

ENRICH Mentoring Programme: Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct, largely based on [ESPID – WSPID Mentorship Programme](#) code of conduct, is to promote a respectful, productive, and positive environment for all participants in the ENRICH Mentoring Programme.

This document outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and professional standards for both mentors and mentees to ensure the success and integrity of the mentoring relationship.

Principles of the Mentorship Relationship

Mentorship should be built on mutual respect, confidentiality, honesty, and a commitment to growth. Both mentors and mentees are expected to:

- Foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment.
- Recognise and respect differences in background, training, identity, and perspective.
- Engage in open, two-way communication and constructive feedback.

Responsibilities of Mentors

Mentors serve as role models and professional guides. Their responsibilities include:

- *Commitment*: Allocate regular, dedicated time to the mentoring relationship, and honour scheduled meetings.
- *Support and Guidance*: Provide constructive feedback on career development, education and research.
- *Confidentiality*: Respect the privacy of discussions and protect personal or sensitive information. The exception to this will be in the case of information which the Mentor believes shows the Mentee or another individual to be at risk. In this case the mentor should inform the Mentee of their concerns and of the need to share this information with an appropriate point of contact within ENRICH (ENRICH Mentoring Committee, for further details please see "Reporting and escalation"), in order to seek further advice and ensure safeguarding.
- *Competence*: Mentors need to be conscious of their own levels of mentoring competence and experience and to never overstate them.
- *Boundaries*: Maintain professional boundaries, avoiding personal or inappropriate relationships.
- *Inclusivity*: Create an environment where the mentee feels valued, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds. The mentor is responsible for ensuring the environment is safe enough for the mentee to communicate needs and challenges honestly.

Mentors must also acknowledge when they are unable to provide specific guidance and help the mentee identify alternative resources or contacts.

Responsibilities of Mentees

Mentees' responsibilities include:

- *Engagement and organisation*: Take responsibility for arranging meetings, preparing agendas where appropriate, and keeping brief notes or records of agreed actions, and follow through on agreed goals and task.
- *Openness*: Be receptive to feedback and willing to explore new perspectives.
- *Communication*: Communicate needs, goals, and challenges honestly and clearly.
- *Initiative*: Drive their own development by setting objectives, asking questions, and seeking feedback.
- *Respect*: Acknowledge and respect the mentor's time, expertise, and boundaries.

Mutual Expectations

- Define goals and expectations early in the relationship, and revisit them periodically.
- Be responsive to communication within a reasonable timeframe.
- Agree on the preferred mode and frequency of contact.
- Address issues or misunderstandings respectfully and promptly.

Unacceptable Conduct

The following behaviours are not tolerated:

- Harassment, discrimination, or intimidation of any kind.
- Breach of confidentiality or trust.
- Exploitation of the mentorship relationship for personal, academic, or financial gain.
- Any form of coercion, including pressure to co-author papers or perform tasks unrelated to agreed goals.

Reporting and escalation

If problems arise (e.g. mentor/mentee constantly cancelling meetings, not working well together, breaking confidence, generally violating the code of conduct) taking early action is always recommended. The issues should be reported to the ENRICH Mentoring Committee, composed of Action Chair and Vice-chair as well as WG7 leader and co-leader.

The Committee will review the issue in confidence and determine appropriate next steps. Where a concern is assessed as serious, the Committee reserves the right to escalate the matter to the relevant institution(s) of the mentor and/or mentee, having informed the individuals involved and sought their prior authorisation, except where immediate escalation is required for safeguarding reasons.

Participation in the ENRICH Mentoring Programme implies agreement with, and commitment to adhere to, this Code of Conduct.