

# Program Coordinating Checklist

Mentoring programs play a key role in the growth and professional development of ocean practitioners, and are critical for enhancing capacity and engaging future generations of ocean professionals. This [Guide to Developing Mentoring Programs for the International Ocean Community](#) is intended to present a framework for mentorship program planning, administration, evaluation, and support. The recommendations presented in the Guide are broadly applicable across ocean disciplines, but can and should be adapted to suit the specific goals and scope of each program. This checklist outlines key steps described in the Guide that program coordinators should follow when developing mentoring programs.

## Planning

- Establish leadership roles and governance structure (program coordinators, advisory committee)
- Assess budget/funding availability and determine priority areas for financial investment
- Define the program goals and target beneficiaries (including relevant qualifications and compatibility factors)
- Perform outreach to any existing or similar mentorship programs in the target region
- Decide on the program structure, scope of relevant activities
- Decide appropriate pairing/matching processes
- Set the program timeline (duration, frequency, milestones, etc.)

## Marketing and Communications

- Connect with local communities and target beneficiaries to determine appropriate communication channels for reaching desired and diverse audience
- Develop messages about the value of mentoring and the program goals
- Make the program timeline clear (e.g., deadlines for application, expected duration, etc.)
- Develop marketing materials (ads, newsletters, website, social media accounts, posts and stories, etc.)
- Build pathways of communication for existing, former, and prospective participants (e.g., newsletters, mailing lists, Slack channels, etc.)

## Recruit Participants and Solicit Applications

- Design application questions (in addition to basic background/demographic questions, be mindful to design questions in a way that captures relevant compatibility factors)
- Build questionnaire and a database to capture and store applicant responses and information
- Share and market the application across appropriate and diverse communication channels to reach target audience
- Engage the advisory committee in helping to market the program and recruit participants
- Hold Q&A meetings to provide clarifying information about the program or application process for prospective applicants

## Pairing/Matching

- Decide appropriate pairing/matching processes (administrative- or participant-led, manual or algorithm-based)
- Select and match participants in accordance with the program structure
- Communicate participant selection and facilitate match introductions

## Create and Share Program Materials

- Create program materials (e.g., a handbook for participants/program coordinators)
  - Program summary
  - Detailed program schedule
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Code of conduct
  - Pledge forms
  - Guidance/framework for mentor/mentee meetings
  - Templates for professional or project development
  - Compile any additional resources and materials
- Share program materials and make them readily available and accessible to participants (either deposit online or share printed copies)
- Continually update program materials to reflect any changes in the program

## Evaluation and Reporting

- Set measurable “SMART” goals to assess the success of the program over time
- Develop evaluation and reporting metrics
  - Include required metrics for relevant funding or administrative agencies
  - Incorporate feedback into the program design as needed
- Update and maintain the database of participant data and evaluation metrics
- Develop and deploy tools to regularly assess program results and/or participant experiences (e.g., program/participant surveys, focus groups, reports, etc.)
- Synthesize evaluation data and compile progress reports
- Communicate program outcomes and successes with participants, partner organizations, and relevant stakeholder groups
- Engage the advisory committee in reflecting on program outcomes/results