**BSGCT Mentoring Scheme aims.**

The BSGCT mentoring scheme aims to support aspiring early career cell and gene therapy scientists in their career development to achieve their full potential and reach their professional goals in both academia and industry. We strive to tailor the mentorship relationship to the individual and provide a comprehensive outline so you can make the most of our scheme. If you’re looking for support and guidance within the field of gene and cell therapy – you’ve come to the right place!

**Who is this scheme for?**

This mentorship scheme is targeted to all researchers with less than 3 years of employment since completing their highest degree who are interested in a career in the field of cell and gene therapy. Examples include current students, postdoctoral researchers within 3 years of completing their PhD, and scientists who entered employment following their undergraduate or Master’s course less than 3 years ago. Career breaks are excluded, so researchers that are several more years post-degree can also be eligible if their cumulative employment is less than 3 years post-qualification. If you are unsure if you fit the qualifications but are interested in the mentorship scheme, please get in touch with us at board@bsgct.org and we will be able to advise on your eligibility.

**Benefits of having a mentor.**

We have mentors in both academia and industry and will aim to pair you with a mentor who is currently working in your area of interest. There are many benefits to having a mentor, these include:

* Advice from someone who has been in your career stage.
* Increased networking within your field and encouragement to build supportive connections.
* Gain a fresh perspective from a positive role model.
* Guidance on career progression.
* Opportunities for confidential review of CV, job, and grant applications.
* It is a safe place for reflection and support.
* Be supported in your career goals while receiving honest feedback in a trustworthy environment.
* Learn about all the opportunities the BSGCT has to offer.
* Support with scheduling and balancing responsibilities.
* Grow in confidence, experience, and challenge any limiting beliefs you may have.

There are also many benefits to being a mentor, and if this is something you’d be interested in we’d love to hear from you!

**Why be a mentor?**

* Use your unique experience, insight, and advice to assist ECRs in their career pursuits.
* It will help to develop your mentoring, leadership, and coaching skills.
* An opportunity to support young researchers may help you to gain a different perspective and you could equally learn from your mentees.
* This program may also assist mentors to gain improved peer recognition.
* It will take willingness and commitment to meet someone over an extended period of time and help mentors gain experience in giving honest feedback and candid insight.

We are grateful to our mentors for their commitment to helping ECRs accomplish their goals, and welcome anyone interested in participating in the mentoring program. Please contact us at board@bsgct.org if you are interested in becoming a mentor.

**Structure of the mentorship scheme.**

We will aim to partner you with a mentor in your field or area of interest and will facilitate a maximum of 10 pairs in the 2023 scheme. Please see below for potential fields of interest. The mentorship scheme will last 6 months, with a minimum of two online meetings expected in this time period, encouraging correspondence in-between. Flexibility is encouraged, and email correspondence and video conference calls will be the primary source of communication. Mentees are encouraged to define their goals for the mentorship scheme and make these clear to the mentor within the first meeting, where alignment of goals can then be a collaborative discussion. This will ensure both parties are aligned on the purpose of the scheme and allow you to get the most out of the mentoring relationship. All applicants and mentors need to be members of the BSGCT. Finally, we will encourage a final meeting at the end of the 6-month period to review the mentor-mentee relationship. The potential to extend the mentor relationship is available should both party’s consent.

**How to apply.**

If you are interested in applying for the mentoring scheme, please fill in the attached document briefly outlining your work, career stage, type of support from our mentor scheme and email it to us at board@bsgct.org by the 24th of November 2023 by 5pm with the subject “Mentoring scheme 2023”. Our team will then endeavour to match you with one of our mentors. You can see some of the mentors available on our website.