

GEOMAR HELMHOLTZ CENTRE FOR  
OCEAN RESEARCH KIEL

# BUDDY PROGRAM



Postdocs and Associated Researchers  
mentor their younger colleagues and  
contribute to their development while  
broadening their skills and boosting their  
careers through the experience

## **AIMS**

GEOMAR Postdocs help doctoral researchers to become part of  
Team GEOMAR.

They ensure them a smooth and productive experience during  
this challenging time of their research life.

Doctoral researchers will receive support in getting to know the  
research environment, identifying their objectives, and finding the  
best ways to pursue their personal and professional growth to  
make the most out of their time at GEOMAR.

This is an initiative of the DocTeam, Postdoc Team  
and PACT Career Center

<https://www.geomar.de/pact>

# AREAS OF INTEREST

## WHAT POSTDOCS / ASSOCIATED RESEARCHERS CAN HELP WITH

Here are some topics that a new doctoral researcher might need help with and for which we will arrange specific training support on request!

- Evaluation of personal skills
- Cultural change management
- Developing organizational and leadership skills
- Management of time & deadlines
- Development of teamwork skills
- Failure management
- Career orientation
- Work-life balance



# COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM

## **DURATION OF THE PILOT PROGRAM**

This first program will last six months. The relationship can be extended by mutual consent.

## **MEETING CALENDAR**

Mentees will meet with their mentor four times in the next months for one hour; independently and with their mentor, they set the specific time and date for each meeting.

Should the mentee encounter additional needs, it will be discussed with their mentor if extra sessions are possible. The first meeting is intended to set general organizational rules for the relationship (further details will be provided during training and with additional material).

## **OVERALL COMMITMENT FOR MENTORS**

Ideally, mentors devote time to at least one mentee (2 are possible); therefore, their commitment to the program will be at least 4 hours per six months plus individual time for regular supervision sessions.

# HOW MEETINGS WILL WORK

## OVERVIEW

First of all, the mentees are responsible for the relationship. They set goals, provide agendas in advance of meetings, make requests based on their needs, and manage the calendar.

Each meeting will be set by the mentor and mentee pair to develop the preferred way of communication, decide on a general calendar of meetings, and, most importantly, discuss and define the mentee's needs.

Further guidance, specifically on this meeting, will be provided.

All meetings will require filling out a logbook - a digital booklet that will be given to both the mentor and the mentee - where they are free to keep track of what has been discussed, what goals were set, and what the next steps are and encounters are planned.

## ABOUT THE MATCHING!

All mentor/mentee pairs will be made to match people from different scientific fields with no conflicts of interest between them.

The final pairing will be done during a speed dating event. This meeting is crucial to get to know each other and create the pairings.

Preparation material will be provided before this event.

# BENEFITS

## FOR MENTORS

- They train their skills as a supervisor: they gain first hands-on experience without having the full responsibility of a doctoral thesis project supervision.
- They can exercise new ways of giving constructive feedback.
- They can improve and diversify their communication and personal skills.
- They create and establish new connections within GEOMAR.
- They are exposed to new approaches and perspectives.
- It can encourage them to renew ideas and perceptions of their leadership role.
- An official certificate of your mentorship activity will enrich their CV portfolio and highlight their leadership skills.

# BENEFITS

## FOR MENTEES

- They are empowered and supported by respected members of the GEOMAR community in developing their potential.
- It increases confidence in their work and future possibilities.
- It gives them a greater awareness of their environment and current place.
- It exposes them to new ideas and ways of thinking.
- It helps them become more capable and effective decision-makers.
- It provides them with new strategies for dealing with personal and academic backlashes.
- It expands their network.

# BENEFITS

## WHAT TO EXPECT

Coaching sessions for the mentors will allow them to fully comprehend a mentoring relationship, how it can thrive, what is expected from them as a mentor, and how to reach out to their mentees in the best possible way.

A trainer will engage them in discussions and role-plays to practically provide them with all the relevant tools and strategies they need to support their mentees and, in the process, develop their approach, improve their leadership stand, and gain insights into their communication effectiveness.





## NEXT STEPS

### WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

- An introductory course for Mentors and Mentees will clarify the expectations. Following these courses, we send out a call for mentors.
- We hope many will answer the call for mentors - that's the first step! Without mentors, there won't be a Buddy Program. And the more mentors, the more doctoral researchers will be able to benefit from the mentor's precious experience.
- All applications will be collected. Based on the number of mentor applicants, we will define how many doctorate researchers we can open the program to.
- We will open a call for mentees and mentors for this pilot edition – immediately after the course for mentees and mentors (September 16, 2022).
- Two weeks later, we will start the matching and assignment to the program during a speed dating event on Friday, September 30, 2022, where the mentor and mentee will receive a calendar for the training.
- Mentors and mentees will receive the logbook where they keep track of the meetings and additional material to help them navigate their first encounter and more.
- The Mentors will receive a supervision session four weeks after the matching and assignment and the first mentor/mentee meeting.

**YOUR NEXT STEP:**  
Get in touch  
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