

Your Introduction to Rise Mentorship

Entrepreneurship can be one of the most dynamic and fulfilling journeys of your professional life. Especially for individuals who experience mental health and addiction challenges, owning a business can be a powerful way to take control of your employment. But entrepreneurship can also be incredibly challenging. It means being in charge of decision-making and taking accountability for your business's successes and failures. Particularly in the early stages of business development, it's almost inevitable that you will have questions and encounter issues that you can't resolve on your own.

The good news is that working FOR yourself doesn't have to mean working BY yourself.

Mentorship is one of the most powerful tools available to entrepreneurs. That's why it's built into the Rise Small Business Lending Program—because a mentor can be a critical source of learning and support as you manage your loan and navigate the ups and downs of building a business. As a seasoned professional, your mentor will draw from their knowledge and experience to provide sound business advice, help you fill the gaps in your expertise and develop your skills so you and your business can thrive.



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are still in business after receiving a Rise loan. *(And the mentorship that comes with it!)*

HOW DOES RISE MENTORSHIP WORK?

In a survey of Rise clients, we learned that positive mentor experiences correlate to a reported **increase in business income.**

2021 Rise Survey

Mentorship at Rise is a one-year commitment for both you and your mentor. During that time, you must commit to meeting for at least one hour every month and to building a meaningful one-on-one relationship that will help you meet your entrepreneurial needs. Between your monthly meetings, you will stay in touch through occasional emails, texts or phone calls (whatever you agree is best) to ensure your business – and the mentorship – stay on track.

But how do we find the right mentor for you?

Until now, you've been working with a Rise Business Advisor, and you may have already begun to discuss the skills and experience that you'll benefit from most at this stage of business development. We use these conversations, and other planning and insights you provide during the loan application process, to match you with an appropriate mentor from our pool of dedicated volunteers. Whether you need help with marketing, accounting, sales, HR, or something else, we'll do our best to connect you with someone who can supplement your experience and support you in achieving your goals.

WHO ARE OUR MENTORS?

All Rise Mentors are experienced professionals who have volunteered their time and talent to support determined entrepreneurs like you. To become a mentor, they must have at least five years of professional work experience and have demonstrable skills in areas critical to building a small business (e.g. finance, e-commerce, marketing, etc.). Depending on your needs, your mentor might work in civil society, for a large corporation, or in the start-up space; they might be a banker, a marketing executive, a life skills or career coach, or a longtime entrepreneur; or they might be another type of professional altogether. Regardless, it's essential to remember that your mentor will not have all the answers. Instead, it's their job to provide valuable feedback, introduce you to new perspectives, help you ask the right questions, and hold you accountable to your planning and goals.

Many of our mentors have also experienced or been affected by mental health and addiction challenges firsthand, so they come to Rise deeply committed to supporting the success of individuals who face similar barriers and stigma. As a part of the onboarding process, all mentors complete a series of online trainings to help them bring empathy and mindfulness to the relationship, and they must understand and respect your definition of success so they can support you to achieve it on your own terms.

Mentorship is a trust-based, non-hierarchical partnership to which you both will bring incredible value, but it must also have boundaries. For example:

- **Consideration for your mental health is central to your mentoring partnership. However, your mentor is not equipped or empowered to provide direct mental health support.**
- **Your mentor does not report to Rise on your loan status, your business or your achievements. While we facilitate the mentorship, your partnership is confidential.**
- **Business decisions are yours alone. Your mentor cannot invest in or actively contribute to running your business while working with Rise.**



"[My mentor] helps me prioritize things so I don't waste my time, and helps me understand how business works so that I can maximize impact... I feel like I have support to do my best and to shine."

Heidi, Small Business Lending Program client

WHAT'S NEXT?

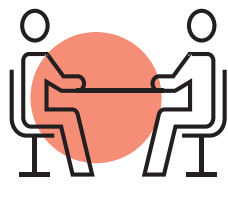
Soon you and your Business Advisor will start to discuss what types of skills and experiences could benefit you most in a mentor. These conversations are critical to informing our matching process. Once your loan is approved and disbursed, we'll host a call for you to meet your mentor, and the two of you will take it from there. But rest assured that Rise will continue to support you every step of the way. We'll connect with you via email periodically to confirm that you are satisfied with your mentor and your progress together. Please take the time to respond to these emails so we can ensure mentorship is a meaningful part of your entrepreneurial journey.

After you have completed one year of mentorship, we will formally close the partnership—at least from Rise's perspective. We'll send you an exit survey to understand your experience and record any feedback you may have. From there, if you and your mentor want to keep working together, you are welcome to do so independently.

Once your loan is approved and disbursed:



Your Business Advisor will facilitate a call to introduce you and your mentor.



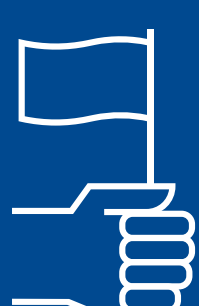
You and your mentor will meet at least monthly for one year.



We'll check in occasionally to ensure you are benefitting from the partnership.



After one year, your official Rise mentorship will be complete!



Congratulations on the work you've already put into your business!

We are excited to see how the Small Business Lending Program and your Rise Mentor can help you to build your business and achieve your goals.

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