

EFSD

European Foundation for the Study of Diabetes

EFSD Future Leaders Mentorship Programme for Clinical Diabetologists

supported by an unrestricted educational grant from AstraZeneca

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Background and justification

There is a global challenge to recruit and train the next generation of clinical investigators, not least in endocrinology/diabetes. Meeting this challenge will require identifying highly promising young clinicians displaying an early interest in research and a commitment to pursuing an academic career in diabetes. These future leaders (“Mentees”) will need training not only in clinical medicine but specifically to improve their clinical research, communication and leadership skills.

This new EFSD Mentorship Programme seeks to fill this gap, offering a broad palette of training opportunities centred around a clinical research project, with leading European clinical diabetologists serving as personal Mentors (“Mentors”).

Outline and Major Objectives

The major goal of this Mentorship Programme will be to *identify and promote the advancement of the next generation of leading clinical diabetologists in Europe*. Through its various activities the Programme will help Mentees develop into leaders by refining their skills in the three cardinal areas of *clinical diabetes, research and communication*, thereby keeping them in the field of diabetes and facilitating their *appointment to senior academic positions at major European institutions*.

Qualifications

This Programme is focused on mentoring future leaders who are established clinical diabetologists with at least 3 years’ experience in their field at a relatively senior level, but without a tenured Faculty position. They must be working at an academic institution in any European country or Associated State with the goal of becoming a national leader in clinical diabetes or its complications in their country of residence. They must further demonstrate a clear interest in education and clinical research.

Mentors

The Academy will match each Mentee with a Mentor, based on common research interests and appropriate locations in different countries, and taking into consideration any possible names brought forward by the Mentee. Mentors must be well established clinical diabetologists with a strong record of clinical research working in a European country other than that of the Mentee. Mentors will develop a research project with their Mentee, supervise the project throughout the 3-year Mentorship lifecycle and will host the Mentee for a minimum of 3 months during this same period. They will write an annual report on the Mentee’s progress that will be taken into consideration for renewal of funding.

Selection

Mentees will be selected through a competitive peer review process under the supervision of the Mentorship Academy, comprising leading European clinical diabetologists.

Budget, duration and payment of awards

Each award will amount to US\$25,000 per annum for a total of US\$75,000 payable to the Mentee's institution and allocated in the following annual amounts:

\$15,000: contribution towards direct costs of research project

\$10,000: travel to EASD Annual Meeting and EASD Courses*; travel, registration and accommodation ADA Annual Meeting; visits to the mentor's institution.

**registration and accommodation will be covered directly by EASD.*

Awards will be made for a total of 3 years. The first payment will be made following approval of funding and completion of all necessary administrative forms. Payments for Years 02 and 03 will be made after receipt of a progress report (to be prepared and signed by the Mentee, the head of the Mentee's department and the Mentor) and approval by the Academy. In the event of progress being deemed unsatisfactory or failure of the Mentee to participate in all mandatory activities of the Mentorship programme, the award will be terminated upon decision by the Academy.

Administration

This programme will be run in a fully independent fashion by EFSD.

Activities

This is a highly interactive programme in which research and educational topics are developed together with an active dialogue between the Mentor and Mentee, under the general guidance of the Mentorship Academy of leading experts and with dedicated staff. Mentors must be well established clinical diabetologists with a strong record of clinical research working in a country other than that of the Mentee. The programme is organised around the development of a clinical research project and participation in training/educational courses.

The **specific activities** will include:

Research Project:

Mentees will pursue a clinical research project under the supervision of their Mentor. For the purposes of this Programme, clinical research is defined as any research focused on patients but excluding *ex vivo* basic research performed on human material.

The Mentee is expected to work on the project throughout the 3-year award period, to include project development, execution of all research work as well as writing abstracts and manuscripts. Most of this time will be spent in the Mentee's home institution; the Head of Department will have provided written approval and guaranteed protected time for this research activity as part of the application package. The home department will receive \$15,000 annually in support of the Mentee's research project and will be asked to account for this expenditure as part of the Mentee's annual report.

For the research project to be successful, it will be necessary to follow clear guidelines to ensure close collaboration and coordination between the major players: Mentee, Mentor (not at the home institution); Head of Department/Section at the home institution.

1. The Head of the Mentee's Department/Section or Dean must commit the institution to affording protected time for the Mentee's research activities.
2. The Mentee must receive a full-time salary from his/her institution throughout the 3-year duration of the award. The \$15,000 per annum that the institution receives to cover costs relating to the Mentee's research activities in the Programme may not be used towards the Mentee's salary.

3. The project and detailed protocol will be developed by the Mentee and Mentor. This will involve a first mandatory 1-week visit by the Mentee to the Mentor's institution to allow for these details to be discussed directly together and for the Mentee to acquire any specific skills/techniques that may be required for the project. At the end of this visit it is expected that the Mentee will be sufficiently well prepared and informed to return to the home institution to launch the research project.
4. At least 3 months *in total* must be spent actively engaged in the research project at the Mentor's institution. This may take the form of a single visit lasting at least 3 months or multiple visits (each not less than 3 weeks) spread over the 3-year award period, totalling at least 3 months. More frequent short visits of a few days may be made to ensure close communication between Mentee and Mentor and to allow for effective supervision of the research project throughout the award period. Advantage may further be taken of these short visits to write manuscripts etc. Costs of travel and accommodation will be covered by the Mentee's \$10,000 award allowance. The timing of these visits will be decided jointly by the Mentee and Mentor, with approval from the Head of the Mentee's home department.
5. Work on the project will be undertaken at the home institution throughout the entire 3-year period. While it is accepted that the major part of the Mentee's time will be devoted to clinical duties, it is expected that there will be sufficient protected time (see "1" above) to allow for 0.5-1 day of research work every normal working week. This will be considered an integral and obligatory part of the Mentorship programme. Teleconference/Videoconference meetings with the Mentor to discuss the research project will be held on a regular basis, ideally once every 2 weeks.
6. Written scientific progress reports will be submitted to the Mentor every 6 months and, subject to approval, forwarded to the Programme Staff and included in the e-passport. In the event of a problem, the Mentorship Academy will be contacted to recommend any action it sees fit to remedy this. Repeated lack of progress will result in exclusion from the Programme.
7. The Mentee will be expected to submit abstracts describing results to hand from the project in a timely fashion. Suggested meetings would include: national diabetes meeting; EASD Study Group Meetings; EASD and ADA Annual Meetings. While it is difficult to set any fixed targets, it would seem reasonable to expect submission of an abstract to a national or local meeting within 18 months of starting the project, and to EASD/ADA possibly by the end of Year 02 and certainly by Year 03. All abstracts must acknowledge support from the EFSD Mentorship Programme.
8. It is anticipated that the research project will be written up in the form of a manuscript(s) to be submitted to a high-quality peer-reviewed journal(s). All publications must acknowledge support from the EFSD Mentorship Programme.
9. Mentees will present their work either orally or by poster (by rotation) at the annual Mentorship Programme meeting that will be held on the occasion of the EASD Annual Meeting. The Mentorship Academy, Mentors, senior leadership of EASD/EFSD and representatives from AstraZeneca will attend this meeting, providing a critical and personalised review of each presentation and so helping develop the Mentees' communication skills

Training and educational activities:

Improving the research, clinical, leadership and communication skills of the Mentees lies at the heart of this Mentorship programme. Learning these skills will thus comprise an important and obligatory part of the Mentee's activities throughout the award period. While some courses already exist as part of the EASD's annual postgraduate activities, others will be developed specifically for this cohort of young clinical investigators including a course for communication and leadership tailored to the specific needs and talents of the Mentees.

EASD Courses will cover the following training and educational activities:

- Good Clinical Practice training
- Critical reading of the literature
- Insight into study design, methodology, statistics, critical analysis, presentation and publication of data
- Development of a clinical research study designed and operated by the participants
- Developing ancillary skills including the scientific approach
- Writing grant applications and manuscripts
- Journal clubs
- Teamwork, scientific responsibility
- Good scientific conduct

In addition, Mentees will get the opportunity to serve as junior faculty in established EASD courses, thereby improving their communication, teaching and own mentorship skills.

Scientific meetings:

Purpose and Goals

Mentees will attend the major diabetes meetings each year with the following purpose and goals:

- General educational purposes, to improve their understanding of clinical diabetes and to become familiar with the latest advances in diabetes research
- Presentation of submitted abstracts from their research project (see above)
- Each Mentee will prepare a report on a specific scientific session or track, to be assigned by the Academy
- The Academy and EFSD Programme staff will facilitate networking and participation in educational events designed to allow Mentees to interact with leading diabetologists in a more creative and intimate setting than would usually be possible at this early stage in their career
- The group will meet with AstraZeneca leadership and will be included in any suitable educational activities organised by the company
- Mentees will be accompanied to both the EASD and ADA annual meetings by dedicated EFSD Programme staff. They will stay at the same hotel and take meals together. This will allow the Mentees to become better acquainted and enhance team spirit

Expenses

Travel and local costs to attend scientific meetings will be covered by the Mentee's \$10,000 annual allowance. EASD will offer free registration and accommodation at its own annual meeting, the Mentees will only need to pay from their allowance for travel and any additional local costs (food etc).

EASD and ADA

Each year of their award, Mentees will be required to attend both the ADA and EASD annual meetings. This is considered an integral and obligatory part of the programme. In the event of sickness or any other serious unexpected problem preventing attendance at a meeting, this must be justified in writing to the Academy. Missing an ADA or EASD meeting without permission from the Academy may result in exclusion of the Mentee from the Programme.

EASD Study Groups

Mentees will be encouraged to attend the annual EASD Study Group meeting most suited to their research and clinical interests.

Annual Mentorship Programme Meeting

As mentioned above (Research Project: action 9), each year all Mentees and Mentors will meet together for a full day with the members of the Academy, senior leadership of EASD/EFSD, as well as representatives of AstraZeneca This meeting will take place on the occasion of the EASD Annual Meeting with the following components and major aims:

- Mentees will present their research project, as an oral or poster presentation on a rotational basis
- There will be one keynote lecture from a member of the Academy to serve as a model presentation and to present cutting edge clinical science. A second lecture will be delivered by a representative of AstraZeneca to foster better understanding of professional life in the industry setting (this lecture may not focus on any AstraZeneca product)
- Interactive breakout sessions will serve to improve communication and leadership skills and to develop career development strategy

The Mentorship Passport and website:

Each Mentee will have his/her own “Mentorship e-passport” in which all programme activities followed throughout the award will be logged within a dedicated programme website. Annual progress reports will also feature in this passport along with copies of abstracts and publications. This will allow dedicated staff, personal Mentors and the Mentorship Academy to follow the progress of each Mentee with a convenient checklist to ensure that all mandatory activities have been completed. Mentees will also be assisted in developing their personal webpage within the Programme website that will be hosted by EFSD

Evaluation

Mentees will be subject to evaluation of all their activities by the Mentor and by the Programme administration/leadership at predefined key intervention points. The results of each evaluation will be validated by dedicated EFSD staff and recorded in the Mentee e-passport. Overall progress and active participation in all aspects of the Programme will be considered by the Academy and evaluated formally on an annual basis. Any serious failure to meet the required standards or continued non-achievement will be sanctioned by exclusion from the Programme.