

National Science Foundation— Postdoctoral Researcher (PR) Mentoring Plan

[Note: The following mentoring plan is an example. The specific mentoring plan a PI develops should fit the project, the department's goals, and the needs of the postdoctoral researcher(s) to be mentored.]

The **goal** of the mentoring plan is to provide the skills, knowledge, and experiences necessary to prepare PRs to excel in their chosen career path. Specific elements of the mentoring plan will include:

- **Orientation** will include in-depth conversations between <PI name> and the PR. To assist in the expectation setting process, the PR and PI are encouraged to complete the Initial Meeting Template/Worksheet for Postdoc and Mentor as well as annual review meetings. In addition to the orientation meeting between the PR and PI, the Harvard University FAS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs offers a New Postdoc Orientation program every other month.
- **Career Counseling/Advising** will be provided in part by <PI name>. PRs at Harvard University also have access to individual career counseling appointments with the Director of the FAS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. This office also offers a comprehensive workshop schedule that includes both career and professional development events.
- **Experience with Grant Proposals** will be gained by direct involvement in proposals prepared by <PI name>. PRs will have an opportunity to learn best practices in proposal preparation, including identification of key research questions, definition of objectives, description of approach and rationale, and construction of a work plan, timeline, and budget. PRs will also have access to sample successful and unsuccessful grants, as well as grant writing tips and assistance, via Harvard Catalyst.
- **Publications and Presentations** are expected to result from the work supported by the grant. These will be prepared under the direction of <PI name> and in collaboration with researchers at Harvard University as appropriate. PRs will receive guidance and training in the preparation of manuscripts for scientific journals and presentations at conferences. Additionally, PRs will have access to courses on Effective Presentation Skills via the Harvard University BRIDGE Program. To assist in travel to present research at conferences, PRs will be eligible to apply to the Postdoctoral Awards for Professional Development, sponsored by the FAS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.
- **Teaching and Mentoring Skills** will be developed in the context of regular meetings within their research group during which graduate students and PRs describe their work to colleagues within the group and assist each other with solutions to challenging research problems, often resulting in cross-fertilization of ideas.
- **Instruction in Professional Practices** will be provided on a regular basis in the context of the research work and will include fundamentals of the scientific method, laboratory safety, and other standards of professional practice. In addition, PRs will be encouraged to affiliate with one or more professional societies in their chosen field. PRs will also have access to “Responsible Conduct of Research,” a training course on campus at Harvard University that meets for 2 hours of class time per week for 7 or 8 weeks, plus case studies and readings.
- **Technology Transfer** activities will include regular contact with researchers at Harvard University. PRs will be given an opportunity to become familiar with the university-industry relationship, including applicable confidentiality requirements and preparation of invention disclosure applications via Harvard University's Office of Technology Development.
- **Success of the Mentoring Plan** will be assessed by tracking the Postdoctoral Researcher's progress toward his/her research and career goals.