

Mentoring Plan

Postdoc Mentoring Plan

We plan a comprehensive mentoring program for the postdoctoral scholars associated with this project. The most robust mentoring starts before the scholar arrives: by clearly articulating the project goals in the job position advertisement, the expectations of the postdoc who eventually accepts the position will be explicit. These expectations—as well as the expectations of those senior personnel in mentoring positions—will be reviewed with the scholar upon arrival. An individual development plan (IDP), a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives, will be prepared. The IDP includes any suggestions on graduate courses that might help the postdoc to actively participate in the cross-disciplinary project¹.

- **From the Outset:** The PI and co-PIs will 1) explicitly discuss the scientific and technical expectations of the postdocs and insure those are in sync with our expectations, 2) discuss the roles in the mentor/mentoree relationship, 3) identify key resources at each institution for assistance in professional development (e.g. the Office of Post-doctoral Affairs at U. Washington), 4) inform the postdocs of avenues for conflict resolution (following the respective guidelines and program offices at each institution), and 5) discuss a timeline for progress on the project.
- **Mentoring a Mentor:** The postdocs will be encouraged to take an active role in co-mentoring (along with the PI and co-PIs) within the graduate departments of each institution. This plays a dual role in providing valuable, early mentoring experiences in academia for the postdoc while creating an additional resource for mentored students as they progress through their own research. We will conduct periodic conversations about graduate student mentoring to help the postdocs reinforce positive results and address difficulties.
- **Formal Reviews:** Every 6 months the PI and co-PIs will provide a formal review to assess the research progress, strengths, and areas needing improvement.
- **Career Laddering:** The PI and co-PIs will informally (but regularly) address career plans and job search strategies with the postdocs, help them network at conferences both domestic and international, obtain invitations to speak at other universities on the subject of this proposal, and work on grant and job applications.
- **Encouragement:** Critical to the success of the postdoc (and this project) will be their continual encouragement to strive for excellence in their research, allowing ample room for creativity and independence. To this end we will provide for an 80/20 split in the amount of time the postdocs are expected to work on this proposal vs. allowed to work on additional scientific pursuits.

¹The University of California *Academic Personnel Policy* provides explicit expectations for mentors of postdoctoral scholars which we will abide by: “Faculty mentors are responsible for guiding and monitoring the advanced training of Postdoctoral Scholars. In that role, faculty mentors should make clear the goals, objectives, and expectations of the training program and the responsibilities of Postdoctoral Scholars. They should regularly and frequently communicate with Postdoctoral Scholars, provide regular and timely assessments of the Postdoctoral Scholar’s performance, and provide career advice and job placement assistance.” (390-6 – Responsibility). There are similar expectations at U. Washington.