

# Individual Development Plan

For BPRI Trainees

## Section 1: Introduction to Develop Individual Development Plan

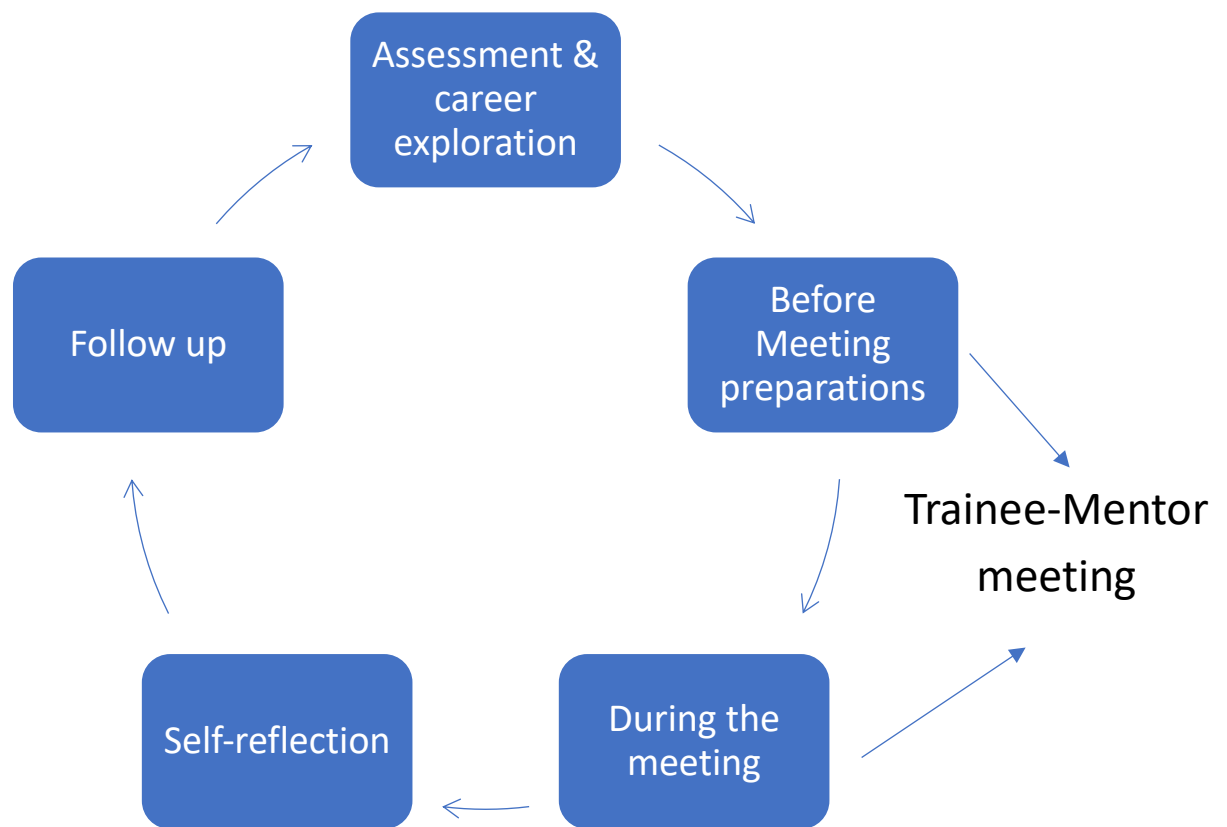
An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a tool that is commonly used to help employees define and pursue their career goals. IDPs can help trainees (at any level) assess their current skills, interests, and strengths. Further, it allows the planning of skill development to meet career goals. It also helps to facilitate discussion with your supervisor or advisor and maintain a good working relationship.

Completing the IDP process requires an understanding of the IDP process and commitment from both trainees and mentors. This document provides resources to succeed in this process.

### First review the informational videos on IDP:

1. [IDP: A guide to making burdened process into a rewarding process](https://youtu.be/LkO8HJpkTsk)  
(<https://youtu.be/LkO8HJpkTsk>)
2. [IDP: What does the literature tell us about IDP](https://youtu.be/PB0cVZAS3gQ)  
(<https://youtu.be/PB0cVZAS3gQ>)

### IDP process



## **Format of the IDP**

In the BPRI, each partnering institution uses different formats for their IDP. If an IDP is mandatory for your degree/postdoctoral program, we strongly recommend following the required IDP format. If the IDP is an optional requirement, we recommend you to use the myIDP web tool for STEM majors (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>), and the IMAGINE PHD web tool for humanities and social sciences (<https://www.imaginephd.com/>).

For consistency and follow-up purposes, we are requesting all trainees to use the goals and planning worksheet [adapted from Vincent et al., 2015] to formulate yearly goals related to BPRI research, professional, and personal goals. We recommend different steps for those who already have an IDP and those who do not have an IDP to complete this worksheet.

## **Steps for trainees who already have an IDP**

### **Before the meeting**

- Note that completing the goals and planning worksheet is an additional step or supplementary document to your IDP. The worksheet is the yearly plan that helps you achieve the long-term goals that you already identified in your IDP.
- Log on to your myIDP account and download your myIDP goals. Or use your institutional IDP to identify long and short-term goals.
- Write down (or copy-paste) your short-term goals into the goals and planning worksheet following each category. If you do not have goals for each category, it is recommended to create them. Note that each category was developed based on core competencies identified by the [National Postdoctoral Association](#).
- Share the draft of the goals and planning worksheet with the education coordinator (Dr. Taniya Koswatta) to get feedback before meeting with your mentor(s).

### **During the meeting**

- Discuss yearly goals with your mentor(s). During the meeting use the printed version of the worksheet, and write down the agreed goals. Remember to discuss research and professional/personal goals, and revise as needed. Additionally, decide on a timeline to achieve each goal.
- At the end of the meeting, scan the handwritten worksheet shared with your mentor(s). Note that having handwritten sheets help you compare your initial goals with what you have accomplished during the meeting. Also, it makes you accountable to achieve the agreed goals.
- Share feedback related to mentoring with your mentor (consider the strengths and weaknesses of your mentor, or areas where you feel you lack guidance).

### **Follow-up and self-reflection**

- Submit copies of the self-assessment and agreed goals and planning worksheet to the education coordinator.
- Add IDP goals and deadlines to your calendar.
- **FOLLOW UP monthly** (at a minimum, look into your goals and planning worksheet and reflect upon your progress).
- Some reflective questions:
  - Did I review my plan and revise it based on feedback received from my mentor(s)?
  - Did I openly share my concerns with my mentor(s)/supervisor(s)?
  - Am I taking responsibility to achieve my goals?
  - Think about things that are: going well, need improvement, are not worth the effort and should be discarded.

### **Steps for trainees who do not have an IDP**

#### **Before the meeting**

- Create a myIDP (or IMAGINE PHD) account and complete skills, interests, and value assessments.
- Identify your strength and weakness and choose a career path using the suggested career path list. If you want further assistance in deciding a career path, use the tools listed in the Getting to know your dream jobs section.
- Do not continue the “creating plan” section until you meet with your supervisor(s).
- Based on the results of your assessments, as well as guiding questions noted in section 3 (on page 7 of this document) list your long-term and short-term goals. In other words, what will you do to improve the weaknesses that you have identified from the assessment? What are your action plans and timeline?
- Use your long-term goals and create short-term goals (i.e., annual goals that can be completed before next October). Use the goals and planning worksheet to record goals in each core competence area. If you do not have goals for each category, it is recommended to create them. Note that each category was developed based on core competencies identified by the [National Postdoctoral Association](#).
- Share the draft of the goals and planning worksheet with the education coordinator (Dr. Taniya Koswatta) and get feedback before the meeting.

#### **During the meeting**

- Discuss yearly goals with your mentor(s). During the meeting use the printed version of the worksheet, and write down the agreed goals. Remember to discuss research and professional/personal goals, revise as needed and decide on a timeline to achieve each goal.
- At the end of the meeting scan the handwritten worksheet shared with mentor(s). Note that having handwritten sheets help you compare your initial goals with what you have accomplished during the meeting. Also, it makes you accountable to achieve the agreed goals.

- Share feedback related to mentoring with your mentor (consider the strengths and weaknesses of your mentor or areas where you feel you lack guidance).

#### Follow-up and self-reflection

- Submit copies of self-assessments and agreed goals and planning worksheets to the education coordinator.
- Add your agreed goals to the “creating plan” section of the IDP.
- Add the IDP goals and deadlines to your calendar.
- **FOLLOW UP monthly** (at a minimum, look into your goals and planning sheet and reflect upon your progress)
- Some reflective questions:
  - Did I review my plan and revise it based on the feedback received from my mentor(s)?
  - Did I openly share my concerns with my mentor(s)/supervisor(s)?
  - Am I taking responsibility to achieve my goals?
  - Think about things that are: going well, need improvement, are not worth the effort and should be discarded.

### Annual review of the IDP

- Meet with your mentor to annually review your IDP. Discuss and evaluate your progress towards achieving each goal with your mentor. We encourage you to have this meeting before August each year.
- Identify the goals that have not been accomplished so far and new goals for upcoming years. Create a goal and planning sheet for each year by revising the old goal and planning worksheet. Additionally, it is highly recommended to re-do the skills, interest, and value assessments (using myIDP or IMAGINE PHD) to track your progress and identify areas that still need improvement.
- Share your evaluation of the previous year, reanalysis of skills, interests, and value assessments, and revise the goals and planning worksheet with the education coordinator (we encourage you to submit these documents before October each year).

#### User guide for the MyIDP webtool

If you are unfamiliar with myIDP and unsure how to navigate the website, review the following videos:

1. [Find Your Career Fit - Self Assessment using myIDP](#)
2. [Explore Science Careers using myIDP](#)
3. [Set Goals for Career Success using myIDP](#)

**User guide for IMAGINE PHD webtool:**

1. [Introduction to Imagine PhD](#)

**Getting to know your dream jobs**

1. <https://intersectjobsims.com/library/>: Contains nearly 30 job simulations for Ph.D. level careers that allows you to read through the tasks /or complete simulations and decide your career path. Use the self-reflection job simulation sheet to assist with this process.
2. [ImaginePhD's Alumni series](#) -A video series discuss work responsibilities and roles in the humanities and social sciences.



## **Section 2: Thing to Remember as a Trainee**

- Take primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree or training program.
- Meet regularly with my advisor and provide her/him with updates on the progress and results of my activities.
- Establish a shared understanding of satisfactory progress with advisors
- Be open to unlearning things and adapting new and effective ways
- Maintain regular communication with your dissertation/thesis committee members similar to your chair. At least write one email to your committee members each semester explaining your degree and research progress.
- Actively seek out advice and feedback from my advisor, committee, BPRI education coordinator, and other mentors.
- Remain informed of the policies and requirements of graduate, undergraduate, or training programs, that you are affiliated with.
- Attend and participate in BPRI meetings, training, and seminars.
- Be a good research collaborator, maintaining a safe, clean, and collegial academic and work environment.
- Discuss policies on work hours, sick leave, and vacation with my advisor.
- Discuss expectations on authorship, research, and attendance at professional meetings with my advisor.
- Select a mentor with who you have a positive relationship to develop IDP (it can be your thesis chair, but no need to stick with the chair)
- Recognize that the responsibility for exploring career options and developing a career plan lies with you.
- Begin career exploration and develop an IDP early in your appointment/degree program.
- Meet with career advisors /graduate advisors/ postdoctoral office staff to discuss what resources are available to you
- Do not be afraid to discuss your career plans with your mentors/dissertation chair.
- Remember that the IDP process is valuable, even if you have already decided on a career and even if you are not pursuing a career in academics.
- Do not expect to complete this process in a day, a week, or even a month. Career planning takes time; it should be an iterative process during which you periodically reassess your goals.

The above list is adapted from the University of Florida and Hobin et.al, (2014)

### Section 3: Guidelines for developing SMART goals

When you develop yearly goals try to create SMART goals. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bounded goals.

e.g., A SMART goal for BPRI trainees

“To transition into an interdisciplinary researcher, I will identify another area of discipline in BPRI that I want to do my Lab Swap activity by end of this semester.”

#### **Helpful questions to identify your research/professional and personal goals**

*Note: Most of the following information is adapted from the Individual Development Plan for Graduate Students at the University of Minnesota and tailored to the BPRI situation.*

#### **Research**

What research theories or questions have you developed in the past year?  
How can you continue to build on those theories or questions?  
Are there other related theories or questions to develop?  
What research-related skills have you acquired?  
What feedback have you received on your research skills?  
What further skills do you need to acquire to be successful with your research and future career?  
How will you gain exposure to these skills and evaluate your competency?  
How much time do you spend on experiments or projects that did not work? Are you continuing to solve problems with the experiments or projects, or could there be more important work to consider for this year? If so, how will you identify such experiments or projects?

#### **Interdisciplinary research**

What research collaborations (intradisciplinary or interdisciplinary) have you established?  
Are they successful and beneficial to your scholarly or scientific work?  
If so, how can you continue to build on those successes for the coming year? What practices, approaches, and techniques will you rely on or adapt to your research?  
If they have not been successful, how can you improve on your collaborative research skills?  
What research-related seminars did you attend? Were they beneficial to your work? What seminars do you need to attend this year?



**Dissertation/ Writing**

How much time have you spent narrowing the scope of your dissertation topic or drafting parts of the dissertation?

Have you developed a schedule this year to meet with your advisor regarding the dissertation?

If you are just beginning your graduate program, are you familiar with your department's process to move students from the coursework to the dissertation defense? If not, whom do you need to contact/ask?

Have you developed your degree plan (i.e., selected courses)? If not, which courses need to select?

How productive were you last year with writing the dissertation/manuscripts?

What are your writing strengths and areas needing improvement? How would you seek assistance (e.g., University writing center)?

**Papers and Publications**

What papers did you author or co-author in the past year? Were any of the papers submitted for publication? If not, could any of those be submitted for publication this year, or do you need to write different papers? How will you identify potential publishing venues?

What types of feedback, formal or informal, have you received on your writing skills?

What specific areas of writing do you need to improve?

**Teaching**

Did you do any teaching in the past year (courses, seminars, laboratories)?

Would you like additional opportunities to teach? How will you find these teaching opportunities?

What sorts of feedback, formal or informal, have you received on your course content, syllabi, pedagogy, consideration of diverse learners, and overall teaching abilities? How will you improve your teaching and what resources are available? (Tip: use your teaching evaluation to identify the areas that you need to improve)

## **Professional and personal goals**

### **Presentations**

What presentations (lab meetings, journal clubs, seminars, scientific meetings, or professional conferences) did you make in the past year? What sorts of feedback did you receive on the content of your presentation and your presentation skills? Are there specific presentation skills you would like to improve? How will you do so and what are your resources? What presentations would you need to make this year?

### **Fellowships and Grants**

What fellowship or grant proposals did you write? Were they funded? If yes, how will you assure that you make progress on these projects this year? If the proposal was not funded, what can you do to improve the application for future submission?

What feedback have you received on your grant writing skills? Are there specific areas you need to develop to attract potential funders? How will you improve your skills and what resources are available?

What grants do you need to write this year?

### **Project and Budget Management**

How much experience do you have with budget management? Do you need to gain more experience managing a research or project budget? How will you accomplish this?

### **Leadership**

What leadership experiences have you had that allowed you to identify objectives, implement plans and acquire decision-making skills?

What positions (within and outside the University) can you pursue this year to enhance your leadership skills?

**Diversity and Inclusion/ Conflict Management**

What opportunities have you had to develop skills related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion activities, or what was your commitment to support and empower disenfranchised communities?

What opportunities have you had to develop skills related to conflict management? Such skills might include the ability to understand:

1. psychological, physiological, and behavioral aspects of conflict
2. cross-cultural considerations in dealing with conflict
3. prevalent conflict management styles and strategies
4. positive opportunities that can be presented by conflict
5. differences between the roles, responsibilities, process, and expected outcomes of mediation, arbitration, and negotiation
6. differences between compromise, cooperation, collaboration, and consensus-building

**Career preparation**

What are job opportunities available for my major? Will I need to get a license or certificate to relate to my chosen career?

Did I update my CV/Resume with information that I accomplished in the past semester/year?

What kinds of information do I want to collect to complete the research statement, teaching philosophy, diversity statement, or job application-related document (e.g., professional portfolio) process?

Are there any networking opportunities (career exploration events) that would help me to find a job or conduct an informational interview (i.e., identify an individual from the company or institution of interest by formulating effective interview questions)?

Who will be my referee for job applications/ how do I keep regular communication with them?