



Best practice guide

IEC Mentoring Programme



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The IEC Mentoring Programme offers a platform for the IEC community to share and impart knowledge in standardization and conformity assessment under the aegis of the IEC Central Office. Participants define their customized objectives prior to signing the IEC Mentoring Agreement form. Each mentor/mentee partnership is given the autonomy to decide the most suitable approach to adopt in fulfilling their objectives as long as both parties agree.

This document is intended to serve as a best practice reference guide for mentors and mentees based upon the experiences of former and existing mentoring partnerships. It can be used before starting the mentoring process or at any time during the mentoring journey. It offers recommendations without any obligation to comply.

The best practice guide should be referred alongside the existing IEC Mentoring Programme official documents:

- Mentoring Agreement form
- Mentoring Application form – Mentee
- Mentoring Application form – Mentor
- Terms of the Mentoring Agreement and Reporting Form
- ACP Mentoring Programme Travel Policy
- Travel Policy for IEC Sponsored Travellers

1 Benefits of the IEC Mentoring Programme

- Develop national goodwill by supporting a country in its effort to increase/consolidate its participation in the international standardization and conformity assessment community.
- Further strengthen the understanding and use of IEC International Standards and Conformity Assessment Systems and the participation in their development.
- Foster interaction and exchange on collaboration and networking-building opportunities.
- Establish a long and fruitful cooperation between participants after the IEC Mentoring Programme is completed.
- Help strengthen the global position of the IEC.
- Contribute actively to an IEC project which strengthens the visibility of mentoring in the community. This can be an opportunity for smaller National Committees (NCs).

2 Best practices prior to the IEC Mentoring Programme

2.1 Recommendations for mentors

- Although English is the official IEC language, assess potential language barriers or other communication challenges.
- Set expectations about appropriate responsiveness of a mentee before engaging in a mentoring partnership.
- Get information from the mentee to identify the stakeholders in charge of the standardization and conformity assessment.
- Define a precise list of objectives to be achieved during the partnership (complete the official documents as specifically as possible).
- Take into account the governance structure and stability of the mentee's organization.
- Prioritize the pairing of a mentor and mentee that share common bonds (e.g. geographic proximity, same/close time zone, language, economic ties/cooperation). This will enable a better understanding of the mentee's needs and facilitate communications.

2.2 Recommendations for mentees

2.2.1 IEC member (mentee)

- Ensure the commitment of the management and of all NC Officers and NC board to fully support the NC Secretary's work as a mentee.

- Identify the different individuals that should participate in the mentoring programme (e.g. NC staff, YPs, TC/SCs Officers, etc.)
- Engage diverse NC stakeholders (both public and private) who may have an interest in the programme.

2.2.2 IEC affiliate country (mentee)

- Confirm the commitment of the affiliate country's standardization management team to fully support the National Electrotechnical Committee (NEC) Officers' work as a mentee.
- Ensure that the NEC is clearly defined and established.
- Engage diverse NEC stakeholders (both public and private) who may have an interest in the programme.

2.3 Recommendations for preparing the IEC Mentoring Agreement once mentor and mentee have been paired

- Prioritize transparency. From the onset, exchange information, define objectives and mentoring plans, and understand the requirements of each partner.
- Prepare an action list. In addition to the objectives defined in the official mentoring programme documents, develop a simple action list to kick off the programme quickly.
- Prepare an estimation of the timeline and resources needed for the programme. Ensure that the management for the mentor and for the mentee approve the programme-plan and required resources.
- Engage with the IEC Central Office contact and the respective IEC Regional Director(s) to provide support as necessary.

3 Best practices during the IEC Mentoring Programme

3.1 Recommendations to help ensure a seamless process

- Schedule a first official meeting between the mentor and the mentee with the participation of the involved IEC Regional Director(s) and the mentoring programme Coordinator to set their very first objectives.
- Plan a first-year mentoring trip if travels are authorized. Within the early period of the mentoring partnership, organize a trip to better understand the needs of the mentee as well as their culture and NC/NEC management style. Usually, the trip would be from the mentor to the mentee country.
- Organize and participate in a national workshop. A national workshop in the mentee country provides the opportunity to inform a larger audience about the programme, provide training and raise awareness about standardization and conformity assessment.
- Invite a delegation of experts from the mentee country to participate in mirror technical committees in the mentor country. This participation will allow an onsite exchange of experience and provide practical training if travel policy permits. An alternative remote participation can be organized if the mentor considers it productive.
- Draft meeting notes with agreed actions and deadlines. The meeting notes should be approved by both parties.
- Assign administrative tasks. The mentor and mentee should share the responsibilities for tasks such as organizing meetings, taking notes, distributing information, etc.

3.2 Recommendations to facilitate communications

- Host virtual meetings on a regular basis. A simple follow-up, ideally on a monthly basis, allows participants to remain in close contact.
- If meetings/phone conferences are cancelled, try to reconnect within a few days. It can be easy to lose track of time.
- Plan meeting schedule in advance. It is preferable to set too many meetings and cancelling those that are unnecessary rather than adding meetings later in the programme.
- Ensure constant and frequent communications. This can include regulate updates, follow-up on prior exchanges, etc.

- Highlight the importance of attending the IEC General Meeting. Organize bilateral meetings to be held during the IEC GM.
- In case of a change in contacts for one of the parties, inform the partner and the IEC Central Office contact overseeing the agreement. A successor should be introduced, and a transition plan implemented.

4 Best practices reporting and evaluating the IEC Mentoring Programme

- Use the *Terms of the Mentoring Agreement and Reporting Form* to complete the mid-term reports and the final report within the defined timeframe.
- Be attentive to the approaching end date of the agreement period. Approximately two months prior, prepare to wrap up the programme, or assess if an extension is needed for a fixed duration/period.
- Should it be necessary to terminate the partnership prior to the agreed end date, it is important to specify the reason(s) for the termination. The termination will occur once all parties and the IEC Central Office contact are officially informed.
- Share positive and negative feedback as well as any recommendations that may be useful for future partnerships.