

 <p>Network for Education & Multidisciplinary Research Africa (NEMRA)</p>	<p>Document No. NEMRA/MG/001</p>
<p>MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES</p>	<p>Issue No: 001</p>
<p>Effective Date: 2021-12-01</p>	<p>Revision Date: 2023-12-01</p>

For more information about these guidelines, please contact info@nemraafrica.org

Introduction

The NEMRA Mentorship program is a branch of NEMRA’s Training and Mentorship department whose aim is to “offer complementary services to schools of postgraduate studies in the area of research capacity building thereby increasing completion rates of postgraduate students, enhance the research culture among academics and build an intellectual group of scholars” (NEMRA 2020-2024 Strategic Plan).

The program has the following objectives:

1. To provide an opportunity to senior academics, researchers, and practitioners across the world to work with and mentor PhD students and early career researchers based in Africa.
2. To support efforts aimed at increasing completion rates of PhD students at institutions in Africa.
3. To accelerate the growth of professional and competent researchers and research outputs across the continent of Africa.

The NEMRA Mentorship guidelines

This document is intended to provide short, concise, and not too prescriptive (flexible) guidelines unto which NEMRA mentors and mentees can underpin the decisions and actions of their mentorship relationship. The document is designed in form of a Q&A to cover possible questions that the mentors and mentees may have about their participation in the program.

It was developed by the NEMRA’s training and mentorship department and approved by the NEMRA Board of Directors. The email contact of the responsible officer is provided above for any concerns.

1. Who is a NEMRA mentor?

The NEMRA mentors are experienced academics and/or practitioners from across the world who are interested in offering support to PhD students and early career researchers based in Africa. They are invited through email or NEMRA social media handles to provide a brief profile indicating their research interests. This information is then used to match them with a prospecting mentee.

NEMRA mentors are not research supervisors as they would not hold any contractual obligation with the institution where their mentees are based in Africa.

2. What does a NEMRA mentor do?

The NEMRA Training and Mentorship coordinator will link up the mentor and the mentee. Once the match is agreeable, the pair may arrange the date and time for the first meeting. The mentor will thereafter:

1. Lead the discussion about expectations and the goals of the mentorship relationship between him/her and his/her mentee.
2. Inform the mentee and agree about the preferred scope of participation (some mentors may be available to offer career guidance, co-authorship, reading & providing feedback on write-ups, etc.)
3. Inform the mentee and agree on the frequency and form of the meetings.
4. Ensure documentation and adherence to what is agreed above.
5. Attend a mid-year evaluation meeting with the NEMRA Training coordinator.

3. Who is a NEMRA Mentee?

NEMRA mentees are PhD students and early career researchers (ECRs) based at institutions in Africa. NEMRA ECRs are the network members who completed their PhDs no more than 10 years prior to their application for a mentor. NEMRA mentees are also official subscribed members to NEMRA.

4. What does a NEMRA mentee do?

A NEMRA Mentee will

1. Ensure that their NEMRA membership subscription is up-to-date.
2. Submit his or her request for a mentor to the NEMRA Training and Mentorship coordinator.
3. Liaise with the assigned mentor on scheduling the first meeting.
4. Share and agree with the mentor about his/her expectations
5. Agree with the mentor of the objectives/goals of the mentorship programme
6. Document the proceedings of the mentorship meetings. (A draft mentorship record form is appended herewith)
7. Prepare and submit to the NEMRA Training and Mentorship coordinator a mid-year and the annual mentorship report.
8. Attend a mid-year evaluation meeting with the NEMRA Training coordinator.

5. How long is the mentorship relationship supposed to run?

The NEMRA mentorship relationship will run for two (2) years. However, the NEMRA Training and Mentorship coordinator will hold an evaluation meeting with the mentor and mentee every six (6) months to consider progress and if the relationship should continue or not

6. Is there a fee?

There is no fee levied on involvement in the NEMRA mentorship program. However, participants are encouraged to donate to NEMRA if they so wish.

7. What role will NEMRA play?

NEMRA will through the NEMRA training and mentorship

1. Match mentors and mentees
2. Arrange mentorship workshops for skills acquisition
3. Evaluate the mentorship records forms, arrange and lead the mid-year evaluation meetings
4. Organise social events for all participants on the program for network building and collaboration

8. What if one party (or both) wants to end the relationship before the end of the mentorship period?

In the event that the mentorship relationship needs to be terminated before the end of the two (2) year period, the party(ies) concerned are requested to notify the NEMRA training coordinator about their intention. A special meeting between the mentor, mentee and NEMRA training coordinator will be arranged before the relationship is finally terminated if the parties so wish.

9. Can the parties apply universally accepted guidelines for mentorship?

NEMRA will uphold the universally accepted guidelines for mentorship to guide the relationship between the mentors and mentees on the program. Mentorship training sessions will be conducted once in a while with specialized mentorship coaches to equip the mentors and mentees with knowledge and skills on mentorship and to discuss the applicability of various ideas on the topic.

10. Anything about ethical conduct?

Undesirable practices on the research journey may limit the development process of PhD students and ECRs. NEMRA, therefore, holds matters of ethics in high regard. In particular, the NEMRA mentorship program expects mentors and mentees to respect each other's confidentiality. Mentors and mentees are also encouraged to use their discretion and consider matters relating to issues like legal requirements, IPR, and copyright, attribution, and co-authorship, etc.

References and other resources

- Blixen, C. E., Papp, K. K., Hull, A. L., Rudick, R. A., & Bramstedt, K. A. (2007). Developing a mentorship program for clinical researchers. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 27(2), 86-93.
- Chopra, V., & Saint, S. (2020, March). Mindful mentorship. In *Healthcare* (Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 100390). Elsevier.
- Geber, H., & Keane, M. (2017). Ubuntu and transformational mentoring in South Africa: 7 principles of a culturally integrated mentoring response. *The SAGE Handbook of Mentoring*. London: Sage.
- Langdon, F., & Ward, L. (2015). Educative mentoring: a way forward. *International journal of mentoring and coaching in education*.
- Sambunjak, D., & Marušić, A. (2009). Mentoring: what's in a name? *JaMa*, 302(23), 2591-2592.
- Smink, J. (1999). A Training Guide for Mentors.
- The NEMRA 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

Appendix:

NEMRA Mentorship Record Form

(to be completed by the mentee and then agreed with the mentor)

Name of Mentee:

Name of Mentor:

Date and time of meeting:

Report of meeting (please use additional sheets as necessary and do not share confidential information)

Topic of discussion:

Main points raised:

Objectives agreed:

Timescale: _____

Date of next meeting: _____

Mentee's signature: _____

Mentor's signature: _____ Date: _____

Copies to be retained by mentor and mentee. The mentee to lodge a copy with the NEMRA Training and mentorship Coordinator.