



ACEC Wisconsin - Connector Program (Pilot Phase)

ACEC Wisconsin is committed to making our events an inclusive environment where all attendees feel a sense of welcome and belonging. To help achieve this – we are offering a Connector Program to pair attendees who are very comfortable and connected with another person who does not yet have a sense of belonging and confidence at our events.

PROGRAM INTENT

This program is intended to be a way for individuals to feel included and develop a sense of inclusion and belonging at ACEC Wisconsin events.

This looks like:

- Listening to and amplifying underrepresented voices
- Respecting and appreciating all attendees' backgrounds and cultural values
- Giving credit where credit is due
- Interrupting harmful language or behavior in the moment
- Greeting people warmly, by preferred name, and creating a rapport
- Remain engaged with the individual during the meeting from beginning to end

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Connector

As a connector, you are asked to be friendly, supportive and inclusive as you help your paired connectee navigate and build confidence attending the specifically assigned ACEC WI Event.

As a connector, you are committing to do the following:

- Have a 15-minute pre-meeting (virtual) prior to the event to get to know the connectee and determine a meeting point and time for the event.
 - Discuss the event and what to expect including typical dress code and any other tips/tricks that will make them feel comfortable and prepared for the event.
- Meet with the connectee on the day of the event on time at the location described.
- Spend the day of the event with the connectee doing the following:
 - Connecting them to at least 5 people that you know who will make them feel included and welcomed.
 - Sit with them at lunch and facilitate connections.
- Fill out a brief, follow-up survey to help ACEC Wisconsin improve the program.
- Continue to be a friendly face at future meetings, briefly checking in to gauge comfort and confidence in the event setting.



Connectee

As a connectee, you are committing to do the following:

- Attend the 15-minute pre-meeting (virtual) prior to the event to get to know the connector and determine a meeting point and time for the event.
- Meet with the connector the day of the event on time and at the desired location.
- Be an active participant throughout the day.
 - Engage with the people that your connector introduces you to.
- Fill out a brief, follow-up survey after the event to help ACEC Wisconsin improve the program.

All Participants

Approaching life with genuine curiosity toward others and different life experiences enables us to widen our view and broaden our perspectives so we can begin to replace our assumptions and stereotypes with more empathy and understanding. Here are a few conversation starters and/or questions that will allow you to be curious and get to know the other person:

- What is your name?
 - Any significance to how you got your name?
- Where do you live?
 - Have you always lived there?
 - Where did you grow up?
- Tell me about your family.
 - Do you have any siblings?
- Where do you work?
 - What do you like about your job?
 - How long have you been there?
- Do you like to travel?
 - Where have you gone recently/favorite place you've been?
- What do you do for fun? Do you have any hobbies?
 - How long have you been doing these things?



Commonly asked questions:

Is this a mentor program?

No, this is not a mentor program. The intent is to have a friendly face at events so connectees do not feel overwhelmed and nervous to break into conversations, wonder who to sit with at lunch, and navigate the event environment. Participants in the program understand that this is intended to be a short commitment to build confidence and belonging at ACEC Wisconsin events.

This was great, but one event was not enough for me to feel a sense of belonging, can I request a connector again?

Absolutely – you can request a connector for as long as you need to feel comfortable and welcome at ACEC Wisconsin Events. You may or may not get the same connector as before, but please do say hello to your previous connector if you see them!