



MENTORING EXPECTATIONS & GUIDELINES

What is the purpose of the POLARIS annual mentoring program?

The program focuses on developing a collaborative learning relationship between a mentor and mentee working in the museum field, in which both parties benefit and grow from building and sustaining the relationship. The POLARIS program will:

- Provide mentors and mentees with research-based leadership frameworks and mentoring resources supporting lifelong learning.
- Support and challenge mentees to set and implement a viable leader development plan.
- Help mentees contextualize the development process in their museum setting or career path.
- Allow both parties to co-create an effective relationship by establishing norms based on professionalism, confidentiality, trust, respect, accountability, and openness.

What are the expectations for mentors? (7+ years museum experience)

- Be interested in your mentee's career and professional development. Become familiar with your mentee's goals, strengths, and challenges while maintaining respectful boundaries.
- Help your mentee define, set-up, and pursue goals that are impactful in their museum setting and that propel their development as a leader and their effectiveness in their role.
- Challenge your mentee to reflect upon/evaluate their assumptions about museum leadership and the effectiveness of their current behaviors, and to come up with alternatives to enhance your developmental journey.
- Share your expertise, knowledge, and insights about leader development and the broader museum workplace.
- Be a resource for long-term support and accountability as you both continue your growth as museum leaders.

What are the expectations for mentees? (2+ years of museum experience)

- Be open to the dual learning process; acknowledge that both you and your mentor contribute to—and can benefit from—this relationship. Define with your mentor the contributions and benefits that both of you expect from the relationship (e.g., what are leader skills you want to develop) and how to support each other.
- Be open to receive and provide constructive feedback. Consider alternate points of view and pathways (from your own) to become an effective leader.
- Take ownership of your development; your mentor will help you along the way and can suggest ideas from his/her experience, but it is up to you to reflect upon and identify how to best address your developmental goals.
- Define concrete goals to work on that are challenging yet realistic in your setting.
- Be accountable of the actions/changes you commit to in order to achieve your goals.
- Prepare beforehand for your mentoring calls/meetings by reviewing notes and completing agreed upon work. Define with your mentor a meeting schedule that works for both of you, and how to deal with cancelations/rescheduling
- Address anything about the relationship is not working or could be improved.