

ECR mentoring program

**Welcome booklet:
useful hints for mentors and mentees**



DEPARTMENT OF PAEDIATRICS
Medical Sciences Division



**Early Career Researchers Committee
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**Dear participants of the ECR mentoring scheme –
Dear mentors and mentees,**

We would like to welcome you and thank you for the interest in the participation in this scheme. Mentoring provides great opportunities to both sides: for mentees to critically evaluate their career path and gain insights and experience from their mentor, for mentors – to build a new type of relationship and expand their network, to gain in confidence and enhance their communication skills. However, mentoring is not limited to these benefits, it's all about proactive and open communication, active listening, support and exchange.

In this booklet, we aim to provide some useful hits, which should help you to make the most out of this connection along with some organisational suggestions.

If you have any further questions or ideas, please, contact the ECR committee directly. We are here to help and assist you through this journey.

Wishing you fruitful discussions and lots of success in your research,

Your Early Career Researchers Committee.

Duration and structure of the program

Mentees will be matched with mentors who are PIs from a different lab group. Where possible this will take into account the particular interest of the mentee (e.g. clinical academic career, teaching etc).

The proposed duration of the mentorship scheme is one academic year. However, you are more than welcome to expand it further or continue to communicate with your mentee/mentor either formally, as a part of the program, or informally after this period.

There is no defined schedule for the meetings and their frequency. A 1-hour meeting once per term serves as a good starting point. Meetings would not normally be more than once a term unless agreed by beforehand by both parties. It is the responsibility of the mentee to communicate and arrange times suitable for both sides.

From the previous experience, we suggest that meetings should be regular, the frequency can vary depending on the needs and availability of the mentors and mentees. It might be useful to also meet occasionally at a different time, for example, if a specific issue or topic needs to be discussed within a particular timeframe (for example, submission of a grant or job application), but this should be agreed upon in advance.

Some basic hits and advice

The mentorship scheme is designed to bring together a mentee, who wants to receive some external independent advice and opinions on their research and career path, and a mentor, who is willing to support, advise and promote the development of their mentee. Their research focus and interests don't have to be similar, as mentorship is different from supervision. Moreover, mentor and mentee are not related via financial or formal (management) relationships; this allows building a trustable connection, where the advices and opinions are expected to be kept between them two and not shared elsewhere without agreement.

For mentees:

- Be proactive, approach the mentor and setup the meetings
- Think of the questions and topic in advance, write them down
- Prepare and update your CV, as it is a good overview of your career path, which is useful to share with your mentor

- Ask the mentor of their expectations from you
- It might be helpful to keep track of the things you discuss and your progress on various aspects through a shared document (on MS teams or Google), which you would fill in before the meetings and as you meet.

For mentors:

- Be respectful to your mentee, listen and ask about their interests and priorities
- Remember that your mentee might see the program differently – clarify individual needs and agree on the format together
- Setup clear expectations of the meetings, define the best ways of communication (for example, whether you prefer the meetings to be structured or more informal; if you expect something to be prepared in advance then share this with your mentee)
- Build plans together and check progress regularly, be supportive but honest in your advice.

Feedback

So we can improve the scheme in the future to help you and other mentors and mentees, we will ask you for your feedback and suggestions (through the email or formal questionnaires) at least two times during the program. We encourage you to share your opinion on the program and thank you for your participation.

We hope you enjoy your mentoring relationship!