The SRI Mentorship Program, "Mentor-in-a-Cloud", was created as part of the 2020 SRI Strategic Plan to support early-stage investigators and In-Training Members by providing an official platform to foster mentoring relationships with established SRI members.

Mentoring is an evolving partnership between two professionals, where one professional often brings a unique and guiding perspective based on experience and wisdom. The mentor-mentee relationship is designed to foster maximum productivity and commitment to the field of reproductive sciences through encouraging strong collegial relationships, training, support and recognition of accomplishments.
Who can be a mentor/mentee?

A mentor is someone who may share career advice, specific knowledge, and/or a professional connection to the Society. Mentors have an important role in this Society, helping cultivate the next generation of scientists and gain personal satisfaction through this unique networking opportunity. SRI welcomes any current, Regular SRI members that have been a member of the Society for a minimum of three years to volunteer to become a mentor. Past SRI Presidents and those who have received SRI grants are also eligible.

Mentees obtain advice, receive feedback, expand their skillsets and connect with SRI members to expand their personal networks. Mentees must be current (paid dues) In-Training members of SRI and can be at any stage of their career.

How the program works

In-Training Members will make preferential selections on potential mentors based on a list of mentor volunteers provided. Leading up to the Annual Meeting, program participants will be given a ‘schedule’ outlining their four matches and their allotted meeting times at the event.

At the Annual Meeting in an in-person event format, all participants will meet one-on-one with the individuals outlined in their schedule, and will have time to network with the rest of the group at the conclusion of the event. Immediately following the event, all participants will submit their final ratings of compatibility to help SRI determine best matches. When determining matches, the Career Development committee and SRI staff will consider several criteria such as research experience, geographic location, etc.

Matches are announced by email before the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, allowing the pair to meet again in-person before departing. Participants will confirm their duties and obligations with their mentor/mentee by simply responding to the email notification. SRI staff will occasionally check in with the mentors and mentees to ensure that there is consistent communication and that the program is working as it is intended to.

Program evaluation

Both mentees and mentors are expected to participate in a year-end evaluation of the program, which will assess factors such as frequency of contact, status of mentoring goals, and general integration within the SRI community (such as joining a committee, Annual Meeting participation, intention to continue membership with SRI post-training, etc.). These evaluations are typically sent one year after the match has been made.
Duration of mentor-mentee commitment

The goal is to maintain the mentorship commitment for one year, although it is understood that if a positive connection has not been made after one year, that the mentor/mentee may be rematched by request. Generally, mentors and mentees are encouraged to extend their relationship long-term, to provide a support system to one another. Here are some activities and checklists that you can refer to, to ensure that you get the most out of the relationship:

- Review CV and provide feedback
- Provide advice regarding service on committees
- Discuss strategies for advancement (looking for resources, collaborations, etc.)
- Review time management strategies/techniques
- Review manuscripts, fellowship applications and grant applications
- Schedule regular professional development calls

Mentor checklist

- Exchange contact information and preferences with your mentee (and vice versa).
- Familiarize yourself with the mentee’s CV prior to first meeting/discussion, so that you already know pertinent professional information.
- Suggest potential topics for your first discussion. It is recommended that meetings are one-hour long in duration.
- Discuss your expectations/needs with your mentee—work with them to develop goals.
Mentee checklist

- Ask yourself, “what are my goals? How can a mentor assist me in meeting these goals? How do my short-term goals differ from my long-term goals?”
- Introduce yourself by phone, brief letter or email. Establish communication guidelines and expectations.
- Review your mentor’s CV- familiarize yourself with their experiences and research areas prior to the first meeting/discussion. Identify valuable key steps in their career path.
- Determine meeting frequency.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to us. We look forward to hearing from you!

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