



NAM-Led Mentorship and Networking Components of the LEA-WH Fellowship Program

Mission:

The NAM mentorship and networking programming activities for LEA-WH Fellows aim to build research capacity, provide evidence-based and culturally responsive mentoring, expand professional networks, and ensure a structured, supportive system that promotes high-quality mentorship and long-term career success.

Section 1. Mentorship Component

Main Goals

- Strengthen the fellows' research capacity and support their long-term career advancement.
- Provide inclusive, evidence-based mentorship aligned with key recommendations from NASEM 2019 mentorship report, [The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM](#).
- Establish a structured and supportive feedback system that tracks mentorship quality and impact over the cohort year and mitigates negative mentorship experiences.

Mentorship Structure and Platform

- Each fellow will be matched with two mentors: one mentor selected by KEMRI and one mentor selected by NAM. KEMRI-selected mentors will focus on the fellows' technical project expertise, while NAM-selected mentors will focus on professional growth and leadership development.
- Matching will be based on:
 - Career stage and development needs
 - Research interests and expertise
 - Specific mentorship priorities
 - Contextual and geographic fit
- Mentoring process will be evaluated using **Mentorship Development Plans (MDPs)** to be completed jointly by mentor and mentee and updated monthly.
- Platform: Structured mentoring will take place using an **online platform (RhythmQ Mentorship)** which provides a user-friendly space to facilitate mentorship



activities, including meeting scheduling, goal setting, progress tracking, and document sharing.

- The platform also has a built-in feature where mentors and fellows can submit progress updates directly to program staff for evaluation. Interventions can be made promptly when a mentor or mentee indicates any problems.

Mentorship and Professional Development Workshops

Besides facilitating the structured 1-1 mentoring process, NAM staff will organize five virtual workshop-style training sessions for the fellows and mentors throughout the cohort year. The first session, focused on mentorship overview, will be required for both fellows and mentors, while the remaining sessions will be optional for mentors.

** topics are subject to change based on cohort needs, speaker availability, and any changes in program priorities.

- Mentorship Overview Training
 - This first training will introduce a shared language and framework for effective mentoring relationships, including what mentorship is and is not, evidence-based practices, and goal setting.
- Cross-Cultural Negotiation & Advocacy Skills
 - This training will focus on strategies to confidently negotiate budgets, resources, salary, and protected time while effectively advocating for their research priorities and leadership roles, strengthening strategic communication and empowering them to navigate gendered and institutional dynamics with clarity and influence.
- Managing Upwards and Leading Downwards: Building Effective Relationships Across All Levels
 - This training will equip the fellows with the skills to effectively navigate relationships with supervisors and confidently lead junior team members through clear communication, strategic influence, and culturally attuned leadership.



- Storytelling and Ethical AI Use for Grant Writing
 - The session will help fellows develop compelling grant narratives that clearly communicate the significance of their work. It will also provide guidance on using AI tools ethically and strategically in grant and proposal development.
- CV Writing and LinkedIn
 - This training will guide fellows in crafting clear, compelling CVs and optimizing their LinkedIn profiles to effectively showcase their research expertise, accomplishments, and leadership potential. The training will emphasize strategies for tailoring materials for broad audiences and communicating impact in ways that support career advancement.

Time Commitment

This section outlines the time commitment required of mentors and fellows for the NAM-led mentorship program only. This does not include time commitment needed for KEMRI-led activities.

- Intake surveys completed by both fellows and mentors for matching
- After matching, 1-2 hours per month throughout the cohort year
- Completion of mid-year and end-of-year mentorship evaluations submitted to staff

Section 2. Networking and Professional Development Component

Main Goals

- Strengthen fellows' professional networks through mentorship and engagement with peers, collaborators, funders, and other leaders across relevant fields and sectors.
- Support fellows' professional development by providing funded access to conferences, workshops, and other relevant professional opportunities that enhance visibility, foster strategic connections, and advance career growth.

Networking Activities and Implementation

- Each fellow will receive a \$7,000 travel budget to support participation in relevant professional conferences, workshops, and events, subject to approval by NAM staff. Budget administration and travel coordination will be managed by NAM staff.



- Travel funds may be used for participation in professional meetings and other relevant events that support fellows' research, leadership development, networking, and global engagement.

Time Commitment

The time commitment for networking and professional development is variable and depends on fellows' participation in activities.