MentforMe Final Report

Executive Summary

This report concludes a 12-month project exploring the design, delivery, and impact of mentoring across the eight UKRI BBSRC-funded Institutes. The project, MentforMe, funded by UKRI BBSRC's Connecting Cultures Fund, sought to understand which mentoring models are most effective in research environments, and how to create equitable, flexible access to mentoring for a broad range of staff.

Key achievements:

- 293 sign-ups across the whole programme
- 224 profiles on the platform
- 58 people in more than one type of mentoring
- 98 matched pairs (self-selected or facilitated)
- Greater-than-average engagement from underrepresented groups

MentforMe's flexible design enabled participants to engage in four distinct forms of mentoring. Participants were supported with resources and training, an in-person visit fund and embedded local MentforMe Champions were in each institute to sustain momentum. Its impact can already be seen in the form of new collaborations, cultural change efforts, and institute-led follow-on programmes that will carry its legacy forward.

[Please note: some elements of this report have been redacted for publication including any Institute-specific data or any data about participants that may be identifiable].

Introduction and Rationale

Mentoring is widely recognised as a key factor in career development and retention in organisations. However, provision across BBSRC Institutes has varied, with many staff, especially those in smaller teams or operational roles, lacking access. *MentforMe* was designed to address the gaps and test a scalable, cross-institutional mentoring approach that would:

I. Seek input from the institute community on appetite for the programme; who might be involved, whether this is proportionate to staff numbers at different institutes; and what mentors and mentees see as the benefits.
II. Trial different approaches to mentoring (traditional, peer to peer, flash, or reverse)
III. Trial approaches which support under-represented or minority groups, as well as participants at different levels of seniority.
IV. Take a flexible approach in terms of numbers and formats of meetings; a light touch approach to administration; and reduce the time burden on mentors and mentees.
V. Take time to source or develop an appropriate online mentoring system.

Methodology

The project was in two parts: Phase 1 from April 2024-October 2024 scoped interest and trialled approaches to understand the needs of participants. Phase 2 from November 2024- April 2025

sought to address the challenges of Phase 1, sustain and increase engagement, and encourage in-person meetings to facilitate deeper connection between mentoring partners.

Participation was open to all staff at all institutes who could sign up for as many types of mentoring as they wished from the four offered:

- **Traditional mentoring** for structured development between a more experienced mentor and a less experienced mentee.
- **Flash mentoring** for short, focused interactions, ideal for time-pressed participants or those seeking specific advice.
- **Peer mentoring** for colleagues at similar career stages to support one another, fostering mutual understanding and shared growth.
- **Reverse mentoring** where junior staff mentored senior colleagues, creating space for upward feedback and dialogue around inclusion and institutional culture.

MentorCloud was procured as an online platform to manage participation as a central space where individuals could build a profile, browse other users and express values and topics from a list provided. *[Appendices 1 and 2].* MentorCloud then used these topics to recommend potential matches, organically through participants or facilitated by the project lead, who manually connected individuals throughout Phase 2.

To ensure the mentoring offer was accessible, training materials were made available, including short guides, toolkits, and online development sessions. A communications campaign supported uptake, using video explainers, testimonials, and targeted promotion through staff networks across the BBSRC institutes. Regular drop-in sessions with MentorCloud and the project lead were offered to support participants throughout Phase 2.

In the second half of the project, additional features were introduced: the MentforMe Connection Fund, enabling participants to meet mentoring partners in person and the appointment of MentforMe Champions within each institute to support local engagement.

Impact data gathered via MentorCloud included, metrics, surveys, formal feedback sessions, and informal follow-ups. Although some data collection was hampered by MentorCloud limitations and variable IT systems across institutes, a comprehensive picture emerged through participant reflection and storytelling.

Voluntary demographic data was collected within MentorCloud, with labels agreed by MentforMe Champions to include all job types and characteristics. The data was then aggregated and compared to institute data where possible. While full demographic data was only available for some institutes due to privacy and system differences, work with MentforMe Champions helped verification.

Results

From the outset, interest was strong with 146 sign-ups in Phase 1 and 95 in Phase 2. Of the total 241 individuals, 224 then made active profiles on MentorCloud. 58 of these engaged in more than one type of mentoring. Participation varied across institutes, but 9% of all staff and students across the institutes were involved in the project.

Initially, 44 pairs matched themselves directly through the platform. An additional 54 matches were facilitated by the project lead from individuals' professional profiles and public institute information.

Participants represented a broad range of roles and career stages from research to administration and senior leadership. Reflecting institute makeup, more scientists took part.

Voluntary equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data, indicated that the programme had higher-than-average participation from women and minority groups compared to institutional benchmarks: 2% more LGBTQIA+ individuals, 10% more disabled people and 6% more Black staff. *[For whole project demographic breakdown, see Appendix 3].*

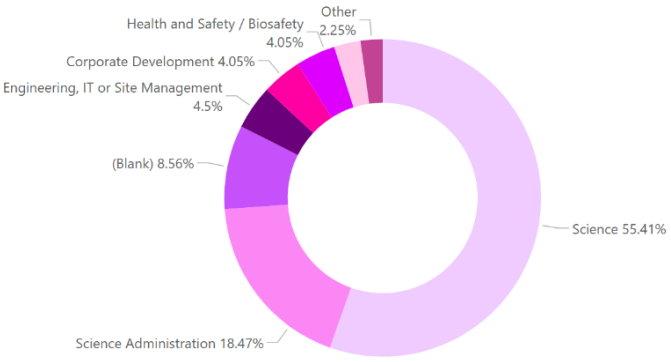


Figure 2: Donut graph of participants' career fields

Though male champions and diverse communications were used for engagement, male participation was still low (33%). Feedback and speculation suggest that many men are in informal mentoring relationships that tend to be less accessible to minoritised groups in STEMM.[1] Institutes should look to record these informal relationships to understand them and offer support to ensure effectiveness.

Overall, the diverse models ensured staff could participate in a way that worked for them. This flexibility was key to the programme's accessibility and success.

Traditional Mentoring

64	111	60
Total Mentors	*Total Mentees*	*Total Pairs*

Traditional mentoring was the most popular format and offered a familiar structure. However, there was a mentor-mentee imbalance through both phases.

Feedback from Phase 2 was more positive than Phase 1. Many traditional mentees also took on other types of mentoring so still had successful mentoring relationships. More targeted support was given to help mentees set clear objectives to reduce ineffective 'chemistry calls' and increase understanding that a mentor does not need to be in their exact field to give useful advice. Furthermore, some mentors worked with more than one mentee to reduce the gap.

Before the project began, preliminary discussions with institutes suggested that uptake for mentorship would be high amongst junior staff and students. However, the data demonstrates that across all fields, those who identify as 'Fellow/ Supervisor/ Manager' had the largest portion of people looking for traditional mentorship. When looking at just science roles, this is on par with Post-Doctoral Scientists/ Junior Managers. Reflections from participants highlight that although many Institutes have formal mechanisms for Early Career Researchers or students, more could be done to continue support as people progress through their career. This is also highlighted by the 14 'Senior Scientists/ Platform Managers/ Senior Mangers' who are looking for traditional mentorship.

[1] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Policy and Global Affairs; Board on Higher Education and Workforce; Committee on Effective Mentoring in STEMM; Dahlberg ML, Byars-Winston A, editors. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2019 Oct 30.

[Full demographic data for traditional participants: Appendix 4]

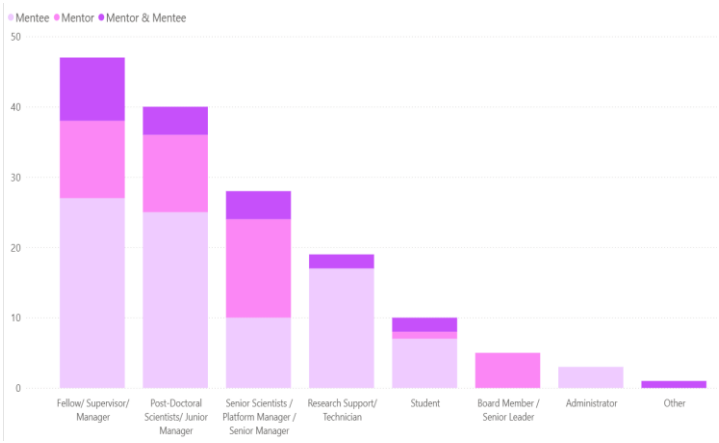


Figure 4: Stacked column chart of traditional science participants by mentoring role

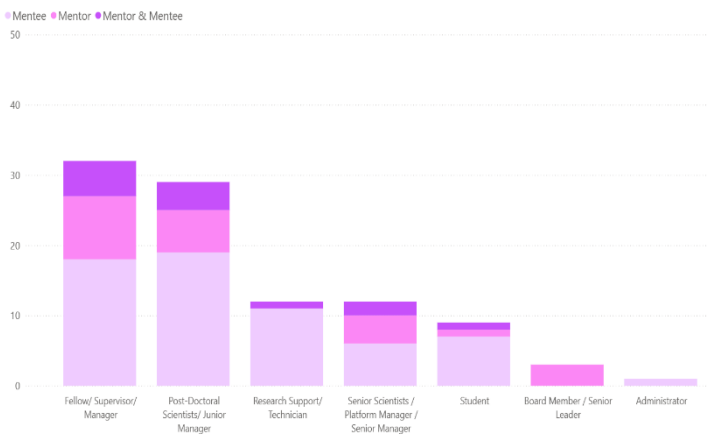


Figure 5: Stacked column chart of traditional science participants by mentoring role.

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

63

Total Peer Participants

28

Total Pairs

In Phase 1, fewer science staff than non-science took part in peer mentoring. Survey feedback showed peer mentorship was particularly impactful for those in operational roles or in small teams where similar colleagues were not readily available. These connections helped combat professional isolation and offered a valuable sounding board to share good practice, give advice and hold each other to account.

For Phase 2, more onus was put on encouraging mentees in traditional mentoring to join the peer programme; this ensured all participants got something from the programme. Phase 2 also targeted promotion amongst scientists to boost cross-institute collaboration.

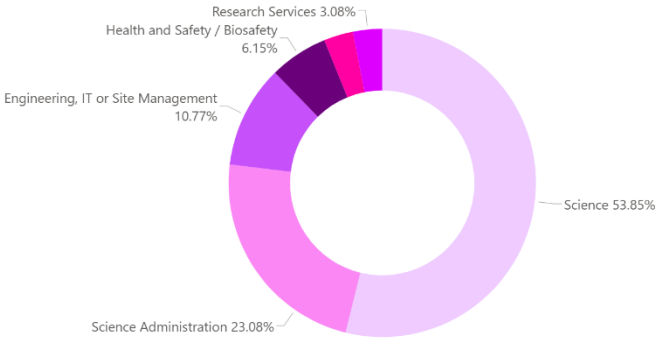


Figure 6: Donut chart of peer mentor participants by field

One inspiring standout story from scientists in Phase 1, came from two individuals who co-wrote a British Society for Immunology grant. Their successful project has developed resources for science education to help young people understand vaccines. The participants directly credit MentforMe for making the connections possible for their collaborative grant. The pair also used the MentforMe Connection Fund to understand each other's Institutes and solidify their mentorship.

[Full demographic data for peer participants: Appendix 5]

Flash Mentoring

30	25	52
Total Mentors	*Total Mentees*	*Total Sessions*

This model was new to many participants, and this may have played a part in it being less popular. However, feedback from mentors described it as an efficient and accessible option, especially for those with limited time. This model worked particularly well for senior leaders who wanted to offer guidance but couldn't commit to traditional ongoing meetings. One mentor managed to meet 5 different people in Phase 1 and another 7 in Phase 2. Each time, a short, intense session met the aims of both parties.

> "I met people I would have never meet any other way. Offering different types of mentoring (like flash) gave me the opportunity to target specific objectives and made it all more useful."

Mentees valued being able to book a conversation with someone they wouldn't normally have access to. Many used this opportunity to ask questions, experience specific funders and explore opportunities.

The speed and informality of flash mentoring helped reduce barriers to access and offered a "taster" that occasionally led to continued contact with participants moving into traditional mentorship.

[Full demographic data for flash participants: Appendix 6]

Reverse Mentoring

10	10	10
Total Mentors	*Total Mentees*	*Total Pairs*

In Phase 1, there were 11 mentors and 8 mentees but only 8 total sessions. Feedback showed that reverse mentoring required more training to build confidence for mentors and clearer objective setting for mentees. One-off sessions proved useful but acted more like flash mentoring; sustaining a longer-term mentorship was more complex.

Therefore, in Phase 2, MentforMe partnered with The Reverse Mentoring Practice (RMP) to run a pilot cohort. RMP's experience in NHS Trusts, Universities, STFC and UKRI meant they understood the nuances of research organisations.

The cohort was open to mentors who were early in their career or students, particularly those who felt marginalised in any way, they mentored more senior colleagues by sharing their life experiences.

Working with the project lead, RMP hosted peer sessions for mentors and mentees to share their experiences in the programme. PhD students, administrators, vets and post-docs made up some of the mentors whilst members of Senior Leadership Boards, Science Advisory Boards and Trustees are mentees.

This format enabled junior staff to mentor senior colleagues on topics such as neurodiversity, racist microaggressions, recruitment and early career experiences.

Using the MentforMe Connection Fund, several reverse mentors were invited to attend leadership team meetings to give feedback, and some mentees have given talks about areas such as career progression and student wellbeing at their partner's institute. Feedback from both mentors and mentees suggested that these interactions led to meaningful reflection and, in some cases, changes in practice.

[Full demographic data for reverse participants: Appendix 7]

Impact

From the outset, participants described MentforMe as different. 86% of survey respondents (of 70) said the project met their expectations. 78% said they would recommend MentforMe to a friend. Many noted it was the first time a mentoring opportunity had felt accessible and relevant to them; especially for those who had not previously engaged with professional development schemes- 58% of participants surveyed were new to mentoring.

One peer participant, a facilities manager, said:

"I'd never been invited to a mentoring programme before, and I honestly didn't think there'd be anyone who 'got' my role. But my peer mentor had the same frustrations in a different institute, and we now share resources and talk regularly. I feel much less invisible."

One traditional mentorship saw a PhD student have two successful interviews because of their mentor's advice. A flash mentee, exploring career options has since moved into a different field using the information made available to them through the programme.

Reverse mentoring may be one of the most immediately impactful types because (to quote one mentee) "it developed a genuine empathy through connection" in areas senior leaders may never have considered. One mentee for example is currently assessing the recruitment practices at their institute and working with their mentor to eradicate opportunities for bias in the process.

> I've been informally mentoring colleagues for years, but this project made me think more about the importance of the process and different ways support can be offered.

MentforMe's influence has extended far beyond individual mentoring sessions. As the programme unfolded, it became clear that cross-institute mentoring could spark wider cultural change and inspire new opportunities for collaboration outside our institutes too.

Understanding that formal mentoring's accessibility to minority groups is preferable to informal programmes left them determined to reinvigorate their formal internal mentoring programme.

Institutes have been given the opportunity to have one-to-one discussions with the project lead around institute-specific mentoring needs to help inform their internal schemes going forward.

The cumulative impact of these efforts is cultural. Mentoring, sometimes seen as a formality or a luxury, has become a tool for meaningful connection, cross-institute learning, and inclusion. MentforMe has shown that mentoring is not just a professional benefit, it's a cultural practice that strengthens the research ecosystem.

MentforMe Connection Fund

Initially, the project intended to host an in-person event at Pirbright, here mentees and mentors could meet to develop mentoring or personal development skills in person. 38% of those surveyed in Phase 1, chose this format over other in-person options. However, feedback from focus groups indicated it wasn't feasible because a fixed date would conflict with other events like the Connecting Research Cultures Conference (CRCC- held by the Earlham Institute as part of the Connecting Cultures Fund), and the time would be redundant if their mentor or mentee couldn't attend.

Figure 7: Map of connections made across the Institutes

Instead, the second most popular option from the survey with 26%, established the 'MentforMe Connection Fund'. This fund allowed participants to travel and meet their mentoring partners face-to-face with flexibility whether at conferences, institute visits, or informal halfway points. MentforMe Champions oversaw the spend and were invited to comment on anonymised applications.

Several participants met for the first time at the CRCC, where informal gatherings were arranged to encourage connection. Many said these meetings gave context to their conversations, helping them to build rapport and establish trust more quickly than was possible online.

Others used the fund for more structured engagements. One reverse mentoring pair arranged a full-day visit, during which the PhD student mentor attended leadership meetings at the mentee's institute. Afterwards, they reflected:

"Being in the room helped me understand how those decisions are made, and it gave me more confidence to speak up. It also gave my mentee insight into how their leadership team might feel inaccessible from the outside."

Another participant, involved in peer mentoring, used the fund to attend a careers day at their partner's institute. They gave a talk to early-career researchers about their role, shared their own development journey, and took part in a panel discussion.

These are just a few of the stories that illustrate the real-world impact of cross-institution mentoring. Demonstrating that when people are invited to learn from one another across boundaries, the possibilities are practical and transformative.

> "In-person meetings really help the mentorship dynamic. When you can know each other better and visualise them in their Institute it helps you reach a deeper conversation in mentoring."

The success of these visits underscores the value of hybrid mentoring models where virtual platforms provide access and scale, and occasional in-person meetings add depth. Future mentoring schemes should consider maintaining a similar fund or framework to enable this kind of flexible, relationship-driven support.

Recommendations

At the end of Phase 2, survey responses were overwhelmingly positive including 50 comments from 70 respondents asking to continue the project and giving suggestions of how to continue the momentum.

Based on participant feedback, project learning, and cross-institute reflection, the following recommendations are proposed to guide the development of future mentoring initiatives.

Mentoring Models

All the mentoring types have a place in research settings like the 8 BBSRC-sponsored Institutes. However, where funding is limited, some may be more suitable than others.

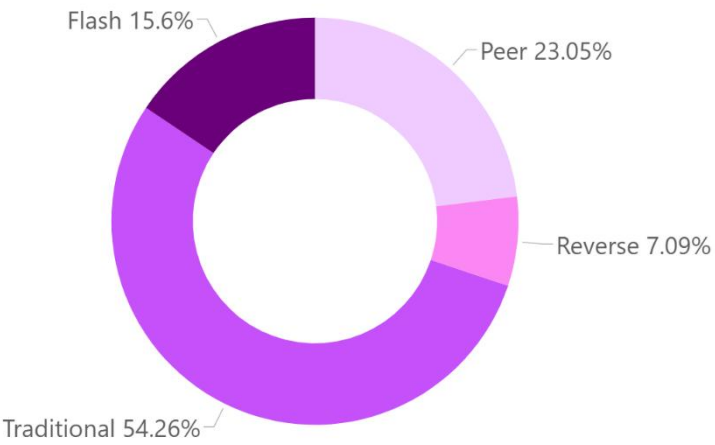


Figure 8: Donut graph showing popularity of each mentoring type

Traditional mentoring is highly valuable but resource intensive. Additionally, mentor-mentee imbalance was a persistent challenge. Future schemes should:

- Encourage past mentees to become mentors
- Include group mentoring or mentoring pools to stretch limited mentor capacity
- Facilitate matches within a given time frame to manage expectations

Peer mentoring offered significant benefits to those in niche or isolated roles, and individuals seeking support without hierarchy. It is a low-cost, high-value model that should be prioritised, especially where administrative resource is limited. It works particularly well when:

- Participants are encouraged to bring an issue or theme to each conversation and have clear methods to 'take turns'
- Peer clusters or small group models are created to expand reach

Flash mentoring is highly effective for short-term support. Its speed and informality worked well for time-limited professionals. To maintain this benefit:

- Institutes could signpost willing flash mentors on external directories for any mentee to reach out to
- Scheduling tools or prompts with Outlook configuration could make short sessions easy to arrange

Reverse mentoring had the deepest cultural impact. Mentees described increased empathy and confidence to talk about topics they had feared getting wrong and mentors had a stronger sense of voice and empowerment. However, this model requires careful support. We recommend:

- Running reverse mentoring in small cohorts with light-touch facilitation (or continued work with RMP)
- Offering training in inclusive communication, listening, and feedback
- Future iterations could focus on strategic themes (e.g., accessibility, belonging or inclusive leadership)

The Platform

While MentforMe delivered a wide range of positive outcomes, the project also faced practical challenges- particularly around the MentorCloud platform and administrative coordination. These issues offer important lessons for future cross-institute initiatives.

90% of answers to the question: 'What is something we could have done better?' referred to the platform. Used as the primary means of profile creation and matching, MentorCloud enabled a centralised approach and provided a user-friendly interface; however, there were limitations that affected participant experience and overall efficiency.

One significant issue was that many participants did not fully complete their profiles. Incomplete data reduced the effectiveness of the algorithmic matching system and lead to fewer automatic matches. The project lead then had to manually review profiles and create matches by piecing together information from institute websites and public profiles, resulting in a considerable administrative burden.

Additionally, MentorCloud did not integrate with internal calendar systems, which added friction to scheduling. Participants reported being discouraged by the need to manage separate communications and logistics outside the platform. Some mentoring conversations moved entirely off-platform, making it difficult to track engagement and collect consistent data.

As many users did not log updates or use the platform's tracking features, it became almost impossible to determine if some pairs were meeting, had paused, or had naturally concluded their conversations. This lack of visibility required the project lead to follow up individually with dozens of pairs, adding to the already substantial coordination efforts.

To manage communication and support participants, the project lead played an active facilitation role- offering regular updates, following up on matches, promoting resources, and answering questions. While this personal approach was appreciated, it is not scalable without dedicated administrative support.

For future programmes, we recommend the following:

- Develop a platform with the IT teams from institutes to ensure integration across all institutes.
- Reduce user onboarding to encourage and profile completion in a quick and easy way.
- Form a shared cross-institute committee, with representation from each institute, to collaboratively manage participant matching and oversight.

Training

Although MentforMe prioritised flexibility and participant-led engagement, it also recognised the need to support mentors and mentees with clear, practical guidance. Training and resource development were therefore integrated into the programme.

Training was not mandatory, which helped maximise participation but may have contributed to the variation in experience. In future iterations, offering tiered training options, that can be followed up, ranging from basic introductions to more advanced sessions- could allow users to engage at a level that suits their confidence and interest.

Several participants also expressed interest in community-based learning, much like the reverse mentoring sessions- such as mentor roundtables or drop-in Q&A sessions. These would allow mentors to learn from one another, share challenges, and reflect on best practices.

Overall, training and resources were well received especially the recorded options that could be accessed when convenient. There is also an opportunity to use the data from this project to inform future training.

Column 1 of Figure 9 highlights the most requested topics and valuable direction for future training efforts.

They could include - online modules, live workshops, group mentoring sessions or peer discussion groups. There are a vast number of people within our community that need support in those areas.

Most Requested Mentoring Topics	Biggest Deficits
Constructive Feedback Techniques	Cultivating Leadership Presence
Influencing Without Formal Authority	Constructive Feedback Techniques
Cultivating Leadership Presence	Crafting Compelling Grant Proposals
Achieving Work-Life Balance	Understanding Funders and Opportunities
Effective Planning and Scheduling	Influencing Without Formal Authority

Figure 9: Table of the top 5 most requested mentoring topics and those mentors couldn't satisfy.

Column 2 of Figure 9 shows the areas that have the largest mentor shortfall (mentees have requested support but not enough mentors feel they are confident enough to support.)

This data may be even more crucial as neither mentees nor mentors are confident in these areas. Institutes have received feedback and with this data, there may be a need to run larger training sessions for everyone. One participant suggested hosting training across institutes to continue to create connections and facilitate collaboration. This would also share the costs.

In summary, the training and development elements of MentforMe were well received and offered critical support, especially for those new to mentoring. As the mentoring culture grows across institutes, there is clear potential to build on this foundation with more structured and role-specific learning opportunities.

Sustainability

Fundamentally, this project could not have happened without the support of all institutes. One reason for the higher proportion of Pirbright participants may be because of the project lead's placement. Therefore, the recommendation is to create a cross-institute mentoring committee who would meet regularly to review mentor/mentee pools, coordinate matching, and share lessons. This would distribute the administrative burden and promote cross-institute opportunities.

A question from the presentation at CRCC asked: 'As a participant, the mentoring programme was great, but how do we ensure the burden of mentor volunteering doesn't fall on those same individuals who are always generous with their time for EDI-related things and make sure we're not overwhelming our volunteers?' This is a question for many 'cultural projects'. However, MentforMe has shown that mentoring is more than an 'EDI-related thing'; it has tangible professional benefits for both parties and in many cases, institutes themselves.

The recommendation is to build mentoring into institutional structures. Align mentoring with staff development, have senior leaders model behaviour and recognise contributions at performance reviews. Funders also have an opportunity to allocate time and grants to

participants in mentorship programmes and therefore demonstrate its importance to a positive research culture.

Further, it is recommended that small funds or hybrid events continue to help mentoring relationships transition from digital to in-person, to deepen engagement and promote relationship longevity. Some comments suggested an online ‘virtual meet up’ to connect with potential mentors and share positive experiences. In a similar vein, some suggested a ‘mentoring day’ hosted at different institutes to give mentors and mentees a regular event to maintain connections and form new ones. If there were to be more regular CRCC, a session could be given for mentoring meetings and facilitating matches.

With the correct administrative support, mentoring could also be offered on a rolling bases rather than the fixed recruitment windows necessitated by the project. This will be more inclusive especially for new staff, those returning from leave, or PhD students writing theses.

Conclusion

MentforMe set out to explore whether mentoring could be delivered in a more inclusive, flexible, and scalable way across the UKRI BBSRC-funded research institutes. Over the course of 12 months, it not only demonstrated that this is possible, it also showed that it is needed, valued, and capable of sparking real change.

The programme reached almost 300 individuals, cut across disciplines, demographics and career stages, and engaged participants who had never previously accessed structured mentoring. By offering multiple mentoring models, it met a diverse range of needs, from one-off conversations to long-term support, and from peer solidarity to reverse mentoring that challenged traditional power dynamics.

The most powerful outcomes were not only the mentoring relationships themselves, but what they enabled: new grants, leadership conversations, student-facing talks, and stronger community ties.

Despite technical limitations and the administrative challenges of coordinating a cross-institute programme, the foundations are now in place. With modest ongoing investment and strategic alignment to people and culture goals, MentforMe can serve as a model for future mentoring across the research sector: open, agile, equitable, and impactful.

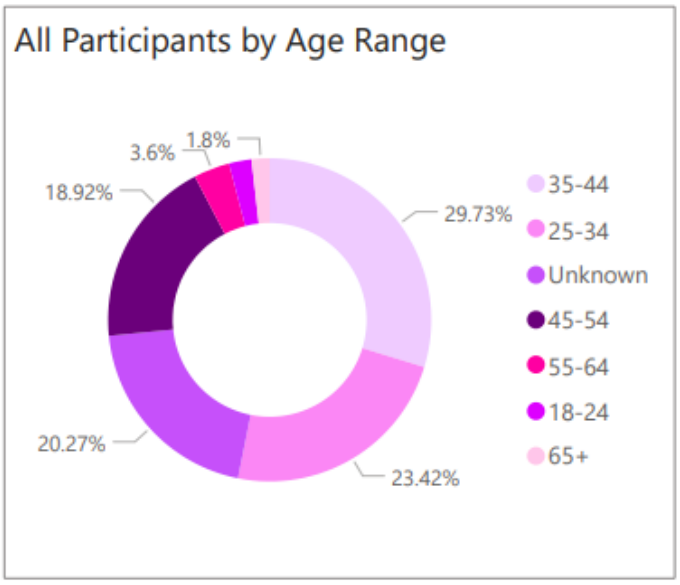
Connections made through this project continue to grow and the Connecting Research Culture Fund has allowed collaboration between institutes to flourish.

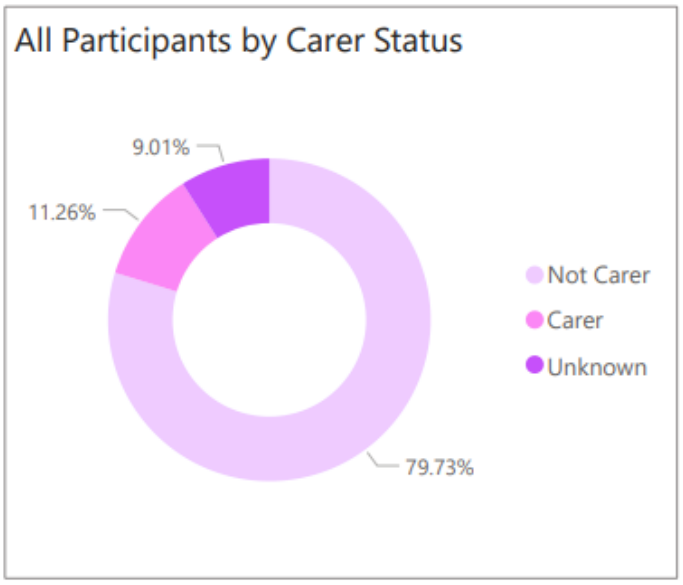
Acknowledgements

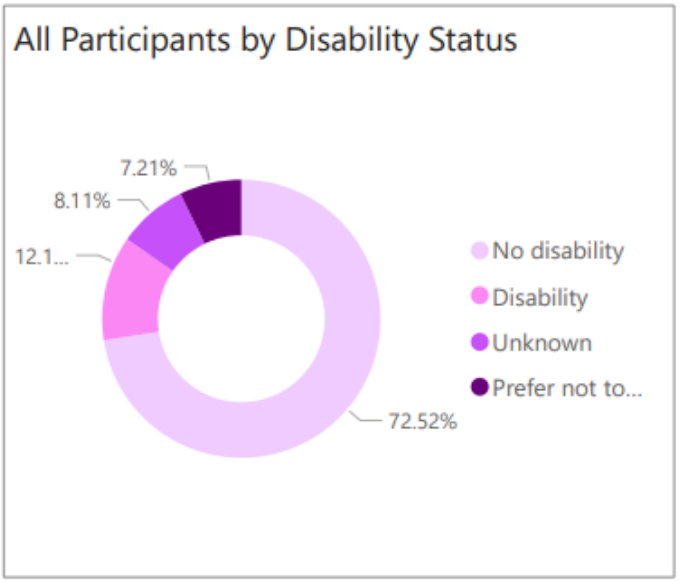
Thank you to the BBSRC for the funding and the opportunity to lead this project as part of their Connecting Cultures Fund. Thank you to the MentforMe Champions for your support and commitment to mentoring at your own institutes. Thank you to all participants for making it such a success.

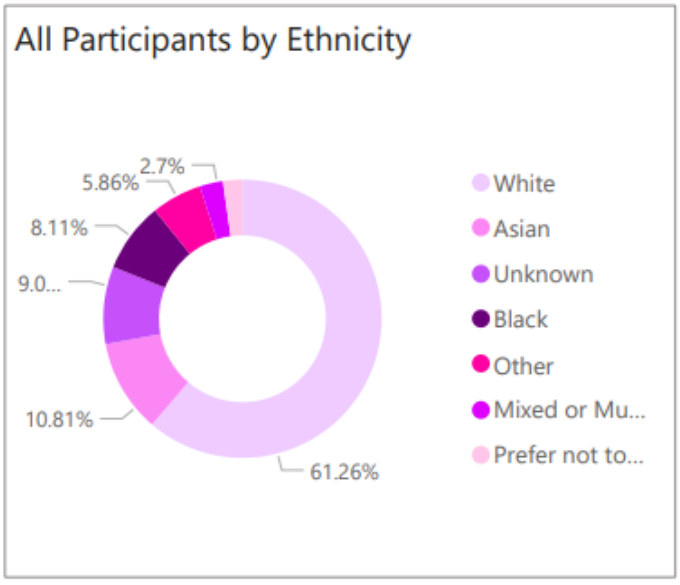
Appendices [Some Areas Redacted]

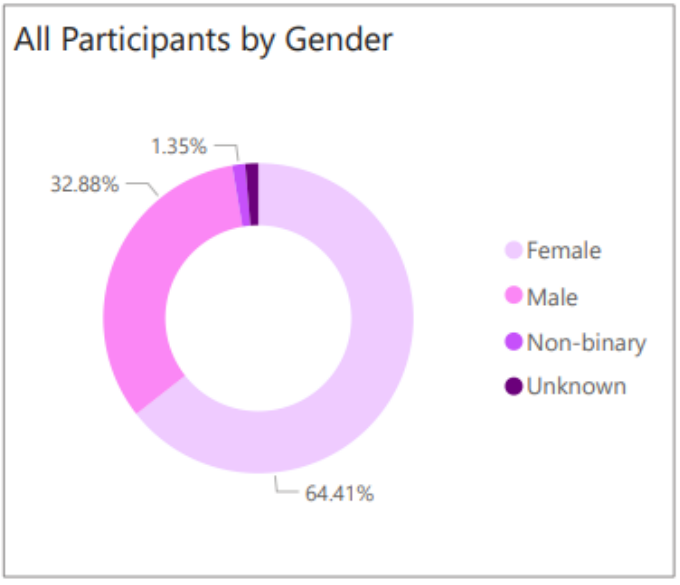
Appendix 3: Project Participants' Demographic Data

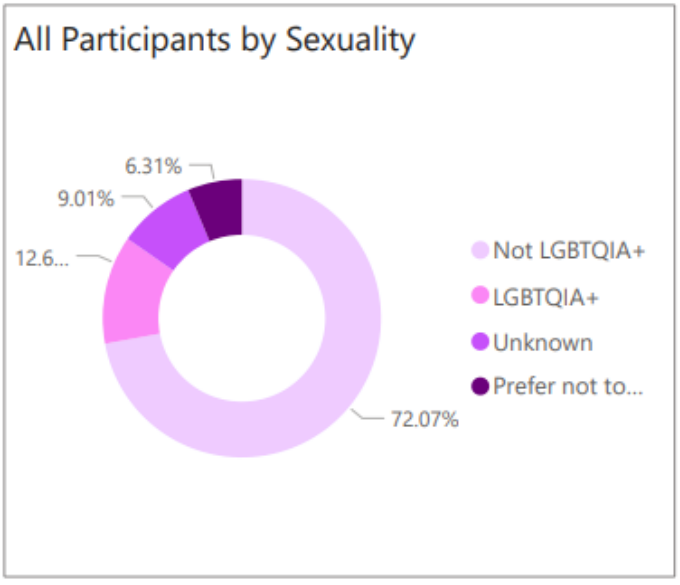




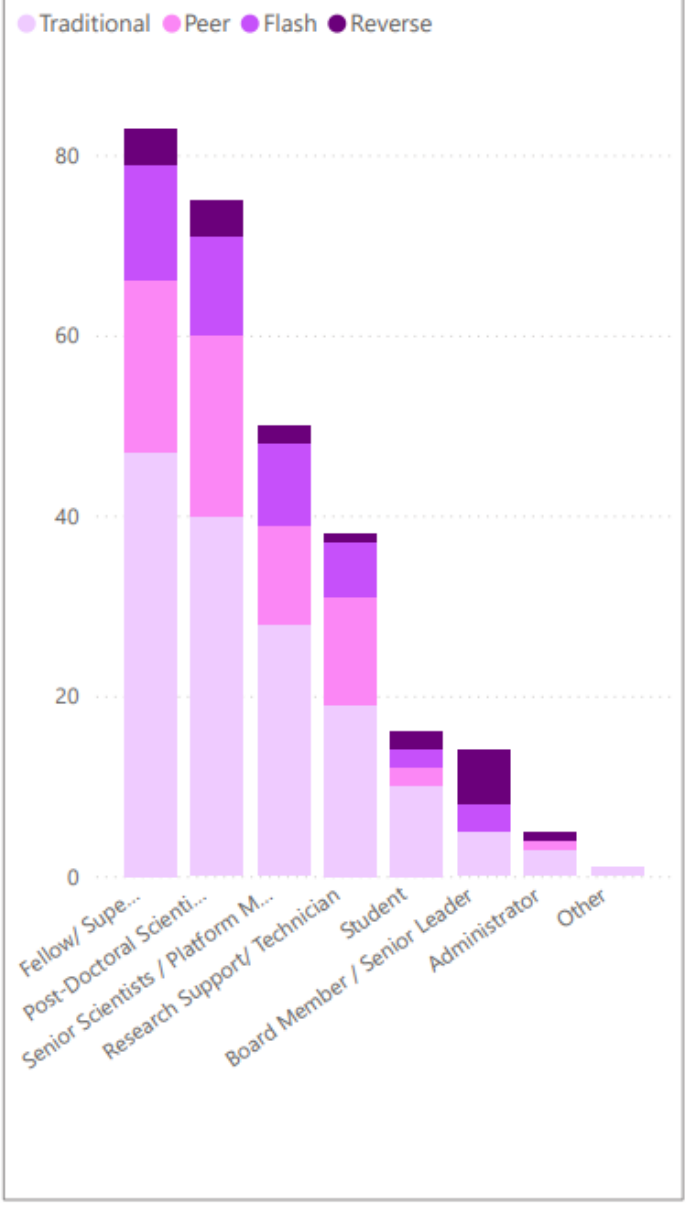




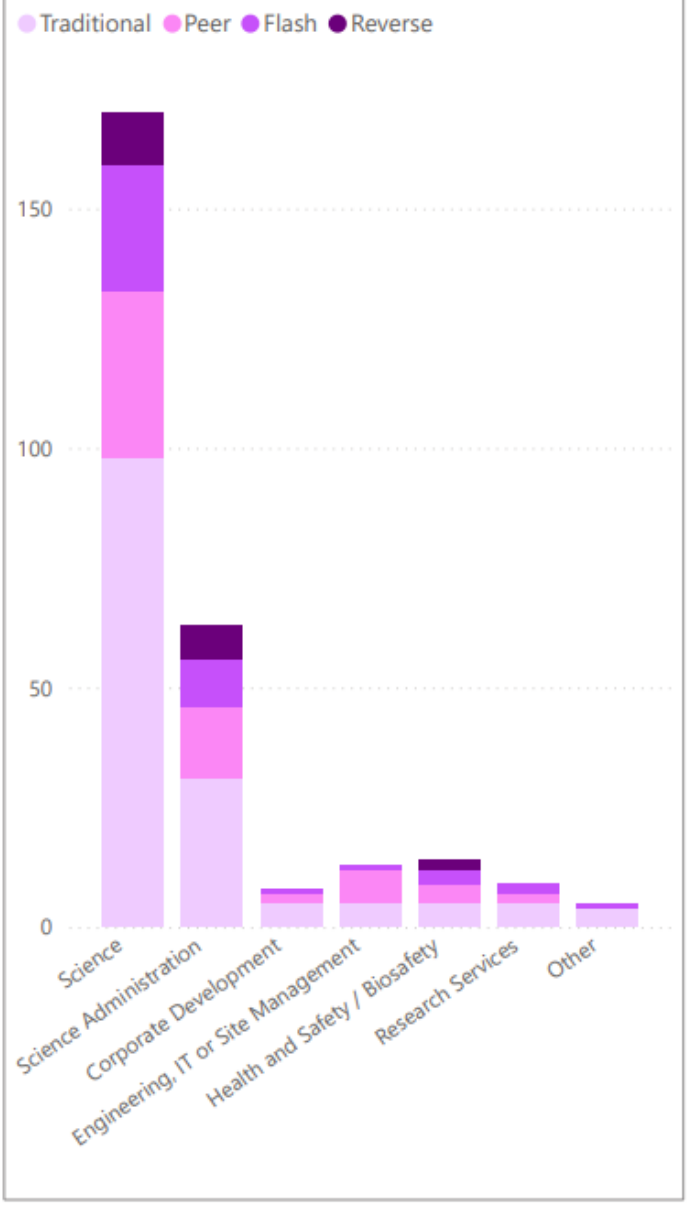




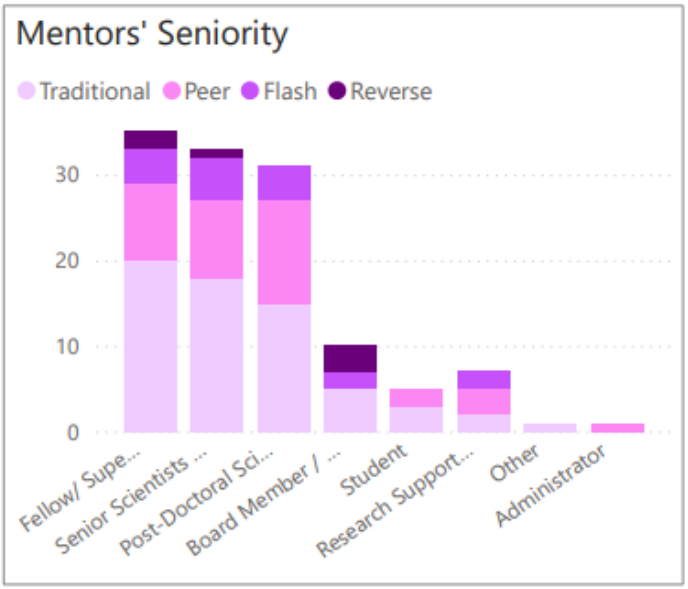
Mentoring Type by Seniority



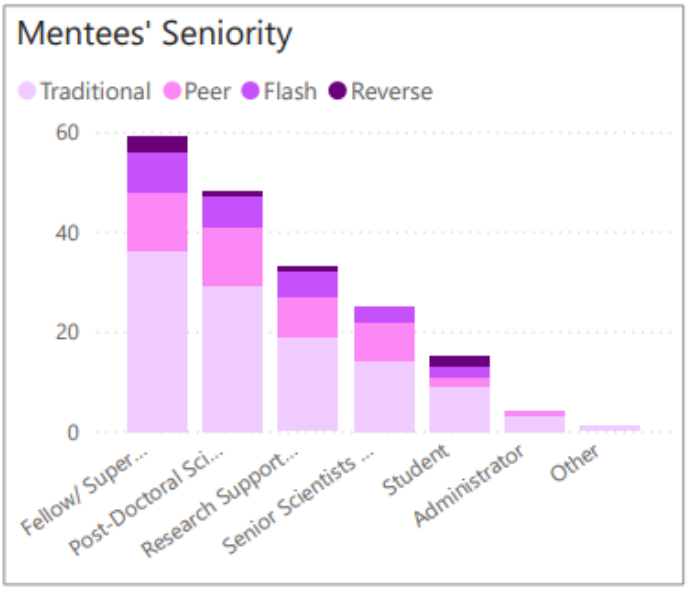
Mentoring Type by Field



Mentors' Seniority



Mentees' Seniority



UK Research and Innovation

UK Research and Innovation

Equality Impact Assessment Form

UK Research and Innovation

*See guidance document for detailed support.
* Delete the guidance text in the response column when completing your EIA.

Overview of activity

	Response
Name of activity being assessed	Connecting Cultures Mentoring Scheme
Council/department/project team	The Pirbright Institute (led by Harriet Keep)
Aims and objectives of the activity *Provide a brief outline of your activity being considered and its rationale and aims*. • *What is the activity?* • *If it is an existing activity, when was it originally introduced? What changes are you proposing and why?* • *What are the aims and objectives?* *Outline the aspects of your activity that need to be covered by the EIA. For example:* • *a funding opportunity may require you to consider equality as part of advertising, application process, external review, building a panel, hosting panel meetings etc.* • *introducing a new system may involve equality considerations as part of assessing a supplier, accessibility, user testing, training, communication and how to guides.*	The Pirbright Institute won a grant from the Connecting Culture Fund to create a mentoring scheme across all 8 BBSRC-funded institutes (Babraham Institute, Earlham Institute, Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, John Innes Centre, Quadram Institute, Roslin Institute, Rothamsted Research and The Pirbright Institute). Members of staff from across all areas in the institute will be able to connect with a mentor/mentee from another institute within the BBSRC family. First there will be a 3-month pilot scheme that offers 4 different mentoring programmes to assess the appetite, benefits, and outcomes of 4 different types of mentoring: flash mentoring, peer-to-peer mentoring, reverse mentoring and traditional mentoring. Subject to the outcomes of the pilot, there will then be a 6-month scheme of mentoring. This EIA will cover: assessing the online mentoring platform, promoting the programme to potential participants, applying to the programme, accessibility to the online mentoring platform, documents (such as mentoring contract and guidance for meetings), and collecting feedback about the experience for both the pilot and extended schemes. The EIA will also cover the online training for the pilot scheme and the proposed in-person event (including training) for the 6-month scheme. There are some existing mentoring programmes within the institutes and between the Norwich Research Park Institutes, however, this programme will enable connections further afield and across specialisms to share knowledge, skills, and culture throughout the BBSRC. Our objectives are as follows: - Increase cross-institute collaboration.

	- Create an open opportunity to participate in mentoring for all demographics of staff across the institutes. - Develop the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes of all participants.
Who is affected by your policy/funding activity/event? *For example, staff, visitors, contractors, businesses, applicants, panel members, awardees, wider beneficiaries*	All members of staff across Babraham Institute, Earlham Institute, Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, John Innes Centre, Quadram Institute, Roslin Institute, Rothamsted Research and The Pirbright Institute will be invited to take part in the mentoring schemes. Short Term: Participants in the mentoring scheme (s) Long term: The British Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Community (through development of community and networking opportunities; shared knowledge; opportunities for further collaboration; developed and supported members of staff)
What data and consultation have you undertaken? *Detail the evidence used and any consultation that was done related to the equality impact of your activity. This could include (not an exhaustive list):* • *UKRI data and reports. For example, UKRI workforce profile or funding diversity data* • *External data e.g. HESA, BEIS, sector reports* • *Survey results or feedback from networks or people who share a protected characteristic, subject matter experts, diverse user groups, unions*	Data: The 2023 'Diversity and Inclusion in STEM'[1] report, the 'Inquiry into equity in the STEM workforce'[2] and the 2014 Royal Society Report 'A picture of the UK scientific workforce'[3] gives an oversight of the UK Research Community and how different demographics are represented within it. These give us some idea of the demographics for us to compare and show representation but don't reflect the specific institutes that this project targets. We hope to collect demographic data from all participants at each Institute and then compare this to the aggregated demographic data of the different institutes to see if we have captured a representative group. Either this will be through the Institutes themselves sharing the data with us or through their own analysis of participation. There is a second project being funded through the 'Connecting Cultures Fund' run by the Roslin Institute whose aim is to explore the metrics and data and we hope to work with them in the future and use their findings to inform the mentoring schemes going forward. Consultation has been undertaken with:

[1] (2023) *Diversity and Inclusion in STEM* : *House of Commons Science and Technology Committee*: Available at: Diversity and inclusion in STEM (parliament.uk)
[2] (2021) APPG on Diversity and Inclusion in STEM. *Inquiry into equity in the STEM workforce, final report.* British Science Association, London. Available at: Download.ashx (britishscienceassociation.org)
[3] (2014) *A picture of the UK scientific workforce: Diversity data analysis for the Royal Society: Summary report*. Available at: https://royalsociety.org/~/media/Royal_Society_Content/policy/projects/leading-way-diversity/picture-uk-scientific-workforce/070314-diversity-report.pdf

• *Previous consultations, outcomes or lessons learned from similar projects* • *Previous EIAs both within and outside UKRI* • *Legal precedent and case studies - seek advice from legal or HR if you're unsure*	- Members of the Research Culture Forum discussed this at length when the funding call was first announced. Since then, there have been follow up calls with representatives from different institutes to give feedback, offer support and develop the schemes to suit the needs of the different Institutes. - The Pirbright Institute is leading on this project and as such, Pirbright grant processes were followed and the Grants Team have approved this EIA. - Members from the Research and Innovation, Knowledge Exchange Team and Learning and Development teams in Pirbright with experience launching mentoring programmes have had input into the schemes' designs. - Five different mentoring platforms to discuss what is possible within the scope of the project and the potential limitations of online platforms before procurement. - The EDI Committee at Pirbright has have oversight of the project since inception and given an opportunity to input into this EIA. - A GDPR consultant was procured in the writing of the Data Protection Agreement to ensure the protection of participants' data from each of the 8 institutes. - Each of the Data Protection Officers at the 8 Institutes have also been consulted to ensure their approval. - The UKRI Fellowship Mentoring lead gave feedback on their mentoring scheme and insight into the design of the programme. - UKRI Fellowship Mentors who currently work in one of the named 8 institutes have given feedback on their own mentoring experiences and contributed to the documentation that goes along with these schemes. - For the second half of the project, the Research Culture Forum with a variety of roles across the Institutes and BBSRC had a presentation with an opportunity for feedback and questions to shape the programme going forward. Edits below have been made to outline the impact of this. - MentforMe Champions were instated in Phase 2 in order to hear more regularly from each Institute. These included a range of roles and seniority. Most of whom had been a participant in Phase 1. They helped validate data, ensure fairness for the in-person visits and support people within their own institutes.

Analysing your impact

In addition to data gathering and consultation, the guidance materials should be used to assist in identifying impacts on different groups.

Are there **general or overarching impacts on multiple groups**? What actions will you take to increase positive impact, or reduce/mitigate negative impact? ***For general impacts and actions that affect more than one protected characteristic, please use this space.*** *For example, in-person meetings can present as negative barriers for disabled people, as well as those with parental or caring responsibilities. You may wish to mitigate this by allowing hybrid or fully virtual meetings to avoid access issues, travel and overnight stay requirements, and facilitate the use of personal equipment (e.g. allowing caption use).* ***For specific impacts and actions for individual characteristics, please use the table below****.* *Your assessment could encompass:* • *How your activity supports UKRI or Council's EDI objectives* • ***positive impacts****. Think about how you promote equality and foster good relations between people who do or do not share a characteristic.* • ***negative impacts***	Mentoring is open to all staff to support any and all of their needs relating to their work and career. As a result of this wide remit all characteristics are being considered. We will collect demographic data of participants to accurately measure who has benefitted from the programme. Hopefully, we will be able to compare this to the demographic data of each Institute to see if our participants are representative of the workforce. The entire purpose of the mentoring scheme is to have positive impacts and foster good relations between participants. This could be between people who do share characteristics – offering support/ role modelling/ understanding. Or between those who do not share a characteristic where people can learn from other lived experiences, increase empathy and understanding of others and have access to networks that they may not have had previously. Mentoring programmes Flash mentoring: 'Quick, focused mentoring sessions designed to address specific challenges or goals.' As this type of mentoring is so specific to a piece of knowledge, it has no impact on characteristics other than those mentioned above. Peer-to-peer mentoring: 'Participants engage in mutual mentorship with peers at similar career stages.' It has no impact on characteristics other than those mentioned above. Traditional mentoring: 'Mentees receive guidance from experienced mentors in their field or a particular skill.' According to The Royal Society[4], there is a lack of diversity across the sector- particularly in leadership positions. Traditional mentoring often assumes that mentors must be in senior positions. However, as we are opening this mentoring up to all experience-levels, we hope that there will be a wide pool of individuals from all demographics who can mentor someone less experienced than them. Reverse mentoring: 'Mentees learn from mentors who are junior to them in terms of career-experience.' This type of mentoring is often used to develop understanding between people who do not share characteristics. There have been clear examples of reverse mentoring having a positive impact on the working relationships between different

[4] (2014) 'A picture of the UK scientific workforce: Diversity data analysis for the Royal Society: Summary report.' Available at: https://royalsociety.org/~/media/Royal_Society_Content/policy/projects/leading-way-diversity/picture-uk-scientific-workforce/070314-diversity-report.pdf

• ***no impact***. *Share evidence to support this* • ***actions*** *you are going to consider/put in place to remove disadvantages or minimise negative impacts. You should consider whether you need to change the activity, change how it is implemented or whether the aims could be achieved in a different way* • ***outcomes and outputs***. *Share how you will measure these*	generations[5], genders[6] and race. Curtis et al[7] demonstrate how it has created a positive change in senior staff to come to 'understand the perspectives and experiences of students from minority backgrounds' and 'an acceptance of institutional responsibility for challenges faced' in medical schools. A negative impact could arise if both participants in a reverse mentoring relationship are not trained adequately. This could be an issue across all mentoring types but is particularly important in reverse mentoring where the mentor is more at risk due to their minority / less-experienced status. The Royal Society of Chemistry and Society for Applied Microbiology also 'highlighted an expectation for individuals from under-represented groups to help address the consequences of under-representation at organisational level' which may 'lead to overworking and in some cases burnout, driving people away from STEM roles'[8]. To combat this, we are offering a clear explanation of the mentoring type in our communications pack, compulsory training for all participants, clear outlines of time expectations in the mentoring contract and regular feedback opportunities. Significantly, training has been proven to improve a 'range of skills, including accounting for the biases and prejudices they bring into a mentoring relationship and working effectively with mentees whose personal backgrounds differed from their own'.[9] Furthermore, by the very nature of the cross-institute scheme, there is no risk that the person mentoring / being mentored will be able to directly influence their counterpart's career success in their Institute. Understanding the importance of this, for the second part of the project, we have partnered with the Reverse Mentoring Practice. This organisation will support, train, match, and develop specifically participants interested in reverse mentoring participants. This will protect minoritised groups and facilitate more opportunities for these mentors to have access to and develop relationships with mentees that are more experienced.

[5] (2012) Chaudhuri, S., & Ghosh, R. 'Reverse Mentoring: A Social Exchange Tool for Keeping the Boomers Engaged and Millennials Committed.' *Human Resource Development Review,* 11(1), 55-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484311417562

[6] (2021) Round, S. 'Can reciprocal mentoring as a progressive tool contribute to creating shared understanding of women's career equality challenges?', *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, (S15), pp.260-269. DOI: 10.24384/a7fa-5w16

[7] (2021) Curtis S, Mozley H, Langford C*, et al* 'Challenging the deficit discourse in medical schools through reverse mentoring—using discourse analysis to explore staff perceptions of under-represented medical students' *BMJ Open*; 11: e054890. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-054890

[8] (2023) 'Diversity and Inclusion in STEM : House of Commons Science and Technology Committee' Available at: Diversity and inclusion in STEM (parliament.uk) pp. 43.

[9] (2019) Stolzenberg EB, Eagan K, Zimmerman HB, Lozano JB, Cesar-Davis NM, Aragon MC, Rios-Aguilar C. 'Undergraduate teaching faculty: The HERI faculty survey 2016-2017.' Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.

	Participants in this scheme will also receive CPD certification for their training and participation to highlight the importance of this work, support minoritised groups and recognise the extra work mentoring can be. Communicating the programme to potential participants We will ensure to include a range of participants from different demographics and Institutes in all our promotional documents to demonstrate at the onset that the schemes are inclusive and are open to all. Information will be in written and video format. We will offer pdfs of the video's slides to allow for screen reader technology to be used and try to ensure that all video resources are transcribed. 24% of surveyed pilot participants were encouraged to start the programme through speaking to someone at their Institute. To capitalise on this and encourage people from different demographic groups, we are going to have a diverse group of representatives from each Institute to be MentforMe Champions and encourage participation. Use of the Online Platform There should be no impact when applying to the programme, accessibility to the online mentoring platform or access to the meetings. Anyone with an email address from one of the institutes should be able to access it and organise meetings according to their own schedules. Documents These schemes will be formal mentoring relationships with guidance and documentation as this will help all participants to understand the expectations from the start. The initial mentoring contract will also ask people to outline their available times: to help any parents/ carers protect their time or anyone else who makes use of flexible working policies. Clear outlines and documentation will also have a positive impact for neurodiverse participants. 'Research has shown, too, that members of UR [under-represented] groups in STEMM often find it more difficult to gain access to the benefits of informal mentoring relationships.'[10] Formalising this process will ensure that access is open to all regardless of demographic. Collecting feedback

[10] (2019) National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 'The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM.' Washington, DC: *The National Academies Press*. https://doi.org/10.17226/25568.

	We will collect qualitative and quantitative data to assess the success of the schemes. This feedback will be collected both through online tracking of participation levels and surveys throughout the scheme and two online feedback sessions (in the middle and end). All participants will be asked to self-reflect and set their goals for the programme at the start and this will form the basis of their end of scheme reflection. There is also a dedicated inbox for any personalised feedback. This should have no impact on particular demographics as all participants will have access to this. Online training For the pilot scheme, all training, meetings, and feedback will be online. This is due to the short duration of the scheme but means there should be no impact for different characteristics. In fact, positively, remote mentorship has been proven to be particularly appealing to those from under-represented groups[11] [12] - especially those with disabilities.[13] There will be two types of training to ensure that people are fully enabled to have successful relationships. The first training- with an overview of the scheme, how to use the online site and general guidance on how to be a good mentor/ mentee will be recorded and available to all participants to watch live or when it is convenient for them. The second training will be online, and all participants will be asked to take part. There will be separate mentor and mentee training offered twice each on different times on different days to reach different working patterns. This accounts for those with disabilities and/or parental responsibilities and/or caring responsibilities. Edit- there will no longer be an in-person event. This is due to feedback from participants on the pilot scheme who felt that the event would be unfeasible due to time constraints. Instead, participants will be given access to a fund to visit their mentor/ mentee's Institute in their own time. This will be more accessible to all – especially those with disabilities or caring/ parental responsibilities. People will be able to plan around their own schedule and there will still be extra funding given for an attendance support grant for participants whose attendance may be hindered by

[11] (2019) Chong JY, Ching AH, Renganathan Y, Lim WQ, Toh YP, Mason S, Krishna LKR. Advances in Health Sciences Education. 'Enhancing mentoring experiences through e-mentoring: A systematic scoping review of e-mentoring programs between 2000 and 2017.' https://doi.org/10.1007/s10459-019-09883-8.
[12] (2018) Wendt J, Rockinson-Szapkiw A, Huderson B, Conway A. 'The design and development of the virtual training modules for peer mentoring to broaden women's and minorities' STEM participation.' *Paper presented at the 2018 Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference;* Washington, DC.
[13] (2016) Gregg N, Gerri W, Jones S, Todd R, Moon N, Langston C. 'STEM e-mentoring and community college students with disabilities'. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability.* 29(1):47–63.

	the costs incurred by parental or caring responsibilities, disability, or socio-economic limitations. This funding will be approved by the MentforMe Champions via a weekly email. Using this diverse group will ensure equitable access and reduce unconscious bias in the approval process. ~~We plan to create an event for the next set of participants to meet in person to help foster further networking opportunities. This may present negative barriers for disabled people, as well as those with parental or caring responsibilities. We will give all participants the option to request assistance with any access issues, travel and overnight stay requirements, and the event will facilitate the use of personal equipment (e.g. allowing caption use). We may offer hybrid attendance if scoping suggests that will be necessary.~~

Protected characteristics

This table will consider any impacts that are additional to the ones mentioned above.

Protected characteristic	**Positive impact or opportunity to benefit** **Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown**	**Negative impact**	**Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used**	**Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.**
Age	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Disability	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	After feedback, added in tags in the video to help neurodiverse people access the parts of the video that are most useful to them without having to focus the whole time.
Gender reassignment (Trans identity)	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	

Marriage or civil partnership	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Pregnancy and maternity	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Race	☒	☐	'The proportion of Black students entering undergraduate and postgraduate education has increased over the past decade, as it has for other minority ethnic groups, but they are leaving STEM in greater numbers at all stages of the career pipeline.'[14] However, evidence suggests that a lack of formal mentoring is a contributing factor in academics from black and minority ethnic backgrounds leaving the scientific community.[15]	We have already asked BBSRC contacts to communicate this opportunity directly with their ERGS (Employee Reference Groups / Staff Networks) to encourage minority groups to take part in the scheme. We will also ensure to collect demographic data to ensure there is good take up on the programmes by black and minority ethnic members of staff.
Religion or belief	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Sexual orientation	☒	☐	A recent article details[16] the lack of accurate data collected around scientists' LGBTQ+ status[17] and notes that 'without proper data, LGBTQ+ people are by definition unrepresented (and hence underrepresented)'.	Through this scheme, we understand that collecting accurate data is important and will ensure to ask informed questions around LGBTQ+ status.
Sex	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	

[14] (2023) 'Diversity and Inclusion in STEM : House of Commons Science and Technology Committee' Available at: Diversity and inclusion in STEM (parliament.uk) pp. 41.

[15] (2015) Bhopal, K., Brown, H., & Jackson, J. 'Academic flight: how to encourage black and minority ethnic academics to stay in UK higher education.' *Equality Challenge Unit.* Available at: http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/academic-flight/

[16] (2024) Bond, Alex; Kelly, Tyler. 'A quick guide to data collection for LGBTQ+ characteristics.' *Journal contribution.* https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.24633756.v1

[17] (2021) Cech, EA, Waidzunas, TJ. 2021. Systemic inequalities for LGBTQ professionals in STEM. Science Advances 7: eabe0933. doi: https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.abe0933

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Additional characteristics

Additional characteristics	Positive impact or opportunity to benefit Leave blank if there is no impact or unknown	Negative impact	Please explain the impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible).
Geographical location and place (consider UK and international offices)	☐	☐	~~If there is an in-person event, this may be in a place that is less convenient for some than others.~~	All mentoring meetings will be held online to ensure equality of access for all. ~~We will aim for somewhere that will be in the middle of every institute for the in-person event.~~ By offering a large fund to all participants to see each other on their own time, no one should be limited by geographical location. Having a MentforMe Champion in each institute will also help people have support wherever they are located.
Socio-economic status	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Education background	☒	☐	Through informal conversations, we have found that by opening the mentoring programme up to non-scientists, more people without PhDs and higher education are taking part in the programme.	
Parent/guardian responsibilities	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	
Carer/parent carer responsibilities	☐	☐	No specific impact other than the ones above.	

Political opinion (Northern Ireland only)	☐	☐	NA	
Other characteristics	☐	☐		

Evaluation

Final Decision:	**Select the relevant box**	**Include any explanation / justification required**
1. No negative or positive impact identified; therefore, activity will **proceed**.	☐	
2. **Adapt or change** the activity in a way which you think will eliminate negative impact or promote equality.	☒	The activity has been planned following the actions described in the previous section.
3. **Stop** the activity because the evidence shows bias or negative impact towards one or more groups.	☐	
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the activity (e.g. in **extreme cases** or where **positive action** is taken). Therefore, you are going to **proceed with caution** with this activity knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	☐	

Review and sign off

What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact of your activity? An EIA is a live document and should regularly be reviewed throughout the life cycle of an activity Consider how you monitor the impact identified in your EIA. Put a plan in place to ensure that the impact is being monitored throughout the activity and evaluate the outcomes of any actions identified in the EIA. For example, you could: • Plan regular reviews of the EIA and action plan • Review the EIA as part of any closure or lessons learned activity. • Be transparent: continue to consult with the groups affected by your activity and use new insights to review you EIA.	The EIA and action plan will be sent to the BBSRC and all of the participating Institutes for any feedback. The first review will take place after this. It will then be considered at each feedback point throughout the pilot phase which will occur twice. There will be a full review of the EIA and action plan at the end of the pilot when writing the month 5 report. There was a survey available through the pilot period; surveys after each mentoring session; training feedback asked for; a dedicated email inbox; and focus groups that allow people to report at the end of the pilot. We will continue to consult with the aforementioned groups- and hope to have more time to consult with them in the planning of the 6-month scheme to ensure that we have done all we can to make the mentoring scheme equitable and accessible to all. We will also meet monthly with the MentforMe Champions to get feedback directly from Institutes. When the new metrics project has launched and is underway, we hope to measure the success of this project with the data that has been found in that process.
Next review date:	Project Complete May 2025.

Will this EIA be published? * Yes/Not required Yes/Not required *EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities for example funding opportunities and events.	Not required as discussed with BBSRC. It will be published on The Pirbright Institute's external website on the Mentoring page after feedback from BBSRC and other participating institutes.
Point of contact	Harriet Keep connectingculturesmentoring@pirbright.ac.uk

Signed off by (name and date):	Harriet Keep 30/05/25

Before publishing or archiving your EIA, please remove any sensitive or confidential information such as personal identifiable data.

Once your EIA is completed or updated:

1. **Email it to your council EDI team and**
2. **Upload it to the UKRI central repository via the EIA submission form**

EIAs for ODA and non-ODA ISPF programmes should be emailed to: ISPF@ukri.org

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Harriet Keep	29/06/24	1	Added another element for neurodiverse people after feedback. Partially achieved action 4 and 5: 40% of all mentors/mentees had training and it was not a compulsory part of being in the programme- multiple dates were offered but people are busy and some have done it before. The training was also very long so it put people off. With more interested mentees than mentors it was important to get people at different levels involved and they were less positive about compulsory training. Action 3: incomplete as though included on the privacy statement and the external webpage, only 15% of people found out about the programme from the external webpage. EIA sent to others, but no feedback given- same from BBSRC. Change 9: from planning in-person event centrally as funds mean it will most likely be held in Pirbright.

Name	Date	Version	Change
Harriet Keep	24/09/24	2	Edited after feedback from the pilot scheme showed we should not go ahead with the in-person event. Edited to include the MentforMe Champions throughout doc. Added to action 2 to include job family/ department/ seniority after feedback from the Research Culture Forum looking to understand the uptake of the mentoring from their Institute.
Harriet Keep	23/10/24	3	Edited to include the Reverse Mentoring Practice- an external organisation which will facilitate the reverse mentoring part of the programme. They will work with mentors from all minoritised groups to enable their confidence and develop their work. They will also help mentees from more senior positions learn from the experience and enact real change out of the project. For actions 4 and 5, more bitesize learning modules will be offered to help busy participants get the training they need. Action 8 has been included on the website and will be included in all comms around the project.
Harriet Keep	20/01/25	4	Ensured all actions were marked as complete or otherwise. Updated some information about MentforMe Champions throughout the document.
Harriet Keep	25/05/25	5	Final Check before final report submission: no change.

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Action plan

Use the table below to define the actions you intend to take (or have taken) to address the indications of negative impact you have identified or to promote equality. Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

	Action	Deadline	Owner	How will it be monitored?	What is/will be the impact/outcome?
1	Ensure a diverse group of people partake in promotional communications	May 2024	HK	Feedback from communications teams and ERGS at different BBSRC-sponsored institutes.	All members of staff understand that they are included in the participation call.
2	Ensure that demographic details are asked for within the system Add a question on which job family/ department and seniority.	May 2024 Nov 2024	HK	Collect demographic data of participants	We can measure the uptake of the programmes from different demographic groups. This can be used in the 6-month scheme to inform design/ communications plans/ new consultations etc.
3	Update communications to ensure people are aware they can ask for additional support and reasonable adjustments	May 2024 Nov 2024	HK	Communications sent out and submissions reflect individual needs	Individual needs can be addressed. Inform inclusive design for the 6-month scheme.
4	Ensure adequate training for all mentors and mentees	May 2024 Nov 2024	HK	Mentoring training has been procured and feedback from participants confirms its usefulness.	Trained mentors/ mentees will make the scheme more successful and protect both parties.
5	Offer multiple dates and times for the compulsory training.	May 2024 Nov 2024	HK + External Trainer	Participation levels and feedback from participants.	Higher uptake. Ensure that people with other responsibilities or flexible hours will be able to attend.
6	Ensure the mentoring contract includes space for mentors/mentees to outline their availability and time expectations	May 2024	HK + Online System	Feedback from participants outlines that their time was protected.	Adequate protection for those with additional responsibilities. People will feel like it's not too onerous on their time – potential for more participation in the future.

				Data collected of mentoring time/ dates shows regular meetings.	
7	Send call for feedback on the EIA to all the participating BBSRC institutes	June 2024	HK	Feedback received and review 1 completed.	Increased consultation to influence the design of the schemes and ensure equality for all.
8	Create and communicate the 'Attendance Support Grant' for the in-person meetings.	Oct 2024	HK	Feedback and the number of people who use the grant.	Increased attendance of people who may have financial limitations on attendance. Further opportunities for people who may otherwise by isolated to network with other institutes.
~~9~~	~~Plan the in-person event as centrally as possible for all institutes~~ ~~Plan the in-person event to ensure that all participants can access Pirbright and sufficient funds are given to support transport costs/ alternative provision where needed.~~	Sept 2024	HK	Feedback and participation	Increased attendance from all Institutes. Further opportunities for networking between Institutes.
10	Recruit a diverse group of people to the MentforMe Champions group	Oct 2024	HK	Members of the team will fill out an anonymous survey with diversity monitoring questions.	Institutes will benefit from having someone on site that is informed about the programme and representation of diverse groups will hopefully encourage a variety of people to be part of the programme.