



START UP GUIDE



An innovation of
George Fox University



ignite
connect. engage. go.

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The Ignite program strategically pairs students with industry professionals for a year-long impactful mentoring relationship focused on personal, professional, and vocational discovery, equipping them to become well-rounded servant leaders within their professional communities.

ignite mentors.org

Benefits for Students and the Institution

Ignite...

- ✓ Jumpstarts students' professional journeys by providing mentorship and support.
- ✓ Encourages vocational exploration and career discovery.
- ✓ Connects students with industry professionals to foster personal and professional growth.
- ✓ Engages industry leaders and key stakeholders in meaningful ways.
- ✓ Strengthens the institution's network by engaging alumni.
- ✓ Builds lasting professional networks that offer ongoing support and valuable career connections.
- ✓ Offers professionals a chance to make a lasting impact on students' lives and careers.
- ✓ Opens doors to expanded collaboration between the institution and industry.
- ✓ Delivers value to industry partners, including access to emerging talent and increased brand exposure.

“



Ignite is an opportunity to help a student overcome self-limiting beliefs and guide them to a professional future that is more rewarding and fulfilling.”

-Ignite mentor

We are here to help strengthen the launchpad and help our students propel into the next season of their greatest destiny”

-Ignite mentor



Without my Industry Mentor, I would still be very confused about the transition to the workplace and tripping up on my lack of knowledge. But, thanks to him, I’m ready to tackle the workforce head-on and set myself up for success.”

-Ignite student

My Ignite experience has been great for filling in small but critical gaps in my knowledge. I feel that classes prepare us well for what we’ll do in the workplace, but don’t say much about the workplace itself.”

-Ignite student

Meeting with my Ignite mentor has been one of the more fun and interesting experiences of my college career. I was able to get advice on deciding between job offers, ask questions about his work experience, and have unique experiences learning from different hobbies of his - from microwaves to old cars.”

-Ignite student



SEMESTER - BASED TIMELINE

- January - August**
MENTOR RECRUITMENT
- January - April**
STUDENT RECRUITMENT
- June - August**
STUDENT / MENTOR PAIRING
- August - September**
IGNITE LAUNCH PREPARATION
- September**
IGNITE LAUNCH EVENT
- September - April**
MENTORING CYCLE
- January**
SPRING NETWORKING EVENT
- April**
YEAR-END CELEBRATION



THE PEOPLE

The Ignite Director is the visionary and strategist behind the Ignite program, orchestrating components that create a seedbed for mentorships to thrive.

Responsibilities include:

Recruitment & Vetting

Lead the process of recruiting and carefully vetting exceptional students and mentors, ensuring a high caliber of participants who are committed to mutual growth and development.

Strategic Pairing

Thoughtfully pair mentors and students, ensuring that each match is based on complementary personalities, career goals, and interests, fostering a strong foundation for productive mentorship.

Training & Empowerment

Provide training and ongoing support as needed for both students and mentors, empowering them with the tools, resources, and guidance to make their mentorship relationships impactful and meaningful.

Creating a Culture of Success

While the Program Director provides structure, guidance, and resources, the true success of Ignite depends on the authentic connections between mentors and students. Facilitate an environment where these relationships can flourish by ensuring ongoing communication, feedback, and a commitment to program excellence.

Execute Ignite events

Plan and orchestrate events that support the mission of Ignite and the program's overall quality and impact.



Mentors

Ignite Mentors are experienced professionals with expertise in industries aligned with students' academic and career goals. They are passionate about mentoring the next generation, offering career insights, fostering growth, and connecting students with valuable opportunities.

Expectations include:

- ▶ **Monthly Face-to-Face Meetings**
Prioritize consistent and meaningful interactions with their mentee.
- ▶ **Career Guidance and Support**
Offer vocational insights, practical advice, and valuable networking opportunities.
- ▶ **Open Communication**
Maintain clear and collaborative dialogue.
- ▶ **Full Mentorship Cycle Completion**
Support their Ignite Student's growth through the full academic year.



Students

Ignite Students are senior students selected for the program who are eager to engage in a transformative mentorship experience.

They are expected to:

- ▶ **Demonstrate Commitment & Engagement**
Show a genuine investment in their personal and professional growth, fully committing to the mentorship relationship.
- ▶ **Prioritize Monthly Meetings**
Ensure regular, proactive participation in monthly meetings with their mentor, valuing these interactions as key opportunities for development.
- ▶ **Exhibit Preparedness & Initiative**
Come to each meeting prepared with thoughtful questions, goals, and topics of discussion, demonstrating focus and curiosity in their learning.
- ▶ **Commit to Full Program Participation**
Maintain consistent involvement throughout the entire program year, actively engaging in all activities and feedback processes to maximize their mentorship experience.



GETTING STARTED

Ignite is all about strong relationships, and its success is dependent on the commitment of all participants. While we welcome interest from all individuals, those with limited availability and bandwidth are encouraged to defer until they can fully engage. This ensures mentors and students can build the meaningful connections that define the Ignite experience.

The success of the program hinges on several key factors

01

Recruiting the Right People

Engaging passionate, experienced, and dedicated individuals.

02

Participant Commitment

Ensuring proactive and consistent involvement from all participants.

03

Quality Matches

Creating thoughtful mentor/student pairings that foster meaningful connections.

04

Adequate Support

Providing resources and guidance to empower participants throughout the program.



Recruitment Process

Recruiting Mentors

The Ignite Mentorship Program seeks exceptional professionals to guide and inspire students. Ideal mentors are individuals of outstanding character and integrity, with a genuine desire to connect with and support students. They must have at least three years of industry experience in their field, and a strong commitment to giving back to the greater good.

To identify such mentors

- Encourage faculty to nominate professionals from their networks.
- Collect recommendations of other noteworthy professionals during onboarding conversations with Ignite mentors.
- Partner with the Advancement, Alumni, and Corporate Relations Offices for recommendations.
- Consider program sponsors, project sponsors, and advisory board members who would be a fit.
- Utilize the [Ignite Mentor Referral Form](#) to streamline and track.

Recruiting Students

Faculty recommendations serve as the primary method for identifying student participants. Additionally, interested students have the opportunity to self-nominate for consideration.

Vetting

Vetting is a critical step in ensuring the success of the mentorship program and selecting the right people is essential.

Mentors

The process involves a personalized one-on-one meeting or phone call to introduce the program, assess their alignment with its values and goals, and evaluate their readiness to invest in a meaningful mentoring relationship.

Students

The process begins with nominations and an information session, followed by an application process. [Applications](#) are then reviewed and students who align with the program's values and goals are accepted into the program.

Key components of the Vetting Process

Introduce the "8 Pro-Tips for Effective Mentoring Relationships" to set clear expectations and provide valuable guidance.

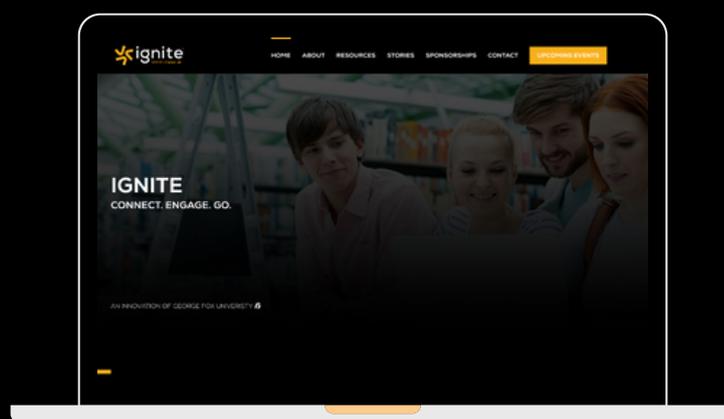
(8 Pro-Tips can be found on the Resources page of the Ignite Webpage <https://ignitementors.org/resources/>)

Establish High Standards

Emphasize the importance of commitment, availability, and genuine care for the students' growth and development.

Be Selective

Don't hesitate to decline applicants who lack the necessary bandwidth or dedication to fully invest in the mentoring relationship.



Prioritizing quality over quantity and selecting only those genuinely prepared to engage meaningfully, fosters a shared understanding that Ignite is a serious commitment.

Choosing motivated individuals who are eager to learn and contribute is far more valuable than simply recruiting high-profile names or focusing on meeting quota targets

Onboarding

Once a mentor or student has been vetted, they should complete the onboarding survey

▶▶ [Student Onboarding Survey](#)

▶▶ [Mentor Onboarding Survey](#)

Equipping for Success

The Ignite webpage (ignitementors.org) serves as a vital resource for both mentors and students.

The monthly newsletter delivers fresh conversation starters, insightful articles, and key announcements to keep mentors and students engaged, inspired, and informed. It includes guidance for getting started, conversation topics, articles, inspirational stories, and tools to maximize the value of mentoring meetings.

Regular touchpoints with students and mentors provide essential encouragement, address challenges early, and ensure the mentorship journey stays on track.

Ignite networking events create opportunities for participants to exchange ideas, learn best practices, and build connections with others in the program.

PAIRING



Intentional and thoughtful pairing of students and mentors is vital to fostering meaningful and impactful relationships. As with any meaningful connection, chemistry and common ground are essential. Taking the time to match students with an ideal mentor significantly increases the likelihood of a transformative and lasting impact.

Goals for Pairing

- 01 Authenticity:** Create a safe space for open and meaningful conversations by pairing participants with others of the same gender.
- 02 Professional Development:** Prioritize mentors who align with the student's field of study or career aspirations, enhancing guidance and fostering valuable networking opportunities.
- 03 Trust:** Build a strong foundation by pairing individuals with shared values, common interests, and similar levels of expectation.

Considerations and Tools

- **Onboarding Surveys:** Use surveys as a starting point to gather insights into participants' goals, interests, and backgrounds for identifying potential pairings.
- **Personal Conversations:** Engage in one-on-one discussions with each participant to gain deeper understanding of their unique aspirations, interests, and personality traits—insights that surveys alone may not reveal.
- **Proactive Recruitment:** If a suitable mentor match isn't available, take the initiative to recruit a mentor who meets the student's needs.
- **Transparent Pairing Rationale:** Sharing context and reasoning behind pairings with both mentors and students can spark enthusiasm and help mentoring relationships begin with purpose and clarity.



THE LAUNCH

Once recruitment and pairings are complete, the next step is preparing for the launch. The Ignite Launch is the signature event of the year, setting the foundation for the program’s success. It unites all participants in one space, offering a valuable opportunity for students and mentors to network, build meaningful relationships, and energize the program. The atmosphere is filled with anticipation as students eagerly await the reveal of their mentors.

Before the Launch

Build the [Ignite Directory](#):

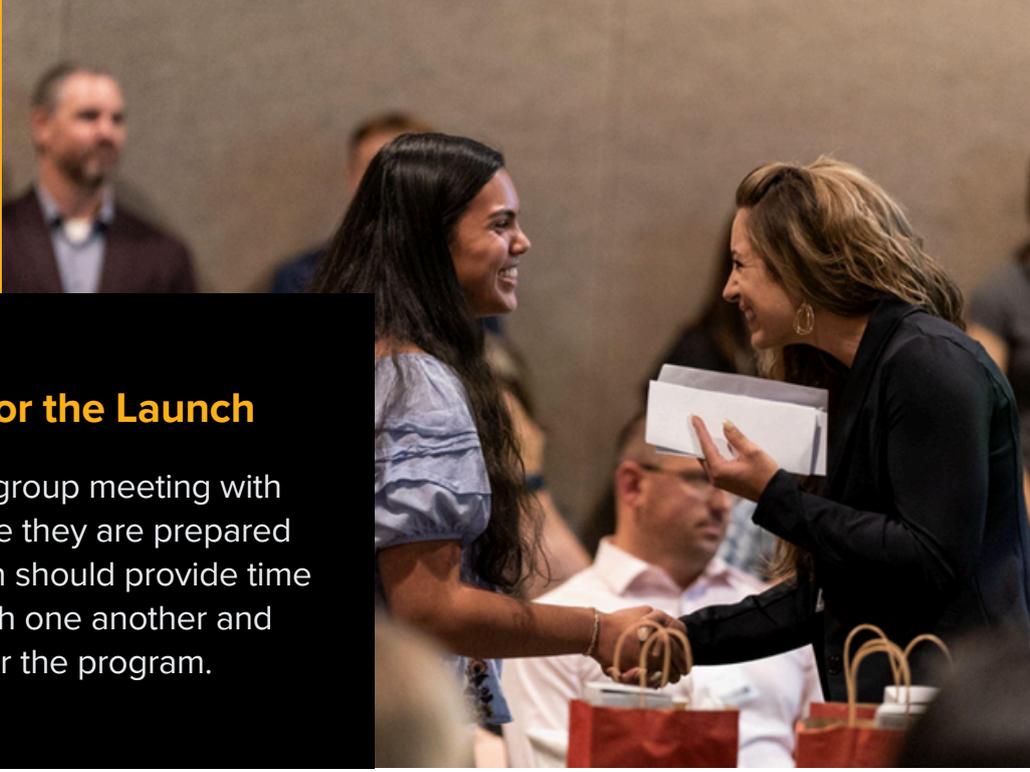
As students and mentors are recruited, begin compiling a directory to share with the Ignite community. This should include a photo and key professional and personal details including hobbies, interests and accomplishments. To maintain privacy, contact information should not be included. Participants can connect via a shared Ignite LinkedIn group or through the Ignite Director.

Confidentiality of Pairings:

Keep mentor-student pairings confidential from students until the Fall Ignite Launch. This element of surprise generates excitement and guarantees student attendance, as the reveal of their mentor takes place at the launch. Mentors will be informed in advance by the Director of their student match and a few insights into the reasoning behind the pairing.

Mentor Preparation:

Send mentors their student’s bio page (from the Ignite Directory) ahead of the event, allowing them to familiarize themselves with their student. As mentors to keep the identity of their student confidential until the “Big Reveal” at the end of the launch event. At the reveal, each student will receive a sealed envelope containing their mentor’s bio page from the Ignite Directory. Once envelopes have been opened, mentors are welcome to introduce themselves to their student.



Preparing Students for the Launch

Prior to the launch, hold a group meeting with all Ignite students to ensure they are prepared and confident. This session should provide time for students to connect with one another and review key expectations for the program.

Networking Skills Development

- Coach students on the importance of a firm handshake with good eye contact.
- Encourage them to take initiative in introducing themselves and conversing with multiple professionals at the event.
- Discuss the skill of asking open-ended questions to foster deeper conversations.
- Practice active listening techniques that build meaningful connections.

Pre-Event Preparation

- Instruct students to review the Ignite Directory and identify 2-3 mentors they would like to meet. Encourage them to prepare thoughtful questions in advance.
- Offer a quick refresher on professional table manners to help students interact considerately and confidently during the event.

Event Instructions

- Provide clear guidelines for arrival times, participation expectations, and the mentor reveal process to ensure smooth and organized engagement at the launch.
- Give tips for professional business attire.
- Cell phone etiquette.

This preparation will set students up for success and help them make the most of their Ignite experience.

Fall Launch Objectives

Introduce the Ignite Leadership Team:

Set the stage by introducing the key leaders who make the program possible.

Hype: Provide a brief, impactful overview of the Ignite program—respect the time of your audience and keep it concise.

Inspire: Share participant expectations and highlight the potential outcomes of their involvement.

Honor: Acknowledge and thank sponsors and donors for their support.

Networking: Create an environment where both experienced professionals and students can actively connect, share valuable insights, and learn from one another.

Elevate: Ensure every detail of the Launch is of the highest quality, from food and nametags to swag bags, while valuing participants' time with a concise program and structured opportunities for meaningful interaction.

Energize: Create excitement that builds to the “Big Reveal,” where students finally learn the identity of their mentor.

Connection: Incorporate times for meaningful interaction throughout the event, with 30 minutes set aside for student-mentor pairs to engage in one-on-one conversations following the reveal.



Sample Launch Schedule





OTHER EVENTS

To respect the time of busy professionals, we do not require attendance at events beyond the Ignite launch, though attendance at the year-end celebration is strongly encouraged. Students are required to attend all Ignite events unless prior arrangements have been made with the Ignite Director.

Spring Networking Event

To kick off the spring semester on a strong note, host an engaging networking event that is mandatory for students and optional for mentors.

This business casual social provides students with a relaxed, low-pressure environment to practice and improve their networking skills, while also allowing them to build relationships with peers and connect with other professionals in the Ignite program.

Event options might include

Bowling Party

TopGolf

Collaboration Café

While the Spring Networking Event is optional for mentors, it offers a valuable opportunity to connect with fellow mentors and meet other students in the program. If a student-mentor pair attends together, it will count as their monthly meetup.



End-of-Year Celebration

Conclude the mentorship cycle with energy, gratitude, and recognition. This event can vary in format but should include:

▶▶ **Appreciation**

Students expressing gratitude to their mentors, with the Director also thanking everyone for their participation and contributions to the program.

▶▶ **Highlights**

Celebrating standout moments and key insights gained from the mentorship experience.

▶▶ **Testimonies**

Sharing powerful stories and impactful experiences from the program.

▶▶ **Call to Action**

Encouraging involvement as mentors for the next year.

▶▶ **Invitations**

Invite potential mentors to attend and learn more about the Ignite program.



Administrative Tasks and Responsibilities

Event Planning

- Ignite Launch
- Spring Networking Event
- Year-End Celebration

Student Meetings

- Check in with Ignite students each semester
- Provide time for students to share successes, challenges, best practices, and highlights

E-Newsletter

- Send monthly email / newsletter to Ignite participants.
Content suggestions:
 - Ignite highlights: success stories and notable moments
 - Meetup ideas
 - Discussion questions
 - Conversation topic suggestions
 - A related article for discussion or inspiration
 - Links to mentoring resources
 - Announcements
 - Fall / Spring survey
 - Ignite LinkedIn group link / invitation
 - Sponsor Ad (if applicable)

Ignite Leadership Team Meetings

- Debrief the launch event and document key insights to guide future planning
- Request content for upcoming newsletters
- Send a reminder for the Fall Survey
- Plan for the upcoming spring networking event

Survey Distribution

- Send the Fall Semester Survey to mentors and students in early December (**Mentor / Student**)
- Track the number of mentor-student meetups
- Address any issues with mentor/student pairs and offer additional support as needed
- Send the year-end survey to mentors and students in April, prior to the year-end celebration (**Mentor / Student**)

Future Planning

- Keep a list of potential mentors with contact details, referrals, and professional backgrounds.
- Track student participants and send an annual highlights email to maintain connections for future mentoring.
- Record all mentor-student pairings with notes for future reference.
- Recruit corporate sponsors and individual donors for financial support.

ADMINISTRATIVE CALENDAR

February-April (Student Recruitment)

- Collect faculty recommendations for prospective Ignite students.
- Host an information session for interested students.
- Collect student applications.
- Identify student participants.
- Have students complete the [Onboarding Survey](#).

August

- Finalize the [Ignite Directory](#).
- Finalize mentor/student pairs.
- Send formal invitations to mentors and students for the Fall Launch.
- Create an Ignite LinkedIn Group and begin sending invitations.

February-July (Mentor Recruitment)

- Gather mentor recommendations from faculty, Alumni Relations, and other sources.
- Hold one-on-one conversations with potential mentors to outline program details and commitments.
- Confirm mentor commitments. Have mentors complete the [Onboarding Survey](#).
- Begin mentor/student pairings.
- Share each student's directory page with their mentor (reminding mentors to keep it confidential until the Big Reveal at the Fall Launch).

September

- Conduct an Ignite workshop for students on networking and professional etiquette to prepare for the Fall Launch.
- Complete preparations for the Launch event.
- Host the Ignite Launch event.
- Follow up with a thank-you email to all Ignite participants that includes event highlights, important reminders, and a digital directory link.
- Distribute the first monthly Ignite newsletter (runs September – April) with conversation topics, ideas for meetups, announcements, and participant testimonies.
- Begin monthly face-to-face meetups between students and mentors (September – April).

May/June

- Plan Fall Launch (refer to [Launch Schedule](#)).
- Send calendar invites to mentors for the Fall Launch.
- Order Ignite swag for the event.

October/November

- Hold a group check-in meeting with students.
- Touch base with mentors as needed.

February

- Hold a group check-in meeting with students.

December

- Send a “Save the Date” for the Spring Networking Event.
- Send the Fall Semester Survey to students and mentors. ([Student Survey](#) / [Mentor Survey](#))
- Address any concerns identified in the survey responses.

March

- Finalize details for the Year-End Celebration.
- Invite prospective mentors to attend the Year-End Celebration for a closer look at the program.

January

- Create a formal invitation for the Spring Networking Event for student use.
- Encourage students to personally invite their mentors and have them RSVP to the Ignite Director.
- Host the Spring Networking Event.
- Begin planning the Year-End Celebration and send calendar invites to participants.

April

- Send the Spring Semester/End-of-Year Surveys to students and mentors. ([Student Survey](#) / [Mentor Survey](#))
- Host the Year-End Celebration to wrap up the program.





Scan me



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Brand Style Guide](#)

[Collaboration Cafe](#)

[End-of-Year Mentor Survey](#)

[End-of-Year Student Survey](#)

[Fall Semester Mentor Survey](#)

[Fall Semester Student Survey](#)

[Ignite Mentor Referral Form](#)

[Ignite Webpage](#)

[Ignite Directory](#)

[Launch Program](#)

[Launch Schedule](#)

[Launch Slide Deck](#)

[Launch To Do List](#)

[Mentor Name Tag Template](#)

[Mentor Onboarding Survey](#)

[Operations Calendar](#)

[Program Overview One-Pager](#)

[Sample Invitations](#)

[Sponsorship Guide](#)

[Sponsorship One-Pager](#)

[Student Application](#)

[Student Name Tag Template](#)

[Student Onboarding Survey](#)



Questions about launching Ignite at your insitution?

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