn, connect, and engage with the broader mentorship community.

## **3. Networking Events**

Networking events may be organized throughout the program to provide additional opportunities for mentors, mentees, alumni, committee members, and industry professionals to connect.

Mentee alumni from prior program cycles may be invited to participate in select networking events to share their experiences, offer perspective, and add another layer of connection and support for new mentees.

Participants are encouraged to attend these events to build relationships within the IESNYC and lighting communities.

## **4. Committee Support**

The Mentorship Committee will provide support throughout the program cycle.

Committee members will check in with participants periodically to help support the mentor-mentee relationship, encourage communication, and provide guidance where needed.

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## **Eligibility Criteria**

### **Mentors**

Mentors must meet the following criteria:

- Must have a minimum of five years of professional experience in the lighting industry.
- Must be an IESNYC member.

- Should have a willingness to share knowledge, perspective, and professional experience.
- Should be open to supporting mentees through thoughtful conversation, guidance, and encouragement.
- Should be committed to monthly participation throughout the program cycle.

Returning mentors are welcome to apply and participate in the next cycle.

## **Mentees**

Mentees must meet the following criteria:

- Must be an emerging professional in the lighting industry.
- Should have five years or less of professional experience.
- Should demonstrate a commitment to professional growth, learning, and active participation.
- Should be open to guidance, conversation, reflection, and new perspectives.
- Should be committed to monthly participation throughout the program cycle.

New mentee applicants are encouraged to apply.

Returning mentees from prior program cycles are not eligible to apply for the 2026–2027 cycle.

Current full-time students are not eligible for this program cycle. Students are encouraged to apply after graduation or once they have entered the professional lighting community.

Applications are welcome from emerging professionals across our NYC lighting community, including lighting designers, manufacturers, manufacturer’s representatives, distributors, and others working within the industry.

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## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Mentors**

Mentors are expected to:

- Provide guidance, share industry knowledge, and offer professional perspective.

- Support mentees as they explore career goals, challenges, opportunities, and next steps.
- Be available for monthly meetings throughout the program cycle.
- Listen thoughtfully and help create a trusted space for open conversation.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any personal or professional information shared by the mentee.
- Communicate clearly and respectfully with their mentee.
- Participate in group programs and networking opportunities when available.

## **Mentees**

Mentees are expected to:

- Take an active role in the mentorship process.
- Help schedule monthly meetings and communicate clearly with their mentor.
- Come prepared with questions, topics, goals, or areas they would like to explore.
- Be open to guidance, feedback, and new perspectives.
- Respect the mentor's time, experience, and commitment.
- Maintain professionalism throughout the program.
- Participate in group programs and networking opportunities when available.

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## **Application Process**

### **1. Review the Program Guidelines**

Applicants should review the program guidelines to understand the expectations, time commitment, eligibility criteria, and responsibilities required for participation.

### **2. Complete the Application Form**

Applicants must complete the appropriate mentor or mentee application form and provide information about their background, experience, interests, goals, and availability.

Applications open on July 6, 2026.

Applications must be submitted by August 21, 2026.

### **3. Selection Process**

Applications will be reviewed by the Mentorship Committee.

Selection will be based on eligibility, commitment to participation, alignment of mentor expertise with mentee goals, availability, and the committee's ability to create thoughtful and meaningful pairings.

Submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance into the program.

### **4. Notification of Acceptance**

Applicants will be notified of their acceptance status in early September 2026.

Accepted participants will receive additional program details, including next steps, expectations, and information regarding the program kickoff.

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## **Evaluation and Program Review**

### **Mid-Program Review**

A mid-program review may be conducted to assess the progress of the mentorship relationships and overall program experience.

Input from both mentors and mentees will help the committee identify what is working well and where additional support may be helpful.

### **End-of-Program Review**

At the conclusion of the program, participants may be asked to complete a final program review.

This input will help the Mentorship Committee continue to strengthen and improve the program for future cycles.

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## **Contact Information**

For questions or additional information about the IESNYC Guiding Lights Circle Mentorship Program, please contact:

[mentorship@iesnyc.org](mailto:mentorship@iesnyc.org)