

What Does Good Mentorship Mean?

A Guide for the SIT Excellence in Mentoring Award

Mentorship plays a critical role in the growth and success of early-career scientists. Exceptional mentors provide guidance, encouragement, and support that extends beyond technical skills, helping mentees navigate challenges and achieve their professional goals. The SIT Excellence in Mentoring Award recognizes individuals who demonstrate outstanding mentorship in professional and personal capacities.

To help you prepare a nomination, the SIT Committee encourages you to consider mentors who exemplify the following qualities:

1. Guidance and Expertise

- Provides career guidance and advice tailored to the mentee's goals.
- Shares knowledge, technical skills, and strategic insights in research and professional development.
- Helps mentees set realistic goals and develop actionable plans to achieve them.

2. Support and Encouragement

- Offers emotional support and fosters confidence, especially during challenges.
- Encourages mentees to explore new ideas, take intellectual risks, and develop independence.
- Celebrates achievements and provides constructive, respectful feedback.

3. Advocacy and Sponsorship

- Promotes mentees' visibility in the scientific community.
- Creates opportunities, such as conference presentations, collaborations, or funding applications.
- Acts as a trusted advisor who champions mentees' interests when opportunities arise.

4. Role Modeling and Integrity

- Demonstrates professionalism, ethical conduct, and commitment to scientific rigor.
- Exhibits qualities of persistence, curiosity, and resilience that mentees can emulate.
- Encourages inclusive, respectful, and collaborative research environments.

5. Accessibility and Approachability

- Maintains open communication and is approachable for guidance, questions, or discussion.
- Invests time in building a mentoring relationship tailored to individual needs.

Tips for Your Nomination Letter:

- Highlight specific examples of how your mentor has demonstrated these qualities.
- Describe how their mentorship has influenced your career development, skill growth, or professional confidence.
- Include any initiatives or actions they have taken to support mentees beyond day-to-day supervision.
- Keep it authentic! Letters should reflect your personal experience – vague or AI-generated letters may not be considered.
- Multiple individuals may nominate the same mentor; however, nominations must be submitted as separate, individual letters. The depth and substance of nomination letters will be valued more highly than the number submitted.

Nominations are typically initiated voluntarily by mentees or colleagues who wish to recognize the impact of a mentor's guidance and support. All nomination materials will be kept confidential and reviewed solely by the SIT Committee, who will select the award recipient.

Submit Your Nomination Letter to: Bethany Rothwell, at brothwell1@mgh.harvard.edu.