

## Conservation Mentorship Toolkit and Training

**Good mentorship leads to more durable conservation impact –  
help us raise up the next generation of conservationists!**

**Conservation is becoming increasingly more collaborative to resolve complex cross-boundary challenges and address resource shortages, while at the same time, we are facing deeper divides. Investing in mentorship builds our capacity and resilience to enact collaborative and long-lasting impact in our communities through the relationships formed and knowledge shared.**

Despite its importance, there is currently no synthesis of mentorship best practices for our unique professional challenges, and many organizations lack the resources to support mentorship.

For this project, we have made that initial investment by seeking out best practices through review of existing literature and interviewing experts from across the field to develop a Mentorship Toolkit. This toolkit will be distributed actively across our West-wide network and will be publicly accessible to other conservation networks globally.

**Who We Are - The Emerging Leadership Working Group** of the [Western Collaborative Conservation Network](#) (WCCN) partnered with [Crowd Conservation](#) aims to empower the next generation of collaborative conservation leaders across the American West. We host a dynamic forum that connects emerging leaders with mentors, resources, and peers. As part of the WCCN, the reach of this working group extends across 11 western states and a diverse network of over 800 students and professionals engaged in collaborative conservation.

**Funding Needs to Cross the Finish Line** – with generous support from the Kendeda Fund, we, as a volunteer working group of eight researchers, have conducted nearly 30 interviews of mentors, mentees, and mentorship program coordinators. Compiling lived experiences and research literature in this and other fields such as higher education and business, we are developing a freely accessible Mentorship Toolkit with worksheets and reflection exercises, as well as a peer-reviewed research paper in collaboration with 6 WCCN partner organizations. We have almost completed Phase 1 of our project.

However, we are in need of more funding to help us get across the finish line to:

- Finalize the toolkit content and polish the graphic design for publication,
- Develop a training workshop for future mentors and mentorship program coordinators,
- Submit the research paper to a scientific journal,
- Update the toolkit after a year of use and incorporate all of the feedback that we receive, and
- Hire a student emerging leader who will contribute to the completion of the tasks above.

We hope to have the toolkit and training completed before the WCCN's in-person convening in May 2026 so that we can host a mentorship training workshop for the projected 120 participants at the event. We are requesting **\$15,000** to cover the work that needs to be completed over the next year.

**If you know of anyone who may be interested in learning more about this project or supporting the development of our mentorship toolkit, please contact Nicole Reese ([nicole@crowd-conservation.org](mailto:nicole@crowd-conservation.org)).**

[Learn more here](#) about this opportunity to equip our conservationists with the skills they need to work across divides.

Thank you for supporting this collaborative effort, and keep an eye out for our published Mentorship Toolkit coming soon.

