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Mentorship: a new pilot project and a calculated risk by ASLIA Vic

Mentorship is an integral part of many professions. However as yet mentorship does not seem to be an acknowledged or valued part of the interpreting/translating field in Australia. Interpreters often work in isolation and under stressful conditions. Coupled with often low remuneration and unpredictable employment it is no surprise that the drop out rate for interpreters can be high. These are some of the reasons for the current chronic shortage of Auslan interpreters. Mentorship seems to be a missing part of our training and professional development that could be a powerful and positive influence on the retention of interpreters in the field and the individual professionalism of interpreter/translators.

This paper will provide an overview of an exciting new mentorship pilot project for Auslan interpreters being undertaken by ASLIA Vic and Vicdeaf. This project which mainly focuses on training mentors and providing mentorship for new interpreters, will have wide application. The outcomes of the project will have relevance for training, professionalism and ultimately the quality of interpreter/translators. This project is a risk from which we believe we will reap great rewards.