

CCTSI TL1-TOTTS Individualized Career Development Plan

Purpose of the Individualized Career Development Plan

The purpose of an Individualized Career Development Plan (ICDP) is to prepare you for your future career as a clinical and translational investigator. It is important that you think carefully about your individual career goals and the skills that you need to be successful. Success in your career will require a much wider range of skills than the ability to design and perform research. Your mentors and resources available through the CCTSI and TOTTS will be helpful, but you must take primary responsibility for your career preparation.

Outline of the ICDP Process

The development, implementation, and revision of ICDPs require a series of steps to be conducted by trainees and their mentors. These steps are an interactive effort, so both the trainee and mentors must participate in the process.

	Trainees	Mentors
Step 1	Complete self-assessment tool to identify goals and competencies needed to achieve goals. Identify and explore potential career paths with mentor(s). Assess how your knowledge and skills match the competencies required	Discuss career opportunities with mentee
Step 2	Write an ICDP, share and discuss with mentors, and revise.	Review ICDP and help revise/adjust.
Step 3	Implement ICDP and revise as you go. Discuss regularly with mentors.	Discuss regularly with mentee.
Step 4	Re-assess how your knowledge and skills match the competencies required for your identified career path and revise your ICDP to prioritize developmental areas and milestones.	

Once you have drafted your ICDP, meet with your mentors to discuss the draft, and schedule regular meetings to review and assess your progress. Make use of as many mentors as you find helpful. Most people are very willing to help guide you in understanding your goals and defining what mentoring you need. Your ICDP should be considered a living document that will evolve over time. You will be expected to update it in consultation with your mentors on a quarterly basis.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mentor signature

Mentee Signature

1. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment helps you to gauge your skills, strengths and areas that need further development. Skills and strengths that are relevant to career decisions in research include: technical abilities (breadth and depth of expertise), writing skills, oral communication skills, organizational ability, leadership, self-motivation, decision-making, creativity, work ethic, problem solving abilities, knowledge (depth and breadth), perseverance, and ability/desire to take risks. Take a realistic look at your current abilities. This is a critical part of career planning. Involve your mentors, faculty, colleagues, family and friends in the assessment process by asking them to identify your strengths and the areas you need to develop.

STRENGTHS	AREAS for FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

2. Career Goals

After completing the self-assessment, defining career goals begins with articulating your career interests, based on your strengths and the jobs/ careers that you might want in different employment sectors (e.g. academia, industry, non-profit, government, or other research/teaching-related areas). Think about where you want to be in your career.

If you can't decide on your preferred career path now, define what you need to know to make the choice, how you will obtain that information, and the time period over which you will work on determining your path. Execute that plan and then develop a different ICDP as your specific career goals become better defined.

- a) **What do you want to accomplish in the next year towards reaching your career goals? (short-term objective; be very specific)**

- b) **What is your next developmental milestone after this program/fellowship completion? Where do you see yourself working and in what capacity? (medium-term objective)**

- c) **What do you want to be doing in 10 years? (long-term objective)**

- d) **What is your overall career goal? (as of now-it will change)**

3. Acquiring Knowledge and Skills

Once you have an idea of your strengths, gaps in knowledge or experience, and your career goals, think of ways to fill those gaps during TOTTS and your program. The remaining sections of the ICDP pose questions about what skills you will need to be successful in your career and how you will develop those skills and gain essential experience. You should involve your mentors in helping you define what you need and in addressing those needs.

- a) **Briefly describe your research projects and accomplishments in the last year and your research goals for the next year.**

- b) **What specific skills or expertise (methods, techniques, knowledge) have you already acquired during the course of your projects and training?**

- c) **What specific skills or expertise do you need to learn to accomplish your research project?**

- d) **What specific skills or expertise do you need to learn to accomplish your career goals?**

4. Development of Career Skills (Professional Development)

Once you have an idea of your strengths, gaps in knowledge or experience, and career goals, think of career skills (professional development) you wish to gain during TOTTS and your program.

- a) **Oral Communication skills:** List communication skills you would like to improve such as in poster and oral presentations related to your research, presenting to community or lay audiences, presenting to clinicians or basic scientists, participating in meetings, networking, interviews.

- b) **Writing skills:** List writing skills that you would like to improve such as preparing manuscripts, writing grants, preparing posters, translating your research to community, writing abstracts.

- c) **Teaching experience** (if a career goal): Identify teaching opportunities that you would like, such as providing a guest lecture, mentoring/teaching high school or undergraduate students, receipt of formal training, teaching assistant position, etc.

- d) **Managing research portfolio:** Are there skills you want to develop to manage your research portfolio? This could include budget development and management, human resource management, priority setting, writing reports, preparing for audits, research ethics and regulation, etc.

- e) **Networking:** Are there people that you would like to connect with? If so, identify and list them. This could be a person or a group of people with expertise, skills and insights that you need for your research and/or to fulfill learning goals.

- f) **Leadership:** Identify areas for further development and improvement. Areas could include communication, giving and receiving feedback, negotiation, positivity, motivation, teamwork, editing other's work, managing conflict, time management.

5. Goal Setting and Progress

In this section, take stock of your progress in publishing and presenting your research. What evidence can you see that you are making progress? If you are not making progress, is something getting in the way? How is your financial support now and in the future?

- a) **Presentations:** List oral and poster presentations (e.g. works-in-progress, seminar presentations, local, regional, national, and international presentations, abstracts submitted) given and planned in the past and next 6 months. Describe how you will fund travel for future conferences. Since starting TOTTS, what presentations have you delivered that achieve your earlier identified goals? Update your CV with conferences attended, noting titles and dates of presentations & posters.

- b) **Publications:** List the publications and targeted journals that you are planning, preparing, and/ or revising and their status. What needs to happen to get them submitted? Since starting TOTTS, what publications do you have that attain your earlier identified goal? Ensure that papers you have published are included on your CV and NIH Biosketch.

- c) **Grants:** List specific funding needs and sources of potential funding, including the type of award and submission deadlines.

- d) **Training Supportive of Research:** Identify and list courses to complete and the term for completion that support fulfillment of identified goals. Are there courses or trainings you need to take or independent studies you would like to do with mentors or advisors? Since TOTTS, list courses/training completed to fulfill learning needs and objectives.

- e) **Teaching** (if a career goal): Identify progress made and additional steps (with a timeframe) to complete to fulfill identified teaching goals and objectives. Are there specific teaching opportunities that you know of? How can you obtain these? Is there any formal or informal training that may help you feel more confident teaching?

- f) **Progress in other career development goals:** Identify progress made and additional steps (with a timeframe) to complete to fulfill identified goals and objectives. Are there relationships with mentors, advisors, or faculty that you hope to cultivate? What steps can you take to make these connections? Are there letters of reference that you hope to obtain before you are on the job market? Are there professional development workshops or trainings that you want to take?

Appendix

University of Minnesota, Graduate School Academic & Professional Development¹

Self- Assessment

The self-assessment will help you to gauge your skills, strengths and areas that need further development. Some of the skills and strengths that are relevant to career decisions in research include: technical abilities (breadth and depth of expertise), writing skills, oral communication skills, organizational ability, leadership, self- motivation, decision-making, creativity, work ethic, problem solving abilities, knowledge (depth and breadth), perseverance, and ability/desire to take risks. Take a realistic look at your current abilities. This is a critical part of career planning. Involve your mentors, faculty, colleagues, family and friends in the assessment process by asking them to identify your strengths and the areas you need to develop.

Here are some questions to initiate the self-assessment process. These questions are not intended to be comprehensive, but can serve as a tool for you and your mentor to identify your career goals and competencies required to reach your goals.

Career Goals

- What are your short-term career goals? How will you achieve these goals within the next two to five years?
- What are your long-term career goals? How will you achieve these goals within the next 10 to 15 years?
- What did you do last year to help develop contacts relevant to your short-term or long-term goals? Did you have opportunities to network with individuals from institutions or companies you feel may be a good fit for your future career aspirations?

Percentage Time Spent

What percentage of your time have you spent in the past year on the following components of the graduate experience? How much time would you need to spend this year?²

	Past year	Next year
Coursework		
Attending career development workshops		
Attending research-related meetings or seminars		
Background reading		
Conducting research		
Writing for publication/dissertation		
Presenting at conferences or professional meetings		
Grant writing		
Teaching (if a career goal)		
Marketing yourself (CV, NIH biosketch, networking, interviewing, etc)		

Scholarly Competencies for Clinical Translational Research

Research

- What research theories, methods or questions have you developed in the past year? How can you continue to build on those theories, methods or questions? Are there other related theories, methods or questions to develop?
- What research-related skills have you acquired? What feedback have you received on your research skills? What further skills do you need to acquire to be successful with your research and future career? How will you gain exposure to these skills and evaluate your competency?
- What research collaborations (intra-disciplinary or interdisciplinary) have you established? Are they successful and beneficial? If so, how can you continue to build on those successes for the coming year? If they have not been successful, how can you improve your collaborative research skills?
- How much time do you spend on projects that did not work? Are you continuing to solve problems with the projects, or could there be more important work to consider for this year? If so, how will you identify such projects?
- What research-related seminars did you attend? Were they beneficial to your work? What seminars do you need to attend this year?

Writing

- What papers did you author or co-author in the past year? Were any of the papers submitted for publication? If not, could any of those be submitted for publication this year, or do you need to write different papers? How will you identify potential publishing venues?
- What types of feedback, formal or informal, have you received on your writing skills?
- What specific areas of writing do you need to improve? How would you seek assistance?
- Have you developed a schedule this year to meet with your research mentor regarding upcoming and potential publications and the dissertation, if applicable?

Presentations

- What presentations (journal clubs, seminars, scientific meetings, professional conferences) did you make in the past year? What sorts of feedback did you receive on the content of your presentation and your presentation skills? Are there specific presentation skills you would like to improve? How will you do so and what are your resources? What presentations would you need to make this year?

Fellowships and Grants

- What fellowship or grant proposals did you write? Were they funded? If yes, how will you assure that you make progress on these projects this year? If the proposal was not funded, what can you do to improve the application for future submission?

- What feedback have you received on your grant writing skills? Are there specific areas you need to develop to attract potential funders? How will you improve your skills and what resources are available?
- What grants do you need to write this year?

Research & Budget Management

- How much experience do you have with research and budget management? Do you need to gain more experience managing a research or project budget? How will you accomplish this?

Teaching (if a career goal)

- Did you do any teaching in the past year (courses, seminars, laboratories)? Would you like additional opportunities to teach? How will you find these teaching opportunities?
- What sorts of feedback, formal or informal, have you received on your course content, syllabi, pedagogy, consideration of diverse learners and overall teaching abilities? In which areas do you need to improve? How will you improve your teaching and what resources are available?

Professional Development Competencies

Leadership

- What leadership experiences have you had that allowed you to identify objectives, implement plans and acquire decision making skills?
- What positions (within and outside the University) can you pursue this year to enhance your leadership skills?

Networking

- Identifying opportunities to meet with individuals who may be interested in your research and professional experiences
- Communicating your scholarly, research and career interests to individuals in academic and professional communities who may be aware of employment opportunities that match your specific experience and skills.

REFERENCES

¹ Web Site: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-academic-professional-development-building-your-plan/plan>

² Web Site: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-academic-professional-development-building-your-plan/idpstep1>