



DBM Junior Faculty mentorship guidelines (Eccellenza, ERC Starting Grant)

Preamble

The recruitment and career development of junior faculty represents an important element in the mission of the Department of Biomedicine (DBM), and dedicated mentorship by senior colleagues is considered a critical component to their success. This guideline by the DBM Junior Faculty Committee outlines the process by which members of faculty are asked to assume a central role in the integration of SNF Eccellenza and ERC Starting Grant recipients as junior faculty at the DBM, and to support them in various ways throughout the period of their career award. In addition to the formalized institutional mentorship detailed herein, all mentees are explicitly encouraged to seek mentorship from one or more international experts in their specific domain of research.

Tasks of mentors during evaluation and recruitment process:

DBM support for SNF Eccellenza or ERC starting grant applications requires mentorship by a DBM research group leader (RGL) and the guidelines for applicants specify the identification of a mentor as the first step in the process. Clinician-scientists should have a “clinic mentor” and a “science mentor”, whereby only the latter needs to be a DBM RGL. When contacted by an applicant with the request to serve as his/her potential future mentor, the DBM RGL is expected to critically judge:

- i) the quality of the applicant and his/her project in terms of scientific excellence
- ii) the potential to integrate the applicant’s research into the DBM and the broader “Basel life sciences cluster”
- iii) his/her own ability to mentor the applicant’s research (see: role of mentor during award period).

Conditional to a positive assessment of the points above, the DBM RGL – now in the mentor role – is asked to consult with DBM colleagues to

- iv) to seek the support of at least one, better two colleagues in the research cluster who can judge and endorse the application.
- v) to seek these colleagues’ perspective on local synergies for the applicant’s research.

The above points i) – v) need to be covered in the mentor support letter that the applicants are asked to submit as part of their application to the Junior Faculty Committee.

Mentoring rules:

- a) Any RGL can only support one SNF Eccellenza and/or ERC starting grant applicant each year.
- b) Any RGL can serve as an official mentor to only one mentee at a time. Upon request, the JFC can approve exceptions when appropriately justified e.g. when a first mentee is about to move on.

Role of mentors during the Eccellenza / ERC grant award period:

- l) Each mentor is expected to hold regular meetings with the Eccellenza/ERC fellow for science and career counseling. The interval should be agreed between the mentor and mentee, with quarterly meetings as a rough guideline, and the possibility of the mentee to request ad-hoc meetings on short notice.

II) The mentor should actively promote the mentee's integration into the respective focal area and into the Basel life sciences community in general.

III) When asked by the mentee, the "science mentor" is expected to critically review the fellow's publications and grant applications well in time prior to submission, to enable critical refinement.

IV) The "clinic mentor" is expected to help securing continuation of the awardee's clinical training during the period of the grant and advise the awardee on clinical aspects of career planning.

V) Within the boundaries of his or her capacity, the clinic mentor should support and encourage the mentee's translational research by facilitating access to clinical specimens and infrastructure.