



ISTC Mentoring Scheme Information for Mentors

Revised Oct 2018

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to join the ISTC's Mentoring Scheme as a Mentor.

The ISTC's Mentoring Scheme matches up Junior Members who are just starting out in the profession of scientific and technical communication with experienced technical communicators for advice and guidance. The goal of the scheme is to provide a framework for the professional development of ISTC Junior Members, and gives them a considerable advantage over other new starters in the profession who may have nowhere to turn to for practical help.

This document describes the voluntary nature of the scheme, the responsibilities of Mentors, and Junior Members, limitations on the activities of Mentors. Refer to the accompanying documents that include a series of sample forms for the Mentoring Scheme, a sample development plan for Junior Members, and a description of the ISTC Membership grades. You should also be familiar with the ISTC's Code of Professional Practice, available on the ISTC website (<http://www.istc.org.uk/about-the-istc/governance/>).

Voluntary nature of the ISTC Mentoring Scheme

The ISTC Mentoring Scheme is entirely voluntary for all participants. Junior Members are invited to take part in the scheme but are under no obligation to do so. ISTC Members and Fellows who act as Mentors are volunteers and receive no payment or reward from the ISTC for their participation.

The ISTC Council greatly appreciates the time and effort each and every Mentor devotes to the Mentoring Scheme. Mentors are encouraged to include their mentoring activities as part of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) records.

The *Responsibilities of Mentors* section of this document suggest that Mentors should report back to the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator about each of the Junior members you are mentoring at least twice a year. Please contact the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator if you would prefer to make alternative reporting arrangements.

The ISTC arranges an introduction between a Junior Member and a Mentor, and provides general advice about the scheme, including a series of sample forms that a Junior Member and their Mentor may use to keep a record of their interactions. These forms are designed to provide a framework for the mentoring agreement between a Junior Member and a Mentor, and to explain what each party expects to contribute to and to benefit from the mentoring relationship. Many Mentors and Junior Members find the use of these forms to be very helpful. However, the mentoring agreement is not a contract of any kind.



Responsibilities of Mentors

As a Mentor you are expected to:

- maintain appropriate records of all your contacts with all of the Junior Members you are mentoring.
- report back to the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator about each of the Junior members you are mentoring at least twice a year (suggested report dates are 31st May and 30th November). (Contact the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator if you would prefer to make alternative reporting arrangements.)
- advise the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator if you are unable to continue your mentoring duties either temporarily or permanently.
- maintain contact with all of the Junior Members you are mentoring on a regular basis, by whatever method, and at whatever frequency they have agreed with you.
- encourage all the Junior Members you are mentoring:
 - to take part in meetings of ISTC Local Groups and Special Interest Groups
 - to attend the ISTC's annual conference, TCUK, <http://www.technicalcommunicationuk.com>
 - to participate in the ISTC's online discussion forum.
 - to read the ISTC's publications for members, (the monthly *InfoPLUS+* newsletter, and the quarterly journal *Communicator*).
 - to engage in their own professional development by personal study and, where appropriate, by attending relevant courses.
 - to consider submitting their own articles or presentations to *Communicator* or TCUK.

Limitations on the actions of Mentors

As a Mentor you may not:

- ask for or receive any payment or reward from any Junior Member they mentor.
- offer or provide any kind of recruitment services other than referring a Junior Member to relevant websites or agencies.
- offer any sort of legal or financial advice, such as advice on employment disputes, or on employment legislation.
- intervene in any issue directly associated with an individual's or an organisation's work practices, delivery schedules, development tools, standards, human resources policies or disciplinary processes.



Responsibilities of Junior Members

Junior Members who join the Mentoring Scheme are expected to:

- complete their sections of any Mentoring Scheme forms they choose to use fully and honestly.
- maintain their own individual professional development plan.
- maintain contact with their Mentor on a regular basis, by whatever method, and at whatever frequency they have agreed with their Mentor.
- where possible, take part in meetings of ISTC Local Groups and Special Interest Groups.
- where possible, attend the ISTC's annual conference, TCUK, (<http://www.technicalcommunicationuk.com>).
- participate in the ISTC's online discussion forum.
- read the ISTC's publications for members, (the monthly *InfoPLUS+* newsletter, and the quarterly journal *Communicator*).
- engage in their own professional development by personal study and, where appropriate, by attending relevant courses.
- consider submitting their own articles or presentations to *Communicator* or TCUK.

Exclusion of liability

The aim of the Mentoring Scheme is to help new entrants to the profession of scientific and technical communication make progress in their chosen careers, but neither the individual Mentor nor the ISTC can accept any liability for any action the Junior Member may or may not take following any interaction related to this scheme.

Further information

If either a Junior Member or the Mentor requires any further information or assistance about the ISTC Mentoring Scheme, contact the scheme coordinator by email at education@istc.org.uk.