



AASSREC MENTORING INITIATIVE (AMI) PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The AASSREC Mentoring Initiative (AMI), is a pilot mentoring program designed to support early- and mid-career social science researchers in the Asia-Pacific region, especially for the benefit of researchers working in the most under-resourced, least advantaged parts of the region. These guidelines set out how AMI's establishment and initial operation will be conducted and the expectations of those involved.

Objectives

The objectives of AMI are to serve two of the three purposes for which AASSREC was established, namely, to promote: collaborative research among scholars in the region; and the exchange of scholarly publications and information among Asian social science institutions and individuals. AMI has an additional, primary objective of providing informal mentoring support and research career development guidance to social science researchers who are, because of their career stage and the resource-constraints of the institutions in which they work, most in need of such support and least likely to have access to it otherwise.

Principles

AMI will be conducted and expects all participants to uphold the following principles:

- A commitment to clear, respectful communication, giving due consideration to the full range of mentors' and mentees' professional and personal commitments and the importance of maintaining healthy workloads;
- The entitlement of all persons to be treated fairly without discrimination on the basis of distinctions such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, age, citizenship, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability;
- The importance of conducting, publishing and disseminating research and scholarship responsibly in accordance with all applicable principles of research ethics;
- The value of trust, privacy, and confidentiality in establishing and maintaining effective mentor-mentee relations, without derogating from the entitlement of any participant to report wrongdoing or seek help; and
- Voluntary, non-remunerated participation by all mentors or mentees free of coercion, intimidation or harassment.

Mentor-Mentee Meetings

Duration and Dates: AMI shall run for an initial trial period of 12 months during which participants will commit to a minimum of four virtual/online or telephonic meetings (in addition to the initial 'icebreaker' group meeting mentioned below) on such dates and times as are agreed between each mentor and mentee pair.

Language: AMI mentor-mentee meetings may be conducted in any common language as agreed between each mentor and mentee pair although participants will be expected to communicate with the AASSREC Secretariat in English.



Topics: The topics for discussion shall be agreed between each mentor and mentee pair, but following is an indicative list of the kinds of topics that it is envisaged that mentors and mentees could potentially discuss:

- Expectations and goals of the mentorship – what the mentee hopes to learn and what the mentor hopes to offer;
- Mentee career trajectory, goals, and obstacles or constraints;
- Scholarly publication strategies – writing book proposals; targeting journals across different jurisdictions and fields;
- Peer review – being a peer reviewer; receiving and responding to peer reviews;
- Identifying and applying for research funding opportunities;
- Promotion applications and planning for career progression;
- Work-life fit and navigating workplace challenges;
- Research supervision best practices;
- Reconciling teaching and research commitments;
- Recognising and addressing burnout;
- Research networking and collaboration strategies, local and international.

Application and Selection Processes

The AASSREC Secretariat will issue an open call for mentors and mentees inviting applications through a simple form for each. The AASSREC Secretariat will select at least 3 and up to 5 each of mentors and mentees and proposed mentor-mentee pairs for nomination to, and approval by, the AASSREC Executive Council according to the following criteria:

Criteria for Mentors

- Currently pursuing a career as a social science researcher in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Commitment to the principles and objectives of the AMI program;
- Willingness to meet the expectations of mentors set out in these guidelines;
- Experience in formal or informal mentoring of researchers (desirable but not essential);
- Professional experience, interpersonal and communication skills; and
- Compatibility of skills and experience with the career goals of mentee applicants.

Criteria for Mentees

- Currently pursuing a career as a social science researcher in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Commitment to the principles and objectives of the AMI program;
- Willingness to meet the expectations of mentees set out in these guidelines;
- Interpersonal and communication skills;
- Compatibility of career goals with the record of mentor applicants;
- Existing access to career support (i.e., those with least access will be prioritised); and
- Institutional/manager support for the mentee's participation, if applicable (not essential).

How to Apply

Prospective mentors and mentees should complete the relevant application form and submit to the AASSREC Secretariat via email at fellowship@socialsciences.org.au.



The **Mentee Application Form** is available here: <https://aassrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AMI-Mentee-Application-Form.docx>

The **Mentor Application Form** is available here: <https://aassrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AMI-Mentor-Application-Form.docx>

Applications must be submitted by no later than **Wednesday 30 November 2022**.

After selection, successful applicants for the mentee role will be confidentially advised of their proposed mentor and asked to confirm their willingness to proceed, after which successful applicants for the mentor role will be advised of their proposed mentee and asked to confirm their availability to proceed. All mentors and mentee applicants, whether or not successful, will be advised of the outcome of their application.

The AASSREC Secretariat will arrange an initial online 'icebreaker' event to which all mentors and mentees will be invited at which the objectives and principles of the AMI program and suggestions for proceeding with the mentorship will be outlined and participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions.

Expectations of Mentors

AMI program mentors will be expected to:

- Respond truthfully to all questions on the application form;
- Uphold their commitment to meet with their mentee in a minimum of 4 virtual/online or telephonic meetings (in addition to the initial 'icebreaker' group meeting mentioned below) on such dates and times as are agreed between mentor and mentee;
- Communicate clearly and reliably when meetings must be rescheduled or cancelled;
- Show interest in and listen carefully to the mentee's experiences, goals, and concerns;
- Agree with their mentee a list of questions or topics to discuss during meetings, revisiting these as appropriate throughout the mentorship;
- Communicate with their mentee via whatever medium and in whichever language the mentor and mentee have agreed is most appropriate and accessible for them;
- Provide encouragement, constructive criticism, guidance, insights and suggestions to their mentee that are responsive to their needs, circumstances, and goals;
- Respect their mentee's decision-making autonomy;
- Respond to requests for feedback regarding the AMI program from the AASSREC Secretariat; and
- Conduct themselves throughout the mentorship in accordance with the principles outlined above.

Expectations of Mentees

AMI program mentees will be expected to:

- Respond truthfully to all questions on the application form;



- Uphold their commitment to meet with their mentor in a minimum of 4 virtual/online or telephonic meetings (in addition to the initial 'icebreaker' group meeting mentioned below) on such dates and times as are agreed between mentor and mentee;
- Communicate clearly and reliably when meetings must be rescheduled or cancelled;
- Agree with their mentor a list of questions or topics to discuss during meetings, revisiting these as appropriate throughout the mentorship;
- Communicate with their mentor via whatever medium and in whichever language the mentor and mentee have agreed is most appropriate and accessible for them;
- Articulate clearly their goals and what they hope to learn;
- Show openness to and interest in the insights, feedback and suggestions of their mentor;
- Make reasonable requests of their mentor, recognising competing demands upon their time;
- Respond to requests for feedback regarding the AMI program from the AASSREC Secretariat; and
- Conduct themselves throughout the mentorship in accordance with the principles outlined above.

Expectations of AASSREC Secretariat/participating members of AASSREC Executive Council

AMI program mentors and mentees may expect that the staff of the AASSREC Secretariat and/or any members of the AASSREC Executive Council who are directly involved in the AMI program will:

- Communicate with them regarding the outcomes of their AMI program application and of the mentor-mentee matching process insofar as it relates to them;
- Convene an initial online 'icebreaker' event to which all mentors and mentees will be invited;
- Be available to all mentors and mentees, within applicable working hours at the AASSREC Secretariat's location, to answer any questions or concerns relating to the AMI program;
- Maintain the confidentiality of any matters communicated in confidence by mentors or mentees relating to the AMI program;
- Communicate with mentors and mentees approximately half-way through, and again toward or at the end of the 12-month period of the AMI mentorship, to check on progress; and
- Conduct themselves in relation to the AMI program in accordance with the principles outlined above.

Program Review and Reporting

At the conclusion of the initial 12-month pilot of the AMI mentorship, the AASSREC Secretariat and/or any members of the AASSREC Executive Council who are directly involved in the AMI program will seek feedback from all mentors and mentees and, on this basis, prepare a report for the AASSREC Executive Council evaluating the pilot outcomes and the resources expended in its delivery and making recommendations as to the continuance, cessation and/or reform of the AMI program.



Key Dates

Timing	Action
Oct-Nov, 2022	Call for applications for mentees and mentors
30 November 2022	Closing date for applications
December 2022	Applications are assessed and mentors and mentees selected
Jan-Feb 2023	Applicants are notified of the outcome and an online introductory group meeting is held for AMI participants.
June-July 2023	6-month check-in with all participants to identify and address any concerns or difficulties
January 2024	End-of-pilot survey of all participants
~March 2024	Report to AASSREC Executive Council on pilot outcomes and resulting recommendations