# Scientific Publication Mentoring Scheme - Application Guidance

**Summary**

CONNECTED aims to build a sustainable network of international scientists and researchers to address the challenges of vector-borne plant viruses in Africa. CONNECTED creates opportunities for individuals to engage with each other, build capacity and create research consortia to respond to funding opportunities in the research area of African vector-borne plant viruses.

 This scientific publication mentoring scheme will help Network Members prepare and submit their work for publication.

The key function of the mentor is to help individuals work their way through a process, sharing their own experiences with their mentee. In this case mentor advice could include providing guidance on data analysis, advice on manuscript layout and structure, and the peer review process itself.

Such a scheme would provide our Network Member mentees with:

* Better understanding of what is required in manuscript preparation
* Increased motivation and productivity
* Greater confidence, improved interpersonal relationships, communication and networking

Both parties (mentor and mentee) need to be clear about the level of involvement expected of them. The mentor could be included as an author on the manuscript if appropriate. Their role in the manuscript preparation would be acknowledged.

Applications are open to all Network Members, and preference will be given to those who are Early Career Researchers and to those who are based in DAC-list countries

Places are limited and will be awarded following a competitive review process.

**Applicants:**

All Network Members are eligible, but preference will be given to those who are Early Career Researchers (ECRs), or are based in DAC-list countries. ECRs are defined as those who have received their highest degree (BSc, MS or PhD) within the past 7 years. For a list of DAC countries, please visit the following link: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

All applications must be supported by your organisation: please provide a letter of support from your group leader alongside your application.

To be eligible, you must have a current contract of research employment or studentship that extends at least until the end of 2021 because the mentoring process may last throughout 2021. This should be confirmed in the letter of support from your group leader

**Application process**

Application form:

1. Applicant details – please complete all sections
2. Details of manuscript in preparation
	1. Manuscript title
	2. Abstract – if this is not written please list the main points it will contain
	3. The mentor needs to understand the current status of your manuscript. Do you have a manuscript draft? Are the figures and tables complete? Do you need to do statistical analysis, sequence analysis? Please list any gaps or missing data. Has the manuscript been submitted anywhere? If so, what was the outcome?
	4. Be clear what type of help and advice you are looking for. Which specific areas of the manuscript do you want advice on and why?
3. List your publications and any manuscript submissions– this gives us an idea of how many manuscripts you have been involved in preparing. List publications that you are an author on. List any manuscripts that you have submitted and the outcome – were they accepted/rejected?
4. If you have previously submitted a manuscript for publication describe your experience of the manuscript submission and peer review process. This gives us an idea of your experiences.
5. Please select up to 3 mentors and give a brief reason why you have chosen them. Your choice of mentor is not guaranteed, the Network team reserve the right to assign a different mentor.
6. Required additional documents – please enclose your CV with the application form, this should include information on your current employment, education, publications, conferences, training courses undertaken and any previous awards. Please also include a letter of support from your research group leader confirming (a) that your contract of employment or studentship at your institution lasts until at least the end of 2021, (b) that you are recommended to undertake this mentoring (c) you are able take time off from your work duties to attend the mentoring meetings
7. Confirmation section - Please complete
8. Signature - Please complete

Completed application forms, CVs, and letters of support must all be submitted to the Network Team email account (connectedvirusnetwork@gmail.com) by 4pm on the closing date.

**Review process**

Initial review - Each application received will be checked by the Network Team to ensure it meets the application criteria and contains the required information. If there are any problems, further information will be requested from the applicant.

Pairing up mentees with mentors - applicants are invited to nominate up to 3 preferred mentors. The Network Team will endeavour to pair a mentee with a mentor of their choice but this may not always be possible and the Network team reserve the right to assign a different mentor. The Network Team will work with the mentors to agree an appropriate mentee for each mentor. Places will be awarded in a gender balanced way and with as broad a geographic and institutional distribution as possible.

**Notification**

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application; please see the CONNECTED website for anticipated dates when results will be communicated to applicants.

**Mentoring process**
The Network Team will send a joint email introducing mentor and mentee, setting out the process and expectations. At this stage we will ask the mentee to share any relevant documents – manuscript draft, figures etc. with the mentor.

Each mentor-mentee pair should agree to 3 online meetings to discuss the manuscript. The timeframe should be agreed between the mentor and mentee depending on the amount of work required on the manuscript and other current work commitments

**The mentoring conversations are confidential and private.**

**Reporting and evaluation**

Mentees will be required to complete a short evaluation form upon completion of the mentoring process.

**Publicity and Data Protection**

Copies of applications will be made available to the CONNECTED Management Board and Network Executive Group who will use the information provided for reviewing the proposal and post-award administration. CONNECTED may choose to publish details of mentor and menteepairings and manuscript topic areas but **all discussions between mentors and mentees are confidential and private**.

All funding comes from the BBSRC, so to meet the UK Research Councils’ obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, non-confidential details of awards may also be made available on the Research Councils’ websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists. The BBSRC will use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, statistical analysis in relation to the evaluation of BBSRC funding, study of trends and policy and strategy studies.