

# CAREER PLAN WORKSHEET

"Building Up the Nerve" to Develop an Effective Career Roadmap | *Neuroscience* 2024 Professional Development Workshop

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Fellowship and career development awards are intended to support your training and provide protected time to develop the skills and knowledge required to successfully conduct the proposed research, as well as to be well-positioned to succeed in subsequent positions and thrive in your chosen career.

This career plan worksheet is designed to help you think through, step by step, how to build on your experience, skills, and interests to achieve your proposed career goals. Using a "gap analysis" framework will help you identify key training activities to achieve your goals and harmonize information across the different sections of the grant application. Remember: This process will be iterative! You can make changes at any time- and update your goals as needed.

## DEFINE YOUR CAREER GOALS AND RESEARCH INTEREST

- Start by envisioning the end of your journey. Explicitly define your career goals and area of research interest. These do not have to be set in stone but will represent your current aspirations. Consider your interests, passions, values, and motivations as you envision the end of your journey.
- Articulate an overall research interest—depending on your career stage this can either be aspirational or descriptive of your career to-date. Be specific by defining past and current interests, immediate next position, and long-term interests.

## OUTLINE THE TECHNIQUES, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND RELATIONSHIPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

- Using the table below as a guide, draft a comprehensive list of "core competencies" – scientific and professional skills you will need. A helpful reference to get started is the National Postdoctoral Association Core Competencies.
- Note and rate your current mastery of each skill and document any previous experience with it. Prioritize the skills for this current training period. Explicitly list planned activities for each skill and the milestones you will use to track completion of your goals. Identify the mentors or collaborators who can help you with each skill.

## DEFINE YOUR RESEARCH PLAN, BUILD A CAREER OR TRAINING PLAN THAT IS TAILORED TO YOUR NEEDS, AND IDENTIFY THE GUIDANCE AND MENTORSHIP NEEDED

- Your career goals should be clearly stated in the personal statement of your biographical sketch and the candidate goals section of the application.
- In the Candidate's Background section, present a coherent picture of how your current skills and expertise were developed, and how each research experience shaped your current interests.
- The plan for career development/training activities and the sponsor/mentor statement should cover the same skills to be learned from two different perspectives. One is reflective of your goals and the other is how your mentor will support you in achieving those goals.
- The research skills and conceptual knowledge you want to develop should also be clear in the research plan. Describe how the research, coupled with other developmental activities, will provide the experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to achieve the objectives of the career development plan.



Office of Programs to Enhance the Neuroscience Workforce

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INTERESTS AND PASSIONS

SHORT- AND LONG-TERM GOALS

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN				
	Current Strengths Previous experiences and skills	Growth Opportunity Skills to be developed or experiences to gain	Milestones Markers of completion and accomplishments	Mentor/Network People to guide or teach you
<b>SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH SKILLS</b>  Discipline-specific knowledge, experimental design, methods, statistical analysis, responsible conduct of research				
<b>COMMUNICATION AND TEACHING SKILLS</b>  Scientific writing (papers, grants, CV), presenting (posters, lectures), teaching, interpersonal skills, teamwork				
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS</b>  Management, project management, collaboration, financial and resource management				