

**Belong**



Co-funded by  
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**Jobbsteget Framåt**

# Participant Guide

Belong promotes integration and inclusion in the labor market by running the project Jobbsteget Framåt, which is co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

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# 1 Introduction and Overview

Welcome to our mentor program for immigrants – we are thrilled you want to participate! We hope you learn a lot and, of course, have fun!

You may have questions about the program and what you and your mentor should do together. That's why we created this guide:

1. Read the entire guide at the start of the program.
2. Revisit specific sections as needed.
- 3. Tip:** Ask your mentor for help if you find parts of the guide difficult to read.

The goal of the mentor program is to help newcomers in Sweden take steps toward the labor market. Many participants even find jobs, according to results! We also hope that you will get to know each other and learn new things from one another. Together, you also contribute to improving integration in Sweden!

Mentorship within Belong is entirely voluntary. However, a successful mentorship requires time and commitment from both of you.

We are here to support you throughout the program. If you have questions or want more exercise suggestions, feel free to email or call us – contact information is on our website.



## Our Best Tips

- Try to meet more frequently at the start of the program.
- Discuss expectations early and set shared goals.
- Always schedule the next meeting during your current meeting – set time and place immediately.
- Meet regularly and ensure no more than five weeks pass between meetings.
- Take notes and follow up on what you discussed.
- Prepare for meetings by thinking about what you need help with.
- Be clear about the support you need – it's easier to get help that way.
- Do what you agree on between meetings.
- Remember: a mentor does not get you a job, but can provide valuable guidance toward employment.
- Don't forget to have fun together!
- Contact us if you need support or have questions.
- Send photos from your meetings and a few lines about what you did to [info@belong.se](mailto:info@belong.se).

## 1.1

### Program Structure

The mentor program lasts approximately 7 months, with different phases and activities.

#### 1. Interview and Matching

All participants are interviewed before joining. Based on the interviews, mentor pairs are matched. Your goals as a participant and your mentor's expertise are most important, but personality and special preferences also play a role.

#### 2. Kickoff

The program begins with a start meeting for all participants. You will learn about the program and meet your mentor for the first time!

#### 3. Mentorship in Action

The key part of the program is the meetings with your mentor. You meet at least once a month and choose the time and place. Plan what you need help with in advance. Decide together what to focus on. Check the "Exercises and Conversation Guide" for ideas.

#### 4. Program Conclusion

After 7 months, the program concludes with a final gathering to celebrate your achievements and discuss what comes next.





## 1.2



### **Structure of a Meeting**

You and your mentor decide what works best, but here's a suggested structure:

#### **Start with Updates**

Discuss what has happened since your last meeting. Review notes from the previous meeting and see if plans were completed.

#### **Focus of the Meeting**

Discuss what you need help with today. Cover a specific topic, do a short exercise, or ask important questions.

#### **Wrap up and Plan Next Steps**

Reflect on conclusions and decide what to do before the next meeting. Schedule the next meeting and add it to your calendar.

## 2. Your Role

As a participant, it is important that you think for yourself about what help you need, instead of just waiting for your mentor to teach you. You are responsible for contacting your mentor when you need support.

This section explains what is expected of you as a participant in the mentor program.

### **Mentor Does Not Provide Jobs**

Your mentor will not secure a job for you. There is no guarantee of employment or internships. However, your mentor can share knowledge and experience about working in Sweden. Make the most of this opportunity!

### **Prepare for Meetings**

Think about what help you need before each meeting. Check the guide for exercises that might help.

### **Ask for Help and Take Initiative**

Clearly communicate your needs to your mentor. They can only help when you ask. Take the initiative in arranging meetings and planning activities.

## 3. Exercises and Conversation Guide

### 3.1

#### Getting to Know Each Other

It's important and enjoyable to get to know each other. Take turns asking the following questions at your first meeting:

- Who are you and where do you come from?
- Your professional background: current or previous jobs?
- Hobbies or talents unrelated to work.
- Why did you join the mentor program?
- Your expectations for the program.
- When, where, and how often do you want to meet?
- Are there any topics to avoid?



## 3.2

### Focus in the Program

#### Your Opportunities

Discuss your career options and paths in the industry:

- Describe a job that you, as a participant, could do today and a job you would like to do in the future. Discuss what the participant needs to do to reach their goal.
- Does the mentor have suggestions for other professional roles that could be relevant for the participant today or as steps toward future goals?
- What skills and experiences are important for those roles?
- How can the necessary experience be gained? Are there opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, or trainee programs? Courses or vocational training?

#### Focus Overview Exercise

You can find the Focus Overview exercise here.

Complete it together with your mentor to decide which areas you will focus on during the mentor program, for example, writing a CV or practicing for job interviews. This exercise is recommended to do early in the program.

Feel free to set goals you want to achieve during the mentor program based on what you come up with in this exercise. You can use the next exercise to help with this!

#### Set Goals for Mentorship

Use our template to set goals and create a career plan.

With shared goals in the mentor program, you ensure that you focus on the most important tasks.

### 3.3

## Industry and Job Market

Jobs in the same industry can look different in different countries. That is why it is useful to discuss what the labor market in your industry looks like in Sweden.

Talk about the following questions:

- Where is the participant's geographic job market?
- In which industries or sectors is the participant's market found? What jobs, titles, or roles could your next position have?
- How are jobs in the industry advertised? Through ads, newspapers, job websites, contacts, or as a result of internships? Which job websites are important to follow?
- Which staffing agencies are specifically focused on the industry?
- How does one get a foot in the door in the industry? How would the mentor do it if they were starting in the industry today?
- How is the industry doing overall right now? Is it growing or downsizing? Are there jobs available or an excess of skills?
- Who are the key employers in the industry? Make a list of 10 potential and interesting employers. What makes these employers interesting? What experience is useful to bring to these companies?
- What opportunities for entrepreneurship exist in the industry?
- How can language skills or international experience be useful in the work?
- What do career paths look like? Are there clear "levels"?

We also have tips on companies that may be good to apply to – [feel free to check our list of companies across different industries.](#)



### 3.4



## Workplace Visits

A workplace visit brings you closer to Swedish work culture. Can be at mentor's workplace or elsewhere. Discuss what suits both of you.

After the visit, reflect on lessons learned. Compare similarities and differences with previous workplaces.

## 3.5

### Education

Having the right education is an important part of finding a job. We have a list of different types of education and tips on how you, as someone who already has an education, can make the best use of it in Sweden.

[Read more here!](#)



## 3.6

### Applying for Jobs

Here are tips and templates for how you and your mentor can write a CV, cover letter, and create a strong LinkedIn profile.

Also feel free to discuss how you can best use your CV and cover letter to apply for jobs. You can find related questions under the section *Industri and Job Market* on page [11](#)

#### CV

**Feel free to use our CV template, which you can find here.** Base your CV on the template together with your mentor and adapt it according to your experiences. Make use of the tips your mentor gives, as your mentor knows what a CV should look like in Sweden. A general tip is that it is good to explain experiences from abroad in more detail than you might think is necessary.

#### Personligt brev

**Use our template when writing your cover letter.** It is good to adjust your cover letter for each job you apply for. Together with your mentor, you can also create a strong template to work from. Choose a position you would like to apply for and follow the steps below.

1. Go through the entire job posting and create a mind map based on the experiences and qualities the employer is looking for. This is what you should write about in your cover letter.
2. Discuss each area. What have you done that shows you meet these requirements? Write your experiences in the mind map.
3. Then, together, you can formulate the text for your cover letter.

#### LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an important platform for networking and finding jobs, more in some industries than others.

1. Create a profile – follow LinkedIn’s own tool that measures how strong your profile is.
2. Connect with each other on LinkedIn.
3. Join the mentor program’s LinkedIn group [Yrkesmentor](#) to connect with more people and get tips on jobs and job searching.
4. Set up job alerts for relevant positions.

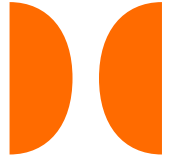
### 3.7

#### Interview

Ask your mentor to conduct a mock job interview. The mentor will ask you questions using [our practice questions](#). Discuss how it felt afterward. Which questions were hardest to answer?

Discuss what could be good answers to these questions.





### 3.8

#### **Internships**

Internships at a workplace can be a good way to gain experience and enter the Swedish labor market. Some employers post internships directly on their website, while for others you need to contact them yourself.

[Here we have collected information](#) about companies and organizations that can be good places to start looking.



### 3.9

## Workplace Social Norms

One of the most fun and at the same time most challenging topics is social norms. Work culture and social norms differ between countries, cultures, and industries. Discuss how it is in Sweden and in your home country.

- How should you behave during a job interview?
- How do people dress in your industry? What do people wear on a regular workday?
- How do you address people? Do you use the informal “you” with everyone?
- What is important to consider before, during, and after meetings?
- Can you take breaks whenever you want, for example to smoke or have coffee?
- What do people talk about during lunch or coffee breaks? Are there topics to avoid?
- How do you greet colleagues? When do you hug and when do you shake hands?
- What are the working hours like? Is overtime expected?
- When can you talk about salary at the workplace?



### 3.10

## Networking and Contacts

A larger network is helpful when looking for jobs in Sweden. We have collected tips on different organizations that [you can use to meet new people while developing yourself.](#)

You and your mentor can also discuss the following questions:

- What type of contacts are useful to you?
- Does the mentor have contacts that could be relevant? Can you schedule a joint lunch with them for your next meeting, or perhaps a connection introduction?
- Are there places or organizations that are relevant for you, such as a conference or seminar in the industry you want to work in? Where can you find information about such places and organizations?
- Does your mentor have other concrete tips that can help you, such as how to network in Sweden and what is important to consider regarding first impressions?
- Are there contacts you can provide to your mentor?
- Sometimes the most unexpected contacts are relevant, so it can be fun, for example, to share a family dinner.





### 3.11

#### **If You Get a Job**

If you get a job or internship during the program, it is good to discuss other topics. Some suggested questions to talk about include:

- What is a reasonable salary?
- How will the workplace introduction take place? Is there a staff handbook?
- How do colleagues communicate at the workplace? Mainly by email, phone, or something else?
- Is it okay to ask and talk to anyone about anything? Are there written or unwritten rules regarding this?
- What are the rules around coffee and lunch? Do colleagues go away together at specific times?
- How does a successful person behave in the organization? What behaviors and values do they have?
- What is leadership like at the workplace? How does your manager give feedback?
- How are decisions made at the workplace? What is your role?

# 4 Concluding Tips

We really hope this guide can help you during the mentor program. We also encourage you to contact us during the program – send an email or call if you need support.

[Our phone numbers and email addresses can be found here.](#)



