

Open City Accelerate 2025/26 Mentor Recruitment Form



What is Accelerate?

- A design and mentoring outreach programme run by Open City.
- Supporting young people (aged 16-18) from under-represented backgrounds to pursue careers in the built environment industries.
- Equipping them with the skills, portfolios, networks and the confidence to make informed career choices.





Course Structure

10 Skills Development Workshops (October to April)
at inspiring London locations

+

12 hours of mentoring (February)
at leading built environment
practices across London

+

Joint **public exhibition** of
student work (July)

+

Continuing support through
education and practice via the
Alumni Network

Mentoring

The Accelerate team organises and coordinates the mentoring session between students and practices.

Mentor Commitment

Between £1000-£3000
financial sponsorship



12 hours mentoring

In Return

Social media coverage
throughout the year

Gain experience teaching
young people

Discounts on Open City
Events

Three mentor training
sessions, accredited for CPD
by ARB

Invitation to join any of the 10
Accelerate workshops



What does mentoring involve?

During the mentoring sessions you will be asked to guide your group of students through a design brief using a lesson plan we will help you to develop. The theme for the design brief is set by the Accelerate team and is open for you and your practice to interpret however you like. Last year's brief was to design a kiosk.

We ask that while in your company you support each of your students to make **one model** and **one drawing** at an appropriate scale (1:20/1:50).

During the time you have with your students you might also want to include:

- Site visits (this can relate to your brief)
- A tour of the office
- Sitting in on meetings
- A group review/presentation of work





Organising Your Mentoring Sessions

- Each practice will be delegated 3-5 students and will deliver 12 hours of mentoring (this works out to be two or three sessions)
- Mentoring sessions will take place on **weekdays in February**, with longer sessions arranged for the February half term school break (16th-20th February 2026).
- We ask mentors to confirm their preferred dates and times for mentoring by November.
- Each practice will create a lesson plan for these sessions with the help and support of the Accelerate team (template provided by Open City).
- We ask that mentors organise no more than 3 separate sessions to reduce student travel (see options below).

Mentoring Session Options

Option 1

2x6 hour sessions

Option 2

3x4 hour sessions

Financial Commitment

Accelerate survives each year entirely from external funding and the generosity of those who support us.

It costs £1500 per student to take part in the course. We ask each participating practice to make a contribution of between £1000 and £3000 to the course (Open City source the remaining cost from other forms of sponsorship).

The amount you decide to pledge will not affect your exposure to the course. Each practice will get the same amount of time and access students and training, but we ask for larger, more established practices to contribute more financially than smaller organisations.



Mentor Training and Support

Open City provides three midweek evening sessions across the academic year, to guide and support mentors (each session is approx 2 hours long, 6pm-8pm). At least one mentor from each practice should attend these sessions in person to receive guidance and briefing, which they can pass onto their team.

Mentor Training Sessions

Session 1: Introduction to the Year - Thursday 6th November 2025, 6pm-8pm

Session 2: Lesson Plan and Mentor Preparation - Thursday 29th January, 6pm-8pm

Session 3: Evaluation and Feedback Thursday 4th June 2026, 6pm-8pm

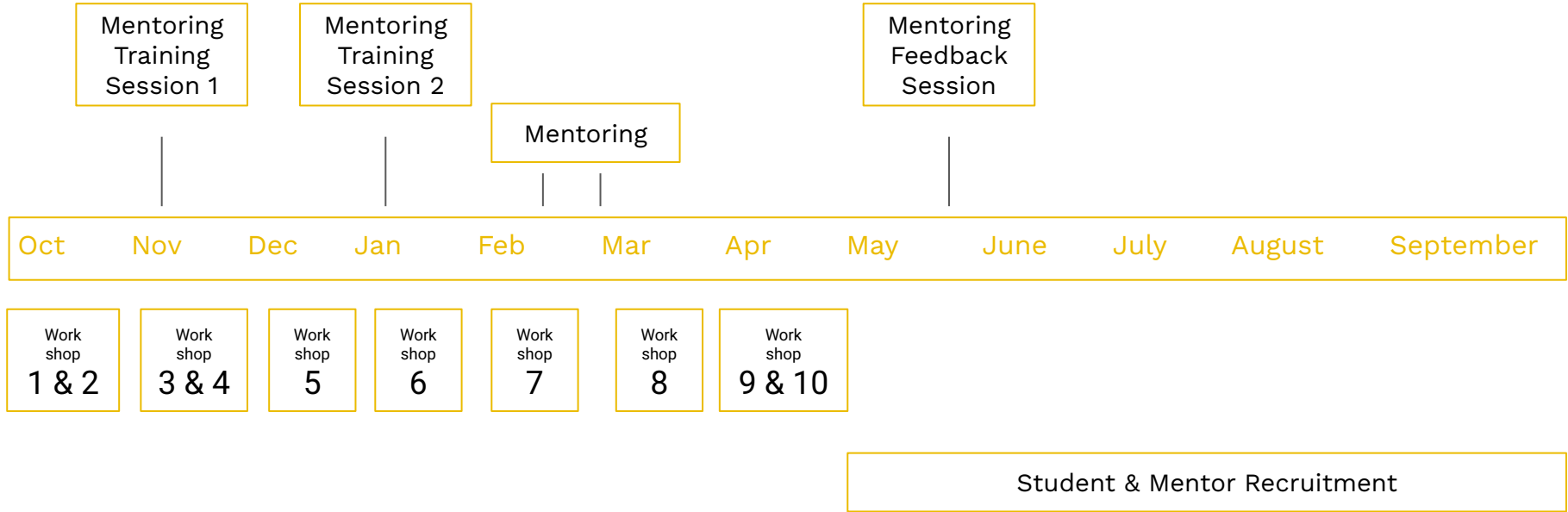
DBS

- All mentors are required to have DBS Basic check in order to work with young people in the programme, and you will need to send your certificate to Open City before mentoring begins.
- If you already have a check you do not need to reapply.
- Check costs £18 each and can take up to two weeks to process.
- Use this link to apply: <https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>

CPD

- Your mentoring can be logged as continuing professional development (CPD).
- In total we estimate: **6 hours** mentor recruitment training, **6 hours** of preparation and planning and **12 hours** mentoring.

Course Timeline



Student Costs

It costs approximately £1,500 for each student to participate in the Accelerate programme. We ask each mentor to contribute a minimum of £1000 to sponsor one student through the course, where Open City finds other means of funding to make up the cost. Here is a breakdown of that annual expenditure:

£800	£90	£60	£210	£90	£250
Teaching and staff	Graphic Design & Course Materials	Photography & Documentation	Workshop Delivery	Exhibitions & Events	Charity Overheads
Support Tutors Assistants Course Tutor Course Director	Course Catalogue Exhibition Booklet Mentor/Mentee Handbooks Course certificates Evaluation Report	Workshop photography Film documentation	Session materials Guests facilitators Lunches for students Venue	Exhibition installation Catering Venue	Insurance Audit costs Accountancy Line Management

Why Support Accelerate?

Champion diversity
in the built
environment sector

**Engage with young
people** and build
lasting relationships

Develop your skills
as an educator

**Promote your
practice** by
facilitating job
opportunities and
work experience

Take part in the
programme as a
mentor/guest
facilitator

**Support young
people** to navigate
their futures

Provide young
people with the
**tools to become
critical thinkers**

Democratise the
processes involving
our built
environment

**Meet other
professionals** from the
built environment
industry, exchange
ideas and facilitate
future collaborations

[Click here to apply](#)

If you have any questions or would like to know more please contact Sirraaj Mitha (Director of Accelerate):

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or visit our website:

<https://open-city.org.uk/accelerate>



Thank You!

