

BNA Scholars Programme

Get involved: Become a Mentor

Are you in a neuroscience role or neuroscience-related role, with career navigation knowledge to share? Then put yourself forward to become a BNA Mentor as part of our Scholars Programme.

Whether you're an Early Career Researcher or an established leader in your field – an academic or an industry scientist – a clinician or a non-scientific commercial sector professional – we want to hear from you. Sharing your career story, connections and insights will make a difference to the career success of a talented young neuroscientist from a currently underrepresented background.

BNA Mentors connect with their mentee around 4–6 times per year to listen, offer advice and give guidance on navigating a career in neuroscience. Ongoing feedback from both Scholars and Mentors reveals strong, impactful relationships that are building and accelerating careers.

"I have always enjoyed helping my peers and individuals younger than me to reach their full potential, especially if they are interested in academic research. This scheme has helped me gain confidence in my advice and helped me appreciate that I have gained a wealth of knowledge to pass on to future researchers."

Afra Aabdien, BNA Mentor

How it works

Expressions of interest from potential Mentors are welcomed all year round, and kept on record. Each spring as we welcome the year's new cohort of BNA Scholars, the mentor matching process will take place as follows:

1. Mentor applications collected throughout the last year are compiled, along with any previous years' applications for which permission has been given to carry them forward

2. Each Scholar will be provided with an index of the mentor-applicants' statements about themselves, and asked to indicate their top four choices of Mentor based on those statements.
3. The selections are reviewed by the BNA Membership & Communities Manager, and each Scholar matched with their the most primary choice possible.
4. Matched pairs of Scholars and Mentors are asked to arrange an introductory, "no-commitments" 1:1 videocall during which they can introduce themselves and assess whether they would indeed be a good fit for one another in a three-year mentoring relationship based on their priorities and interests.
5. Both sides of the matched pair are asked to privately confirm to the BNA Membership & Communities Manager whether or not they are happy to proceed. If either party returns a "no", then the process returns to stage 3 – we want to reassure applicants that the BNA is committed to ensuring that a BNA Scholar feels well-matched with their Mentor.
6. Provided a "yes" is received from both the Scholar and Mentor, the Scholar-Mentor pair are invited to co-produce a agreement outlining the priorities and scope of their three-year mentoring relationship, and are provided with some training resources to help them get started. Arranging regular meetings with you will then be the responsibility of the Scholar – we ask that you ensure that you have reasonable availability for these.
7. If at any point either you or the Scholar feel that your pairing no longer meets the Scholar's needs and career goals, then pairings can be rearranged simply by getting in touch with the BNA Membership & Communities Manager – although we believe that there is something positive to be generated out of every pairing!

As part of your role, BNA Mentors are expected to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- To attend mentoring meetings with your Scholar (around 4–6 per year; time/date, format and mode to be agreed between you and your Scholar)
- To once a year complete a short evaluation form (sent to you by the BNA via email), used to inform the development and improvement of the Programme for you and other Mentors
- To maintain your BNA membership
- To engage with the BNA Scholars Programme and Scholar/Mentor community in any other relevant ways, e.g. connecting with your Scholar at the BNA Festival of Neuroscience

How to apply

To be eligible to become a BNA Mentor, you must be a current BNA member. If you're not a current BNA member, you can begin/renew your membership here. <https://www.bna.org.uk/login.html?fr=e105189e>

When you're ready, please complete the short Microsoft Form below. You will be asked to provide some personal details, as well as to describe your expertise (research area, techniques you use, experience to date etc.), why you want to be a Mentor on the Programme, and what makes you well-suited to the role.

Please make your answers as clear as possible – remember, they will be the basis on which the incoming cohort of BNA Scholars choose their Mentors.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TTHo6uxK5E-YesztiB1DxFV-0s0B13JDpNbe1a9nFdVUM1VORDMxVzI5UDVCMkcxUIZXUuk2UjE4My4u>

Please note that you may not be chosen as a Mentor for the upcoming cohort of Scholars. However, if you would like us to keep your application on record for consideration by future Scholar cohorts, then you will be able to indicate this on the form. This would be for a maximum of 8 years, and you will retain the right to withdraw if chosen as a Mentor in one of those years.

Your information will be stored securely in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).