

Individual Development Plan for First-Year Postdocs

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) provides a planning process that identifies career objectives, annual progress, and professional development needs of postdoctoral fellows. The IDP can serve as a planning and organizing tool for communication between postdoctoral fellows and their mentors. It is desirable that postdoctoral fellows finish Parts I and II as soon as possible upon entering their postdoctoral training and Part III about individual career goals certainly by the end of the first year. Each year, at the time of the annual renewal of his/her postdoctoral appointment, an annual Progress Report will be sent to postdoctoral fellows for completion and update the original IDP.

Goals of the IDP

To help the postdoctoral fellow identify:

1. Short-term needs for improving research performance and progress to career goals
2. Long-term career goals and options and necessary skills and training needed to meet research and career goals.

Benefits of the IDP

Identifying long-term and short-term goals gives the postdoctoral fellow a clearer sense of expectations of a career objective and identification of milestones along the way to achieve this objective. Personal benchmarks of success can be defined.

Outline of the IDP Process

1. Complete all three parts of the IDP as soon as enter postdoctoral training or as soon as possible in the first year of postdoctoral training. Submit a copy of all three parts to the OPE.
2. Each year at the time of appointment renewal revisit the original IDP or the IDP from the previous year and check progress toward research goals and revise long-term career goals as needed. Discuss your progress with your mentor. Your IDP and first Annual Progress Report will be used in discussions with the Office of Postdoctoral Education about your career goals during your second year of Postdoctoral training.
3. Discuss when appropriate short term and long term research and career goals with your mentor throughout your postdoctoral training.

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PART I

Research Project Planning

Postdoctoral Fellow Information

Name _____

Department _____

Mentor/Advisor _____

Overall Research Project

- Describe the aims and experimental approaches of your current research project(s). Aims and approaches should be decided in discussions with the mentor.

- What is the significance of your research?

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Part II

Name _____

Department _____

Research Plans for Up-Coming Year

- Research Project Goals for the first year of training (brief description)
- Plans for improving scientific writing skills and your oral presentation skills in the first year
- Anticipated research techniques to learn in the first year
- Anticipated publications to submit in the first year.
- Anticipated meeting and workshop attendance in the first year
- Fellowships, grants or other funding applications planned for this year

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Part III

Name _____

Department _____

Overall Career Goals and Plans for Achieving the Goals

- What are your short-term career goals? Describe your time line for achieving them.
- What are your long-term career goals? Describe your time line for achieving them.
- In reference to your career goals, what resources can the Office of Postdoctoral Education or your mentor provide or help you find?
- What further research activity or other training is needed before it is appropriate to start a job search?
- When do you hope to begin a job search? If you do not know then estimate.