

Win4Science Mentorship program – Guide introduction

Aims of the Mentoring program

The main goal of the Win4Science Mentoring program is to connect female graduate students, postdocs and professors of the Life Science departments, as well as with professionals working outside academia, into mentoring groups. During mentoring group meetings, mentees can gain knowledge, advice, and valuable experience from their mentor and peers. This program also aims to create a community, foster diversity and inclusivity, provide a framework to drive rich learning and professional development for students and young scientists. The program provides networking opportunities for both mentors and mentees. We are hoping to provide greater visibility to women in the field of Life Sciences and embolden the next generations of scientists to pursue their ambitions to greatness.

Mentoring groups consist of one mentor (professors, postdocs or early investigators) and 3-4 mentees (graduate students, postdocs or early investigators). Groups are usually composed of people coming from different departments and that are at different study/career stages. Mentoring groups are expected to meet at least 3 times during the academic year. Composition of mentoring groups will change every year so that members are exposed to several mentoring styles and connect with many different peers throughout their training years.

**For more information or for any inquiries related to the mentoring program,
please contact the program coordinator Anne-Sophie Pépin via email:
anne-sophie.pepin@mail.mcgill.ca**

Win4Science Mentorship program – Mentor’s Guide

Role of the mentor and definition

A mentor is an experienced person that provides a safe learning environment for mentees to develop skills and enhance professional and personal growth. A mentor can provide help, share resources and networks to guide and assist mentees during their learning process.

After the meetings

Inform the coordinator when a meeting is taking place, as well as attendance. This is to keep track of mentoring connection activities as well as to obtain feedback on the program.

Connection duration

Connections with mentees are expected to last a maximum of one year. Mentoring groups will be created at the beginning of every academic year and will be composed of one mentor and 2-4 mentees that are at different training levels and are from different departments. Composition of mentoring groups will change every year so that members will have the opportunity to be exposed to several mentors and peers throughout their training.

Expectations

Mentors are expected to meet with each of their mentees three times a year. Meetings can be one-on-one (mentor-mentee) or within a group (multiple mentees with their shared mentor).

Non-disclosure agreement – safe space

Every mentor enrolled in the program must sign a confidentiality agreement form annually through registration.

Benefits to be a mentor

Being a mentor is a great opportunity to:

- gain satisfaction by sharing learnings, knowledge and experience
- be recognized as a visible role model and mentor and a leader by students, faculty and staff
- include being a “mentor” with our program on your CV, LinkedIn account and others
- learn from your mentees’ background and history to enhance professional and personal development
- increase networking by making more connections with other mentors and faculty

Win4Science Mentorship program – Mentee’s Guide

Role of the mentee and definition

A mentee is a person that is being mentored.

After the meetings

Inform the coordinator when an official meeting took place, as well as attendance. This is to keep track of mentoring connection activities as well as to obtain feedback on the program.

Connection duration

Official connections with mentors are expected to last a maximum of one academic year, unless the connection is renewed.

Mentoring groups will be created at the beginning of every academic year and will be composed of one mentor and 2-4 mentees that are at different training levels and are from different departments. The composition of mentoring groups will change every year so that members will have the opportunity to be exposed to several mentors and peers throughout their training.

Expectations

Mentees are expected to clearly state their expectations as they sign up for the program, as well as with every mentor they are being connected to. Mentees are also expected to ensure that they meet a minimum of three times with their respective mentoring group within an academic year. Mentees should come prepared to their mentoring groups meetings with clear goals and expectations as well as specific topics, questions or skills they would like to learn and discuss.

Non-disclosure agreement – safe space

Every mentee enrolled in the program must sign a confidentiality agreement form annually through the registration form.

Benefits to be a mentee

Being part of a mentoring program is a unique opportunity to:

- learn skills and knowledge that are relevant to specific personal and professional goals
- gain valuable knowledge from mentor’s expertise and experience
- receive critical feedback
- develop management and leadership skills
- network with influential scientists across departments

Win4Science Mentorship program – Discussion facilitator

These questions and topics to discuss are facultative; this list is only to facilitate and enhance discussions if needed, as well as to ensure that everyone's expectations are clear.

Introduction

- Every member can introduce themselves
 - Background
 - Study path
 - Career path
 - Current position, year
 - Research interests

Goals and expectations

- How often would you like to meet as a group?
- Would you prefer meeting one-on-one or as a group?
- Every member should think about their goals and expectations for the mentoring program **beforehand**, and state them at the first session
- Why did you decide to participate in the program?
- What would you like to gain from being a mentor/mentee?
- Have you participated in other mentoring programs in the past?
 - If so, what did you learn?
- What are your short- and long-term professional/personal goals?
- How do you think the mentoring program will help you reach these goals?
- How do you expect your mentoring group sessions to take place?
- What do you think you can bring to your group?/What do you think your group can benefit from having you? (*i.e: ideas, experience, etc. We can all learn something from someone!*)
- What would you like to learn from your mentoring group?

Other topics to discuss or questions to ask to both mentees and mentor

- Difference between mentor, coach, supervisor, sponsor (advocate)
- As a woman, what are the obstacles/challenges you have encountered throughout your career and/or study paths?
- How do you balance work and personal life? Or career and family?
- What was your best mentoring experience?
 - What did she/he bring/teach you?
 - What did you learn from her/him?
 - How did she/he help you progress?
- Skillset for women in science: discuss.
- How can we hack the gender gap as an individual?
- What are strategies taken in your lab to increase inclusivity?
- What are strategies to your success?
- What is something hard but worthwhile that you are proud of?
- How did/can you make the most of your graduate career?

Win4Science Mentorship program – Discussion facilitator

- How did/can you gain communication skills?
- How did/can you gain management skills?
- How did/can you prepare for life after graduate school?
- What factors can affect your selecting of a career path?
- What do you include in your CV? In a cover letter?
- How do you prepare for a job interview?
- What are the best practices to coach and provide feedback?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10? 20?
- What accomplishments do you wish to achieve professionally? Personally?
- What qualities do you look for in a leader?
- Any tips for networking?
- What is your favorite inspirational quote? Why?
- What have been your most effective tools for career development?
- What are mistakes that have stalled or derailed your professional or personal development?
- What is your biggest concern as a trainee? Professor?
- What are some unspoken rules that are important to be successful?
- What are common mistakes trainees make during their graduate studies? Any advices on how to avoid these mistakes?
- What aspects of your job/position (as a professor, student, postdoc, research associate, etc.) is empowering? Which aspects are disempowering?
- What factors hinder your effectiveness? What factors enhance your effectiveness?
- What is the most important contribution you have made throughout your career or training path?
- What has been the most significant change you have experienced in your career or training path? How has that affected you? What have you learned about yourself from experiencing this change?

To discuss towards the end of a meeting

- **What is the one thing you will do differently as a result of your mentoring group meeting session?**
- What did you learn?
- What should we discuss next time?
- What should we prepare for our next mentoring group meeting?
- Set yourself a goal to achieve before your next mentoring group meeting
- When are we meeting next time?

Powerhour discussion facilitator (appended – see next page)

- List of questions that can be discussed at mentoring group meetings
- Questions are grouped by topic and were designed to drive goal-directed discussions related to strategies on how to hack the gender gap

Win4Science mentoring program *Powerhour* – November 7, 2019

Description of event: *The goal of this session is to create a learning-rich environment with **goal- and strategy-directed discussions**. Participants will be split into 6 groups of 5-10 people. Every table will have one hour to answer a list of questions related to a specific topic. All questions are designed for women to think about **strategies to hack the gender gap** and navigate through a scientific career as a woman. There will be one designated note-taker at every table to have (anonymous) records on key take-away messages, tips, advices and strategies. After 45 minutes focused on answering the list of questions, groups will have 15 minutes to reflect on **what they will do differently as a result of their discussions** during the Powerhour. At the end of the event, each table will have the opportunity to share with others what they have learned through this active learning session. Notes taken will be collected in order to create a document that will be incorporated in the Win4Science Mentoring Program Guide, and shared with other members. This document will be used as a **reference of advices for women in science** as well as a discussion facilitator for mentoring group sessions in the future.*

1. Strategies to tackle the imposter syndrome

- Do you have imposter syndrome? Do you chalk your success up to luck/timing/error?
- What external messages have fed your imposter syndrome? How to recognize these messages?
- How do you keep your imposter syndrome under control?
- What are strategies to overcome the imposter syndrome?
- How to sell yourself without under/overselling yourself?
- How do you prepare for interviews?
- Do you believe that “if I can do it, anyone can”? If so, how not to do so?
- Do you agonize over small flaws in your work? If so, how not to do so?
- How do you avoid comparing yourself to others?
- How do you take ownership of your success?
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**

2. Strategies to tackle unconscious biases

- What are your biases? Have you acted to correct them? If so, how?
 - If you have not done a bias test, you can do so by using this link after the event: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/canada/takeatest.html>
 - Feel free to share this link to friends, colleagues, mentors, mentees, etc.!
- What factors contribute to your/others' unconscious bias? / How to recognize them?
- How do you keep unconscious biases under control?
- What are strategies to overcome unconscious biases?
- How to recognize when people have unconscious bias(es) towards you?
- How to tackle peoples' unconscious bias towards you?

- The *To Use Or Not To Use Dictionary* for women in science: Write down 5-10 words to describe yourself. As a team, identify words that could be replaced to overcome gender bias
 - You may refer to this bias corrector
<https://www.catalyst.org/biascorrect/>
 - Feel free to share this link to friends, colleagues, mentors, mentees, etc.!
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**
- 3. Strategies to balance personal life and career
 - What are resources/strategies to manage time? (resources, apps, agenda, etc.)
 - What are resources available for women with young children?
 - What are strategies you have undertaken to reach your goals and your success?
 - How can you make the most of your graduate training/career?
 - How to strategically plan out your career timeline? If you want to have children?
 - Any tips for networking?
 - What are some unspoken rules that are important to be successful?
 - What factors hinder your effectiveness? What factors enhance your effectiveness?
 - What factors can affect your selecting of a career path?
 - Any tips to avoid burnout?
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**
- 4. Mentoring and how to use it wisely
 - What is mentoring for you?
 - What do you value from mentorship? What are the benefits of mentoring **and** being mentored?
 - How to find mentors?
 - How to find networks? Any networking tips?
 - Have you had a mentor in the past? What did you learn from them? What have you gained from mentorship?
 - How to put into actions what you have learned?
 - What are the differences between a mentor, coach, supervisor, sponsor (advocate)?
 - What are the best practices to coach and provide feedback?
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**
- 5. Strategies to educate and share information on challenges faced by women in science
 - How to talk about experiences that we have as women in science without coming across as “angry” or “hysterical feminist”?
 - When is the right time to start to educate someone?
 - What platforms people use to educate on challenges for women in science?
 - What reliable resources are available to refer to someone to inform them on these issues?

- What are strategies taken in your laboratory (current or past) to increase inclusivity?
- What are strategies to elevate women in science?
- What is something special you can do to celebrate women in science on International Women's Day? Or at any time of the year?
- Do you know any other organization/network that have similar goals as Win4Science? What are they, what do they do?
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**

6. Strategies to develop a career skillset

- How can you gain management skills?
- How can you gain communication skills?
- How to prepare a CV? How to prepare a cover letter?
 - The must-do's and must-not-do's
 - What to include, what not to include?
 - How to customize your CV/cover letter for a specific application/job?
- How to prepare for a job interview?
- How to prepare for life after graduate school?
- What factors to take into account to select a career path?
- What have been your most effective tools for career development?
- What are mistakes that have stalled or derailed your professional or personal development? What have you learned from these mistakes?
- How to sell yourself without under/overselling yourself?
- **What is the one thing (or several things) you will do differently as a result of this discussion?**