

Postdoc name: Mentor name: Date:

Your postdoctoral training is a professional development period vital to establishing an independent career. The postdoctoral researcher and the mentor relationship is a key aspect of career development. Maintaining clear, open communication is important to optimize quality training and the overall research experience. The Individual Development Plan (IDP) facilitates this communication and helps the postdoctoral researcher to set and achieve goals. The plan also attempts to anticipate and address periodic challenges. Every postdoc takes a unique path to future success. Designing that path requires careful consideration and collaboration between mentor and mentored and others involved in the postdoc training activities.

Each Postdoc should complete this form and share it with the mentor before your annual mentoring meeting. Please contact the LSU Office of Postdoctoral Affairs for any questions that you may have.

How to Complete Your IDP



Part I. Self-Assessment

1. Which of your **accomplishments** will contribute to the success of your postdoctoral training? What skills are you bringing? (Include papers, presentations, techniques, etc. If you are changing fields, consider applicability of your prior experience.)

2. What areas of learning and growth would you like to develop in the next semester, six to nine months, and one-year timeframes? Be as specific as possible how you would like to accomplish these stated goals.

Part II. Career Goals

Describe your **long-term goals**. These should paint a vision of your future.

1. **Research Goals:** What specific area(s) of research do you wish to explore during your postdoctoral training? Are there specific methods or approaches with which you would like to gain familiarity and/or expertise?

2. **Professional Development Goals:** What professional skills would you like to acquire during your training? Examples might include public speaking, grant writing, manuscript preparation, teamwork personnel management, teaching, mentoring, etc.

3. **Career Goals:** What are your first and second choices of long-term careers - i.e. what position do you hope to hold 10 years from now? Be as specific as you can, and indicate relative enthusiasm for each choice.

(Optional) What are the **primary factors driving these goals** (e.g., personal interest in specific research area, teaching, business, government, writing; geographic priorities; family commitments; financial objectives; position in home country; immigrating to the US; etc.)?

Part III. Objectives

What are some activities that might help you achieve the research and professional goals you outlined on the previous page?

1. **Research goals (list 1-3):** For example, specify a course, meeting, or workshop attendance, fellowship or grant application; anticipated publication (details can include tentative title, annual or longer-term objectives. Include applicable details such as relative timeline for each objective interdependence, the order and urgency of project milestones (i.e., which are nearer term and which are longer-term?).

2. **Professional Development Objectives (list 1-3):** Specify courses, meeting, or workshop attendance, teaching, mentoring, or service opportunities. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs provides information about such programs.

Part IV. Agreed Upon Action Plan for Next Year

To be developed jointly by the postdoc and the mentor(s) during or after the discussion

Consider the following questions as you develop an action plan with your mentor:

- o List any **activities** in which you and your mentor agree you should participate in to achieve your professional/career goals in the coming year.
- o Do you have guaranteed **funding** for the next year? If not, what back-up plans are in place?
- o Are there **specific actions** that you and/or your mentor can undertake that will support your success (e.g., modify working styles, meetings to discuss progress, networking opportunities)?
- o How can your faculty mentor help you achieve your goals?
- o This IDP is a **living document**, and the goals within should be revisited throughout the year. Are there specific goals that you and your mentor should discuss before your next annual meeting?