

CASE

Empowering Women through Mentorship:

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**Women for Na-  
ture Mentorship  
Program**

STUDIES





## Why is Mentorship Important?

Women face different barriers than men in the workplace.<sup>1,2</sup> Mentorship programs designed specifically for women can help them to overcome gender-specific obstacles to advance in their careers. Research has shown that having a formal mentorship program in the workplace reduces the burden on women to identify an appropriate mentor, and enables all interested women to participate<sup>3</sup>.

It is critical to have more women and women of diverse backgrounds in leadership roles because, as a KPMG study found, 67% of women reported they had learned the most important lessons about leadership from other women, 82% of professional women believe access to and networking with female leaders help advance their careers and 86% of women report that seeing women in leadership positions encourages them to believe they can achieve it themselves<sup>4</sup>.



## Empowering Women to Advance

Today's environmental issues require innovative leaders with diverse skills and backgrounds. Women can bring unique perspectives to drive effective solutions for biodiversity conservation. Launched in 2017, Nature Canada's Women for Nature Mentorship program is a platform for professional women in the conservation sector to share their experiences and offer advice to future leaders in conservation. It serves as an opportunity for women to grow both professionally and individually by helping to break down the barriers placed upon them both in the workplace and beyond.

The program is designed to increase the number of young women leaders by matching them with professional women role models. Mentors model leadership skills, inspire confidence and assist with formal or informal networks that can facilitate their future path to leadership positions. Effective leadership programs for young women strengthen their responsiveness to community needs, offer exposure to informative role models, affirm their existing strengths, and build their management skills.

Nature Canada uses a change of theory that: IF young women from diverse backgrounds who are active in natural sciences, outdoor education or nature groups can connect with senior women leaders, THEN these young women become stronger and more effective leaders in their communities BECAUSE their critical thinking skills, confidence, and leadership skills are enhanced which reduces barriers to career advancement.

## To Date, More than 50 Women Have Taken Part in Program

To date, 50 women have gone through the mentorship program over three cohorts.

- 75-79% ranked the effectiveness of the mentorships as high to very high;
- 86-90% ranked that the pairing was well matched; and
- 90-93% reported they would recommend our mentoring program to other members.

This unique and innovative project has been led by Jodi Joy, Nature Canada Director and Women for Nature strategic advisors: Janet Bax, Laren Stadelman, Christy Pettit and Cindy Collins.

1. Ibarra, Ely, and Kolb, "Women Rising."
2. Ely and Padavic, "What's Really Holding Women Back?"
3. Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail."
4. "Women's Leadership Study."

# Women For Nature Mentorship

Nature Canada is one of the oldest national nature conservation charities in Canada. For over 80 years, Nature Canada has helped protect over 110 million acres of parks and wildlife areas in Canada and countless species.

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