

Alumni Mentoring Program

of the
Göttingen Graduate Center for Neurosciences,
Biophysics, and Molecular Biosciences
and its
International Max Planck Research Schools

Handbook



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Mission Statement

In summer 2019 we launched the Alumni Mentoring Program for the IMPRS Molecular Biology and IMPRS Neurosciences at the Georg-August University of Göttingen. After three very successful rounds, we opened the Alumni Mentoring Program last year to GGNB and are excited to welcome applications from all GGNB doctoral programs for the upcoming 5th call!

This one-to-one Alumni Mentoring Program facilitates meaningful connections between experienced alumni and current PhD students of all GGNB graduate programs including its four International Max Planck Research Schools across a wide variety of academic and non-academic careers and research fields.

Focusing on career advancement, professional development and networking, this program aims to be a rewarding and inspiring experience for all participants.

We hope you enjoy this journey!

Your Alumni Mentoring Program Team



Program Goals

Based on our mission we defined several goals how this Alumni Mentoring Program will benefit both mentors and mentees.

- **Explore** and discuss within your mentoring tandem different career paths, companies and industries;
- **Learn** about required knowledge and skills for different job profiles and which tools are needed to thrive in the competitive marketplaces;
- **Equip** the mentee with skills and tools needed to make sound and informed career decisions;
- **Assist** the mentee with establishing and accomplishing short and long-term professional goals;
- **Improve** the mentee's leadership, teamwork, creative thinking, decision making and interpersonal skills;
- **Provide** insight into the mentor's daily work life;
- **Enable** alumni to reconnect and stay in contact with their alma mater and prepare and potentially employ quality staff to their organization;
- **Facilitate** networking, character development and career advancement for both mentors and mentees.



General Format and Timeline

Format

- One mentoring cycle per year with a duration of six months per cycle excluding the application and pre-mentoring phase
- Per intake up to 20 mentees, who will be matched with their personal mentor
- Mentors are alumni from all GGNB doctoral programs including the four International Max Planck Research Schools with different backgrounds and job profiles from inside as well as outside of academia (e.g. R&D, QA, product or project management, consulting, entrepreneurship, publishing)
- In addition to the mentoring tandems the mentees will benefit from
 - Introduction workshop (self-assessment, analyzing individual potential, defining personal goals for the mentoring program)
 - Individual 30 min coaching session
 - Monthly peer group meetings
 - Kick-off and closure events

Timeline 5th round 2024

- Call for mentee applications 1st Sept – 15th Oct 2023
- Selection and matching process Oct / Nov 2023
- Official participation confirmation for mentees 27th Oct 2023
- Short interviews for selected mentees 2nd / 3rd Nov 2023
- Confirmation of mentoring tandems end of Nov 2023
- Introduction Workshop (mandatory for mentees) 9 Nov 2023, 9–13h
- Individual 30 min coaching sessions (mentees) 22 or 23 Nov 2023
- Kick-off Event (mentors and mentees) 1st Dec 2023, 14–16h
- Mentoring tandems and peer group meetings Jan – July 2024
- Mid-term taking stock meetings (mentees and coordinator) April 2024
- Report and evaluation phase Sept – Dez 2024
- Closing event Nov / Dez 2024

Eligibility Criteria and Application Process

Eligibility Criteria

- **Mentees**
 - Initial ideas about a future career path you would like to pursue lined out in your motivation statement
 - Members of one of the GGNB graduate programs including all four International Max Planck Research Schools
 - Current doctoral students with a PhD start date on 1st July 2021 or earlier
- **Mentors**
 - Alumni of all GGNB programs including the four International Max Planck Research Schools
 - Committed to support the next generation of your alma mater

Application Process Mentees

- Mentees can apply only during the application phase until 15th October 2023.
- Submit your online application through our application portal via this link: <https://gauss-mentoring.uni-goettingen.de/>
- In addition you need to upload your **CV** as well as your **motivation letter** (max. 1 DIN A4 page, formal letter format) stating why you would like to take part in the Alumni Mentoring Program
- Your application will be evaluated by the Alumni Mentoring Program coordinators and if selected for the program, the matching process will start based on the information you submitted and a short interview (see below)
- Selected mentees will be invited to a short interview with the program coordinators to support the matching process. The **interview is mandatory**, so **please block the dates in your calendar**.

Application Process Mentors

- Submit your online application through our application portal via this link: <https://gauss-mentoring.uni-goettingen.de/>

Mentoring Program

Flexibility of each mentoring tandem to decide together on the timing, format and content of meetings

- At least one meeting per month during the entire duration of the program is strongly recommended
- The format can be flexible, e.g. personal meetings, online meetings, phone calls
- Each tandem is free to decide how they use the time together and this program is encouraging the tandems to approach mentorship in whatever style works best for both (by following our basic rules set out in the mentorship agreement)
- Potential topics for meetings of the mentoring tandems:
 - Discuss different career options and paths
 - Research “ideal careers” together, discuss next steps to land such a job
 - CV and application review
 - Conduct mock interview



Mutual agreement by mentor and mentee on nature and expectations of mentoring relationship

- Mandatory mentoring agreement has to be signed from both parties before the start of the mentoring tandems
- Framework of rules and guidance will be handed out prior to the program, which the mentor and mentee should agree on, e.g.
 - Who will take responsibility for setting up meetings?
 - What format and frequency have the meetings?
 - Are meeting reminders necessary?
 - How to deal with arising problems? (e.g. if one part is unhappy with the relationship)
 - How is confidentiality handled?
 - How will the pair proceed if one needs to withdraw from the relationship?
 - Are there any other norms/expectations, which need to be clarified?

Building a mutually beneficial and trusting relationship for mentors and mentees will take time, effort and patience from both sides – but it will be worth it!



Mentor Responsibilities

- Dedicate your time, experience, talents and energy to support their mentee to make progress towards their professional goals
- Lead by example and aim to set up a relationship of trust and mutual respect
- Be genuinely interested in your mentee, acknowledge achievements and offer positive reinforcement
- Support your mentee in maintaining a positive attitude and open mind
- Support your mentee's career growth by encouraging your mentee to seize opportunities, share your ideas, experiences and networks
- As a mentor you are not to be expected to offer the mentee a job, internship or job shadowing
- If you are available we would be delighted if you could join the Kick-off as well as the Closing Event



