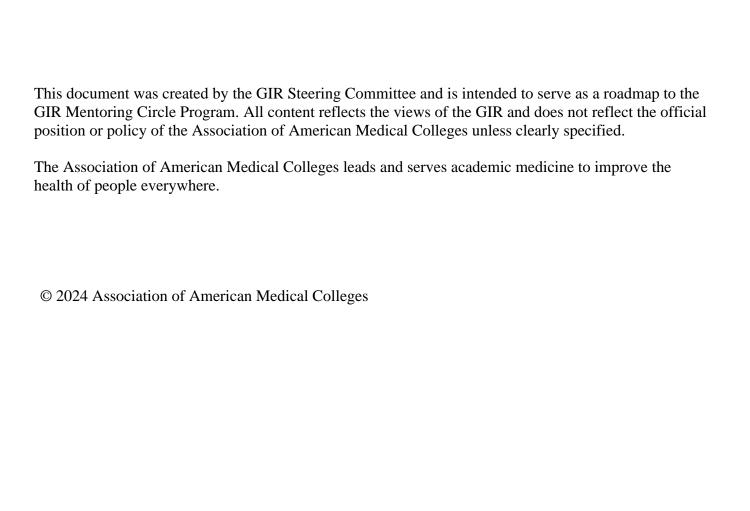# Mentorship Circle Overview

A Roadmap to the GIR Mentorship Circle Program

Group on Information Resources (GIR)

Mentorship Circle Overview
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Association of American Medical Colleges
Washington, D.C.

This document was created by the GIR Steering Committee and is intended to serve as a roadmap to the GIR Mentoring Circle Program. All content reflects the views of the GIR and does not reflect the official position or policy of the Association of American Medical Colleges unless clearly specified.

The Association of American Medical Colleges leads and serves academic medicine to improve the health of people everywhere.

The GIR Mentorship Circle Program serves to connect mentors with a group of mentees to support their career journey, to help them build their peer network, as well as access resources through their engagement with the GIR.* Through this nine-month long experience, participants will be connected with valuable professional development resources, and also garner advice and share best practices within their Mentorship Circle. By engaging in this unique networking opportunity, mentors and mentees alike will build meaningful professional connections across the GIR community that can continue to serve them well beyond the program's nine-month commitment.

Please note that you must be a GIR member to participate in the GIR Mentorship Circle program. For questions, please contact GIR@aamc.org.

Program Description

What are Mentorship Circles?

Instead of traditional one-to-one mentorships where person A (mentor) sits down with person B (mentee) for a chat, mentoring circles involve a number of people (mentees), usually about 5 to 7, who convene together – usually in a *circle* – to discuss a topic of interest with one (or multiple) mentors or facilitators who have expertise or experience in that subject matter.

How does it work?

1. There will be an informational webinar regarding the GIR Mentorship Circle Program which is open to all GIR members.
2. The application process will be open prior to the IT in Academic Medicine conference and will remain open for approximately six weeks.
3. The number of participants will then determine the number of Mentorship Circles that will be formed for the nine-month term. Each Mentorship Circle will consist of 2 mentors and 5-7 mentees. The matching process, curriculum, and expectations are described in detail below.

Program Recruitment and Onboarding

GIR members will have a variety of opportunities to learn about and apply for the Mentorship Circle Program. These opportunities include:

1. An invitation to apply to participate in the Program by completing an application survey. Upon review of the applications, individuals will be matched into a Mentorship Circle and then will receive a formal acceptance into the Program.
2. Mentor orientation prior to the Circles convening.
3. A new member orientation/meet and greet of Mentorship Circles to be held once the Circles are assigned.

Mentorship Circle Assignments and Launch

The GIR Leadership will review all mentor and mentee applications and make Mentorship Circle assignments based upon various factors (see page 4). Once assigned to a Mentorship Circle, the Leadership will inform the AAMC to notify mentors and provide the names and contact information of their co-mentor and mentee matches.

Co-mentors should first connect with each other and then jointly reach out to their mentees to welcome them to the Program and begin to define a meeting schedule that enables completion of the Program curriculum over the course of nine months.

The meeting schedule may include phone conversations, video conference calls, online communications, and/or in-person meetings. Mentorship Circles are expected to connect at least three times for an hour over the course of the program, but more frequent and/or longer meetings are welcome and at the discretion of each Circle.

Program Curriculum and Evaluation

Each Mentorship Circle will engage in a nine month-long curriculum. Over the course of the program, participants will have opportunities to provide feedback via evaluation surveys. Individuals are also welcome to submit feedback throughout their experience directly to AAMC GIR staff at gir@aamc.org. All feedback will be considered when the Leadership makes improvements for future program cycles.

Program Participant Expectations

A successful Mentorship Circle experience requires engagement from both mentors and mentees. The following expectations for each of these roles is described below.

Mentor Expectations

Every Mentorship Circle will have 2 mentors, and these mentors will be matched with 5-7 mentees. Mentors are expected to:

1. Participate in an orientation call for mentors. This call will be scheduled based on mentor availability, and soon thereafter the Circles are assigned.

2. Meet their mentees at the annual IT in Academic Medicine Conference, if held in person, and engage with their assigned mentees. The mentorship program will officially kick off in September. It is expected that the Circles will convene by conference call at least three times during the course of the nine-month program.

3. Introduce and facilitate the connection of the mentees to GIR members and leadership. Mentees will be provided with the GIR Steering Committee roster.

4. Work with Mentorship Circle participants to define a meeting schedule that enables completion of the program curriculum over the course of nine months. The meeting schedule may include phone conversations, video conference calls, online communications, and/or in-person meetings. Mentorship Circles are expected to connect at least three times for an hour, but more frequent and/or longer meetings are welcome and at the discretion of the Circle.

5. Discuss and set realistic goals or areas of focus for their mentees.

6. Encourage mentees to utilize the GIR Listserv, consider joining a [GIR Work Group](#) and consider/encourage attendance at future GIR engagements as applicable.

7. Introduce mentees to potential ongoing GIR mentors in roles/areas of interest.

8. Complete GIR Mentorship Circle evaluation surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the Program.

You will be asked to provide feedback to the GIR Steering Committee, by way of a survey, about your experiences throughout the nine months, with the intent to improve on the Program from cycle to cycle, and to assist new mentors and mentees begin their Mentoring Circle relationships.

Mentee Expectations

Every Mentorship Circle will have two mentors, and these mentors will be matched with 5-7 mentees. Mentees are expected to:

1. Meet your mentors and other participants at the IT in Academic Medicine Conference. The mentorship program will officially kick off in September. It is expected that the Circles will convene at least three times during the course of the nine-month program.

2. Work with Mentorship Circle participants to define a meeting schedule that enables completion of the program curriculum over the course of nine months. The meeting schedule may include phone conversations, video conference calls, online communications, and/or in-person meetings. Mentorship Circles are expected to connect at least three times for an hour, but more frequent and/or longer meetings are welcome and at the discretion of the Circle. Mentees are expected to have some schedule flexibility in order to participate in scheduled calls.

3. Utilize the knowledge and skills of the mentors to enhance connections and engagement with the GIR, knowledge of GIR resources, and individuals within the GIR community.

4. Work with the mentors to identify key colleagues with interests and activities that would make them potential collaborators and/or mentors for the longer term; meet and/or connect with these individuals as schedules allow.

5. Work with the mentors to identify ongoing relationships at the conclusion of their cycle of the Program.

6. Complete GIR Mentorship Circle evaluation surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the Program.

How are the Circles Assigned?

There are many factors that contribute to the assignment of the Circles. These include:

- Career goals of mentees and alignment with mentor expertise
- Roles and responsibilities of mentees at their organizations
- Institutions, so as not to pair mentees and mentors together from the same institution, where possible

Course Correction

What happens if your Circle fails to materialize as expected?

- None of mentees are engaged/show up for calls: It could be that your call schedule may need to be adjusted or your mentees are not connecting in the Circle setting. You can reach out to your mentees individually to see if they would like to continue the dialogue one-on-one.
- My co-mentor is absent: Are you ok with leading the Circle on your own? That's also an option.
- I can no longer fulfill my duties as a mentor: Please contact gir@aamc.org. We will work with your co-mentor to gauge if they are ok leading the Circle on their own or they would like a replacement.
- Something else is happening: Please contact gir@aamc.org.

Mentorship Circles Suggested Curriculum

It is at the discretion of each Mentorship Circle how they want to engage and how frequently. Below is a suggested Curriculum for the nine-month program.

- Mentors should convene prior to reaching out to their Circle to determine the roles of each mentor, setting up a call schedule, and managing other logistical items. The expectation is that mentors should share in the duties and responsibilities of managing the Circle.
- Icebreakers/get-to-know your Circle. Early call(s) should focus on getting to know your Circle participants. Here are some suggestions for icebreakers.
- Encourage mentees to suggest topics of interest that you may want to discuss as a Circle.

Suggestions for ways to engage with your Circle:

- Ask mentees to take responsibility for leading a call around a topic they are most interested in learning about
- Join a GIR webinar and reconvene your Circle to discuss what was presented during the webinar
- Suggest books or articles you can read and come back together to discuss the findings
- Ask AAMC staff to join a call to discuss resources mentees can access as GIR members or have AAMC staff provide a detailed overview of one AAMC data resource
- Have mentees select a tool or dashboard they utilize the most and ask them to present the resource to the other Circle participants by sharing their screen during a video conference call
- Consider submitting a proposal for a poster or presentation at a conference on a mutual topic of interest
- Mentors can invite a colleague to give a presentation to the Circle on a topic of interest
- Mentors can discuss their own leadership journey

GIR Resources

You may learn more about the AAMC and the GIR by viewing the AAMC GIR homepage, which includes featured and upcoming events, GIR news, resources, professional development opportunities, information on how to get more involved in the GIR through Work Groups, and more.

Work Groups
The GIR convenes various Work Groups

You are welcome to join a Work Group at any point:
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Education Technology
- Research Technology
- Data-Driven Academic Medical Centers

The GIR also convenes an annual conference planning committee. In addition, there are quarterly calls that focus on IT Operations

Access to the GIR Listserv. Members are automatically added to the GIR Listserv (GIR@lists.aamc.org). It is also the chief mechanism by which GIR members and AAMC staff are able to distribute updates to our member institutions.

Additionally, GIR members have access to other resources such as:
GIR IT Survey
GIR Monthly Newsletter
Virtual Communities: Information Technology in Academic Medicine; GIR Work Group Hub
FAMOUS and Faculty Roster