

## Professional Development Mentorship and Outreach Plan

Due Date: August 31, 2025

A Professional Development Mentor (Mentor) outside of your graduate institution can be a critical asset in career development. The goal of partnering with a Mentor is to allow you to form a collaborative, professional growth-oriented relationship with a professional who can use your research and findings in the 'real' world. Together with your Mentor, you will develop a two-page Professional Development Mentorship and Outreach Plan (Plan) that outlines the goals, objectives, and activities of your mentorship. For additional information, please see the [Guidance on Fellow-Mentor Relationships](#).

### Steps to develop your Plan:

1. Identify, reach out to, and begin a collaboration with your Mentor by the end of Year 1 of your Fellowship. Your Mentor could work for a management, non-profit, academic, or other organization that is relevant to the goals of your graduate research, but cannot be a member of your thesis committee. If you need help identifying possible Mentors, your Faculty Advisor and Sea Grant Liaisons can help.
2. Schedule one or more meetings to discuss and develop your Plan with your Mentor using **Appendix A** as suggested conversation guides. You do not need to submit written answers to these suggested discussion questions.
3. Write the Plan together and solicit feedback from your faculty advisor. This plan should be agreed upon by you, your Mentor, and your Faculty Advisor, and emailed to [seagrant-research@whoi.edu](mailto:seagrant-research@whoi.edu) **no later than August 31, 2025**.
4. WHOI and MIT Sea Grant will review your Plan within 10 business days for final approval.
5. Once your Plan has been approved by WHOI and MIT Sea Grant, send us a final version signed by you, your Mentor, and your Faculty Advisor.

### Professional Development Mentorship and Outreach Plan Structure and Components

#### Cover Page with Signatures (1 page):

- Project title
- Contact information (name, institution, email, phone number, and mailing address) for you, your Faculty Advisor, and your Mentor.
- Once approved by WHOI and MIT Sea Grant you, your Mentor, and your Faculty Advisor should sign and date the cover page. By signing, you agree to these goals, expectations, and working parameters for this Plan.

#### Professional Development Mentorship and Outreach Plan (2 pages maximum either bullets or paragraphs):

Your Plan should include a description of how you will engage with your Mentor (maximum 1 page) and include:

- You and your Mentor's goals and what you hope to achieve.
- The structure of the Mentorship, i.e. frequency and style of meetings (in person, phone, or virtually).
- The metrics for success in this mentorship experience and project.

Your Plan should include a description of how you will engage in outreach (maximum 1 page) and include:

- A summary of the **research** project goals
- How you will share your results with the scientific community. This may include conferences or

- workshops you plan to attend and/or present your findings at.
- How you will engage interested parties outside the scientific community.
    - Who you will engage with and how they will benefit from the results of your project.
    - Proposed outreach materials and timeline for dissemination.
    - The steps you will take to coordinate the outreach plan with your Advisor, Mentor, and other interested parties.

**Note:** We expect you to develop your Plan towards the end of the first year of your Fellowship and begin implementing your Plan during the second year of your Fellowship by engaging with community members who will use your findings. We understand that your graduate work may extend past the two years of funding you receive as a Massachusetts Sea Grant Graduate Research Fellow. If you make a Plan but are unable to implement it due to lack of research findings at the end of this Fellowship we hope you continue to implement this Plan until your degree is complete.

**WHOI Sea Grant and MIT Sea Grant expect Advisors, Fellows, and Mentors to abide by the following Code of Conduct:**

WHOISG and MITSG are committed to ensuring that researchers, fellows, and mentors maintain the highest scientific integrity and are provided with an equitable, positive, and respectful working and learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. WHOISG- and MITSG-supported investigators and undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate fellows and their supervisors and mentors are expected to represent WHOISG and MITSG with the highest integrity and ethical standards. They must abide by the standard code of conduct policies of their home institution(s) including, but not limited to, any: personnel policy, policy regarding sexual harassment, policy regarding workplace violence, and policy regarding ethical behavior. Furthermore, the funding provided through this fellowship award is subject to any NOAA policies relating to scientific integrity and sexual assault or harassment that may be in force at the time the award is issued. More details on these policies can be found in the terms and conditions documents provided to the Fellow.

## **Appendix A: Conversation Guide and Considerations for Fellows and Mentors**

These topics and questions may be useful for Fellows and Mentors to consider prior to meeting and while forming the mentorship and outreach plan. Written answers to these recommended discussion points are not required.

For Fellows:

1. Summarize your research and why it interests you.
2. What is your vision for your outreach plan? What audiences will benefit from your research? How do you propose to share your research with these audiences?
3. What are your professional or personal goals related to this fellowship? How can this mentor–fellow relationship help you achieve them?
4. What would success in this mentorship experience look like to you?
5. What, if any, specific technical, outreach, or communication skills do you expect to learn as part of this experience?
6. How do you prefer to communicate and learn (written, verbal, in-person/Zoom, etc.)?
7. How often would you expect to meet with your Mentor?
8. What skills do you expect to bring to this Professional Development Relationship from previous work?

For Mentors:

1. What would success in this mentorship experience look like to you?
2. What metrics will your fellow use to document the success of the outreach plan?
3. Is there any institutional training that is required for your fellow to work with you on their outreach plan? If so, establish a deadline by which they should complete it.
4. How do you prefer to communicate (written, verbal, in-person/Zoom, etc.)?
5. How often would you expect to meet with the Fellow?
6. What resources, beyond your mentorship, might you and/or your organization provide the fellow (e.g., outreach materials, locations/support for events, inclusion in events relevant to the fellow’s research, attend events or meetings at your organization, shadow you, co-author materials, etc.)?
7. Do you plan to help present the Fellow’s research through your organization?
8. What skills do you expect to bring to this Professional Development Relationship? What skills do you expect your fellow to learn as part of the mentorship experience?