MENTORING FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS
Reach your Goals

IMPROVE
DEVELOP
INSTRUCT
MOTIVATE
SUPPORT
INSPIRE

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

land-wirtschaftliche fakultät

CONTENT

MENTORING IN SCIENCE

Mentoring programs in the science system are characterized by great benefit for all participants. They strengthen the interdisciplinary, cross-hierarchical networking of the participants as well as their integration into the scientific community.

The mentees benefit in particular from the strong empowerment provided by their mentors. At the same time, the mentoring process contributes to the development of the personality and sharpens the leadership and scientific profiles of the mentees. Mentoring gives mentees the chance to explore structures, processes, and informal rules of the game within and outside the science system.

Mentors expand their advisory and gender competence by assuming additional responsibility as a leader through their involvement in the personal development of young scientists. In addition, they gain insights into the living and working environments of upcoming generations as well as into specific fields of research.

M E N T O R

SUPPORT & EXCHANGE

M E N T E E

Role Model & Experience

Advisor & Counselor

Supporter & Contacts

Career Goals & Realization

Confidence & Self-Reflection

Openness & Esteem

PREREQUISITES OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

There are a number of prerequisites for a successful mentoring relationship all of which help both the mentor as well as their mentee to best fulfill their role. The mentor-mentee relationship is built upon these qualities and characteristics and should be lived practice by both sides:

Voluntariness
Mentee and mentor participate in the program voluntarily.

Independence
There is no direct relationship of dependency between mentee and mentor.

Personal Contact
The personal contact (face-to-face) of the tandems already at the beginning or during the mentoring process is important and can be supplemented by mail correspondence, telephone calls or video conferences.

Confidentiality
Mentoring discussions take place in a protected setting and are to be treated in strict confidence by the participants.

Commitment
The binding and reliable handling of appointments and agreements is an essential prerequisite for a successful mentoring relationship.

Expectations and Agreement
At the beginning of the mentoring, concrete expectations and agreements on the formal goal, rules for establishing contact and feedback have to be set.

FINDING A MENTOR

When registering for mentoring, mentees propose a mentor of their choice. Possible criteria include gender, professional orientation, relevance of professional proximity, family responsibilities, leadership experience, and geographic proximity.

In general, people from all sectors can be considered as mentors - e.g., from industry, government agencies, non-profit sector, academia, as well as freelancers and the self-employed. The decisive factor is that a mentor has already successfully followed the career path you are aiming for.

Before you start searching for a mentor, make sure that you have figured out your career goals and ask yourself:

- Which language would you prefer?

- Which gender would you prefer for an exchange?

- What expectations do you have of your mentor?

- In which areas would you like special support?

- Which questions would you like to discuss?

- Should your mentor come from the same or similar research area or field of experience?

Tips on Finding a Mentor

- Online Networks like XING, LinkedIn, etc. offer a large network of experts.

- Seminars, workshops and conferences might help finding a suitable person among the speakers or other contacts you have made.

- Check your personal network if there are people who interest you or ask if someone can recommend a mentor to you.

- Check your professional environment if you can find people who have left academia and are now working in industry or other fields that interest you.

- Revise your own profile in online networks or on the website of your institution! Sometimes potential mentors will have a look before agreeing to be contacted.

STRUCTURE OF THE MENTORING PROGRAM

The program structure of the PostDoc Mentoring is based on an one-to-one mentoring. The aim is to provide individual support by a person with professional experience from the career field the mentee is aiming for, either within or outside of academia.
The application phase will be taking place annually in summer. The selection process begins at the end of the application period. A maximum of 8 mentees per period (12 month) are accepted.
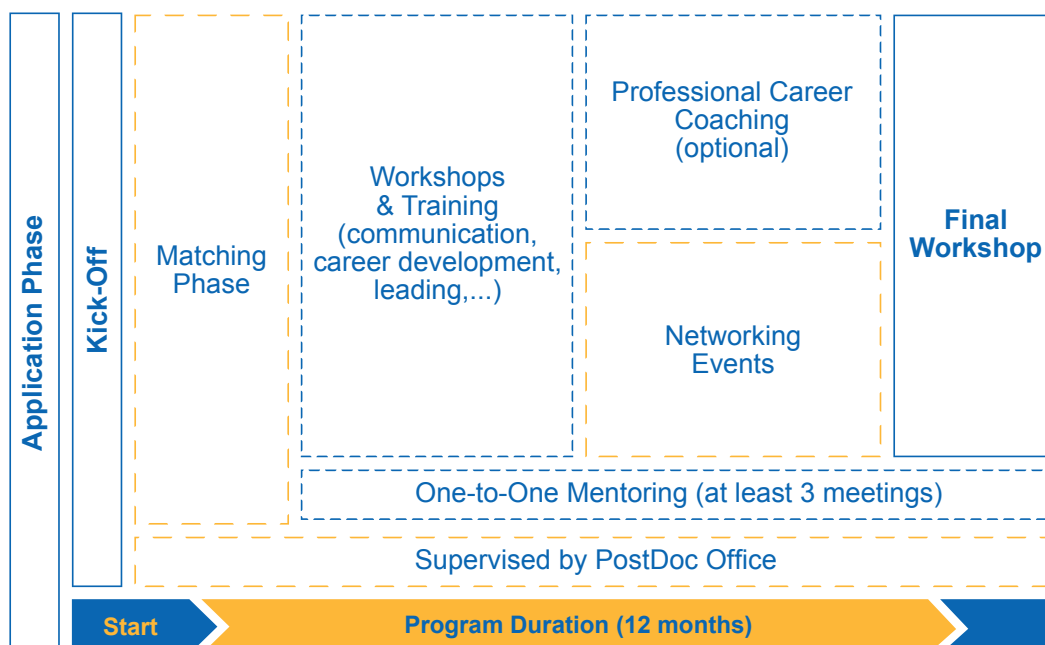
Important Dates & Deadlines
Application Phase: May - July
Application Deadline: July 31st
Kick-Off Meeting: September

MENTORING FROM START TO FINISH

Application Phase	Kick-Off	Matching Phase	Workshops & Training (communication, career development, leading,...)	Professional Career Coaching (optional)	Final Workshop
				Networking Events	

One-to-One Mentoring (at least 3 meetings)

Supervised by PostDoc Office

Start → **Program Duration (12 months)** →

OVERVIEW OF THE MENTORING PROCESS

If you are interested in this mentoring offer, you can contact the Postdoc Office of the Faculty of Agriculture at any time. You are welcome to send your application (yearly deadline July, 31) to **forschung@lwf.uni-bonn.de**.

The following gives an overview of the mentoring process.

Indication of Interest to Postdoc Office

First contact by phone or e-mail without any obligations

Clarification of initial questions

Submission of Required Documents

Application Form

CV & Letter of Motivation

Suggestions for mentors/Expectations towards the mentors

Check-In Interview with Postdoc Office

Clarification of goals

Expectations

Matching Process: Mentee – Mentor

Contact from mentee to mentor

Start of mentoring work (12 months)

Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback talk with PostDoc Office after termination of mentoring

APPENDIX

Guiding Questions – Letter of Motivation

- What are your wishes with regards to starting a mentoring relationship?

- What are your personal and professional goals you would like to work on with a mentor?

- What about your pursued career path (e.g. Professorship, science management,...)? Explain your point of view. What questions arise with regards to your future career path?

- Propose a mentor!

- What else is important to you?

You will find these application documents on the following pages:

- Application Form for Participation in the DETECT PostDoc Mentoring Program

- Target Agreement Between Mentor and Mentee

- Template for the Mentoring Conversation in the DETECT PostDoc Mentoring Program

Application Form for Participation in the DETECT PostDoc Mentoring Program

Your details will of course be treated confidentially and will not be passed on to third parties. They are used to prepare for a personal interview to which you – as a potential mentee – will be invited in advance.

Personal Data

Name, First Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Marital State / Children: _____

Contact Info

Street Address: _____

Zip Code / City: _____

Phone (Private): _____

E-Mail (Private): _____

Institute Information

Institute Name: _____

Street: _____

Zip Code / City: _____

Phone (Business): _____

E-mail (Business): _____

Doctoral Degree

Subject in which you have been awarded your doctorate:

_____

Topic of Dissertation:

_____

Start of Doctorate:_____   Completion of Doctorate:_____

Please specify three goals you want to achieve during the DETECT mentoring program.

How do you want your mentor to support you?

Indication of a Mentor

Please suggest two potential mentors using the following form

Preferred Mentor 1

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Reasons why you have chosen the person:

_____

Preferred Mentor 2

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Reasons why you have chosen the person:

_____

Target Agreement Between Mentor and Mentee

Dear mentees and mentors,

This proposal for a target agreement can be used as a guideline for the first meeting.

It serves to clarify the objectives and content of the mentoring process as well as to define the framework conditions of your cooperation in the coming 12 months. You can also modify this guideline according to your wishes.

We wish you a good start for your collaboration!

Target Agreement on the Design of the One-to-One Mentoring

between   _____(mentor)

and   _____(mentee)

Within the framework of the DETECT PostDoc Mentoring Program of the University of Bonn, we would like to work together as a mentoring tandem.

For this purpose we agree on the following:

1. We will meet regularly _____(X times) during the program runtime (12 month).
2. The time interval between meetings will be a maximum of _____.
3. A meeting will take about _____(30 to 90min).
4. The initiative for arranging the meetings is/are made by _____(mentee/ both sides).
5. We agree on the following as the predominant form of contact:
   - ☐ Personal meetings
   - ☐ Phone
   - ☐ Email

Objectives

We have defined the following objectives for the course of the DETECT PostDoc mentoring:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Topics/Content

We agree on the following content/topics:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Basic principles for the One-to-One Mentoring

We are both willing to,

- respect each other's privacy and boundaries.
- to keep the content of our conversations confidential.
- to talk about topics / contents of our mentoring partnership only with third parties, if we have made an explicit agreement about this.
- to continue the obligation to maintain confidentiality even after the mentoring for postdocs has ended.
- to take responsibility for the success of the mentoring partnership.
- to take advantage of support (e.g., from the coordination team) if problems arise.
- to always seek open and constructive feedback.

_____   _____

Place, date   Place, date

_____   _____

Signature of mentee   Signature of mentor

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Template for the Mentoring Conversation in the DETECT PostDoc Mentoring Program

Date: _____

Location: _____

My aim for the conversation:

Contents
Which topics have been addressed?
What was particularly interesting and important?

Recommendations/Advice

What do I notice regarding my aim for the conversation?

What should I take into account?

What do I want to implement?

Following Action Steps

Which questions could be clarified?

Which questions do I want to follow up on?

What should be discussed at the next meeting?

Date of the next meeting: _____