**VBRN Faculty Individual Development Plan (IDP) and Mentoring Needs Assessment (MNA)**

Timing: to be completed or updated at the beginning of each academic year

The **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** is a common tool used for reflecting on and planning for professional career goals. It provides a personal roadmap for accomplishing immediate, intermediate, and long-term goals by identifying skills and developmental needs, resource needs, mentors and role models, and target dates for career building milestones. Treat this as a live document, subject to periodic review and revisions as needed to correct course, and as a compact with your VBRN science mentor.

In addition to your VBRN Science Mentor, the BPI Coordinator at your institution and leaders of VBRN are also available for mentoring and advice. The effectiveness of this mentoring team relies on alignment of expectations – what you expect from them, and what they expect of you. With that in mind, please incorporate references to your research and career support needs in the IDP. Think about the mentoring and advice that would be most helpful to you, from whom, and by when, and add that to your document. We are calling this your **Mentoring Needs Assessment (MNA)**.

Please:

**Communicate** with your mentors early and often; take the lead in maintaining contact and take ownership of your professional development.

**Set aside time** to strategize on achieving your goals and to identify obstacles that may be hindering your progress.

**Set clear expectations**, of yourself and others.

**Supplement this IDP** with additional resources from within your own institution and professional organizations, as appropriate.

**Follow the process** outlined below to prepare a first draft of an IDP prior to meeting with your VBRN Science Mentor. Discuss your draft with your mentor and reflect on their feedback before making revisions, then revisit (as needed) with your mentor before implementing your strategy.

**Reach out** to the BPI Coordinator at your institution and/or members of VBRN’s leadership as needed. They are here to facilitate your work, including if you find yourself in a difficult or uncomfortable situation in your mentoring relationship.

The IDP and MNA are limited to your VBRN related research commitment.

**Steps:**

1. Think intentionally about your goals and prepare a timeline: for each, identify the BIG GOAL and the interim steps towards the goal. Include actions that you need to take as well as activities that you need to stop doing to achieve the goal. Be as specific as possible and remember to include the mentors you will reach out to for help or advice along the way. Justify how each interim step contributes towards the BIG GOAL and indicate how you will measure progress and completion to a successful outcome. List your goals in order of priority, incorporating key VBRN deadlines into your timeline. The timeline categories below are divided into three periods and based on a one-year project/pilot funding period. (Note that funding is for one year with a renewal application with demonstrated progress meriting additional funding.)
2. Immediate - within the next three months
3. Intermediate - within the next three to six months
4. Long-term - within the next six to twelve months
5. Assign each goal to a category in the table below and indicate percent effort you will dedicate.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Research |
| 1. Acquire requisite skills (e.g., technical, lab management) |
| 1. Mentor and train students |
| 1. Design methods, conduct experiments, analyze data |
| 1. Assess research progress |
| 1. Develop impactful and meaningful future research direction |
| 1. Grants and Funding |
| 1. Acquire requisite skills (e.g., hypothesis framing, grant writing mechanics) |
| 1. Identify funding source and establish connection with agency/program officer |
| 1. Work backwards from the due date to establish milestones and their target dates |
| 1. Collaborations or consultations (if applicable) |
| 1. Identify needed expertise to carry out the project |
| 1. Assign tasks and responsibilities |
| 1. Establish regular meeting/conference schedule |
| 1. Publications and Presentations |
| 1. Acquire requisite skills (e.g., manuscript preparation, oral presentations) |
| 1. Establish milestones and target dates |
| 1. Identify publication outlet/presentation venue |
| 1. Identify internal reviewers |

1. Use the example IDP (next page) as a guide. Please also include your answers to these questions:
2. How useful would it be if your VBRN Science Mentor visited your institution, in-person or virtually, to give a presentation or meet with you and your students?
   1. Not useful
   2. Slightly useful
   3. Moderately useful
   4. Very useful
   5. Extremely useful
3. How useful would it be if your BPI Coordinator did each of the following?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not useful | Slightly useful | Moderately useful | Very useful | Extremely useful |
| * 1. Advised you on preparing for promotion |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Advised you on navigating institutional policies and procedures |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Advised you on achieving key institutional milestones |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Notified you of relevant meetings, seminars, or conferences |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Advised you on opportunities for using Core services available at UVM and in the region |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Reviewed publication draft(s) |  |  |  |  |  |
| * 1. Reviewed presentation draft(s) |  |  |  |  |  |

1. To what extent is your department chair actively engaged in your professional and career development plans and activities?
   1. Not at all
   2. Slightly
   3. Moderately
   4. Very
   5. Extremely
   6. Other answer (please elaborate):

**Example IDP** (an investigator plans to write a grant)

| **(2) Grants and Funding** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Milestones** | **Timeline** | **Timetable** | **Mentoring needs** |
| Sub-tasks |  | Months before submission | Who will you reach out to? How will they be most helpful to you? |
| 1. Problem identification | Immediate | 12 months |  |
| 1. Presentation of research interest |  |  | - |
| 1. Read deeply to assess the state of the field & identify the most salient research questions |  |  | - |
| 1. Narrowing down interest into testable hypotheses |  |  | Discuss with science mentor |
| 1. Identification of funding sources that fit with hypotheses |  |  | Get input from science mentor & BPI Coordinator |
| 1. Identification of target funding source(s) |  |  | Get feedback from science mentor |
| 1. Obtain information from target funding sources of proposal formats |  |  | - |
| 1. Operationalizing constructs presented in hypotheses | Immediate | 10 months |  |
| 1. Present procedures to science mentor and get feedback |  |  | Get input from science mentor |
| 1. Create foundation for Specific Aims page |  |  | - |
| 1. Assess the current state of preliminary data |  |  | - |
| 1. Identify those experiments that are needed to support the premise of the application |  |  | - |
| 1. Assess overall feasibility of the Approach |  |  | Get input from science mentor |
| 1. Writing the conceptualization and procedures | Intermediate | 7-8 months |  |
| 1. Draft the Specific Aims and Significance sections |  |  | - |
| 1. Draft the Methods/Procedures section |  |  | - |
| 1. Share draft with mentor and get comments |  |  | Get input (draft back with comments) from science mentor |
| 1. Conceptualization to operationalization to data analysis | Intermediate | 6-7 months |  |
| 1. Draft Analysis section |  |  | - |
| 1. Share draft with mentor and get comments |  |  | Get input (draft back with comments) from science mentor |
| 1. Mechanics | Intermediate | 3-5 months |  |
| 1. Complete IRB (human subjects research) and IACUC (research with vertebrate animals) forms |  |  | Discuss with science mentor |
| 1. Draft budget |  |  | Discuss with science mentor |
| 1. Draft budget justification |  |  | Get input from science mentor |
| 1. Draft Prior Research and Preliminary Studies sections |  |  | Get input (draft back with comments) from science mentor |
| 1. Full draft proposal circulated for review and comments | Long-term | 0-3 months |  |
| 1. Share full draft for review and comment |  |  | Get input from science mentor and others (BPI coordinator, VBRN leaders, others) |
| 1. Review feedback |  |  | - |
| 1. Revise and finalize |  |  | Discuss with science mentor |
| 1. Submit! |  |  | - |