

THE ALIYAH PROJECT EVALUATION

FEBRUARY 2021



LAAMICA

CREATING NEW PATHWAYS FOR BLACK, ASIAN, MINORITY ETHNIC,
REFUGEE AND MIGRANT WOMEN IN CAMDEN AND ISLINGTON

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ABOUT LAAMIGA

At Laamiga we are passionate about creating pathways for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, Refugee and Migrant women. We are a small but impactful charity run by inspirational women and it is our mission to motivate other women and provide support to overcome any barriers in their career aspirations. Laamiga was awarded funding from the European Social Fund to deliver a new employability programme, the Aliyah project. The Aliyah project was created to further extend our commitment to women, enabling a cohort of mentees to identify their own skills and ambitions, and develop plans to reach their potential.

“The Aliyah Project has provided me with training and increased my knowledge. I have done things out of my comfort zone such as attending a summer entrepreneurs' programme and workshops to improve my interview skills. My mentor has listened and understood me, without judgement. She has supported, encouraged and helped me to reach my goals. She is kind and empathetic and I appreciate her taking the time to be my mentor.”

- Quote from Mentee



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THE ALIYAH PROJECT

The Aliyah project was launched in February 2020, to support 12 women to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence to fulfil their potential. The programme was designed to include a combination of workshops, seminars, group sessions, action learning sets and one-to-one mentoring, in order to upskill, encourage and motivate women to take the next steps in their careers.

The Aliyah project was promoted locally via community organisations, parenting groups, schools, local job centres, volunteering centres and libraries, in order to raise the profile of the programme locally in Camden, Islington and the surrounding boroughs. Women joined the programme as Aliyah project mentees and began their journey on the programme by completing their registration forms and completing an individual action plan. The women were provided with an overview of the programme and put in touch with a volunteer mentor to access one-to-one mentoring. Mentors completed a coming on board process and further training, and were provided with a mentor handbook that outlined their role in detail.

The initial sessions began face to face at a local training venue. However due to the pandemic the programme was moved online to adhere to the guidelines set by the government. Elements of the project were repurposed to ensure the mentees were able to gain the best possible experience from the programme. As agreed with the funder, mentees were able to access financial support towards their monthly Internet usage, to allow them join the programme online. Mentees were also provided with financial assistance of up to £160 to help them complete an additional skilled-based training course.

During the pandemic mentees received well-being calls and mentors' roles became even more essential in building mentees' self-confidence and reaffirming learning gained during group sessions. All mentees were able to join group workshops online covering a number of topics to help improve their skills, knowledge and confidence. These included problem solving, motivation and resilience, time management, business skills, returning to work, personal branding and a CV masterclass. The Aliyah project organised action learning sets, well-being sessions and opportunities for mentees to connect online and grow their network.



MENTEE DATA

Number of participants: **12 Mentees**

Age

- 15% of the women are aged 25-40
- 46% of the women are aged 41-55
- 39% of the women are aged 56-65

Ethnicity

- 8 % of the women are White and Black Caribbean
- 8% of the women are White and Black African
- 8% of the women are African
- 15% of the women are Caribbean
- 23% of the women are Arab
- 38 % of the women are Black British, African / Caribbean

Disability

- 18 % of the women have a disability

Education history

- 46% of the women have completed further education
- 23% of the women have completed higher education

Employment history

- 77% of participants were looking for work or volunteering
- 100% of participants had volunteered in the past 47%
- of the women expressed that they had low self-confidence about work

"In February when the pandemic started it was a struggle. But I kept going, knowing the group came together each month. Hearing people sharing their experiences helped a lot. Everything was going wrong for me but I persevered. The Aliyah project really helped with my self-confidence and I got onto a nutrition course to further my career within the fitness industry."

- Quote from Mentee



IMPACT

Many of the mentees joined the project because they lacked the confidence and knowledge to take the next steps in their business and/or employment plans. Laamiga mentees have been on a journey of self-development and growth.

- **12 mentees** were supported to gain the confidence, skills and knowledge to enter training or employment reaching their potential
- **12 volunteers** were allocated to individual mentees and committed to supporting their mentees
- **15 groups sessions**
- **1 celebration event**
- **100% mentee retention**; all the mentees successfully completed the programme
- **80% or more mentees** joined the online group sessions and workshops
- **50% of the mentees** are now employed

“I was inspired to join the Aliyah Project because I wanted to spend some time giving back to my community outside of my corporate role. As a mentor I was hoping to be able to give a mentee encouragement and support her career development; whether that was starting a course, gaining employment or exploring her own business idea.”

– Quote from Mentor



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Aliyah mentees and mentors were invited to an online event in December 2020 to acknowledge and celebrate their commitment to the project. The event was opportunity for participants to share their experiences with the rest of then group.

“The Aliyah project has been a fundamental support in the midst of everything that was happening with the pandemic. The programme has empowered me to make significant progress towards launching my own business and having the confidence to try new things. I am so thankful for this opportunity.”

– Quote from Mentee

Thanks to Emua, I am grateful to have met my mentor. It has been amazing to be a part of the Aliyah Project, I was very happy to grow as a person and honoured to meet lovely women and share experiences”

– Quote from Mentee



SUMMARY

Despite the challenges faced by the pandemic the Aliyah project was a great success! Every mentee that enrolled the project in February 2020 remained committed to working towards self-improvement and engaged with all elements of the programme. Mentors have been a huge asset, providing time and space for each mentee to have access to tailored one-to-one support.

The Project Coordinator was able to transform the programme online and maintain the quality and value of the project. The blended learning approach of face-to-face and online delivery has been well received by mentees and Laamiga will explore this flexibility in future projects as it will enable them to reach more women. Aliyah mentees have grown in confidence and are equipped to take the next steps in their careers.

Aliyah mentees have:

- **Progressed onto further training**
- **Secured an internship**
- **Become self-employed**
- **Are now employed**

“I am very thankful for being a part of Laamiga and the Aliyah Project. I suffer from anxiety and low confidence and I find interviews very stressful and this situation makes my anxiety worse. As a result I have avoided interviews but this year I realised that if I did not overcome this fear I would not progress in my career. I decided to apply for a job, that I saw, because I could no longer let my fears and anxiety stop me from reaching my potential in life. I got through to the interview stages, and, even though my anxiety was at a high level, I managed to impress the organisation on both interviews and I was offered the internship!” -

– Quote from Mentee