

International HPC Summer School 2018: Mentoring Guide for Mentees

Dear Mentee,

In preparation for the 2018 International HPC Summer School we have matched you with a mentor. The information contained in this pack will help you get the most out of mentoring at the Summer School.

You are expected to read this information, act on it, and contact your mentor before arriving in Ostrava.

In this pack you will find:

1. Ice-breaker challenge: please complete this **before** you arrive in Ostrava;
2. Information for mentees;
3. The mentoring schedule.

If you have any questions about mentoring, before, during or after the summer school please do not hesitate to contact us.

Looking forward to meeting you in Ostrava!

Scott Callaghan, Weronika Filinger, Elsa Gonsiorowski, and Toni Collis

2018 IHPCSS Mentoring Committee

Ice Breaker Game: Two Truths and a Lie

PLEASE COMPLETE BEFORE COMING TO OSTRAVA

The aim of this ice-breaker game is to build a relationship between mentors and mentees before the summer school starts. Please make time for this activity BEFORE arriving in Ostrava.

We will play this game by having everyone in a mentoring group (your mentor and your mentor's other mentees) share two truths and a lie about themselves. This can be done by email or Skype with their mentor and their fellow mentees. Each person will give their 2 truths and a lie, and the other group members can try to guess which one is the lie. Then, by group consensus, they will choose the best two truths and a lie from anyone in the group to present to another mentor/mentee team at the Summer School at lunch on Monday. The other team will have to guess which are true and which is a lie.

How to play:

Each person will make three statements about themselves – two will be true and one will be a lie. Typically, statements cover likes/dislikes, experiences, skills or habits. They can be common or unusual facts. Liking the color red is a common statement; bungee jumping off the Rio Grande Bridge is a bit more unusual. Unusual facts tend to make for a more interesting game.

Players use different tactics to try to hide their lies. For example, three common statements or three unusual ones are perhaps hardest to evaluate. Be creative! Selecting lies that 'seem like you' or truths which don't are often good strategies.

Guide for mentees

How does mentoring work at the summer school?

When you receive this mentoring pack, you and 2-3 other students will be assigned to a mentor as a group, based on the interests you indicated in the mentoring survey. In advance, please complete the ice-breaker activity (see page 2 of this pack) with your mentor and the other mentees in the group; it will help you to get to know your mentor and fellow mentees a little better.

At the Summer School, there will be both formal mentoring opportunities, as outlined in the schedule, and informal opportunities, such as over meals, the poster session, and evening activities. We hope you take advantage of both to interact with your mentor.

While we do our best to match based on mutual interests, if you find that you and your mentor aren't compatible, please talk with other mentors instead, or raise this with the mentoring team (Scott/Weronika). Our goal is not to force you to stay with the mentor you were assigned to, but rather that you have a positive mentoring experience. Even if you and your assigned mentor are a good match, we encourage you to talk with other staff members for a variety of perspectives and expertise.

Why should I participate?

- Gain access to a new network of contacts
- Get a broader diversity of perspectives than your own advisor or department
- Learn from someone else's experiences
- Obtain help in achieving your goals
- Improve your self-confidence

What can I do to get the most out of mentoring?

Much of this information is taken from an invaluable resource:

[Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend: On Being a Mentor to Students in Science and Engineering \(1997 \).](#)

- Keep in touch with your mentor before, during, and after the Summer School. You may not have burning questions at all times, but reaching out to your mentor will help you establish a good relationship with them.
- Ask your mentor any questions you may have - don't hold back! Even if your mentor doesn't have the answer, he or she can help you find another mentor in our community who can answer your question.

- Feel free to disagree with your mentor, question your mentor, or ask for clarification. They can only assess how helpful they are if you give feedback.
- Your mentor is there to help you to think through your options and help you to formulate your plans. You make the decisions and you take the responsibility.
- Always seek mentoring in a public space.
- Reach out beyond your assigned mentor. Getting a variety of opinions from multiple mentors is a great idea.
- Talk to the mentoring team (Scott/Weronika) if you are not happy with your mentoring group.

What should I avoid?

- Assuming that because technical areas differ, your mentor's advice is not applicable.
- Assuming that your mentor cannot possibly understand your situation. Give them a chance - you might be surprised!
- Assuming your mentoring match will be perfect. No match is perfect and your mentor may only be able to help you with some of your issues, this does not mean that the partnership will not work. Discuss your aims and goals; find out the strengths of your mentor and the areas in which your mentor feels able to assist.

What should you talk about with your mentor?

You will have many opportunities to talk to your mentor and fellow mentees, and the better prepared you are the more you will benefit from them. You should spend some time thinking what it is that you want to talk with your mentor about.

Things you may want to talk about include:

- How to organise your time and responsibilities? How to achieve a work-life balance?
- Personal and professional challenges – how to make the best out of them?
- What to expect from working in the industry/academia/government etc.?
- How to adapt to working in an international setting or another country?
- How to find funding? How to get access to HPC resources?
- Different working arrangements - What is it like to work from home/work remotely?
- Professional etiquette
- How to talk to people? How to effectively build your network?
- How to deal with people issues at work (e.g. problems with your advisor, manager, confrontations etc.)?
- How to succeed in a job interview?

Poster Sessions and Soft skills tips

Poster sessions

On Monday and Tuesday evenings you will participate in poster sessions. As a part of this activity you will be asked to give a 1-minute lightning talk, and after the talks you will stay close to your poster and share it with others. Your mentor will provide with more details and the below tips are meant to help you prepare. If you have any questions feel free to ask them.

Guidelines

Besides learning the HPC-related content we also want you to make the most out of this summer school by practicing your soft skills. The ability to network, present your work or do a quick elevator pitch will be useful regardless of what sort of job you will have in the future. There will be times when you will be required to work efficiently with people coming from academic backgrounds different than yours. When you are just starting your career you may find talking to people you don't know intimidating, especially if you think there is no common ground between you, or when they are important in your field. That is not unusual and should be overcome with practice. That is why we want to encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity during the summer school to develop, improve, and put your social skills to test. You will be surrounded by over 90 potential training partners so have fun talking to them!

Some of the things to keep in mind when giving a presentation or an elevator pitch:

1. **Know your audience** - Quite often you will have a very limited time to get your message across so condense it. What is the most important thing that you want to communicate to this particular audience? Is it to highlight the importance of your work? Tell others about your latest project? Or simply introduce yourself and explain what you are working on? Some of the things you may want to cover are: introduce yourself, explain what you do and how, say what makes you unique or who you work with.
2. **Prepare** - Once you know what you want to say, try writing it down. Make sure to cover only the most essential information. Be informative but avoid going into details. If someone is interested in knowing more, they will ask you about it. Also think about the language you are using - explain things as simply as possible, but don't be patronizing. If you are preparing for a chat with someone from your field it's fine to use a moderate amount of domain specific jargon. If you are talking to someone from a different field try to either avoid it completely or be prepared to provide a simple explanation.
3. **Practice** - After you have written it down try to deliver it. A nicely written text may not sound natural during a conversation so ask your friends to act it out with you. Use your opportunities wisely and talk to as many different people as possible, while trying to adjust your language and message depending on the situation.

4. **Ask for feedback & give feedback-** If you are talking to someone in a more relaxed environment don't be afraid to ask for his or her feedback. Everyone has to start somewhere so people are generally happy to provide feedback, give tips and even share their experiences. You can also learn a lot by observing other people give presentations and talks. Try to identify things that you think other people do well or maybe not so well and analyze your own style. Don't be reluctant to help other people practice - you don't need to be an expert to give them useful feedback. Whether you receive or give feedback always try to be understanding, respectful, and constructive.

If you are not a native speaker and you feel that this has an impact on your soft skills, you may find the following tips useful:

- Spend more time preparing what you want to say - try writing it down and saying it out loud.
- Remember that your writing and speaking vocabulary is different - a writing vocabulary is usually bigger than a speaking one. When preparing your presentation try to use only words that come to you naturally when you are speaking.
- Try to speak a bit slower and more clearly than you would normally. You can try recording yourself and see how understandable you find it.
- Don't worry too much about grammatical mistakes - people care much more about being able to understand what you telling them than how perfect your command of their language is.
- If you are talking to someone in an informal context and want to improve your language skills ask them to correct you if you happen to make a mistake
- Last but not least: Speak, speak, and speak. Practice makes perfect!

Mentoring Schedule

Day	Time	Activity
Sunday	6pm – 9pm	Welcome Reception Introduction to Mentoring
Monday	11:15-12:30 & Lunch	Introductions Returning Mentor Tech Talks Lunch Game
Wednesday	11:30-12:30	One-on-one with Mentors
Thursday	11:20 – 12:10	Peer Discussion Groups Resource Fair
Friday	11:25 – 12:25	Returning Mentor ‘Career’ Talk Group Breakout with Mentors
Afterwards	Email, Facebook, LinkedIn	Stay in touch