

## **Mentorship Program - EMEAC**

What defines career and success? The answer of top researchers, neuroscientists and clinicians to this question is similar: conflict and competition, nevertheless on the constructive and effective way. Success is not just a question of will, failure is not an answer to a lack of will, a necessary break during the career or a job/direction change is not the result of a lack of ability. Unfortunately, there is no recipe for a career: every path is individual. Everyone develops his/her personal strategy and individual tips and tricks.

The EMEAC Mentorship Program targets younger scientists, medical doctors, neurophysiologists, colleagues in training or at the start of their clinical/academic career who seek to get a formal source of career advice outside their own institutions. Over the 1-year mentoring time, each pair of mentee and mentor will have several meetings that can be in person or virtual, to reach the following goals:

1. To learn how to develop a research academic/clinical career generally, how to enhance career trajectory, how to communicate within the clinic, groups, etc. how to drive constructive collaborations
2. Feedback on how to conduct and coordinate clinical or laboratory-based research, including on how to get ethics approval and applying for grants.
3. Guidance on negotiating for time, space, support and salary, planning for promotion, etc.
4. Guidance on conflict management
5. Guidance on better work-life balance

Many students and young scientists are optimistic about their professional future. Indeed, the studies, the residency, PhD years and the early post doc stage are very important phases in life, but they can be perceived as both positive and negative. E.g. many young people are confronted with new situations in which they have to make decisions for the first time that will have an essential influence on the course of their later life. Unfortunately, during these periods not enough time is planned to find and develop personality traits or to promote social skills. Therefore in this mentoring program mentors from different disciplines will support younger scientists, by NOT only to talk about their scientific/clinical career, but also about their "personal journey and experiences": What goals did they have in life? Was there any idea

20 to 30 years ago of what the future/your own life should look like a few decades later? Or did it all just happen by chance? What did these coincidences look like? What goals in life could you achieve? What memories do they have of their student life? Have you ever wanted to stop? What prospects did they have at the time with regard to their future and what goals do they have in the future?

Furthermore, this mentorship program is developed to deliberate issues such as combining clinical and research work with a family, networking, obtaining career advice or insights in different promotion and funding options. Therefore, the program is set up for the duration of one year. Nevertheless, both sides are encouraged to establish a long term relationship. As a result, mentees will be able to improve their self-confidence, resilience, social skills and independency through their individual personal development plan (needs).

The EMEAC mentoring program is provided free of charge to bring together mentors and mentees. Mentors and mentees may participate on voluntary basis. As it is written above, the standard duration of the mentorship program is one year. However, on agreement of mentor and mentee, an extension of the program can be requested. Applications for extension will be reviewed and approved by the EMEAC. The maximum duration of the mentorship program is limited to three years.

### ***How does this program work?***

- Mentors and mentees will include all their information in their application forms. The application process is continuous, however, new mentors and mentees are matched in every three months.
- Based on the information in the application forms, pairings will be made by EMEA Chapter of IFCN. Mentees who cannot be matched with a mentor will stay on the program for the next round
- The successfully matched mentor-mentee pairs will be contacted within 2 weeks with the contact details.
- To begin with, the mentor and mentee will mutually define the roadmap (discovering and describing personality traits, describing aims, objectives for the near future and for the next

10 years, setting deadlines, time-windows, describing problems in a recent situation, etc) for the coming year. Reports at 12 months should be submitted from both mentors and mentees.

- An evaluation survey will be sent to the mentor and to the mentee in every 6 months.

### ***Guiding principles for mentors and mentees***

I. The mentees and mentors are matched by the EMEA Chapter of IFCN, however, if the mentors or the mentees find that the matching is not optimal or the mentorship will not work, they can terminate the mentoring relationship within the first three months without any consequences.

II. The relationship between a mentor and a mentee should stay on a professional level only and shall never be subject to manipulation. At no time shall the mentee be professionally dependent on the mentor (e.g. accepting a position from the mentor), as any staff recruitment is prohibited for the duration of the mentorship program. Any kind of discrimination is unacceptable

III. Mentors and mentees should meet at least once in every three months.

IV. Any personal information shared between the mentor and mentee is confidential, unless both mentor and mentee agree that the information can be shared, and with whom it can be shared.

V. In case of conflicts, violation of the rules of conduct, or any other personal matter, EMEAC must be contacted and informed.

VI. If either the mentor or the mentee believes the mentoring is no longer needed or it is not productive anymore, both should agree upon discussion to terminate the mentoring relationship.

The ***Mentors*** should be IFCN members, recognized experts in their field (key opinion leader), passionate about sharing career experiences; able to interact and communicate effectively, should have sufficient time to support a mentee during the one-year period, should be fluent in English.

The **Mentees:** should be IFCN members, a neurology/psychiatry, neurophysiology, etc residents or medical doctors within the first 5 years of national board certification (junior consultant), PhD students (neuroscience and related fields) or Post-Docs (no more than 5 years into your post-doc position), should be ready to take the initiative and define concrete career goals; should have fluent in written and spoken English

***Planned activities (these activities are suggested activities, there are no obligations):***

Workshops (meeting with other mentors and mentees) face to face or zoom, journal clubs, having a virtual breakfast (e.g. in each two-three months); internet blog about experiences, problems, etc. Interdisciplinary networking as an overarching element of the Program is encouraged and supported through networking events and informal meetings to exchange among one another. It will be up to the mentee not the mentor to foster the relationship to the mentor and she/he should be proactive about asking mentors for help.

***Aims and Benefits for the Mentees:***

- ♣ Empowerment
- ♣ Motivation and encouragement to remain in science or clinic
- ♣ Reflection on one's own potential and resources
- ♣ Learning new perspectives
- ♣ Increase in self-confidence and sovereignty
- ♣ Position oneself in science/clinic
- ♣ Knowledge of standards, structures, and processes
- ♣ Build and extend a sustainable network, Benefits of potential synergistic effects

***Aims and Benefits for the Mentors:***

- ♣ Personal transfer of knowledge and experience

- ♣ Extension of one's own advisory skills, Enrichment of one's leadership tasks through individual support of young people
- ♣ New contacts and impulse from the up-and-coming generation
- ♣ The Mentors will get a title: *Mentor of the EMEA Chapter of IFCN*

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