



MENTORING FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS

Focus on your development

CONTENT

What is mentoring?	3
What is mentoring useful for?	4
Who is this offer aimed at?	5
Roles and responsibilities	6
Who are the mentors?	7
How does the application phase work?	8
An overview of the mentoring process	9
Planning and designing mentoring conversations	10
Appendix	
Guiding questions for the letter of motivation	11
Guiding questions for the selection of the mentor	11
Copy template for the mentoring conversation	12
Publication Details	14



All information also online
<https://go.fzj.de/mentoringcc>

WHAT IS MENTORING?



In mentoring, young professionals are brought together with mentors with professional and leadership experience, within the framework of temporary cooperation. By passing on their experience, the mentors support their mentees in their personal and professional development. Therefore mentoring offers in companies, organisations and higher education institutions are targeted instruments of personnel development and promotion of young talents.

The goals of mentoring can be very diverse. A professional exchange can, but does not necessarily have to be part of a mentoring relationship. The focus is rather on the personal and professional development of the mentees. It is important to clearly define and record the goals for the period of cooperation in advance.

Overall, it is an intensive, confidential and personal contact at eye level over a defined period of time. In order to shape this relationship in the best possible way, great value is also placed on the fit between mentee and mentor. The individual goals of the mentee can be pursued through prior clarification of expectations on the collaboration and concrete agreements on the mentoring relationship.

WHAT IS MENTORING USEFUL FOR?

The communication within the mentoring relationship and the elaboration of topics can be individually shaped. It is important to focus on certain topics together with the mentors and to constantly reflect on, discuss, and develop them within the framework of the collaboration.

For example, the focus can be on the following areas:

- Support for personal development and professional advancement
- Receiving professional and/or personal feedback
- Promoting visibility and recognition in science and/or society (scientific outreach)
- Expanding (in)formal knowledge in science and/or economy in Germany as well as in an international context
- Expansion of the professional network

In total three possible target fields can be defined, which however, do not all have to be part of the mentoring:



Development of individual career strategies



Further development of interdisciplinary competences



Expansion of the professional network

WHO IS THIS OFFER AIMED AT?

The mentoring offer of the Career Center & Postdoc Office is aimed at:

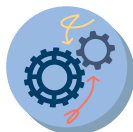
- Doctoral researchers in the final year of their doctorate
- Postdocs

The offer is suitable for doctoral researchers and postdocs who wish to pursue the goals described above for their personal and professional development.

The preconditions for the success of the mentoring relationship on part of the mentees are openness to new perspectives, acquisition of personal responsibility and personal initiative.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



MENTEE	MENTOR
<p>Role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Engine of the relationship”, determines the focus and acts proactively • Develops and sets goals for the mentoring relationship • Takes advice and engages in self-reflection • Wants to develop personally and professionally 	<p>Role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares experiences and informs • Provides insights into areas and fields of work • Observes, gives feedback, encourages, makes suggestions • Supports strategy development and introduces into networks
<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profits from experience already gained • Expansion of the network • Possibility to get to know and assess the own personality as well as social, communicative and professional skills better • Can compare structures of the own professional world with those of others in order to derive suggestions for the own career/situation 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility to reflect on own leadership behaviour • Can get new impulses for own professional development • Can strengthen own competences and external image • Opportunity to make new contacts

WHO ARE THE MENTORS?

When registering for mentoring, mentees define the expectations they have of their potential mentors. Possible criteria are gender, professional orientation, relevance of professional proximity, responsibility for family, leadership experience and geographical proximity. Based on these wishes and expectations, suitable mentors are identified and approached by the Career Center & Postdoc Office. The pool, consisting of internal and external experienced scientists, science managers and people from the private sector, helps to identify and assign mentors and mentees. In addition, the independent selection and approach of mentors by the mentees is possible and also desired.



In order to create a professional and valuable mentoring atmosphere for both sides, the Career Center & Postdoc Office also pays attention to the following aspects during matching:

- Independence
- Confidentiality
- Commitment

HOW DOES THE APPLICATION PHASE WORK?

If you are interested in this mentoring offer, you can apply at the Career Center & Postdoc Office at any time.

You are welcome to send your application or any questions in advance to the Career Center & Postdoc Office mail address [✉ career-center@fz-juelich.de](mailto:career-center@fz-juelich.de).

One of the two career counsellors, Andrea Bosten or Viola Middendorf, will then contact you for further information.



Helpful guiding questions
see [» P. 11](#)

The following documents are required for the application:

- A curriculum vitae
- A short letter of motivation, which describes your personal goals and clarifies your individual wishes for the offer
- A short input on your expectations of the mentor

The career counselors will then make an appointment for a personal check-in interview with you, in order to initiate the matching process in the best possible way according to your individual goals.

All personal data is treated confidentially and in accordance with data protection regulations at all times during the process.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE MENTORING PROCESS

Indication of interest to Career Center & Postdoc Office

First of all, contact us by phone or mail without obligation.
([» P. 14](#)) We can then clarify initial questions together.

Submission of all required documents

Submit your CV, letter of motivation and expectations of the mentors [» appendix P. 11](#).

Check-in interview with Career Center & Postdoc Office (clarification of goals, expectations,...)

Together with a career counselor, you set the goals for your mentoring and define the requirements for the mentor.

Matching process: mentee – mentor

Based on your requirements, we will make a proposal for a suitable mentoring relationship. It is also possible for you to suggest a mentor who we will approach as part of the matching process.

Contact from mentee to mentor

Start of mentoring work (approx. 6 – 12 months)

You start the mentoring by contacting your mentor.
Together you agree on the duration, type and frequency of the exchange.

Evaluation after termination of the mentoring with the Career Center & Postdoc Office

After completing your mentoring, you give us feedback and evaluate the offer.

PLANNING AND DESIGNING MENTORING CONVERSATIONS

An important component of mentoring are the mentoring conversations, where the mentees and mentors have time to exchange.

The mentees receive a guide from the career counselors of the Career Centre and Postdoc Office as a preparation for the conversation.

The number and type of the talks can be arranged individually, but the initiative is taken by the mentee. It is also important to have a comprehensive preparation and follow-up, as well as a record of the discussed contents so that important findings and, if necessary, needs for improvement can be recorded.

In principle an atmosphere of trust as well as space for self-reflection and constructive feedback should always be maintained on both sides of the mentoring relationship.

The Career Center & Postdoc Office is always available to answer questions or provide support throughout the process.

In the course of the mentoring relationship, it is advisable to draw an interim conclusion after a few months.



Template for the mentoring conversations

» P. 12

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE LETTER OF MOTIVATION

In your letter of motivation please answer the following key questions:

- What wishes do you have with regard to starting a mentoring relationship?
- What personal and professional goals would you like to work on through the exchange with the mentor?
- What career path do you want to pursue (e.g. professorship, science management ...)? Please explain your point of view. What questions arise with regard to your future career path?
- What position should your mentor have? What field of work should they work in? What other characteristics are important to you?
- What else is important to you? What else would you like to tell us?

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF THE MENTOR

In preparation for selecting a mentor, please think about your expectations of the mentor:

- In which areas would you like special support? Which questions would you like to discuss?
- The mentoring relationship is essentially based on cooperation between mentee and mentor. What expectations do you have of your mentor?
- In which areas of work should your mentor have experience?
- If possible, would you like to be matched with a mentor from the same or similar research area or field of experience?
- Do you prefer an exchange with a male or female mentor?
- In which language should the exchange take place (English/German)?

Recommendations/Advice:

What do I notice regarding my aim for the conversation?

What should I take into account?

What do I want to implement?

The 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?

When will the next conversation take place?

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Mentoring for Young Scientists **Published by:** Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH · 52425 Jülich, Germany **Conception and editing:** Andrea Bosten · Career Center & Postdoc Office **Contact:** Career Center & Postdoc Office · Tel. +49 2461 61-85407 · career-center@fz-juelich.de **Pictures:** Eva Künzel **Layout and printing:** Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH

