

## O'Brien Institute Mentorship Program – Guiding Principles and Program Description

Mentorship is recognized as an important contributor to career development in academic researchers, and in its first review by the Cumming School of Medicine, the Institute was encouraged to create a mentorship program for its members. This document therefore outlines the Mentorship Program to be offered by the O'Brien Institute for Public Health, in collaboration with its host Department, Community Health Sciences.

### Guiding Principles

1. In alignment with the Institute goals and values, the Program aims to facilitate and increase:
  - a. the quality and quantity of academic output and recognition (submitted applications, successful applications, publications, KT events, awards, etc.)
  - b. the conduct of collaborative, multidisciplinary, cross-sectoral research that integrates end-users and community stakeholders
  - c. the translation of research outputs to societal benefits, including through policy
2. Becoming and remaining a mentor or mentee in the Program is voluntary, but participation will be encouraged and can be reported to your Department Head as part of the service component of your academic appointment, and recognized within the context of annual performance reporting.
3. Participants are encouraged to respect each other's time constraints.
4. Different types of mentor-mentee relationships are encouraged, including long-term or time-limited/activity-related relationships.
  - a. While time-limited relationships and well defined mentorship activities are deemed more manageable, flexible, and amenable to measures of success for the Program, less structured long-term relationships are also encouraged. The Program will therefore involve mentors and mentees mutually benefiting from each other's skills, expertise, and experience, either toward achieving specified and short-term research goals (until goals are met or need for a different mentor is identified) , or toward a relationship based on less time-limited career development.
  - b. Activities such as networking (<https://www.obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/events>) and Internal Peer Review (<https://www.obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/research/internal-peer-review>) are not specifically part of this program since they are offered through the O'Brien Institute as separate programs. However, mentoring pairs are encouraged to orient each other toward those programs as needed.

5. Evaluation of the program is deemed important for its success. The program will be reviewed annually, based on participant feedback. Evaluation procedures measuring success of the program could include metrics on the number of registrants in the Program, number of matches made, number of outcomes from targeted activities, level of satisfaction of relationship from mentor and mentees (*e.g.*: follow-up correspondence, interviews, surveys, etc.). Those procedures will evolve over time, and will be designed to minimize the administrative burden to participants. Data gathered through evaluation mechanism could be used for research purposes.
6. Given the variety of career opportunities that are amenable to mentorship, and the long timelines over which these opportunities arise over a career, the Program is not limited to participants of any particular career stage, and a participant may well be a mentor for some activities, while a mentee for other activities.
7. Given the mandate of the Institute to facilitate the research endeavour of its membership, mentorship toward research-related goals will be the focus of the Program. It is understood that mentorship toward service- and education-related goals is the mandate of Departments. Because of the significant overlap between the O'Brien Institute and Community Health Sciences, service- and education-related mentorship will be managed through the Program for CHS members, and could be considered on an *ad hoc* basis for an Institute member from another Department, upon request from that Department.
8. It is assumed that Institute members from other Faculties or Institutions may have other career development or mentorship programs available to them through those affiliations. The Program therefore is not adapted to members outside the Cumming School of Medicine, but could be considered on an *ad hoc* basis, upon request from the member's Faculty or Institution.

### **Program Description**

9. The Program will be operated by the Mentorship Program Committee, with support from the Institute's Core Operating Team, led by a Portfolio Lead, and overseen by the O'Brien Institute Executive Committee (<https://www.obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/about-institute/executive-committee>).
10. The Mentorship Program Committee is composed of the Mentorship Portfolio lead (who holds a seat on the O'Brien Institute Executive Committee), a member with expertise in the area of faculty mentorship, the Dept. CHS Director of Operations, the O'Brien Institute Administrative Director and the O'Brien Institute Project Coordinator.
11. On a regular basis, the Institute and the Department of Community Health Sciences will notify members of the opportunity to register within the Program as a mentor and/or mentee. Intake forms will be used to gather requisite information. All Institute and Dept. of CHS members are also welcome to formalize unofficial mentorship relationships to benefit from Program resources.

12. The Mentorship Program Committee will determine potential mentor-mentee matches among the submitted registrations, and use the Institute's membership list to identify additional potential mentors as necessary.
13. Mentees will be asked to prioritize a list of potential mentors suggested by the Program Committee, and the potential mentor(s) will be approached by the Program Committee until a mutually satisfactory match is determined. Every effort will be made to secure a match within participants' time requirements, not usually to exceed 1 month.
14. Mentors/mentees will be invited to begin the relationship, and provided a link to program guidelines and a start-up tool (an agreement template or checklist), among other resources.
15. Resources (including online documents, seminars, and workshops) will be offered for mentors and mentees to provide guidelines on what makes a valuable mentor/mentee relationship. Mentorship-related resources will be made available on the Institute website (<https://www.obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/about-institute/mentorship>). Individualized mentorship through the Program can be complemented by attending regular Institute workshops and seminars in areas of general interest to all (e.g.: skill development, KT, successful grant writing, etc).
16. Should a match prove unsatisfactory, either Mentor or Mentee is encouraged to reach out to the Program Committee (through the O'Brien Institute Project Coordinator) to confidentially seek advice and/or request a different match.
17. The Portfolio Lead will report on the status of the program to the O'Brien Institute Executive Committee regularly.