

Innovation & Enterprise Development Mentor

DreamSpace Academy, Sri Lanka

Assignment title	Innovation & Enterprise Development Mentor		
Partner organisation	DreamSpace Academy		
Location	Sri Lanka	Batticaloa, Hatton, & Trincomalee	
Type of assignment	In-country Assignment		
Duration of assignment	12 months		
Assignment phases	Phase	Mode	Duration
	1	In-Country	12 months
	2	No other phase	0 months
	3	No other phase	Select phase duration
Proposed start date	1 August 2026		
Website	www.dreamspace.academy		
Australian organisation:	No Australian organisation is linked to this assignment		

ABOUT THE PARTNER ORGANISATION

DreamSpace Academy is a social enterprise based in Batticaloa, Hatton, and Mullaitivu, Sri Lanka.

Emerging from the aftermath of three decades of civil war, the organisation work to support local communities to solve their own complex socio-economic and environmental challenges. Rather than relying on imported solutions, the organisation focusses on challenge-based learning, grassroots innovation, and impact venture building to create sustainable, locally driven change.

Their vision is to build a self-sustaining ecosystem where local and international changemakers can co-learn, co-innovate, co-farm, and co-produce, helping to make Sri Lanka potentially the biggest social and tech innovation hub in South Asia.

Their mission is to drive the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through education, innovation, and entrepreneurship; supporting the empowerment of underserved communities, protecting the environment, fostering economic initiatives, and contributing to peacebuilding.

ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENT

This assignment is important for DreamSpace Academy as it will help strengthen the organisation’s ability to sustain and scale its mission of empowering underserved communities through education, innovation, entrepreneurship, and community-driven programs. DreamSpace has developed a range of impactful initiatives and social enterprises, and now requires strategic support to improve how these program are structured, positioned, marketed, and sustained over the long term.

By engaging an Australian volunteer in this role, DreamSpace seeks to bring in additional expertise, creative thinking, and a strong business development perspective to help strengthen programme sustainability, enterprise growth, and financial resilience. The volunteer will contribute to building practical systems, stronger partnership pathways, and more effective approaches to outreach, revenue generation, and strategic growth.

A volunteer can support this assignment by helping DreamSpace Academy review and refine its programs, strengthen its products and services, improve the positioning of its social enterprises, and support more sustainable pathways for organisational growth. While DreamSpace has strong local leadership and program delivery experience, this role requires additional support in strategic business development, enterprise growth planning, fundraising systems, and sustainability-focused structuring that can further strengthen the long-term impact of the organisation.

DreamSpace is a well-established social innovation organisation with experience in youth empowerment, community engagement, STEAM education, entrepreneurship development, and social enterprise. Its strengths lie in grassroots innovation, practical learning, and building inclusive opportunities for underserved communities. Volunteers in this role will have the opportunity to contribute to a dynamic and mission-driven environment, while gaining practical experience in program sustainability, enterprise development, social impact strategy, and cross-cultural collaboration. This partnership offers a mutually beneficial opportunity where the volunteer contributes meaningfully while also learning from a community-rooted and impact-oriented organisation.

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The volunteer will work alongside members of DreamSpace Academy to support the objectives below:

Assignment objectives	Proposed activities
<p>In-Country Phase Objective: Strengthen program sustainability and growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and support the restructuring of selected DreamSpace programs so they are clearer, more scalable, and more sustainable. ● Support the development of program pathways, delivery models, and practical growth plans. ● Help refine how programs are packaged, positioned, and communicated to learners, partners, and supporters.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contribute to strategies for program outreach, recruitment, partnership-building, and revenue generation.
<p>In-Country Phase Objective: Support social enterprise growth and strategic positioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help strengthen the business models of DreamSpace-led social enterprises and initiatives. ● Support clearer product and service packaging, pricing logic, and growth planning. ● Assist in identifying ways to improve marketing, customer engagement, partnership opportunities, and sales systems. ● Contribute to practical tools and systems for performance tracking, planning, and enterprise growth.
<p>In-Country Phase Objective: Improve financial sustainability and resource mobilisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support DreamSpace in strengthening approaches to financial sustainability, including revenue planning and cost awareness. ● Assist in developing practical systems for fundraising, donor engagement, sponsorship positioning, and proposal support. ● Help contribute to strategic thinking around sustainable entrepreneurship finance, investment readiness, and support pathways for ventures and changemakers. ● Strengthen planning approaches related to budgeting, sustainability strategy, and longer-term organisational resilience.
<p>In-Country Phase Objective: Build team and entrepreneur capability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mentor team members, changemakers, and entrepreneurs in business development, critical thinking, and strategic planning. ● Support structured mentoring sessions, venture reviews, and practical guidance processes. ● Help strengthen internal capacity in problem-solving, prioritisation, growth thinking, and partnership development. ● Contribute to improving founder readiness in areas such as validation, pitching, partnerships, and financial thinking.
<p>Inclusion objective and proposed activity</p>	
<p>The volunteer will work alongside the partner organisation to uphold values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Inclusive approaches will aim to make everyone feel welcome and support equal access to opportunities, regardless of gender, age, disability status, religion, language, ethnicity, or social background.</p>	

The volunteer will work alongside members of DreamSpace Academy to;

- Promote inclusive participation in programs, mentoring, and enterprise development activities.
- Support the design of systems and opportunities that are accessible and relevant to underserved communities.
- Encourage respectful collaboration and help create an environment where diverse voices, ideas, and lived experiences are valued and included.
- Ensure that program and enterprise growth strategies remain aligned with DreamSpace’s mission of community empowerment and inclusion.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Education and qualifications

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor’s degree in Business, Entrepreneurship, Management, Social Innovation, Development Studies, Marketing, Finance, or a related field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Qualification or training in Social Enterprise Development, Strategic Planning, Fundraising, Innovation, or Community Development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrated interest in social impact, enterprise development, or sustainable community development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certification or demonstrated training in mentoring, business development, facilitation, or program design.

Knowledge and experience

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong business development and strategic thinking skills, with the ability to identify growth opportunities and sustainability pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience working with social enterprises, entrepreneurship program, or impact-driven organisations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience in program development, enterprise support, marketing, partnerships, or organisational growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Familiarity with fundraising, donor engagement, sponsorship development, or resource mobilisation systems.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work collaboratively with diverse teams and contribute to practical planning and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in mentoring entrepreneurs, founders, youth, or community-based initiatives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communication skills and the ability to support structured thinking, planning, and problem-solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in cross-cultural, grassroots, or community-based settings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital literacy and confidence in using common software, presentation tools, planning tools, and communication platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with financial planning tools, pipeline tracking, KPI dashboards, or business model development tools.

Following the Program’s values on locally led development, this Assignment Description has been developed and negotiated in good faith with the Partner Organisation. The information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request. However, while we take responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.

Line Manager: Kishoth Navaretnarajah

Working relationships: Program Implementation

Hours and days of work:

In-country phase
Full time

Leave: All volunteers are entitled to 20 days leave per 12 months, unless advised otherwise. The same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays.

Work from home: Working from home while on an in-country phase must be in line with usual partner organisation's practices and agreed with the in-country office.

Professional indemnity insurance *(Required for all volunteers who are acting as a medical, allied health or legal professional whilst on assignment):*

No, this assignment is not deemed to require professional indemnity insurance

he volunteer should consult the partner organisation about the need for professional indemnity insurance for the role prior to departure. Where required and/or considered essential to hold this insurance, please discuss this with the Volunteer Services Manager in Melbourne prior to departure.

LIFE AS A VOLUNTEER

The Australian Volunteers Program supports volunteers from preparing to go on assignment through to returning home. For a full breakdown of support provided, including assignment allowances, please visit: <https://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteering/lifestyle-and-support/>

Country context

Learn more about the host country's location by reading the country profile. We encourage candidates to research the specific location of this assignment, as it will be discussed and addressed with a recruitment officer during the interview process.

For more information, please visit country links: <https://www.australianvolunteers.com/countries/sri-lanka> and <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/sri-lanka>

HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be submitted online through the Australian Volunteers Program website. If you have not already done so, you will need to register on our website prior to applying. For more information about how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteering/how-it-works>

We actively support and encourage people of all backgrounds and abilities to volunteer internationally and aim to make the program as accessible and inclusive as possible. The program has a dedicated Indigenous Programs Coordinator to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander volunteers, who can be contacted at indigenouspathways@australianvolunteers.com. Access and inclusion plans are available for volunteers with disabilities to ensure their assignments and living and working arrangements are made more accessible.

Personal circumstances *(This may not apply for Remote-only assignments; consider discussing with AVP team)*

Due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions associated with this location, we ask that applicants disclose the following:

- If they want their same-sex partner to accompany them on an assignment.
- If they want their partner, to whom they are not legally married, to accompany them on an assignment.
- If they want their child(ren) to accompany them on an assignment.
- If they have a criminal conviction where a criminal conviction may be relevant to the inherent requirements of the assignment.