

# DKFZ Connect Mentorship Pilot 2022



## *Guide for Mentees*

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## Welcome

Welcome to the DKFZ Connect Mentoring Pilot 2022. This is a joint initiative of the 2022 [PhD Council](#) Support Team, the [Postdoc Network](#) and the [Career Service & Alumni Relations](#) team. DKFZ Connect Mentoring is part of the [Tailored Mentoring](#) at DKFZ and is open to everyone, specifically to MSc Students, Doctoral and Postdoctoral Researchers. Within this pilot, in the coming six months, we want to support you in finding a [Mentor](#) and starting a fruitful relationship.

## A few infos about Mentoring

Mentoring is a highly effective way for professional and personal development. One-to-one Mentoring is a temporary, informal transfer of experience and knowledge between a (professionally) experienced person ([Mentor](#)) and a less experienced person ([Mentee](#)). Mentoring is particularly worthwhile in biographical transitional phases, such as entering the job market, or taking the next step in the career e.g. when changing jobs or locations. Here Mentoring can help to expand one's professional skills and competencies in line with one's personal future career plans. A Mentor does not necessarily have to be very senior to the Mentee but can be just one-step ahead or even at the same professional level (peer mentoring). Mentors support Mentees in their professional development through discussions, guidance and introduction to the relevant networks.

### Who is a Mentee?

A Mentee is a member of DKFZ staff or a DKFZ Alumn registered on DKFZ Connect ([dkfz-connect.de](https://dkfz-connect.de)), who is seeking career advice and knowledge. As a Mentee, your role is to learn from your Mentor and glean insights based on their individual experiences, by bringing the following to the relationship:

- Identify and clearly communicate your needs: preferences, skills, values and desired areas for growth.
- Adopt a growth mindset, and be an attentive listener, even if your Mentor shares information you already know.
- Define clear objectives with your Mentor and commit to action points.
- Ask for concrete feedback on relevant documents (career development plan, CV/applications).
- Be open for networking and new professional connections and further opportunities that might occur along the way (job shadowing, etc.).

### What can you gain from it?

Mentoring is a collaborative relationship that facilitates mutual learning, critical reflection, and growth. It is also a chance to help develop self-awareness. There are a number of benefits to be gained by being in a Mentoring connection, including:

- Expanding your professional network
- Identifying and refining your career goals by getting new insights
- Receiving valuable feedback on your own development

## DKFZ Connect Mentoring

This DKFZ Connect Mentoring program is a pilot for the duration of six months, starting in June 2022. It is a low-threshold offer for current MSc students, Doctoral and Postdoctoral Researchers as well as former DKFZ scientists.

All MSc students, Doctoral and Postdoctoral Researchers interested in getting support by Mentoring are requested to register on [dkfz-connect.de](https://dkfz-connect.de) and join the group “[DKFZ Connect Mentoring Pilot 2022](#)”. Being a member of the group is mandatory for this pilot and will help us to tailor our communication to the needs of the Mentees and Mentors and to individually support the attendees of the pilot.

On the platform around 500 members indicated that they are “willing to Mentor”. Of these 325 are at senior level and are willing to invest time in Mentoring tandems. Aspiring Mentees can either independently request a possible Mentor via the platform or approach the Career Service & Alumni Relations team for support in matching with a Mentor based on specific criteria.

## Ways to communicate

Communication between Mentors and Mentees is flexible and can span a variety of channels including direct messages or video calls on DKFZ Connect, email, phone call, text, or meeting in person. You can reach out to your match by navigating to their DKFZ Connect profile and clicking on the small icons below their name to schedule a meeting. Make sure to edit your notifications and privacy settings to ensure you are receiving notifications from your Mentor and DKFZ Connect.

Mentor and Mentee will agree on the frequency and form of communication individually.

## The Mentee’s Role, Responsibilities and Expectations

- Be reliable, trustworthy and build a relationship
- Establish and maintain appropriate boundaries
- Stick to the rules of appreciative communication and be respectful of the Mentor's time
- Commit to the program for the duration agreed on by both parties (typically this is for the length of the program but can of course be extended when both parties agree)
- Remain timely to “meetings” and notify your Mentor in a timely manner of any changes or cancellations to any communications previously agreed upon
- Engage with your Mentor regularly throughout the program and sustain the frequency of contact agreed between you and your Mentor
- Inform the DKFZ Career Service & Alumni Relations team of any conflict or intention to withdraw from the DKFZ Connect Mentoring Pilot

## Getting Started

### a) Update DKFZ Connect

Register on [dkfz-connect.de](https://dkfz-connect.de) and make sure your profile in general and especially the mentoring settings are up to date and complete.

### Mentoring

🏠
👤
⚙️

Maximum number of people I want to mentor at a time

−
2
+

[UPDATE MENTEE LIMIT](#)

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#### Mentoring Settings

<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offer Help</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Share professional expertise</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to network connections</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check a CV / Application</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Give a talk and/or host a (virtual) round table</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Offer Mentoring</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10-Minute-Mentoring (Coffee/Phone Call)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tandem Mentoring (3-4 meetings/year)</p>	<p>Seek Help</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Share professional expertise</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to network connections</p> <p>Seek Mentoring</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10-Minute-Mentoring (Coffee/Phone Call)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tandem Mentoring (3-4 meetings/year)</p>
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[UPDATE MENTORSHIP SETTINGS](#)

### 1 Choose your Mentoring settings

Please also fill in the fields “Job function”, “Education / Background”, “Fellowships and Grants”, and “Interests for Career Days & Mentoring”. Together with the “Seeking help match” these are the main weighting factors for the automatically suggested mentors.

The more and exact the fields in the profile are filled in, the better the matching between Mentor and Mentee will work.

To edit your profile, choose “Edit profile” from the list that opens when you press the small arrow next to your profile picture.

## 2 Edit your profile

You can also adapt your mentoring settings there.

### b) Get in touch with Career Service & Alumni Relations

After your settings and profile information is complete, please join the “[DKFZ Connect Mentoring Pilot 2022](#)” group on DKFZ Connect. This is where the official pilot communication happens. Additionally, contact the Career Service & Alumni Relations team via [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de) to let us know, that you are actively looking for a Mentor and/or if you need any assistance.

### c) Find a mentor

Within the mentoring section > “Find a Mentor”, you see a little selection of “Suggested Mentors”. Those are matched to your profile automatically based on a basic algorithm.

We recommend to search for a Mentor using your own preferences, use the directory on DKFZ Connect and its filters by clicking on “Find your own mentor” or go directly to the Directory > Mentors.

#### Directory

## 3 Use the directory to search for your Mentor

The result list automatically shows everybody who offers mentoring, respectively 10-Minute-Mentoring as well as Tandem Mentoring. For the pilot we recommend to untick the 10- Minute-Mentoring option in the filter section Mentoring.

The screenshot shows the DKFZ Connect Mentorship Pilot 2022 search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the DKFZ logo and the text 'GERMAN CANCER RESEARCH CENTER IN THE HELMHOLTZ ASSOCIATION' and 'Research for a life without cancer'. Below the navigation bar, there are several filters: 'Affiliation', 'Location', 'Get Involved', and 'Mentoring'. The 'Mentoring' filter is expanded, showing a search bar and two options: '10-Minute-Mentoring (Coffee/Phone Call)' and 'Tandem Mentoring (3-4 meetings/year)'. The 'Tandem Mentoring' option is selected with a blue checkmark.

#### 4 Search for people offering Tandem Mentoring

**IMPORTANT:** For this pilot program please look for Mentors that are willing to offer mentoring option “Tandem Mentoring”.

Use the filters to search for suitable Mentors. You can filter by affiliation, location, nationality, gender, work experience, education, Interest for Career Days & Mentoring etc. You can also use the full text search. With the section “Get Involved” you can specify your mentoring match for more precise support fields.

The screenshot shows the DKFZ Connect Mentorship Pilot 2022 search interface with filters and options. On the left, there is a 'Filter by' section with fields for 'First name', 'Last name', 'Affiliation', and 'Location'. In the center, there is a 'Get Involved' section with a search bar and four options: 'Share professional expertise', 'Introduction to network connections', 'Check a CV / Application', and 'Give a talk and/or host a (virtual) round table'. On the right, there is a 'Mentoring' section with a search bar and two options: '10-Minute-Mentoring (Coffee/Phone Call)' and 'Tandem Mentoring (3-4 meetings/year)'. The 'Tandem Mentoring' option is selected with a blue checkmark.

#### 5 Use the filters to narrow your search

Within the section “DKFZ Connect” you can filter for nationality, gender and “Interests for Career Days & Mentoring”.

### 6 Filter for Interests for Career Days & Mentoring

Check the profiles of your result list. Decide who you think, is the best mentoring match for you and send a mentoring request by clicking the “Request mentoring” button at the users profile.

### 7 Request Mentoring via the button and choose Tandem Mentoring

Choose “Tandem Mentoring” as Mentoring option and write your message to your potential Mentor. Please do not contact more than two people at a time. Your prospective Mentor will receive the request and will decide to accept or decline it. Give him/her three to five days to make a decision. Please ask [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de) for support if you do not receive any reply from your desired Mentor. In case your first choice Mentor denies your request, you are of course, free to go for another option.

If you need any support in searching for your right mentoring match, please do not hesitate to contact [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de).

#### d) Introductory call and goal setting

Once your mentor of choice accepted your request, we suggest introducing yourself in more detail and setting up a time for an introductory call. During your introductory call, we recommend defining expectations regarding the frequency of your sessions, the duration of each session (i.e. 1 hour), and a few points on the guidance you are seeking. This way, your mentor has some background knowledge to expand upon for the subsequent sessions.

During and following your introductory call, it is important to identify clear goals for yourself. Here are some questions to consider leading up to goal setting:

- What areas are you hoping to grow in during this program?
- What challenges or uncertainties do you face?
- What are your top hard skills, and top soft skills?
- Are you aware of your preferences and values?
- Can you identify areas for growth and why those areas are especially challenging for you (i.e. computer/program skills, patience, collaborative mindset, networking, etc.)?

Goals should be phrased in a SMART way: SMART to dos are Specific, Measurable, Active, Realistic and Timebound, e.g. “Interview three Alumni working as Postdoc in Great Britain until end of month”. Use <https://careercheck.dkfz.de> to create awareness of your potential, your ♥ elements and to set up your career orientation strategy. In the [MyPlan](#) section, CareerCheck will also help you in phrasing SMART to dos. For individual support, please book a slot according to your convenience via <https://careercheck.dkfz.de/Home/BookAppointment>.

#### e) Discussion Topics

Within your first sessions, your Mentor will help you define and refine your goals and help you to create action steps. Do not be afraid to ask lots of questions. Ask them for stories and examples, or what they would look for in a candidate in their field. You can utilize the below categories to identify help you may need:

- Assessment of current position - Skills, Preferences and Values
- Career Orientation Strategy / Career Development Plan
- Insights into the professional (scientific) community

- Planning and acquisition of third-party funds
- Stories of Experiences & General Knowledge
- Job Seeking & Workplace Dynamics
- Balancing work and (family) life
- Networking

## FAQs

- **How will a mentoring match be made?**

As a potential Mentee you will look out for profiles and mentoring options on DKFZ Connect that are interesting to you. You will have to actively approach your potential Mentor via the platform (“Request Mentor”, choose mentoring option “Tandem-Mentoring”). The Mentor will review your request and either confirm or decline it. You cannot find someone? Please let us know via [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de) and we can have a look together.

- **What is expected of me as a Mentee?**

The DKFZ Connect Mentoring pilot is designed to engage regardless of all backgrounds and experience levels. You will be in a tandem with the Mentor who has accepted for six months. We encourage the tandems to connect on a regular basis, frequency and format of communication should be mutually decided on by the tandem. As a Mentee you will take on the active part of the tandem and are responsible for defining goals, scheduling, and preparing and following up on meetings. The DKFZ Careers & Alumni Team will be standing by to answer any questions you might have. Prior experience is not required.

- **How exactly can I approach a potential Mentor?**

You can send a mentoring request via DKFZ Connect. Briefly say something about yourself and why you are interested in this person to become your Mentor. The Mentor will review your request and either confirm or decline it. If you are unsure how to approach your potential Mentor please let us know and we can provide examples.

- **What happens if I am paired with a Mentor and never hear from her?**

As Mentee, you take on the active part of the tandem and amongst others, you are responsible for scheduling and following up on meetings. If you have reached out to your match and have not heard back from him, please contact us at [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de) and we will be happy to help you connect, or find a new connection altogether.

- **My Mentor is enthusiastic and I am hearing from her a little too frequently. What do I do?**

We love our enthusiastic members, but we understand your discomfort, too! Fear not. Revisit your agreement regarding frequency of communications together, or feel free to contact us for assistance.

- **Do I have to live in the Rhine-Neckar region to attend the DKFZ Connect Mentoring pilot?**

You do not have to live in the Rhine-Neckar region as you can interact with your Mentor not only by meeting in person but also by connecting via video chat, phone calls, etc. You will jointly decide on the frequency and the format of your meetings.

- **How many Mentors can I have?**

Getting insights into different fields and receiving feedback from various perspectives can be very fruitful. Nevertheless, also due to your time, we recommend you to start with one mentor in the six-month period.

- **How long is my commitment?**

Your commitment lasts for six months. You will have to review Mentor profiles and contact possible Mentors. Once your Mentor has reviewed your request and confirmed you as Mentee you will officially start the tandem. Of course, you can extend your mentoring relationship also after the DKFZ Connect Mentoring pilot. The mentoring relationship can be terminated at any time by mutual agreement.

- **Is attendance of the events a mandatory element of the DKFZ Connect Mentoring pilot?**

Attendance at the kick-off event, the mid-term event and the closing event are not mandatory but we will be very happy if you can take the time to join. Especially at the kick-off, we would highly appreciate your attendance, as this might be the first occasion to meet and get to know your Mentor.

- **Can I find a Mentor outside of the DKFZ Connect Mentoring pilot?**

Yes! Sign in to and update your profile on DKFZ Connect. The more information you provide in your profile the better potential Mentors can decide whether this might be an interesting Mentee candidate. Head to the directory and filter by people who are seeking help/seeking mentoring, use filters for a specific industry, location, company, etc. You can actively approach individuals by sending a message or mentoring request. You found an interesting person as potential Mentor who is not on DKFZ Connect? Approach us via [careernetwork@dkfz.de](mailto:careernetwork@dkfz.de) for individual support.

- **I am in a connection and no longer able to commit to the program. How can I politely bow-out?**

Life happens! We get it. We recommend reaching out to your Mentor explaining your new situation, and letting her know you will be stepping away. Email us and let us know and we will end your mentoring relationship on DKFZ Connect.

- **My Mentor is not quite the right fit, even after talking for a couple sessions. What do I do?**

While we recommend trying to still learn from your mentor, we understand that not every fit will be perfect. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with details on the situation and we would be happy to assist, or match you with a new connection.

- **What if I would like to continue mentoring after the six months?**

You are welcome to extend your mentoring relationship as long as you are both willing and able to.