

National Contact Centre for Gender & Science
of the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences
presents

MENTORING PROGRAMME FOR EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS

On the following posters, we will introduce the participants
of the first round of the programme – mentees and mentors.

What does the mentor programme consist of

An early career scientist (mentee) teams up with a more experienced scientist (mentor) who then shares their experience with the mentee. The mentors present their career in science and ways of research work, give advice on starting a career in science and help to solve the many questions that the mentee is faced with. The mentor also introduces the mentee to other members of the scientific community, helps them with career networking, provides workplace references or discusses academic news. The content of the programme depends entirely on the mentor and mentee's decision. This gives the mentees an opportunity to concentrate on their subject of interest.

Apart from the cooperation with the mentor, the mentees also attend courses focusing on professional and personal growth (e.g. time management, presentation and communication skills or basic project management courses). In these meetings, the mentees also cooperate with each other, gain more contacts in their field of study and offer each other support in the beginnings of their career in science.

Mentoring offers a unique opportunity to gain information and advice that is useful for the development of career in science.

The first year of the programme

In the first year of 2016, 54 mentees (46 women and eight men) and 11 mentors (nine women and two men) participated in the mentoring programme. One female mentor and one male mentor worked from abroad. There were 42 PhD students and 12 postdocs among the mentees. One participant was both mentee and mentor. The mentees study and work in social sciences and humanities but also in natural sciences and technical fields.

This exhibition was created as part of the "Support of international cooperation in mentoring: networking and research" project (contract no. LE14021), funded by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.



Olga Angelovská & Marcela Janečková

Olga Angelovská

Public and Social Policy Department
Faculty of Social Science, Charles University

„I was quite surprised when Marcela approached me with the offer to become a mentor. I heard about the programme at a seminar some time ago but I didn't feel brave enough to actively participate. Now I am very glad that Marcela encouraged me to become a mentor. My view might be a little subjective because it's always much easier to cooperate with someone who you get on with. After a year of mentoring, I am sure that it can be beneficial not only for the mentees but also for the mentors themselves. It allows the mentor to consider various viewpoints and approaches and prevents fossilization in their area of study.“

Marcela Janečková

formerly a PhD student of Applied Ethics, Faculty of Humanities,
Charles University, recently a 1st year PhD student of Public and Social
Policy, Faculty of Social Science, Charles University

„When I approached Olga, I was worried about whether she would want to be my mentor or not. Now I'm glad I chose someone who can not only share their experience but also someone who has always been kind to me. Olga helped me with my decision to change my field of study and consequently my faculty and I'm very thankful for that. I think it's important to feel like you can talk to your mentor about everything - including the things you're not good at or when you're completely at a loss. I hope we'll continue to collaborate even after the end of the mentoring programme.“



Kateřina Horská

Kateřina Horská

PhD student of Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

„What I expected from the mentoring programme was mainly the opportunity to get informal feedback on my work and to clarify my priorities and direction. Over the many months of my involvement in the project, I discovered that it offers even more. Attending the courses that form part of the programme taught me the basics of project management in science. It was also interesting to meet the other participants and to share experiences, problems and to learn about how other workplaces function. Cooperating with my mentor has motivated and inspired me. Participating in the programme is a great idea for anyone who wants to progress in their work.“



Pavla Hujová

Pavla Hujová

2nd year PhD student of Medical Microbiology and Immunology
Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University

„At first, I didn't want to participate in the mentoring programme at all because I felt very unsure of my position in science. However, after my colleague recommended the course to me, I changed my mind and signed up, mainly out of curiosity. In hindsight, I am immensely grateful that I did. Even though I wasn't actively looking for a mentor, I attended most of the courses offered in the programme. These gave me the opportunity to meet new colleagues who are dealing with same or similar problems, to think about my future in science, to define my priorities and to discover my strengths and weaknesses. Overall, this programme has provided knowledge which has been very enriching for me as an early career scientist, especially in preparing me to take the plunge into academia.“



Dana Kapitulčinová & Selma Benyovszky

Dana Kapitulčinová

researcher
Charles University Environment Centre

„This year I decided to be both a mentee and a mentor in the mentoring programme and it was definitely a positive experience. In the mentoring meetings, I tried to absorb all the knowledge and experience from my mentor, professor Dostálová from UCT Prague, and to pass it on to my mentee, Selma Benyovszky, a doctoral student from the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University. The two relationships worked on a slightly different principle, but both were enjoyable. Professor Dostálová and I focused on scientific matters concerning food consumption and nourishment. With Selma, however, we discussed topics relating to doctoral studies such as the publication process, presentation skills, feedback or grant opportunities. Mentoring can have many different forms, it just depends how you approach it. I speak from my own experience when I say that mentoring really is beneficial for both sides – mentors and mentees.“

Selma Benyovszky

PhD student at the Charles University Environment Centre
assistant at the Department of Civil Society Studies
Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

„I had encountered mentoring programmes abroad and I'd hoped to find something similar here in the Czech Republic. When an opportunity appeared, I was a little wary but my curiosity got the better of me. In hindsight, joining the programme was one of the best decisions I've made so far during my doctoral studies. Attending the workshops, meetings and events gave me the opportunity to meet many inspiring people. I had the chance to share my experience with them and learn more about life in science. I also received support, feedback and immensely valuable advice from my mentor, Dana Kapitulčinová. We discussed everything from grant applications and project management to combining family and work. I wouldn't have had this opportunity without the support of the mentoring programme.“



Lucie Klůzová Kráčmarová

Lucie Klůzová Kráčmarová

4th year PhD student, Department of Psychology
Palacký University Olomouc

„I joined the mentoring programme because I wanted to cooperate closely with professionals outside my workplace and to find someone who could support my professional development. I gained a lot right from the first meeting and have been able to explore what is important to me and what I want to achieve. My mentor works abroad and our mentoring sessions usually happen via Skype. I was also lucky enough to visit her at her workplace. Apart from helping me with professional matters, she is also a wonderful support and inspiration to me. She teaches me how to combine family and work which was one of the things I was most interested in. I would recommend the mentoring programme to anyone who is interested in both professional and personal growth. I would definitely do it all again.“



Eva Kubátová

Eva Kubátová

PhD student

Centre for Ibero-American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

„I decided to join the mentoring programme mainly because I wanted to find out what career opportunities there are in my area of study, and to gain some insight into dissertation writing from my colleagues. The workshops have helped me professionally and personally and have given me space to think about my priorities and the directions in which my career could develop. The debates with other mentees have inspired me to finish my dissertation. NKC mentoring has been one of the most fruitful experiences of my doctoral studies.“



Marcela Linková & Kateřina Kňapová

Marcela Linková

researcher
head of the National Contact Centre - Gender and Science
Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences

„I was very happy that Katka chose me as her mentor. She’s wonderful – determined, smart, she knows what she wants and she’s not afraid. I have to say that the study and work plan she sent me before our first meeting seemed very ambitious even to me. I am very glad that Katka and I could discuss her career plans and goals and I am all the more pleased that she is aiming high. It is moments like these when I yet again realise how important networks are and how wonderful would it be if women were as successful in building them as men often are.“

Kateřina Kňapová

PhD student at the Institute of Political Science
Faculty of Arts, Charles University

„If I had to name the most important thing that mentoring has given me, it would be meeting and getting to know people. I have met many wonderful young scientists at the meetings. In the mentoring sessions, I got to know my amazing and inspiring mentor, Marcela Linková, but also myself – my goals, strengths and also the direction in which I would like to go. Mentoring has taught me to look forward, beyond the horizon and also to connect my love for knowledge with work in politics and the government. I couldn’t have wished for a better mentor than Marcela, who has a wealth of experience in this area and who is also so articulate when reflecting on the status of women in the public space and political battles.“



Magdaléna Matejková

Magdaléna Matejková

PhD student at St. Anne's University Hospital Brno – International Clinical Research Center (FNUSA-ICRC)
Center of Biomedical Engineering

„The NKC mentoring programme has helped motivate me to pursue my future scientific direction. The variety of courses offered has provided me with a good basic training in soft skills. As a doctoral student, I particularly appreciated the courses concerning planning and realising projects. These were also very helpful for orientation in funding opportunities from the Czech Republic and European Union. This mentoring programme has offered me not only personal and professional growth but also new friends and contacts from the scientific sphere. I would recommend it to all students who want to invest in their skills development and move forward.“



Olga Norková

Olga Norková

PhD student of Applied Ethics

Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

„I signed up to the mentoring programme because I wanted to reflect on my priorities and explore the real opportunities to combine professional growth with caring for my son. Thanks to the mentoring programme, I was able to cooperate with a quantitative research methods specialist and gain valuable experience for, and advice on my work. My mentor was also a huge inspiration and living proof that combining professional growth and childcare is possible. The mentoring programme has given me the self-confidence and motivation to continue working on myself.“



Zuzana Nováková

Zuzana Nováková

PhD student of Ecotoxicology

RECETOX - Research Centre for Toxic Compounds in the Environment, Masaryk University

„I signed up to the mentoring programme in the first year of my doctoral studies. I wanted to get some insight into how science works, my different options during my studies and I also wanted to benefit from the advice of experienced scientists to help me make sure my studies are successful, enjoyable and support my development. Mentoring has made me think about what I expect from the next few years, how to achieve my goals and also what to avoid. All the different courses offered were also very beneficial. I think that the mentoring programme has a lot to offer not only to early career stage scientists who are trying to identify their career path, but it can also open up new directions to experienced scientists. Due to programme’s spirit of collegiality, you find out you that you’re never the only one who sometimes gets a bit lost. It also helps with self-reflection, in terms of both scientific and more general matters.“



Jindra Veselská & Dino Numerato

Jindra Veselská

PhD student of Sociology
Institute of Sociological Studies,
Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

„The NKC mentoring programme has helped me to make new contacts and orientate myself in the academic environment. Thanks to the workshops I was able to develop strengths and abilities which are essential for doctoral studies and personal growth in general. The meetings with my mentor have offered me perspectives on my work from the point of view of an experienced scientist and teacher, and have given me the opportunity to find out more about the academic world and how it works. I really appreciated being given the opportunity to talk about my expectations of postgraduate studies and how to set about actually realising my ambitions with other participants of the programme. Finding out that we all share similar problems was very liberating.“

Dino Numerato

sociologist
Faculty of Social Science, Charles University

„The contemporary academic world offers a number of opportunities to new generations of researchers. However, it isn't that easy to find your way in it. The mentoring programme can help people find their way and it is very important that it exists. Not only mentees, but also mentors can benefit from the mentoring programme. For me personally, the mentoring programme was a pleasant pause in the rush of academic life. From time to time I experienced a sense of déjà vu and appreciated the possibility to look at a given problem from a different perspective. At the same time, I realised the shared responsibility for shaping the institutional conditions under which mentees develop their research ambitions.“



Eliška Sychrová

Eliška Sychrová

PhD student and assistant

RECETOX - Research Centre for Toxic Compounds in the Environment, Masaryk University

„You don't have to aspire to a scientific career in order to be part of the mentoring programme. It is even for those of us who are considering a different career path than a scientific one. Even though I wasn't lucky enough to have a personal mentor, the seminars and meetings with other participants were time well spent. It was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on what I have done and what may still be ahead – but also what is worth doing and thinking about now. Enough talking, it's time to transform these thoughts into reality!“



Lucy Vojtová & Lucie Grodecká

Lucy Vojtová

senior researcher

Central European Institute of Technology - Brno University of Technology (CEITEC BUT)

„Mentoring is a new and very interesting experience for me. Apart from sharing scientific and personal knowledge I also feel like I provide moral support to my mentee, Lucie. Even though we are from different academic areas, we have many things in common, such as combining career growth and childcare. Anything is possible if you want it enough.“

Lucie Grodecká

PhD student

Centre for Cardiovascular Surgery and Transplantation
Molecular Genetics Laboratory

„I signed up to the mentoring programme to learn about the possibilities of combining a scientific career with parenthood. In the end, I gained so much more. I met an incredibly interesting and inspiring woman, associate professor Lucy Vojtová, discovered her view of academia and felt I grew, professionally and personally after attending the wonderful (and often entertaining) courses. I must also mention all the contacts I made to colleagues from similar study areas. I believe my newly gained knowledge and experience will inspire my work for a long time to come. Thank you to all the organisers!“



Jana Dostálová

Jana Dostálová

university teacher

Department of Food Analysis and Nutrition, University of Chemistry and Technology Prague

member of The Czech Society for Nutrition

„When Dana Kapitulčinová chose me as her prospective mentor, I was quite surprised. Her scientific background is in a different area to mine, i.e. food analysis and nutrition. After careful consideration, I decided to take up her offer. I thought that mentoring two scientists from different fields, namely environmental studies and food analysis and nutrition, could be beneficial for both sides because food production has a significant impact on the environment. We had several meetings during the mentoring programme, all of which were very friendly and inspirational. I was very satisfied with my collaboration with Dr. Kapitulčinová and think we both benefitted from it.“



Lucie Cviklová & Petr Jedlička

Lucie Cviklová

sociologist and political scientist
Charles University

„The biggest benefit of training in the mentoring programme had been the renewed contact with my mentee, who consulted me about his bachelor thesis at the Faculty of Social Sciences (Charles University) ten years ago. Even though it was me who initiated the contact, we have shared scientific findings during the programme and I believe that I have helped his personal and professional growth in some ways. This form of information exchange between experienced and early career stage scientists is contributing to a positive qualitative change and functioning of the scientific community in the Czech Republic.“

Petr Jedlička

PhD student of Theory and History of Science and Technology
University of West Bohemia

„My course of study, Theory and History of Science and Technology, is quite marginal in the Czech academic environment. I hope that mentoring will help me make contacts abroad and broaden my understanding of my dissertation topic.“