One-to-one Mentoring Guidelines[1] - run 2027/28

What is Mentoring?

"Mentoring implies an exclusive relationship in which a more experienced person provides strategic advice to facilitate the professional and personal development of another, less experienced one." (Meschitti, Viviana, and Lawton Smith, Helen (2017): *Does Mentoring Make a Difference for Women Academics? Evidence from the Literature and a Guide for Future Research*, Journal of Research in Gender Studies 7(1): 166–199.)
In a mentoring relationship the mentor shares her/his experiences in academia or industry with the mentee. The goal of a mentoring relationship is to empower and support the mentee in developing her career and in coping with upcoming career steps.

Goals of FLP Mentoring

The FLP program – Foster. Lead. Promote. mentoring program aims at supporting female PhD students (3rd year and above) and postdocs in the ETH Domain in their career development (academia or industry). The mentoring is focused on career related issues like networking, career planning, work-life balance, career and family issues, funding questions etc. Scientific questions are not in the core.

What Mentoring is Not

Mentoring is not the same as managing. It does not replace the supervisor's role and it is not tied to a promise of career advancement. Furthermore, it is not spontaneous or casual advice among friends and it is not active problem fixing.

Mentoring versus Coaching

Mentoring and coaching pursue the aim of career development. The FLP Mentoring is less structured than the FLP coaching groups. Mentors support and give advice.
The FLP coaching groups are led by professional coaches with experience and knowledge in the academic context. Coaching is more task-oriented, more short term and more performance driven whereas mentoring is more driven by development perspectives and focuses on the exchange of personal experiences and is advice based.

[1] FLP thanks the Gender & Diversity Group at D-BAUG ETH Zürich, for sharing their Mentoring Handbook, which served as template for the FLP Mentoring Guidelines.

Confidentiality

A mentoring relationship is based on mutual trust, respect and an open dialogue. All content discussed is strictly confidential. There is no hierarchical dependence between a mentor and a mentee.

Commitment

Mentees commit to regular participation in the mentoring meetings (at least 5 meetings during a year). The mentee is responsible for maintaining the mentoring relationship. She invests sufficient time in the mentoring project (approximately two hours per meeting incl. preparation, and participation in the Kick-off and Intermediate event).

Structure of FLP Mentoring

At a first meeting, mentor and mentee should discuss expectations and academic career related interests. They are supposed to sign the mentoring agreement that outlines the mutually defined goals as well as frequency and style of the meetings. The agreement should be sent back to the FLP project coordinator.
The mentoring will be launched with a Kick-off event, taking place online on Tuesday, May 11th, 2027, between 12.15 and 13.45 and it lasts until spring 2028. An online intermediate event will take place on Wednesday, September 29th, 2027 from 12.15 to 13.45.

Financial Resources

Mentees are entitled to a financial contribution up to CHF 200 for travel expenses incurred for mentoring meetings (original tickets needed).

Further Reading

Kearns, Hugh, and Gardiner, Maria (2011): *The care and maintenance of your adviser*, in: Nature 469: 570.

Lee, Adrian, Dennis, Carina, and Campbell, Philip (2007): *Nature's guide for mentors*, in: Nature 447(14): 791–797.

Meschitti, Viviana, and Lawton Smith, Helen (2017): *Does Mentoring Make a Difference for Women Academics? Evidence from the Literature and a Guide for Future Research*, in: Journal of Research in Gender Studies 7(1): 166–199.

Nöbauer, Herta, and Genetti, Evi (Ed.) (2008): *Establishing Mentoring in Europe: Strategies for the promotion of women academics and researchers*, Fribourg.

Abteilung für Gleichstellung der Universität Bern (2007): *Wissenschaftlerinnen gewinnen durch Mentoring: Zwölf Porträts aus drei Programmen*, Bern.