



TRAINEE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Program Information 2024-2026

The AAS Trainee Mentorship Program offers Trainees a platform to expand their professional network by building meaningful mentor-mentee relationships within the international research community. Through guidance, collaboration, and knowledge sharing, we empower the next generation of autonomic professionals, supporting their development and career growth while fostering a culture of mutual support.

Why join the program as a mentee?

In a mentor-mentee relationship, Trainees receive personalized support to navigate their academic and career pursuits with improved confidence. By expanding one's professional network with a mentor, mentees gain valuable insights and fresh perspectives from experienced professionals. This relationship enhances the mentee's professional development and provides a foundation for long-term success and meaningful career connections.

Why join the program as a mentor?

Alongside finding personal satisfaction in helping others, mentors can enhance their leadership and communication skills while expanding their professional network. Through mentorship, they could gain fresh perspectives and insights, stay updated on emerging trends, and reflect on their own practices. This process fosters their professional growth and allows them to shape the next generation of professionals, leaving a lasting impact on their field.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Format: Trainees are paired with their mentor for a 2-year term, over which time they will connect via phone, Zoom, or in person (if this is possible, e.g., AAS Annual Meeting). *This is a mentee-driven program; each Mentee is responsible for initiating and maintaining interactions with their mentor.*

Matching: Pairing will occur based on the Trainee's goals, and list of 3-5 preferred mentors, shared at registration. If a preferred match isn't available, we will strive to match Mentees with a mentor in the same or a related field.

Year at a glance:

September-October: Expressions of interest for mentors and mentees

Early November: Matching and first introduction of mentors with mentees, initial contact with your mentor.

Nov-Dec: Suggested first meeting. Mentorship Welcome hosted at AAS Annual Meeting, for those attending.

Jan-Apr: Suggested second meeting.

May-Aug: Suggested third meeting.

Late August: AAS Mentorship Program evaluation survey, confirmation of interest to continue to Year 2.

Enrolment Deadline: Incoming Mentors and returning participants, Oct 4 / New mentees,

Contacts: Ms. Kavithra Karalasingham (kavithra.karalasingh@ucalgary.ca, Program Leader), Ms. Erin Williams (elwillia@sfu.ca, Trainee Committee Chair).

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation in the AAS Mentorship Program is restricted to registered AAS Members, in good standing. Our membership includes students, educators, clinicians and researchers from different disciplines (neurology, clinical pharmacology, internal medicine, pediatrics, cardiology, endocrinology, physiology).

- **Mentees** must hold a *Trainee* membership (students, post-doctoral fellows, residents, and junior faculty).
- **Mentors** hold non-Trainee AAS membership and have autonomic expertise with professional experience in academic, clinical/healthcare, government, public health, and/or industry sectors.

Program participation lasts for a 2-year term. In late August of the first year, both parties will be asked to confirm their participation for the upcoming year. If either party wishes to withdraw early, the remaining participant will be re-matched. After the 2-year term, mentors and mentees can choose to continue for another term or re-match.



Mentees and mentors will have three meetings annually (six meetings over 2-year term), conducted via phone, online (e.g., Zoom), or in person (e.g., at the AAS Annual Meeting). The relationship can continue afterward if both parties agree. If you need to withdraw from the program, please inform the AAS Trainee Committee immediately.

Each mentee is responsible for initiating and maintaining interactions with their mentor, as this is a mentee-driven program. Over their participation, all parties must fulfill their responsibilities (outlined below) and are encouraged to complete the annual program evaluation form, distributed in late August.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MENTEES within the program are responsible for driving the contact with their own mentor.

Over the duration of their participation, mentees will:

- Read and follow the program materials provided by the AAS Trainee Committee
- Thoughtfully research 3-5 preferred mentors and share these in their registration survey.
- Maintain contact with their mentor and schedule their meetings in accordance with the program guidelines, at times that are suited to either parties schedule.
- Maintain respect and professionalism throughout their participation in the program:
 - Establish your goals for joining the program and communicate these to your mentor. Consider what you'd like to discuss at each meeting, share this with your mentor in advance, and come prepared.
 - Develop a positive, trusting relationship with your mentor, and respect each other's privacy and confidentiality throughout the program.
 - Allow sufficient time to schedule meetings, respond promptly, and give your mentor adequate time to reply. Always inform your mentor with due notice if you need to miss or reschedule a meeting.

MENTORS within the program are responsible for sharing their advice and experience with their mentee. Accordingly, very little preparation is needed outside participating in your Mentor-Mentee meetings.

Over the duration of their participation, mentors will:

- Read and follow the program materials provided by the AAS Trainee Committee.
- Correspond with their Mentee as needed, and participate in scheduled mentor-mentee meetings. Note that outside of the three suggested meetings per year, mentors are not obligated in any way (unless they wish to take their own initiative to do so) to arrange further activities for their Mentee to participate in.
- Maintain respect and professionalism throughout their participation in the program:
 - Consider the goals of your Mentee and provide insight to the best of your ability, based on your own professional experiences.
 - Develop a positive, trusting relationship with your Mentee, and respect each other's privacy and confidentiality throughout the program.
 - Share any boundaries/preferences you have around communication up front and reply to correspondence in a timely manner. Always inform your mentor with due notice if you need to miss or reschedule a meeting.

The AAS Trainee Committee is responsible for program management. This includes:

- Matching mentors and mentees based on submitted preferences and goals as closely as possible.
- Hosting a Mentorship Program event at the AAS Annual Meeting, serving as an meeting for program participants that are able to attend.
- Checking in with mentors and mentees intermittently throughout the program.
- Offering ongoing support as needed

If you ever have any questions, comments or requests for support, please direct these to either of the program contacts within the AAS Trainee Committee:

Ms. Kavithra Karalasingham (kavithra.karalasingh@ucalgary.ca, AAS Mentor-Mentee Program Leader)

Ms. Erin Williams (erwillia@sfu.ca, AAS Trainee Committee Chair)