



## **SENC Mentoring Program 2026-2027 Guidelines**

Are you unsure about how to approach the future as a scientist? At different stages of a scientific career, it can be difficult to find the support or advice needed to take the next step or make the next decision. From the **Young Researchers and Training Committee (SENCJ)** we aim to provide researchers at different stages of their careers (both predoctoral and postdoctoral) with access to information and to the experiences of people outside their usual circle, which can serve as guidance and support for the future.

To this end, we present the **3rd Edition of the SENC Mentoring Program**, with the aim of connecting PhD students and postdoctoral researchers with established scientists and senior postdocs who are willing to share their experience, knowledge, and career guidance. In addition, in this edition we will continue our collaboration with the SENC Women in Neuroscience Committee (WiNs, Women in Neuroscience) *to provide more specific mentoring on the challenges women face in their academic careers.*

The registration deadline for both **mentors** and **mentees** will remain open **until October 18, 2026**.

Contact for the SENC Mentoring Program 2026-2027: [mentoring@senc.es](mailto:mentoring@senc.es)

### **AS A MENTEE**

The program is designed both for predoctoral students who want guidance in shaping their careers and for postdoctoral researchers who are looking to establish a new group or take their scientific careers in other professional directions. Take part in our group meetings, find your scientific mentor, meet other mentors and mentees at the in-person event during the upcoming SENC 2027 Congress in Zaragoza, and receive your certificate of participation.

To register, the only **requirement is to be a SENC member during 2026 and 2027**, the years in which this edition of the program will be active.

If you would like to participate in the program but are not yet a member, join SENC through our website before the registration deadline.

<https://www.senc.es/en/how-to-join-2/>

### **AS A MENTOR**

If you would like to help other researchers by sharing your own experience and career path as a guide, register as a mentor in the program and **receive a mentoring certificate from SENC**.

SENC invites all researchers, both in Spain and abroad, to share their experience as mentors, with no membership requirement. However, researchers who are SENC members during the program will be given priority for mentor-mentee matching and for



participation as speakers in our activities. Of course, we encourage everyone to become a member and join the SENC community!

## ACTIVITY GUIDE

### 1. Mentoring circles

60-minute online sessions in which small, fixed groups of mentees meet with a different mentor in each session, giving them access to a range of professional profiles. The aim is to offer mentees different perspectives and scientific experiences from across the various stages of a research career, in an environment of trust and open dialogue.

- 4-6 mentees per group.
- 3 weekly group sessions
- Each session will feature a guest mentor with a different profile (for example, a mentor who completed a postdoc abroad, someone from industry, a PI, someone pursuing an alternative career, a postdoc in Spain, etc.), so that each group of mentees has access to a range of professional experiences.
- **At the end of the session cycle, participants must complete a survey** assessing their personal goals. The purpose of this survey is to improve future editions of the program and to ensure that mentees' needs are taken into account when they are ultimately matched with a mentor.

ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME: January - March 2027

### 2. 1:1 meetings with your scientific mentor

Based on your preferences and needs, and on the mentors participating in the program, we will create mentor-mentee pairs. The aim of this second phase is for each pair to arrange online meetings according to their availability and begin building a personalized mentoring relationship in a confidential and constructive environment.

These meetings are intended to discuss the mentee's professional goals, specific topics related to the next steps in their research career, any obstacles they may encounter, and any questions or concerns raised by the mentee.

The program will do its best to create the most compatible matches, and we recommend that these meetings take place 1-2 times per month. We will not organize a schedule for each pair; it will be up to you to decide how many meetings you would like to have and when to hold them.

ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME: Matching process: March - April 2027

### 3. In-person event at the SENC 2027 Congress in Zaragoza



To bring the program to a close, we will organize our in-person event, “MENTORING SYMPOSIUM: Pathways in Science”, a space for face-to-face dialogue where mentor-mentee pairs can meet in person in a relaxed setting, with the aim of strengthening their connection and encouraging the mentoring relationship to continue in the future.

### Open to participants from outside the program

ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME: SENC Congress, September 2027

## CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION

The **certificates of participation (for mentees) and mentoring certificates (for mentors) will be issued at the end of the program** once the minimum participation requirements have been met.

### FOR MENTEES

Mentees who meet the following minimum participation criteria will receive a certificate from SENC.

1. Attend at least 2/3 of the group sessions.
2. Complete the 2 program evaluation surveys (one after the group phase and one after the in-person event that will conclude the program).

Certificates will be issued after the SENC event that marks the end of this edition of the program.

### FOR MENTORS

Mentors selected as speakers for the group sessions will receive certificates for their participation in those sessions.

In addition, SENCJ will provide a form for all mentors through which they can request mentoring certificates by indicating the number of sessions held with their mentees.