Please note that Mentoring Plans are usually created based on each request for proposal. The below language is comprised of resources available at Columbia, the Climate School, and Lamont, and can be utilized to strengthen your proposal. The below language should not be used as a substitute for a fully developed Mentoring plan.

MENTORING PLAN RESOURCES

Postdoctoral researchers and graduate students will benefit from robust programs including:

Orientation will include in-depth conversations between <PI name> and the postdoc(s) and graduate student(s). To assist in the expectation setting process, postdocs/students and PIs are encouraged to complete an Initial Meeting Template/Worksheet for Postdoc/Graduate Student and Mentor as well as annual review meetings. Orientation sessions for all new postdoctoral researchers occur every 6-8 weeks. These sessions, facilitated by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), offer information about the resources and programming available to support postdoctoral researchers during their training experience at Columbia University. In addition to this University-wide program, individual PIs are encouraged to provide a laboratory-specific orientation to newly hired postdocs and graduate students.

Career Exploration Support. Postdoctoral researchers and graduate students receive mentorship and guidance in their career exploration through a combination of OPA sponsored programs and direct PI mentorship. Columbia's Individual Development Plan (IDP) program is designed to support postdoctoral researchers in developing a training plan, with specific time-oriented goals, for their postdoctoral appointment. Postdoctoral researchers are strongly encouraged to share their IDP with their PI to facilitate intentional progress on these goals. To support this intentional progress, the IDP program begins with a session on career management. Other components of the IDP program include a leadership series, a business course, and multiple career panels. While PIs are expected to offer the primary modality of career mentorship, individual appointments can also be made with OPA staff to offer additional support in career exploration. Job talks and site visits are organized to offer further assistance in career path exploration. In addition, career counseling is available to all graduate students within their respective school and department.

Job Preparation Support. In addition to the rigorous research skill development that occurs under the mentorship of individual PIs, Columbia offers multiple seminars and workshops to help postdoctoral and student researchers prepare for and be competitive on the job market. OPA organizes a monthly workshop series focusing on aspects of job preparation, such as CV/resume and cover letter development, networking skills, and interviewing skills, among other topics. OPA also offers the opportunity for postdocs and students to participate in mock interviews and/or receive individualized feedback on aspects of their applications. Postdocs and students interested in an academic career path have access to the "Academic Application Boot Camp," a course that offers guidance on the development of academic application materials while offering guidance on transitioning to research independence.

Research Conduct and Grant Writing Support. This experience will be gained by direct involvement in proposals prepared with individual PIs, in which postdoctoral researchers and students will learn best practices for grant proposal preparation. Postdoctoral researchers and students are also invited to participate in a Funding and Grantsmanship course led by a Columbia faculty member. Postdocs and students also receive training in standards of professional practice via Columbia's research compliance and administration system.

Publications and Presentation Support. Publications and presentations should result from work completed with PI and in collaboration with other researchers. OPA organizes an annual postdoctoral research symposium in which postdoctoral researchers present their research to the Columbia community. Postdocs and students also may participate in presentation skill development workshops from leading organizations such as The Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science.

Personal Support. In addition to the professional support options available, Columbia also offers many services available to support the personal needs of a postdoctoral researcher/graduate student. As this is a component of overall development, postdoctoral researchers and students and their PIs may elect to include involvement of these aspects in a mentoring plan. Multiple Columbia organizations and groups exist for postdoctoral researchers and graduate students to seek community and peer support. While these groups offer the opportunity for connection and collaboration, postdocs and graduate students can also seek leadership positions that assist in honing leadership skills. Additionally, OPA organizes monthly wellness events aimed at enhancing postdoctoral researchers' overall well-being.

Postdocs at Lamont: LDEO has developed an institution-wide Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring Plan. The goal of this plan is to provide postdocs with relevant skills, training and guidance to advance their careers. The LDEO institution-wide Mentoring Plan supports the development and continual evolution of a personalized postdoctoral and career planning process via:

1. Self-Assessment: The post-doc fills out a structured self-assessment and discusses this with their mentor. If appropriate, multiple mentors are included in the process.
2. Structured Mentoring: The post-doc and mentors meet at least once every three months to specifically discuss career directions, taking into consideration the items listed on the self-assessment questionnaire.
3. Ongoing Feedback: The Assistant Director for Academic Affairs & Diversity solicits written feedback annually from post-docs on their overall mentoring experience.

Specific elements of the career-development experience for a Lamont postdoctoral scholar include: (1) development of an individual development plan, (2) seminars and workshops organized by the Office of Academic Affairs and Diversity on funding opportunities and developing competitive grant applications, (3) Presentation of research results at one or more conferences each year, and (4) participation in weekly research group meetings.