

VSM Mentoring Program

Suggestions

How to get a mentor?

In principle, all faculty members that are advisors of the VSM can also act as mentors (if they want to). For several reasons, it may be a good idea to choose a mentor who holds a permanent position at the University you are studying at, but you are free to make a different choice. A list of advisors of the VSM who hold a permanent position at the University of Vienna as well a list of possible mentors at TU Wien is available via the homepage of the VSM, see <https://www.vsmath.at/about-vsm/mentoring-program/>. You can also meet potential mentors at welcome/networking events of the VSM.

Option A

- Pick a potential mentor and communicate your preferred choice to the VSM, the VSM will make the contact
- After receiving a positive answer, reach out to the mentor to schedule the first meeting

Option B

- Make contact to the chosen mentor yourself. If you agree on a mentorship, inform the VSM about it and schedule the first meeting.

Concept

Your mentor should be a person you can ask for non-scientific advice. You should profit from the mentorship by discussing your career plans, your academic life and your job at the Faculty. If you face some problems in your PhD, your mentor can provide support in overcoming them.

Please note that the mentorship is not meant to be used for questions regarding your scientific research.

Disclaimer

After the mentee and the mentor have received the confirmation email about the mentorship, the involvement of the VSM ends. How the mentorship is organized is up to the mentee and the mentor. In the following, we present some advice and suggestions that we hope may be helpful.

The First Meeting

Set-up

Get in contact with the mentor, for instance by using the confirmation email you and your mentor both received from the VSM. Agree with your mentor on a date and time for the first meeting and ideally also discuss how long you expect the meeting to take.

Preparation

Before the first meeting, both mentee and mentor should make up their mind about the following topics:

Mentee	Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How often/regularly do you want to meet?• How long do you want a meeting to take?• How do you want to set up the following meetings?• Where do you want to meet?• Which topics do you want to discuss in the meetings?• Are there any specific issues you think your mentor can help you with?• How do you want to profit from the mentorship?• What are your expectations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How often/regularly do you want to meet?• How long do you want a meeting to take?• How do you want to set up the following meetings?• Where do you want to meet?• Which topics do you think are most relevant/worth discussing?• Are there any specific issues things you think you can help your mentee with?• Which topics are not part of the mentorship, e.g. scientific questions?

During the meeting

Topics you may want to discuss:

- Introduce yourselves
 - Career (plans)
 - Academic Background
 - How do you want to profit from the mentorship?
- Agree on the schedule of meetings:
 - how often
 - how long does a meeting take
 - who gets in touch to schedule the next meeting
 - Do you want to already schedule the next meeting at the end of the current meeting?
- Discuss and agree on expectations
 - Topics to discuss
 - Problems to address
 - Things the mentor can help the mentee with
- Discuss the Dos and Don'ts
 - Confidentiality
 - Time frame for replies to emails
 - Which topics are not part of the mentorship?
 - How do you feel about emails between the meetings about events, job offers, urgent matters, etc.?

Upcoming Meetings

Topics that can be brought up:

Mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Public presentation of the PhD project•Yearly progress report of the doctoral agreement•Give overview of recent developments•Discuss problems you might have in your PhD, e.g. with your supervisor, with your thesis, with your course work, ...•What are your career plans?

Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Give advice about/on the public presentation of the PhD thesis•Explain the structure and the academic life of the Faculty, e.g. Colloquia•Ask about progress in the PhD program, e.g. with the thesis and with course work•Discuss importance of Journals and Publications•Address mental health and work-life balance•Ask for feedback about the mentorship•Help with networking e.g. introduce your mentee to other PhD students or Faculty staff you know•Regularly inform mentee about interesting job offers, events, ...•Career advice