



VALIDATE Mentoring Scheme Guidance

Summary

As part of VALIDATE's commitment to supporting Continuing Professional Development and promoting career progression for its members, we offer an annual mentoring program. In each mentoring call, we aim to match approximately 10 Associate and (early) Investigator VALIDATE members with Senior Scientist mentors from the VALIDATE Network, for a 12-month mentoring relationship. The opportunity to request a mentor is open to scientists from all regions and at any organisation, with a special encouragement for applications from LMIC scientists.

To apply for a mentor, complete the application form and include the required associated documents, and submit **as one pdf document** by 4pm GMT on the closing date (stated on the VALIDATE website), to the Network Management Team VALIDATE@ndm.ox.ac.uk.

Application Guidance

What is a mentor?

- A mentor is a more senior and experienced person in your career field who agrees to guide and support you, drawing on their own experiences and insights to assist you in your professional growth.
- They are not... a coach, counsellor, or your personal advocate.
- They will not tell you what to do or how to do things.
- You will need to do the work, but they'll be there to encourage and guide you, to help you clarify your goals, and offer valuable insights on how to achieve them. They will serve as a resource for navigating your career path.

Why have a mentor?

The path to becoming a PI is challenging - and not always obvious! A mentor can help you:

- Explore and plan the best route and your goals
- Strengthen your CV to be more likely to win grant applications and new positions
- Overcome obstacles
- Network
- Learn from your mentor's experience

How to Apply

To be eligible to apply, you must be a VALIDATE Associate or Investigator (VALIDATE membership is free; to join, visit our [website](#)).

To apply for a mentor, complete the Mentoring application template, and submit this, together with the required associated documents, to the VALIDATE Management Team before the closing date.

On the application form you should complete your personal details, and outline your career to date and your career aspirations. You should explain clearly why you would like a mentor and



how you think a mentor will support you and benefit your career. You will pick 2-3 VALIDATE Investigators that you would like to be your mentor. Your application will be considered by the VALIDATE Management Team, who will try to match you to one of your preferred mentors; due to high demand we cannot guarantee one of these will be assigned as your mentor, but we will do our best to match your preference as well as research area, skills and experience, and career aspirations. For a list of eligible VALIDATE Investigator Mentors and their research interests, visit our [Members page](#) (and filter to just see 'Investigators' using the drop-down option).

For a useful video about how to pick a mentor, click [here](#).

After Your Application

You will be notified about your offered mentor within one month of the Management Team decision. If you decide to join the scheme, you and your mentor will meet at least four times during your 12-month mentoring relationship. Your mentor will be from a different organisation, and possibly even a different country, so meetings may be face-to-face, or via telephone or Skype/Zoom/Teams.

During your first meeting, you and your mentor will agree your expectations about how often you will meet, confidentiality, and how your relationship will work. You may like to use some of our resources listed on our website mentoring scheme page to help you, such as the guidance document for mentees, and the mentoring contract.

Take time to think about what you would like to gain from your mentoring relationship, and be realistic in your expectations - our guidance document can help you with what your mentor can and cannot do.

At the end of the year, the mentoring relationship will end. All mentees will be expected to provide a short report at the end of their one-year mentoring relationship, for inclusion in Network outcomes and publicity, and to continue to improve our mentoring scheme.

Publicity and Data Protection

Copies of applications will be made available to the VALIDATE Management Team, NMB or SAB who will use information provided for reviewing the proposal and post-award administration. VALIDATE may share information with its funders, including details of mentor-mentee pairings, as appropriate. VALIDATE and its funders may choose to publish further details of awards, awardees, and information about successful mentoring relationships.