

Early Career Mentoring Program

Program Goals

The long-term objective of the Early Career Mentoring Program is to prepare engaged junior scholars and practitioners to be better equipped to make significant contributions throughout their careers to the field of nonprofit and voluntary sector organizations. In this program, early stage scholars and practitioners have an opportunity to learn from more experienced colleagues to advance their career, publishing, research, networking, and/or professional development goals.

Mentors tailor advice and guidance to mentees depending on individual needs, including consideration of career progression, research and teaching interests, discipline, and location. Mentors are expected to share their experiences on topics such as (but not limited to):

1. Writing and publishing
2. Grant writing and seeking external funding
3. Developing a scholarly identity
4. Generating new research ideas
5. Establishing a healthy work-life balance
6. Establishing contacts and relationships with academics and practitioners
7. Generating the most benefit from conferences and networking
8. Making decisions to collaborate with others
9. Navigating the tenure and promotion process

Mentors and mentees should be in contact at least three to four times during the year in which they participate in the program. Ideally, this relationship will continue after the official mentoring year is over.

The program should not substitute existing formal advisors-advisees' relationships in the participants' respective institutions. It only supplements these relations. This means there are no expectations of specific deliverables, including reading dissertation drafts, drafting cover letters or grant proposals, editing and reviewing publications, and conducting research or data analysis. While these are important tasks, they should be carried out within the mentee's regular institutional channels and networks. Any more elaborate involvement is fully at the discretion of a mentor and a mentee.

Criteria for Mentors

Mentors will be: (1) academics who are post-tenure or (2) individuals who have 6 or more years of experience working at a professional research institution or nonprofit organization (e.g. Brookings, the Urban Institute, Mathematica, etc.).

Once mentors agree to participate in the program, they will be asked to complete a brief application asking for basic background information. As part of the application, they will also be asked to submit their CV.

Mentors must be willing to actively and consistently work with mentees for a full one-year period.

Criteria for Mentees

Mentees will be early career scholars in their first three years at an academic appointment or at a professional research institution or nonprofit organization. Individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education (such as African Americans, Latinx, and Native Americans) are especially encouraged to participate in the program. Mentees must be ARNOVA members with active memberships at the time of application.

To initiate the matching process, mentees will complete a brief application asking for basic background information. As part of the application, they will also be required to submit a cover letter and their CV. The cover letter should describe their motivation for participating in the program and the area(s) in which they would like to be mentored.

The maximum number of mentees that can be accepted into the program the first year is ten. If we receive more than ten applications from potential mentees, priority will be given to individuals from historically underrepresented groups, individuals earlier in their careers and individuals who have interests that closely match a mentor's interests.