

Stanford | Office of Postdoctoral Affairs



Postdoc name: Mentor name: Date:

Your postdoctoral training is a period of growth toward your independent career. Your relationship with your mentor is a key aspect of that growth; maintaining clear, open communication is important to optimize your training and research experience. The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is designed to help catalyze this communication, help you reflect on your goals, make plans to help achieve those goals, and to address challenges that arise along the way. There is no single prescribed pathway to postdoctoral success. Rather, every postdoc takes a unique path; designing that path requires reflection on your part and collaboration with your mentor and others.

Fill out this form and ideally share it with your mentor ahead of your annual mentoring meeting. Also, take advantage of resources here at Stanford, which can be found on the **Office of Postdoctoral Affairs website**.

How to Complete Your IDP

1**Step back and self-assess!**

It's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. Fill out this form, using the questions as a jumping off point to understand your research progress, development, and goals. Please **visit our website** for more resources on making use of the IDP.

2**Set your annual meeting with your faculty mentor.**

You are responsible for scheduling annual IDP meetings with your faculty mentor to discuss your IDP. We recommend that you share your completed IDP form with your faculty mentor before your meeting.

3**Lead the discussion.**

The IDP includes topics postdoctoral scholars have found helpful. This meeting is a great time to bring up additional questions and set expectations about your working relationship.

4**Complete the Action Plan and make a plan for following up.****5****Document your meeting.**

Both your IDP and the content of your conversation with your faculty mentor are private. The date of your IDP conversation must be recorded using the IDP Reporting Form at **<http://postdocs.stanford.edu/idp/reporting/>**. Your faculty mentor will confirm that the meeting took place on the recorded date.



Part I. Self-Assessment

1. Which of your **past 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 how your prior experience might be applied.)

2. What areas of learning and growth would you like to develop in the next year? Which of these areas could be addressed in the next quarter? Which would be better addressed in 6 or 9 months? Be as specific as possible, including how you would like to accomplish them.



Part II. Career Goals

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

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

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

c. **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? goals on the previous page?

1. Research goals (list 1-3): For example, a course, meeting or workshop attendance (specify if possible); fellowship or grant application; anticipated publication (list tentative title if appropriate); may include objectives in the coming year or longer-term objectives. Include a relative timeline for each objective (i.e. are these objectives dependent of each other? Do some make sense to approach immediately, while others make sense to delay?)

2. Professional Development Objectives (list 1-3): For example, courses, meeting or workshop attendance (specify if possible); teaching/mentoring; service opportunities; etc. Note that the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs provides information about these types of 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:

- List any **activities** in which you and your mentor agree you should participate in to achieve your professional/career goals in the coming year.
- Do you have guaranteed **funding** for the next year? If not, what back-up plans are in place?
- 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)?
- How can your faculty mentor help you achieve your goals?
- 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?