Pathway to Employment

Education today for change tomorrow.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Overview

From July to December 2021, Communiteer and AVI (Australian Volunteers International) in partnership ran Pathway to Employment. This was a pilot program facilitating mentoring between university students and corporate volunteers, alongside skilled volunteering.

Through our partnership with Gradwise, we also supported students living with a disability, mental, physical health condition or injury.

In response to the growing youth employment crisis brought on by the pandemic and 2021 lockdowns, this program sought to increase student confidence in seeking employment after graduation through technical and transferable skill development with a corporate mentor.

Objectives

Universities will increase student employability scores via the application of transferable skills to the real world.

Students will increase their confidence in employment after graduation by building transferrable skills and professional connections.

Corporates will raise volunteer participation by engaging in a direct impact exchange with students, developing their professional skills and encouraging social connection.

Corporate volunteers will build their leadership and professional skills, while socially reconnecting and linking work to purpose.
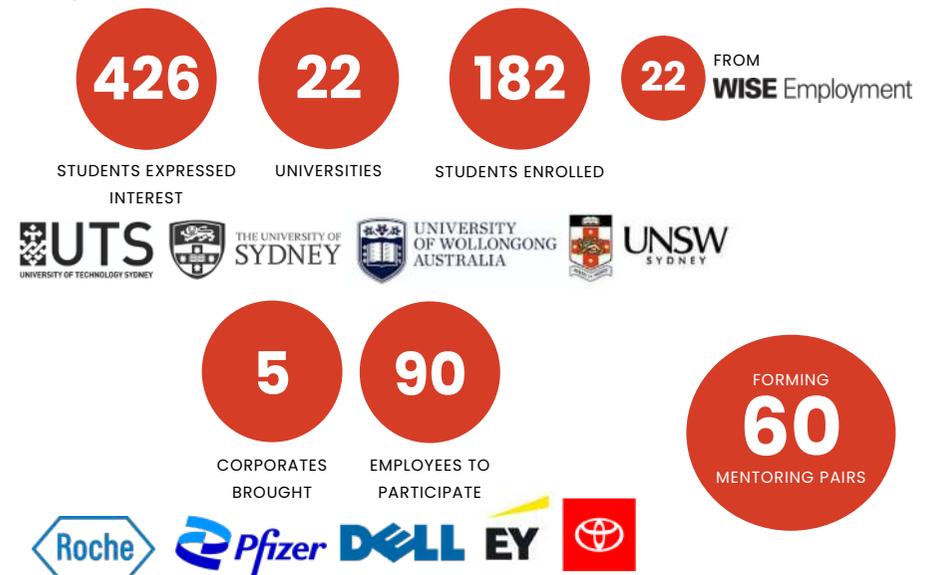
Program Structure

4 cohorts of student/mentor pairs participated in a 12-week program, including:
- Induction workshops;
- Regular meetings and communication;
- Course content to guide reflections and discussions developed by AVI and delivered via the Communiteer platform; and
- Recognition and feedback collection.

Pairs were also encouraged to complete skilled volunteering opportunities, either together or individually, via the Communiteer platform.
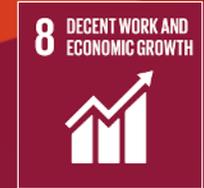
Participants

By the end of the pilot:

426 STUDENTS EXPRESSED INTEREST

22 UNIVERSITIES

182 STUDENTS ENROLLED

22 FROM WISE Employment

UTS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY • THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY • UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG AUSTRALIA • UNSW SYDNEY

5 CORPORATES BROUGHT

90 EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE

FORMING **60** MENTORING PAIRS

Roche • Pfizer • DELL • EY • Toyota

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Student Experience

Before commencing the program, we surveyed students on their employment journey so far:

77%
had never engaged with a mentoring program before.

64%
scored 2 or less out of 6 in confidence in their professional network.

71%
scored 3 or less out of 6 in confidence in searching for employment.

Relating to perceived skill competencies, students graded themselves fairly highly when it came to teamwork, digital literacy and problem-solving.

However low grades were seen in professional work ethics, multicultural fluency and leadership skills.

Testimonials

Harrison Adkin, University of Sydney
"Mentoring is a very good way to consolidate your personal narrative. And I think reflection is super essential in figuring out where you need to put the time in to improve. My Mentor has been able to help me understand the landscape a bit more, recognizing the best ways to incorporate my personal values into the job that I go for."

Megan Chau, University of Wollongong
"I have been successful in making it through to interviews for multiple opportunities. Though I haven't succeeded in sealing the deal (yet!), this does give me a bit of confidence continuing with my job search."

Mentor Experience

Before pairing, mentors were asked what would be successful to them after the program. The responses touched on some key themes:

1. Helping students come closer to achieving their career goals.
2. Students feel like they gained a valuable experience through interaction.
3. Open and honest communication with a continuing professional relationship.

The personal goals mentors wished to achieve for themselves included:

1. Gaining confidence in leadership and coaching skills.
2. Feeling a sense of accomplishment and contribution to someone in need.
3. Connecting with new people and networking.

Testimonials

Ruby Mhaskar, EY
"I've had good mentors throughout my career, professional and personal life. I want to be in someone's life, helping their career or personal pathway. The way she thinks is completely different from me. So it is adding some new points to my values."

Maureen Nicholls, Roche
"It's mutually beneficial. It's enjoyable, you get to use your skills and pass on new wisdom. It's part of the overall culture that Roche has and that's one of the reasons I'm working for."
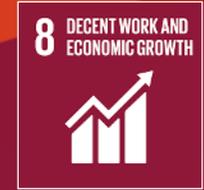
Stephanie Meintjes, EY
"I had a mentor fairly late in my career journey, and I wish I had this support a lot earlier in my life. People development is a passion of mine, so joining mentorship programs really warms my heart."

communiteer *the social good network*

AVI *inviting change*

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Social Impact

Including mentoring & project-based volunteering, this pilot accumulated:

1450+

total volunteering hours during PTE.

700+

hours given by corporate volunteers to students in need.

By the end of the pilot, Communiteer brought onboard 36 not-for-profit organisations supporting the causes of employability and education.

Spotlighting organisations brings awareness to student challenges and directs resources for societal impact.

The participatory pool of Pathway to Employment filled 30 skilled volunteering opportunities by 23 students on the Communiteer platform.

This has so far culminated in 76 hours of student skill-building experience.

Sustainable Development

On a holistic level, this program related to key targets under UN SDGs 4 and 8; Quality Education and Decent Work and Economic Growth. These included:

4.4: Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

4.7: Ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote the Sustainable Development Goals.

8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation.

8.5: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including young people and persons with disabilities.

Into the Future

The combination of mentoring and volunteering as a Pathway to Employment presents significant potential to improve graduate employability outcomes.

Due to the success of this pilot program, Communiteer and AVI have developed an ongoing mentoring program, operating in several cohorts throughout 2022.

To view the details of this program, head to our website.