Manna Institute Research Mentoring (MIRM) Program

Manual for Mentors and Mentees

Contents

Aims and Rationale

The MIRM program aims to cultivate a vibrant and sustainable research community by providing targeted guidance and direction to emerging researchers. .

Recognising that mentoring is a reciprocal learning exchange, the program not only imparts knowledge and skills but also fosters an environment where experienced researchers benefit from fresh perspectives and innovative ideas brought by mentees. The goals include fostering professional development, enhancing research skills, and instilling a sense

of confidence in emerging researchers. Strategic matching of mentors and mentees from different universities will contribute to fostering an interinstitutional culture of collaboration.

The rationale for this initiative is grounded in the belief that effective mentorship contributes not only to individual growth but also to the overall sustainability of the research workforce. By nurturing a supportive mentor-mentee relationship, the MIRM program looks to inspire a new generation of researchers, facilitate knowledge growth, and make a sustainable impact on the development of research in the mental health sector.

Eligibility

Mentees

To be eligible for the MIRM program mentees should be:

Criterion A

- Employed at a university in the Regional Universities Network (RUN), OR
- Employed by a partner organisation and engaged in research activities.
- Early or midcareer

Early career mentees will engage with their mentor in small groups of up to three. Mid-carer mentees will have one-to-one meetings with their mentors.

Mentors

Mentors will hold appointments as either Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, or Professor (Level C-E) at either a RUN University or with a partner organisation.

Schedule 2024

Month	Details
March	15/3 Applications close.
	22/3 Matching completed and mentors and mentees advised.
	25 – 28/3 Mentors & mentees schedule initial meeting.
April	First mentoring meeting.
May *	Second mentoring meeting.
June	Third mentoring meeting.
July*	Fourth mentoring meeting. Mid-program evaluation
August	Fifth mentoring meeting.
September*	Sixth mentoring meeting
October	Seventh mentoring meeting.
November	Eighth mentoring meeting.
December	End of program evaluation.

* Additional calls for applications from mentees and mentors will be announced.

Responsibilities

The Manna Institute takes responsibility for:

- Advertising the program on the Manna website and in the newsletter
- Inviting applications from mentees and mentors by emailing a letter of invitation, the application form, the Manna website link, and the MIRM Handbook to the Manna mailing list.
- Selecting, matching, and introducing mentees and mentors
- Setting up the Mentoring Partnership Agreements
- Supporting mentees and mentors through, providing monthly 1-hour on-line check-in sessions (optional) for mentees, mentors, and Manna representative, and providing individualised online support as needed.
- Conducting mid and end-of-program evaluations to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for improvement. This will be achieved through collecting and reviewing metrics including, attendance, and outputs, and through obtaining feedback from mentors and mentees.

Mentees take responsibility for:

- Scheduling the mentoring sessions in consultation with the mentor.
- Completing the Mentoring Partnership Agreement in consultation with the mentor.
- Submitting the completed and signed Mentor Partnership Agreement to Manna
- Preparing the agenda for each mentoring meeting
- Following through with agreed between-meeting tasks
- Participating in the mid and end-of-program evaluations

Mentors take responsibility for:

- Collaboratively scheduling the mentoring sessions with mentees
- Working collaboratively with mentees to develop the Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Attending scheduled mentoring meetings
- Supporting the mentee to reach the goals and aims specified in the Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Participating in the mid and end-of-program evaluations

Content and Process

The underlying principle of the MIRM program is that a well-structured, and well-organised approach to mentoring leads to the best outcomes for both mentee and mentor.

Through regular meetings and with a spirit of open communication, the mentoring experience is tailored to best serve the mentee's professional development.

Decisions around the focus and content of each mentoring session will be decided collaboratively between the mentee and the mentor, and documented at the beginning of the program, in the Mentorship Collaboration Agreement (Appendix A). Similarly, goals and anticipated outcomes will also be specified in the Agreement at the outset.

Examples of areas of focus for mentoring sessions could include:

- **Research Project Guidance:** Mentors can provide insights and advice on the development and execution of a mentees' research project, and assist with refining research questions, designing methodology, and troubleshooting challenges.

- **Manuscript development:** Mentors can help mentees improve the quality and impact of a manuscript through providing critical review of the structure and content of the work.

- **Navigating peer review:** Mentors may provide advice to mentees on addressing feedback on manuscripts.

- **Grant writing and funding opportunities:** Mentors can assist mentees in navigating the grant writing process, providing insights into successful proposal strategies and helping identify appropriate funding opportunities for their research.

- **Skill development:** Mentors and mentees can identify specific skills relevant to the research field and mentors can guide mentees in acquiring them. This might include training in data analysis techniques, experimental design, or proficiency in specific tools and technologies.

- **Professional development:** Mentors can help mentees with setting and achieving career goals, offering guidance on publishing strategies, conference participation, and networking within the academic and professional community.

- **Time and project management:** Mentors can help mentees develop effective time management strategies and project planning skills. This could involve creating realistic timelines, setting milestones, and adapting to unexpected challenges.

- **Networking opportunities:** Mentors can introduce mentees to relevant contacts in the field, facilitating networking opportunities and helping them establish valuable connections with other researchers, professionals, and institutions.

- **Feedback and Critique:** Mentors can provide constructive feedback on mentees' work, including research papers, presentations, and proposals. This helps mentees refine their work and develop a critical mindset essential for research success.

- **Career Path Exploration:** Mentors can help mentees explore various career paths within and beyond academia, providing insights into the diverse opportunities available and helping mentees align their skills and interests with potential career trajectories.

- **Cultural Competence and Inclusivity:** Mentors can guide mentees on fostering a diverse and inclusive research environment, discussing strategies for collaboration, effective communication, and understanding the cultural nuances within the research community.

- **Work-Life Balance and Well-being:** Mentors can discuss strategies for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and managing stress. This can include discussions about self-care, time off, and strategies for dealing with the pressures of academic life.

Outcomes

Outcomes should be specific, realistic, and achievable within the eight mentoring sessions. Mentors and mentees should tailor the outcomes to align with the goals of the mentorship, and with each mentees individual research development needs.

Applications

Mentees and Mentors must complete the application form (Appendixes B & C) to be considered a position within the program. The availability of positions is variable and depends entirely on the number of mentees and mentors available for the program. Every effort will be made to match mentees and mentors strategically to maximise the likelihood of excellent outcomes for both parties.

Appendix A. Mentorship Collaboration Agreement

Overview

This Mentorship Collaboration Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into between the Mentor, [Mentor's Name], and the Mentee [Mentee's Name] with the guidance of the Manna Institute. The purpose of this Agreement is to outline the terms and expectations for the mentorship collaboration between the Mentor and the Mentee. The signed and completed Agreement will be provided to the Manna Institute by no later than 30 April 2024.

Duration

The mentorship collaboration will

Begin on, start date:	/	/ 2024

Conclude on, end date:	/	/ 2024

unless ended earlier by mutual agreement.

Mentoring session plan

Meetings will occur monthly for one hour and will be conducted in an online environment.

Session	Date	Content/topic
1	/04/2024	
2	/05/2024	
3	/06/2024	
4	/07/2024	
5	/08/2024	
6	/09/2024	
7	/10/2024	
8	/11/2024	

Research Needs, Goals and Objectives

The goals (i.e., what will be achieved) and the objectives (i.e., how the achievement will be measured) are established collaboratively by the mentor and the mentee, but with the mentee taking a proactive approach to identifying their goals. The Progress towards the goals is to be reviewed regularly throughout the mentorship. The number and type of goals are tailored to the mentee's research development needs.

Research needs	Goals	Objectives

Responsibilities

Mentor's Responsibilities:

- Encourage the Mentee's involvement in academic and professional activities.
- Collaboratively schedule the mentoring sessions with mentees
- Working collaboratively with mentees to develop the Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Attending scheduled mentoring meetings
- Supporting the mentee to reach the goals and aims specified in the Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Offer constructive feedback on the mentee's research work.
- Provide professional role modelling.

Mentee's Responsibilities:

- Actively engage in the mentorship process
- Demonstrate commitment to achieving the agreed goals.
- Scheduling the mentoring sessions in consultation with the mentor.
- Respect the Mentor's time and adhere to agreed-upon meeting schedules.
- Completing the Mentoring Partnership Agreement in consultation with the mentor.
- Submitting the completed and signed Mentor Partnership Agreement to Manna
- Preparing the agenda for each mentoring meeting
- Following through with agreed between-meeting tasks.

Planning for first mentoring meeting

Mentees may find it helpful to consider the following questions in preparation for their first mentoring meeting:

- How do you envision this mentorship contributing to your career development?
- What specific goals do you hope to achieve through this mentorship program?
- What outputs/objective would you expect through achieving your goals:
- What skills or knowledge areas you would like to develop?
- What qualities are you looking for in a mentor?
- How do you believe a mentor can best support your academic and research goals?
- Are there any specific challenges you are currently facing in your research or academic journey?

Confidentiality

The Mentor and Mentee agree to maintain the confidentiality of discussions and any sensitive information shared during the mentorship collaboration.

Termination

Either party may terminate this Agreement with written notice if there is a mutual agreement or if circumstances arise that make the continuation of the mentorship collaboration impractical or unproductive. Prior to formal termination of the Agreement, the Mentor and Mentee will meet with a Chief Investigator from Manna Institute to discuss and advise of the decision.

Signatures

Mentor:	Date / /
Mentee:	Date / /

Appendix B. Mentee Application

Name:		Gender:	Age:

Email:	Phone:

Current University/Partner:

Discipline:

Current title and level of appointment:

Year PhD was awarded:

Describe your primary research interest(s):

Can you commit to monthly meetings with your mentor for 8 months?

Please add any comments or other information you would like to share *(optional)*

Appendix C. Mentor Application

Name:		Gender:	Age:

Email:	Phone:

Current University/Partner:

Discipline:

Current title and level of appointment:

Year PhD was awarded:

Briefly describe your primary research interest area:

Are there any specific or specialised skills you would offer mentees (e.g., specific data analytic skills)

Have you served formally as a mentor in other programs? If yes, please outline your experience briefly.

What values do you believe are essential in a mentor-mentee relationship?

How do you believe your mentorship can contribute to the professional development of mentees?

Describe your mentoring style. For example, are you more hands-on, providing structured guidance, or do you prefer a more collaborative and exploratory approach, or a combination of both, or something different?

What qualities are you looking for in a mentee?

How do you foster diversity and inclusivity in your research and mentorship practices?

Can you commit to monthly meetings with your mentee for 8 months?

Please submit to: mannainstitute@une.edu.au by 15th March 2024.