

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE UAA/USAID MENTORING PROGRAM

v.2 Sept. 2019

The UAA and USAID have been partners since 2013 in a program that brings alumni experience and expertise to mentoring relationships with interested USAID Foreign Service Officers (career and career-candidate) posted overseas.

- **Who is eligible to participate in the Program?** The program works with career-candidate and career Foreign Service Officers posted overseas, ranging from first tour officers to Mission Directors. It is currently active in GH, AFR, E&E, PPL, & LAC, and participates in the Mission Director Training Program. The Program also supports Payne Fellows as they onboard to USAID. UAA works closely with USAID through HCTM, Bureau Coordinators, the FSI Senior Development Advisor, and the Payne Fellowship Program.
- **What do UAA mentors do?** The main objective is to provide mentees with career development and professional support. Mentors can provide perspective and context for mentees at all career levels as they navigate the complexities of the overseas environment. Mentors take part in a one-day training program that fleshes out roles and methodologies. Mentees also receive training via webinar. Although we seek to match backstops, a mentor is not considered to be a technical consultant.
- **How do mentors and mentees communicate?** They talk via internet services such as WhatsApp or Skype, or toll-free phone. Email communication also is used. While meeting in person is, no doubt, desirable, no funding is available for such travel.
- **How much of my time will this take?** All mentor/mentee relationships are unique. Generally, mentors and mentees initially aspire to talk weekly or bi-weekly for about 30-60 minutes. Preparation and emailing may add additional time.
- **What other requirements do mentors have?** At a minimum, each mentor must sign a conflict of interest statement. This is part of the Mentor-Mentee Agreement.
- **How long must I commit to this program?** The Mentor/Mentee Agreement states that the mentee should be willing to participate for at least six months. However, pairs often continue to work well beyond that, some lasting many years, if they mutually agree. On the other end, some mentor/mentee pairings may not work out for whatever reason. In that case, there is a provision for early termination.
- **Who are the mentees and mentors?** Mentees range from Junior career-candidate and career Foreign Service Officers to Mission Directors, who express

interest in participating. Mentors are UAA member volunteers, retired Foreign Service Officers, who have had career ranging from the breadth of USAID experiences. The UAA is a non-profit association of former USAID employees. It supports USAID and foreign assistance through the expertise and experience of USAID alumni.

- **How are matches made?** For field-based FSOs in participating Bureaus, UAA will work with Bureau Level coordinators. The USAID coordinators will communicate with Mission leadership, asking him or her to send an email to all field FSOs, encouraging them to consider participating in the program. Interested FSOs will be instructed to send their expressions of interest to the Bureau Coordinator. The Bureau Coordinator will work with UAA to identify an appropriate mentor. The Bureau Coordinator will then communicate the proposed match to the mentee.

Participation in the program is entirely voluntary, so if for any reason the mentee believes the proposed match is not a good one, he or she may decline to participate in the program.

- **When does all this happen?**

Expressions of interest (i.e., the mentee profile) must be provided to the Bureau Coordinator, as appropriate, by Oct. 2. Matches will be made during October, and pairs will be notified of the match during November. Training for the Mentors and Mentees will take place in early December.