



## LEAP Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan

At **Columbia** and **Irvine**, postdocs are a vital component of the research community, in addition to being the future of the US scientific enterprise; as such, the conscientious mentoring of postdocs is taken very seriously. Both institutions have developed Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring Plans providing postdocs with relevant skills, training and guidance to advance their careers and perform as successful individual scientists. Both plans support the development and continual evolution of a personalized postdoctoral and career planning process via:

1. **Self-Assessment.** Each postdoc will fill out a structured self-assessment.
2. **Structured Mentoring.** The postdoc and mentors meet at least once every two months to specifically discuss career directions, taking into consideration the items listed on the self-assessment questionnaire. The discussion focuses on topics relevant to the particular case.

**Orientation.** Orientation sessions for all new postdoctoral researchers occur every 6-8 weeks. Facilitated by **Columbia** and **Irvine**'s Offices of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), orientations offer information about the resources and programming available to support postdoctoral researchers during their training experience. In addition to these University-wide programs, individual PIs will be encouraged to provide a laboratory-specific orientation to newly-hired postdocs.

**Career Exploration Support.** Postdoctoral researchers receive mentorship and guidance in their career exploration through a combination of OPA sponsored programs and direct PI mentorship. The 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. Components of the IDP program include career management, a leadership series and business course, and multiple career panels. While PIs are expected to provide the primary modality of career mentorship, individual appointments can always be made with postdoctoral affairs staff.

**Job Preparation Support.** In addition to the rigorous research skill development that occurs under the mentorship of individual PIs, **Columbia** and **Irvine** offer multiple seminars and workshops to help postdoctoral researchers prepare for and be competitive on the job market, including 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. Both institutions also offer the opportunity for postdocs to participate in mock interviews and/or receive individualized feedback on aspects of their applications. **Columbia** postdocs interested in an academic career path have access to the "Academic Application Boot Camp" offering guidance on the development of academic application materials while offering guidance on transitioning to research independence.

**Publications and Presentation Support.** Publications and presentations are expected to result from work completed with PI and in collaboration with other researchers. **Columbia** organizes an annual postdoctoral research symposium in which postdoctoral researchers are able to present their research to the broader community. Postdocs also have the opportunity to participate in presentation skill development workshops with The Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science.

**Personal Support.** In addition to the professional support options available, there are many services available to support the personal needs of a postdoctoral researcher across both institutions. As this is a component of overall development, postdoctoral researchers and their PIs may elect to include involvement of these aspects in a mentoring plan. Both institutions organize monthly wellness events aimed at enhancing postdoctoral researchers' overall well-being.