

SBME's Career Accelerator

WELCOME MENTEE'S!

On behalf of the School of Biomedical Engineering, welcome to SBME's Career Accelerator! We believe you'll benefit from this experience as you gain valuable insights into potential career pathways and build your professional network.

This guidebook¹ was created to support you develop a meaningful mentorship experience. In this guide you'll find information on:

1. Program Overview
2. Expectations
3. Individual Development Plan
4. Plan Development, Refinement & Implementation
5. Advice to a Scientist
6. Evaluation
7. Resources

1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Launched in partnership with STEMCELL Technologies and Advice to a Scientist in 2022, SBME's Career Accelerator offers mentorship opportunities for our graduate students as they identify possible career options and learn how to transition into those careers following training. The program seeks to support you as you build your professional network, explore career pathways, and develop communication and leadership skills.

2.0 EXPECTATIONS

In SBME's Career Accelerator, mentees are encouraged to²:

MANAGE THE RELATIONSHIP – Mentees take equal responsibility for working to build a rapport with their mentors and ensuring that times are booked for meetings. Be prepared with an agenda for your meetings with mentor.

SET CLEAR GOALS – Create SMART goals (see Individual Development Plan). Identify barriers to goal achievement and provide potential solutions. Undertake honest self-assessment regularly. Share mistakes and perceived areas for improvement

BE CLEAR ABOUT OBJECTIVES – Mentees need to consider what they want from their mentors such as: advice about a particular career path, advice about a particular skill set, or some other goal or objective. Mentees communicate these objectives to their mentors, recognizing that these may change

¹ The content for this guidebook was adapted from CIHR's IDP Resource Website: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50516.html>

² Expectations adapted from Faculty of Medicine's [Mentoring Framework](#)

over time. Set goals and timetables for completion of projects and invite reflections on progress towards them.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY THE MENTOR – Mentors may be able to introduce their mentee to others in related fields of study or provide opportunities for social and professional engagement in a variety of communities.

ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN DEVELOPMENT – Mentees must make their own decisions; mentors can provide advice and feedback, but mentees are responsible for their careers.

SEEK INFORMATION – Mentees should come to meetings prepared with questions so that meeting times are focused and useful. Be open to suggestions, advice, feedback. Listen and ask questions. Be open about thoughts and feelings, provide feedback on what works and what does not.

CONFIDENTIALITY – Maintain confidentiality of relationship.

2.2 TIME COMMITMENTS

Students are required to commit to 45-minute meetings every month during the program's cycle (January to April). We encourage virtual meetings to increase accessibility, but pairs are welcome to meet in-person.

2.2 PROGRAM TIMELINE

Date	Milestone
Oct - Nov	Mentee recruitment and selection
December	Mentor-mentee matched
January	Orientation and Program Kick-off event
January	1 st Meeting: AtaS Exploring Science Interview
February	2 nd Meeting: Discuss IDP, develop goals and outcomes
March 15 th , 2024	Submit Exploring Science post-interview deliverables
April	Mentee completes self-evaluation and reviews IDP outcomes with mentor
May 13 th	Evaluation: Final Report (student) & Survey due

3. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SBME's Career Accelerator used an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to identify mentors and match students. An IDP is a tool that supports trainees prepare for the career of their choice by establishing career goals and identifying skill gaps. Through the IDP, mentors are matched with students whose career goals are a good fit.

Through the initial IDP, students will have the opportunity for self-evaluation and reflection, and together with their mentor, will develop an action plan to track goals and progress. The IDP will also serve as a communication tool, enabling both parties to set expectations and training outcomes.

For more information about IDP's, [please visit CIHR's IDP Resource website.](#)

3.2 GOAL SETTING

During your 2nd meeting, you'll review and discuss your IDP. Please seek your mentor's input for goal setting and plan development. This will involve an insightful discussion between the mentor and student. Please use the content and reflections from Steps 1, 2 and 3 to develop goals and make plans for implementation (Steps 4 & 5) (Figure 1). We have provided an example IDP template which was developed by CIHR to support planning for Steps 4 and 5.

CIHR's IDP Template

Through quarterly check-ins, you'll be able to assess progress and outcomes and set new goals (Steps 4 & 5). At the end of the program, SBME will ask mentors and mentees to reflect on their outcomes and evaluate success based on the goals laid out in the IDP (Step 6).

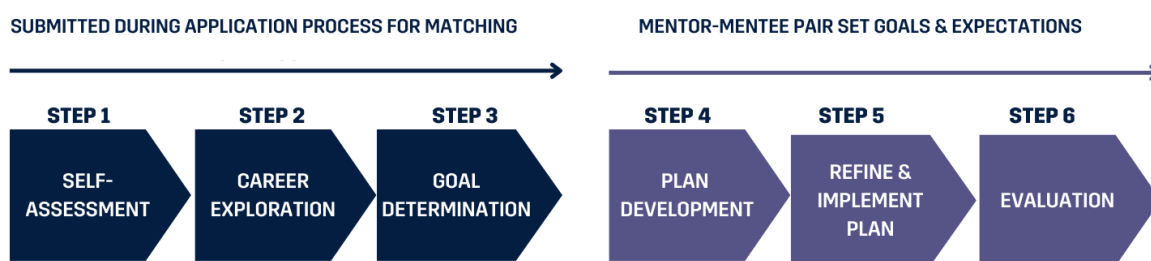


Figure 1

4. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Insights from the IDP in Steps 1, 2, and 3, and your initial discussion can be used to prepare a plan. Ensure that both goals and objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). The questions in Figure 2 can support the mentee-mentor pair outline a plan of action that is effective, precise and measurable.

Questions for mentee-mentor pairs to outline a plan of action:

For Mentee	For Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does my action plan define how I will reach my goals (as well as the objectives within each goal)? Are the components of my action plan SMART: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific? Measurable? Achievable? Relevant? Time-bound? What will work best for me in my environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicit step-by-step plan? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has my trainee written goals and objectives that are SMART? Are they challenging but attainable? Are the timelines realistic? How can I support my trainee? How can I facilitate skills development? How can I encourage success in achieving their goals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What mentorship can I provide? What access to resources or experiences can I facilitate? (e.g. opportunities to make presentations)

○ A higher level plan?	○ Who in my network can help my trainee?
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Figure 2

4. PLAN REFINEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

Plan refinement involves a discussion between the mentor and mentee about the student, their IDP and the goals and objectives outlined in the IDP, with the aim to improve it. The IDP is a living document and can be revised multiple times as required. Review and revision are essential to implementing an effective IDP. As this discussion moves the IDP from the development phase to the implementation phase, the conversation can assure that expectations are clear, the goals and objectives are SMART and that the student and mentor have a shared understanding of the plan and are committed to the plan.

IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

One or two weeks prior to your meeting:

1. Trainee will provide a copy of their IDP for review and prepare questions for their mentor.
2. Mentors can use the template IDP plan refinement & implementation sections (Steps 4 & 5) to provide insights, and any useful resource and/or network that can help refine the plan.

The questions in Figure 3 can support the plan refinement and implementation of the mentee's IDP.

Questions to support the plan refinement and implementation of the mentee's IDP:

For Mentee	For Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What insights does my mentor(s) have? • How can I leverage my mentor(s) to identify and facilitate opportunities to develop skills, acquire experiences and expand my network? • How can I use my IDP and related discussions about it to support my progress toward my career goals, noting that the IDP is a living document and may evolve as I develop? • How will my mentor(s) and I use my IDP to track my progress? How often will we meet? • Do my mentor(s) and I both agree on my IDP? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on my review of my trainee's IDP, can I bring forward any insights? • What am I able to commit to in order to best support my trainee and facilitate the implementation of their plan? • How can I encourage my trainee? How can I manage expectations and increase their confidence to reach their goals that may evolve as they develop? • How will my trainee and I use the IDP to track progress? How often will we meet? • Do my trainee and I both agree on this IDP?

Figure 3

5. ADVICE TO A SCIENTIST

Advice to a Scientist (*AtaS*, www.advicetoascientist.com) is an initiative that was co-founded by Dr. Nika Shakiba (University of British Columbia, UBC) and her postdoc supervisor, Dr. Ron Weiss (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) with the mandate to provide open-access advice-sharing in the science, technology, engineering, math and medicine (STEM) community. It is now co-run By Dr. Jennifer Ma (Science and Visual Communication Specialist) who is the creative director and project manager.

Their initiative strives to provide open and equitable access to resources and mentorship in scientific training. **AtaS is built on the core belief that advice and mentorship are key ingredients that empower individuals to succeed in STEM. By breaking down borders and barriers, we want to make this accessible to everyone.** To achieve this, *AtaS* has developed a website that serves as a hub where scientists, scientists-to-be, and future-scientists can find and share advice on topics relevant to the scientific training and development pipeline. This online hub is composed of several concurrent projects that allow us to work towards achieving our mandate, such as Articles and the new “Exploring Science” initiative. You will learn more about these below, as well as how they relate to your experience in this program.

5.1 EXPLORING SCIENCE

The “Exploring Science” project aims to weave a rich tapestry of stories from the STEM community by capturing the career trajectories of mentors through mentee-led interviews. This initiative not only fosters a deeper mentor-mentee relationship but also contributes to a centralized database that provides a holistic view of various career paths in STEM. “Exploring Science” will be an interactive and visual database on which the career trajectories of members of the STEM community can be visualized and searched. SBME students will collect and build **career trajectory roadmaps** by interviewing their mentors throughout the program and will share these experiences through the Exploring Science database.

5.2 INTERVIEWING YOUR MENTOR & DEVELOPING CAREER ROADMAPS

Key Objectives:

- Build Connections: Facilitate a meaningful relationship between mentor and mentee through shared stories and experiences.
- Visualize Career Paths: Populate the “Exploring Science” database with diverse career stories from the STEM community, going beyond formal CVs and resumes.
- Highlight Serendipity: Illuminate the unplanned, serendipitous moments that have significantly impacted mentors’ career journeys.

Before the Interview:

- Gather Preliminary Data: Obtain and review the mentor’s CV or resume, focusing on educational and career milestones.
- Schedule and Prepare: Allocate sufficient time for the interview and ensure thorough preparation by reviewing this guide.

- **Consent for Recording:** Seek approval to audio-record the session for accurate data transcription.

Conducting the Interview:

- **Embrace Curiosity:** Approach the interview with genuine interest, aiming to uncover the mentor's motivations, challenges, and pivotal moments.
- **Explore Beyond the Professional:** Dive into hobbies, interests, and unexpected experiences that have shaped the mentor's career and life.
- **Document Thoroughly:** Ensure detailed note-taking or recording to accurately capture the mentor's shared experiences and reflections.

Post-Interview Actions:

- **Data Compilation:** Organize and input the gathered information into the provided tables, ensuring accuracy and completeness.
- **Reflection and Submission:** Reflect on the shared journey, compile the data, and submit it to contribute to the "Exploring Science" database.

Ensure respect, empathy, and confidentiality throughout the process, honoring the mentor's shared experiences and insights.

Resources

1. [Questions](#) to ask your mentor to ensure you capture a complete image of their trajectory and the information needed for the Exploring Science database.

2. [Instructions](#) on how to record these interview results using an online submission form and [template](#). Please review a Database Submission [example here](#).

Please submit your completed tables as .xls files to **Saba Vatanpour** at AtaS (sabavatanpour@gmail.com) using the subject line "AtaS Exploring Science SBME-STEMCELL partnership". Please also cc Nika Shakiba (nika.shakiba@ubc.ca).

Due March 15th, 2024

6. EVALUATION

At the end of the program, mentors and mentees will review the IDP, reflect on outcomes and evaluate success based on the goals laid out in the IDP. Mentees will be asked to complete a final report (max 500 words), to reflect on their experiences and discuss how the program contributed to their research and career goals. In addition, the mentee-mentor pair will be asked to fill out a program evaluation survey. Survey results will help organizers evaluate and improve the mentorship program.

Final Report Guidelines

- Please reflect on your mentorship experience and how this Program contributed to your research and career goals
- Please reflect on your goals & action plan, then reflect on your outcomes and evaluate success based on your IDP
- Max 500 words – please email directly to Danielle.walker@ubc.ca by **May 13th, 2024**

Survey

Please fill out the program evaluation survey by **May 13th, 2024**:
https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2spcsIRIAXKIC8K

7. MENTORSHIP RESOURCES & SUPPORT

1. CIHR'S IDP Training Modules and Resources

These modules have been developed for trainees and mentors

- Module 1: Introduction to IDPs (8 min.)
- Benefits of IDPs for Trainees
- Benefits of IDPs for Mentors
- Benefits of IDPs for Canadian Economy
- Module 2: Trainee Role (15 min.)
- IDP Learning Objectives Worksheet
- Module 3: Mentor Role (8 min.)

2. UBC Centre for Student Involvement and Careers Mentor Handbook
3. Health & Wellness: <https://students.ubc.ca/health>