

MENTOR' GUIDE

2026-2027 cohort



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THE INITIASCIENCES PROGRAM

OUR MISSION

With the InitiaSciences project, we aim to inspire high school and CEGEP students by giving them the means to contribute to projects at the cutting edge of scientific research, alongside passionate young researchers.



OUR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

InitiaSciences is the **first platform in Quebec** to immerse young people in a real university scientific research project for an entire school year. Accompanied by their mentor, students become real research assistants. Mentees benefit from unique training in the scientific process, teamwork and oral communication, thanks to the annual symposium. Our mentoring program offers them a wide range of benefits, whatever their future career path.

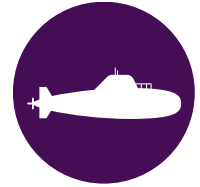


Personal achievement

- Long-term research project
- Development of autonomy
- Confidence in ability to advance science
- Discovery of new fields of interest

Immersion in scientific research

- Discover the daily life of research
- Exposure to different types of scientists
- Access to unique and advanced resources
- Understanding of the project's scientific context



Teamwork

- Work in teams of 2 or 4 on each project
- Close collaboration and mentor support
- Context conducive to mutual aid and perseverance

Developing unique skills

- Introduction to the scientific method
- Advanced analysis techniques and state-of-the-art tools
- Reading scientific articles in French and English
- Oral and written scientific communication



Relationships and careers

- Develop a network of science contacts
- Familiarization with research careers
- Opportunity to co-author publications



Generational proximity

- Mentors are sensitive to young people's questions
- Facilitates open communication and collaboration



Sharing knowledge

- Mentors' presentations in schools and CEGEPs
- Annual symposium - mentees' presentations





BECOMING AN INTIASCIENCES MENTOR

WHO CAN BECOME A MENTOR?

Are you a **young graduate or post-doctoral researcher**? Do you enjoy sharing your passion for science? Then you've got what it takes!

Your level of education (number of years since obtaining a bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree) or the number of published journal articles or conference papers do not make you a more or less qualified mentor! On the other hand, certain personal skills and competencies that you will have the opportunity to develop during your training will be essential to the success of the mentoring relationship. These include **patience, empathy**, guiding your team towards increasing **autonomy**, enthusiasm, the ability to **popularize** your research topic and place it in a broader scientific and/or social context.

Since 2023, we have been accepting applications from all over Quebec, in all scientific disciplines (natural sciences, health sciences, humanities and social sciences...).



WHY BECOME AN INITIASCIENCES MENTOR?

Introducing young people to science

Thanks to your commitment as a mentor, you'll be helping young people to achieve personal fulfillment by awakening their interest in science, sparking vocations and contributing to the development of their critical thinking and scientific identity.

Contributing to equal opportunities

Equity, diversity and inclusion are core values at InitiaSciences. That's why our mentoring program focuses on young people from groups under-represented in higher education in general, and in the sciences in particular. We also offer scholarships to mentees from underprivileged backgrounds.

Thus, among the 14 mentees of the 2024-2025 cohort :

- 12 were first-generation university students
- 10 identified as female or non-binary
- 10 identified as visible minorities



By becoming a mentor with InitiaSciences, you are actively contributing to equal opportunities for young people in Quebec, and to improving the diversity of the next generation of scientists.

More generally, young people who benefit from mentoring report **better mental health**, a significant impact on their **self-confidence** and confidence in the future, and are much more likely to **pursue higher education** than young people who have not had access to mentoring (source: Future of Good and Mentor Canada, see [p.41](#)).

Add a unique experience to your course

Becoming an InitiaSciences mentor is also a great added value to your academic career. Mentoring is a rich, long-term experience that will develop your skills in **scientific communication, teaching** and **project management**. You'll be helping to promote research and train the next generation of researchers. What's more, before meeting your mentees, you'll receive a **full training** from experts in pedagogy, scientific communication and equity-diversity-inclusion (see [Appendix 2](#)).

Each mentor will receive fixed financial compensation for his or her commitment, the amount of which is at the discretion of InitiaSciences.

WHAT DOES THE ROLE OF MENTOR INVOLVE?

InitiaSciences mentors' mission

As a mentor, you commit to :

- Get young people interested in science;
- Introduce the team to your research topic;
- Familiarize young people with the scientific process in action and the day-to-day activities of researchers;
- Promote your career path and the diversity of career opportunities in your field of study;
- Contribute to the creation of a scientific identity among young people.

In practice, this mission revolves around two axes: the mentoring project, and discovering the world of research.



Mentoring project

Your main role will be to mentor **a team of 2 to 4 young people** in secondary 3, 4 or 5, or in CEGEP, for one academic year (approximately 8 months, from October 2026 to June 2027), around a **research project stemming from your own master's, doctorate or post-doctorate project** (for more details, see [p.19](#) and [Appendix 3](#)). The InitiaSciences team will help you design your project, and support you during the mentoring period with monthly reviews.

You'll organize **weekly meetings** with your mentees: on average 3 to 4 hours a week at the start of the program, then around 2 hours a week as their project progresses and they become more autonomous (see [p.19](#) and [Appendix 4](#)). You will also help them prepare an oral presentation of their project for the annual InitiaSciences Symposium in June 2027 (see [p.21](#)).

Discovering the research world

Beyond this project, you'll be responsible for introducing your team to the world of research. Introduce them to your team, show them around your laboratory or field of study (wherever possible), offer to take part in seminars... in short, show them your **daily life as a young researcher!**

We also encourage you to talk about your personal experience, the prospects in science and the diversity of career paths and opportunities in your field of study, especially if you sense a mentee's interest in a scientific career.

To bring research to a wider audience of young people, you'll also be able to present your research project to high school and CEGEP classes in September 2026.



MENTORS' COMMITMENTS

These commitments are detailed in the InitiaSciences **Mentor Code of Conduct** and the **Mentoring Agreement**. Here are some of the most important points.

Nature of the mentoring relationship

As a mentor, you must remain your mentee's main point of contact at all times. This means not delegating the task of research supervision to other members of your laboratory, or to any other person who has no official involvement in the InitiaSciences project, and who has not fulfilled all the necessary prerequisites (adherence to the code of conduct, signature of the mentoring agreement, criminal record check).

Your relationship with your mentees must remain professional. For all personal questions (family background, psychological problems, etc.), young people should be referred to InitiaSciences contacts or qualified professionals. On the other hand, it is possible (and encouraged!) to talk to young people about your academic career (which may include any obstacles you have encountered), their career aspirations, their academic interests and so on.

Respectful, ethical and honest behavior



Throughout the mentoring process, you are committed to showing respect, empathy and honesty, both towards your mentees and other mentors, and towards the InitiaSciences team and its partners.

You are also committed to ethical conduct and integrity in the broadest sense.

Thus, you agree, among other things, to :

- Provide your team with methods and information supported by scientific consensus,
- Be transparent about potential biases in your research,
- Do not falsify your data,
- Respect the recommendations of research ethics committees corresponding to your field;
- Do not commit plagiarism.

Integrity also implies **citing your mentees as co-authors** of any production obtained with their help, whatever the form (publications, oral communications, posters, blog posts, social networks, etc.), the audience (scientific community, professionals, general public, etc.), the nature and volume of their contribution (documentary research, data collection, analyses, etc.).

Safety of your mentees

As mentors, you are expected to ensure the safety and physical and mental integrity of your mentees throughout the research project. This may involve training them beforehand in the use of laboratory equipment or dangerous products, providing them with personal protective equipment, and not exposing them to dangerous handling or handling that may offend their sensibilities (invasive animal experimentation, exposure to violent or traumatic acts or language, etc.). Some projects may not lend themselves to InitiaSciences mentoring in the current form of the program, particularly where major ethical issues are involved.

Note that sensitivity differs from one person to another, and that these constraints may vary depending on the research team or project. We invite you to **contact us early on** in your application if you suspect that your research topic may involve strong ethical or safety issues, so that we can help you build a project suitable for mentoring. We can also help you negotiate with your home institution to provide your team with the training, equipment or other resources needed to guarantee their safety.



MENTORING PROJECT

KEY PROGRAM MILESTONES

DATES	STEPS
April - June 2026	Training - 6 workshops of 1h30, online (see Appendix 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparing your mentoring project• Write a text and video popularizing your research
August 1st, 2026	Delivery of final versions : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A detailed plan of your mentoring project• Your text and video
September 2026	Present your project/course in the schools (Optional)
October 2026	Selection and training of mentees (by InitiaSciences and its partners)
End october - start nov. 2026	First meetings with your team (see Appendix 4)
End december 2026	Informal project presentations by mentees
February 2027	Mid-project progress review with InitiaSciences resource person
June 2027	InitiaSciences Symposium (see p.21)

MENTORING PROCESS

Research project framework

The research project on which your mentees will be working must meet a number of requirements: it must be **original**, stem **from your own research project**, **adapted** to the level of your team and to the time available to carry it out (see [Appendix 3](#) for more details). During the initial training sessions, we will help you define your project. If necessary, experts will be consulted on its feasibility.

During the course of the program, you will be able to make adjustments to adapt to your team's actual progress or to unforeseen circumstances. You will need to inform us of these changes and justify them. To do so, please contact the InitiaSciences person in charge of project follow-up (see [p.23](#)).

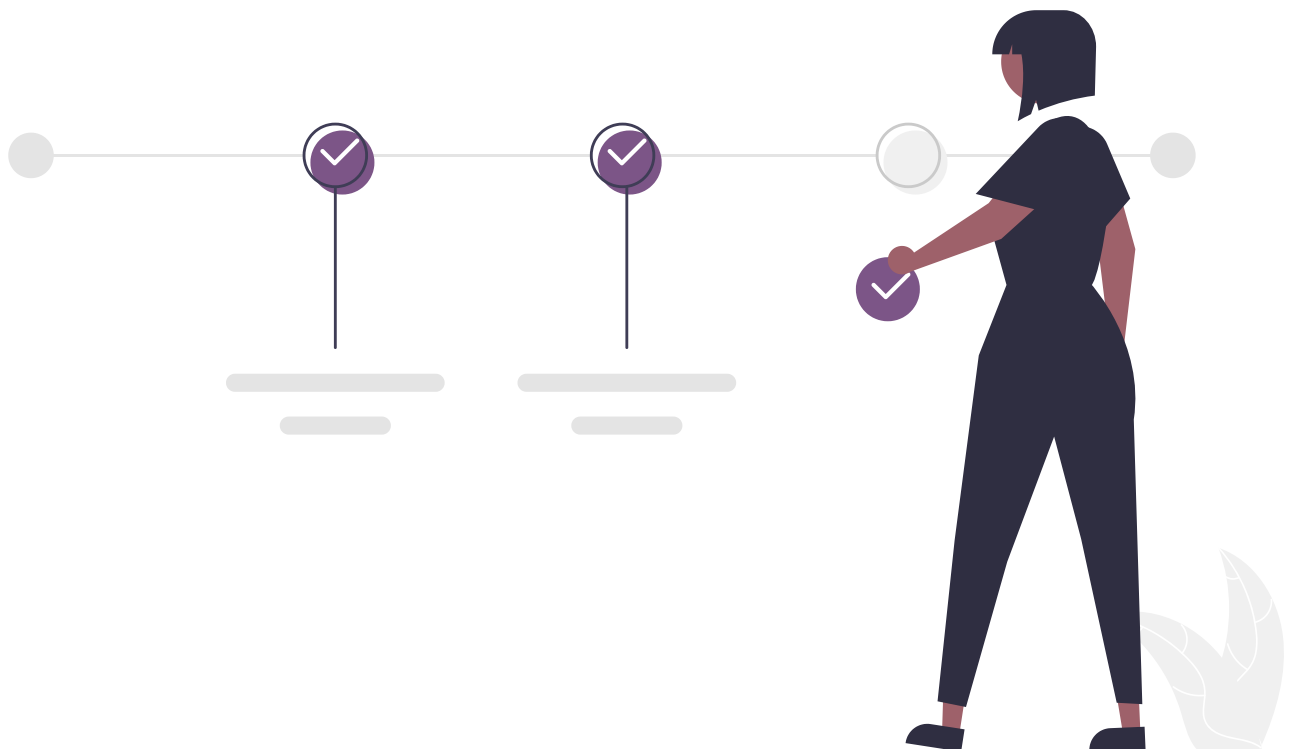
Team project process

Once the mentees have been selected by our team, we will organize a **welcome evening** in early October 2025, which will serve as a first meeting with your mentees and their parents or legal guardians. During this event, you'll be able to organize yourselves and define the schedule for future meetings.

Then, before your first meetings with your mentees, the young people will be trained in the basics of the scientific approach, documentary research, reading scientific articles and oral communication. **If your project requires specific training** (e.g. programming, laboratory manipulations, use of software, etc.), please let us know **before June 2026**, so that we can support you.

During the first few weeks, you can expect 4 hours of weekly meetings with your team (twice 2 hours). As your mentees' autonomy grows, one meeting a week should suffice. So, from around the eighth week (January), your commitment will be around 3 hours a week:

- ~2 hours devoted to **meetings with mentees** ;
- ~1 hour devoted to **follow-up tasks**:
 - E-mails or communication with the team;
 - Preparation for future meetings;
 - Room/equipment reservations (as needed) ;
 - ...



Bilans d'avancement du projet

In **December 2025**, each team will be invited to present their understanding of their project: objectives, methods, task allocation and importance in the wider context of advancing knowledge. This step ensures that each mentee has a good idea of their role and responsibilities, and tests the feasibility of the project. We encourage mentors to support their mentees in preparing this presentation, in particular by ensuring that the key points have been covered during the mentoring meetings.

Between **January and February 2027**, the InitiaSciences resource person in charge of project follow-up will carry out a systematic review of each team's progress. However, we encourage you to consult the plan drawn up at the start of the project on a regular basis, and to call on this contact person at any time to revise the methods or framework of the project as it progresses.

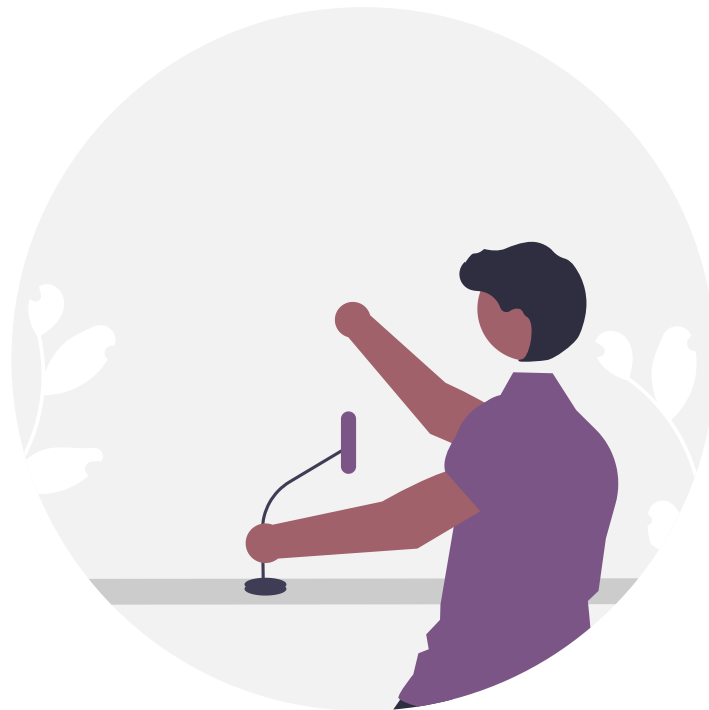
INITIASCIENCES SYMPOSIUM

What is it ?

At the end of the program, in June, the young people will present their projects as a team at a one-day conference, either face-to-face or in a hybrid format. As a conclusion to your participation in the program, this is an opportunity for your mentees to present their work of the year in conditions similar to a scientific conference. For example, here's a [link](#) to the recording of the symposium for the first cohort 2022-2023.

The symposium is intended for the participating teams, the InitiaSciences administrative team, our partners and the general public. Our focus is on members of the university community, high school and CEGEP classes, with a view to recruiting participants for the next cohort. It's an opportunity to raise the profile of the project, turning mentees into true ambassadors of scientific culture and research to a varied public.

The best presentations will be awarded prizes by a jury made up of InitiaSciences members and partner organizations. During the event, our partners will be setting up booths to present their activities.



How to prepare your mentees for the Symposium ?

Young people taking part in InitiaSciences will be given a short training course in oral scientific communication to help them prepare and lead their presentations. However, for many, the symposium is likely to be their first experience of a public presentation outside the school setting, and even more so of a scientific conference. It will therefore be important to help them prepare for this new and sometimes intimidating event.

It's recommended to start this process **several weeks in advance**, to make up for potential delays due to the unavailability of mentees in May-June (exams, homework). Your support can take many forms. You can, for example, organize **presentation practice** with your mentees in preparation for the final symposium. During the year, you can also offer them the opportunity to present their progress at a meeting of your laboratory, at seminars or in other relevant contexts.

Here are a few tips to guide your mentees through these oral presentation exercises:

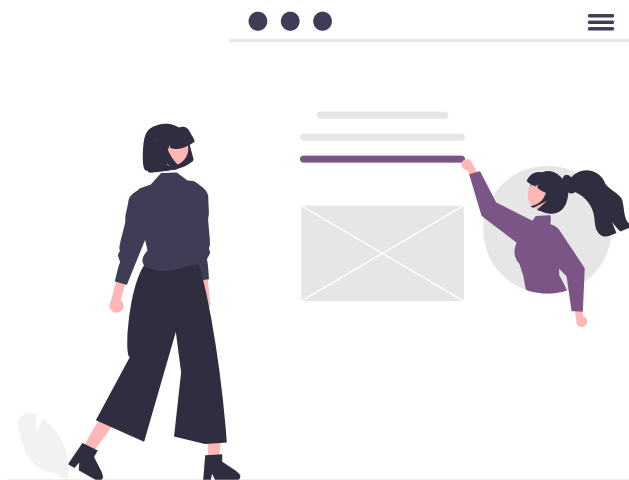
- If necessary, remind them of the classic plan for a scientific presentation in your discipline (e.g. introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, conclusion);
- Do at least a **few face-to-face training sessions** with your whole team (if possible, with a projection of their visual aids, to get closer to real-life conditions);
- In addition to the content, advise them on their **attitude**, the way they use their voice, their language, etc;
- Leave them a margin of **autonomy and freedom!** Bear in mind that your help is valuable, but that you shouldn't produce their presentation for them: the aim is to learn by doing.

INITIASCIENCES RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

This guide and its appendices should be of great help to you in your experience as a mentor, especially the [section 4 "Keys to success"](#).

You may encounter difficulties during your participation in the InitiaSciences program:

- Difficulty reaching your mentees due to exams, homework, lack of punctuality, etc;
- Discouragement on your part or that of your mentees;
- Delays in project progress;
- Personal problems, time management or workload difficulties compromising your commitment as a mentor;
- Excessive or inappropriate exchanges with your mentees;
- Etc.



As soon as you feel the need, don't hesitate to contact the InitiaSciences contact person, who is responsible for supporting mentor teams throughout their project:

suiviprojets@initasciences.ca

Depending on the case, the InitiaSciences team will take charge of solving the problem, or refer you to other resources, for example within your organization.

Contact us if you have any doubts or feel uncomfortable, and **don't wait** any longer - which could make any problem worse. We're here to support you and make sure you and your mentees get the most out of your InitiaSciences experience!

Remember, too, that a mentor is not a therapist, parent or lawyer. If you feel overwhelmed by a mentee's comments or attitude, if you feel that your relationship goes beyond a purely professional mentoring relationship, or if you have any other warning signs, let your contact person or any other member of the InitiaSciences office know as soon as possible.



KEYS TO SUCCESS

OF THE MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP



Adapt your expectations

The aim of InitiaSciences is to give young people their first experience of research. Most start from scratch. It's with you that they'll develop all the skills they need to become true research assistants. Start the project with enthusiasm, but **without over-ambitious expectations** of your team's productivity. Your mentees have a lot to learn, and they don't have your expertise! Setting the bar too high could lead to frustration on your part and discouragement on the part of your team. On the other hand, **don't underestimate them**: challenge them and encourage them to excel! There's a balance to be struck to make the experience stimulating for mentees, and you may be pleasantly surprised by the awakening of your team!



Empower

From the outset of the project, assign each mentee **specific tasks, roles or responsibilities** according to their interests and strengths - which may evolve over the course of the program. This crucial step will enable each mentee to clearly identify his or her personal contribution to the team project at the end of the program. It will also facilitate regular and equitable involvement of each team member, avoiding one person becoming responsible for most of the work, if his or her peers lack commitment. If you are unsure about the division of tasks or roles to be proposed, we invite you to consult the InitiaSciences team or a qualified person in your direct research environment (colleague, supervisor, other researchers...).



Encourage initiative and autonomy

To make the mentoring experience stimulating, it's important that young people gradually take ownership of their project and take the reins. Their role **should not be limited to that of executor**. To encourage their proactivity and autonomy, you can use open-ended questions: "What do you think this means?", "I'd like your opinion on this", "What would you do at this stage?"...



Validate learning and progress

As with your research, we encourage you to apply educational methods whose effectiveness has been validated by peers during your interactions with your mentees. Keep in mind that InitiaSciences wants to offer young people the opportunity to build a scientific identity, in the broadest sense of the term.

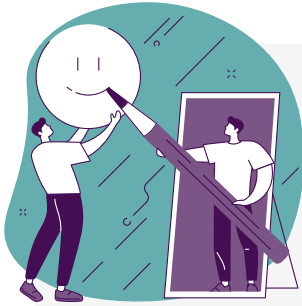
This identity is based, in particular, on **curiosity** and the courage to explore new avenues without knowing what to expect. However, it has been shown that encouraging young people by attributing characteristics to them ("You're gifted/intelligent!"/"You're excellent!") actually encourages them to take fewer risks, and to avoid going off the beaten track so as not to lose this new "identity" (see, for example, the work of [Carol Dweck](#)). Instead, validate their efforts by **emphasizing the learning experience** ("You've really outdone yourself!"/"You've learned a lot!"), whatever their level of success.



Recognize your limits

Never be afraid to admit that **you don't know** how to answer a question: this can be a great opportunity to share with your mentees your process for finding answers (literature search, expert advice). What's more, young people will recognize you better if you know how to be vulnerable and **share your difficulties**. Feel free

for example, to talk to them about imposter syndrome, to share your tips for gaining self-confidence, or to discuss your own questions about your career choice, at their age or more recently. Remember, your role is to accompany young people and show them a **realistic** (and fundamentally imperfect!) example of what it's like to be a scientist.



Create a psychological safe space

It's important that young people feel comfortable at your meetings. Psychological safety can take different forms from one person to another, but certain aspects are essential:

- **Listening** : respect your mentees' words and don't interrupt them without good reason.
- **Understanding** : use your body language to indicate active listening and understanding when mentees discuss their work. This can mean nodding, smiling, and rephrasing what the mentee has just said to ensure mutual understanding.
- **Validation** : encourage your mentees (see next paragraph for details). For example, if a mentee has made a remark, proposed an idea or obtained a result that shows a growing understanding or mastery of the subject, let them know you're impressed! Don't forget that you are their role models as scientific experts, and that your validation certainly means more than you think.
- **Non-judgemental** : your mentees' self-confidence can be significantly impacted by your reaction to their lack of understanding of the concepts and skills you are trying to pass on to them. Regularly check their understanding with open-ended questions ("Can you tell me what you understand?" rather than "Do you understand?"). Make sure you offer them an environment in which they are not afraid to make mistakes, using constructive feedback.



What to do if a mentee seems discouraged?

Mentees may experience moments of discouragement. If this is due to personal or academic circumstances, you can contact the project's resource people. If they are due to certain difficulties encountered in the project, you can try the following strategies:

- **Play down** : you can share with the group your own experience with more difficult periods in your project (lack of data, programming difficulties...) to normalize the fact that this is part of the research experience and does not mean a lack of skills.
- Do **the "three to five levels" exercise** : this very important exercise reminds them of the importance of their work. It's about putting their task into perspective by placing it in the wider context of the project. For example:
 - "The table you're trying to fill in describes the absorption of a molecule in the infrared" (level 1)
 - "This information is crucial for detecting these molecules in corners of the Universe only remotely accessible with telescopes" (level 2).
 - "We can use this table to look for this molecule in the atmosphere of planets around stars other than the Sun" (level 3).
 - "It's this kind of in-depth work that will enable astronomers to search for signs of life outside the solar system" (level 4).
- **One thing at a time** : the scale of the task being undertaken can sometimes seem too daunting. Work with them to break it down into smaller tasks, and then break each of these tasks down again, until the next task is completely affordable. You can use the SMART method for this (see [Appendix 5](#)).

Some of your mentees will certainly need more encouragement than others. Pay attention to their attitude, or phrases such as "I can't do it", "I don't understand anything"... It's important to recognize these signs and encourage your mentees to make sure they realize their important role in the project.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX TABLE

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APPENDIX 1 :

PRE-REQUISITES BEFORE WELCOMING YOUR TEAM

There are several conditions that **must** be met before you can welcome your team of mentees. We invite you to use the checklist below to make sure you complete all the steps:

When you apply :

- Ensure sufficient availability from October 2025 to June 2026
- Obtain the agreement of your supervisors to :
 - (1) Participate in the InitiaSciences program as a mentor
 - (2) Host young people in your laboratory from Oct. 2025 to June 2026

When your application is accepted :

- Attend preliminary training from April to June 2025
- Complete the criminal record check form
Deadline: April 30, 2025
- Read and sign the mentor code of conduct
Deadline : April 30, 2025
- Read the mentors' guide







When a team is assigned to you (BEFORE the first meeting) :

- Sign the mentoring agreement with each of your mentees
- Have your supervisor sign the mentoring agreement
- Participate in the welcome evening in October 2025

APPENDIX 2 :

MENTORS' TRAINING

Between April and June 2025, you'll take part in 6 online training workshops offered by InitiaSciences and its partners. This training is **mandatory and free** for all InitiaSciences mentors in the 2025-2026 cohort.

ATELIER	OBJECTIFS
<p>Preparing your project (1/2)</p> 	<p>Roundtable discussion with mentors from the 2024-2025 cohort and our team resource person.</p> <p>To do: start the project description form.</p>
<p>Caring teaching</p> 	<p>Round-table discussion with a former mentor and the Scientifines, covering topics such as arousing interest, motivating young people and managing a team of young people.</p>
<p>Scientific communication (1/2)</p> 	<p>Impakt Scientifik introductory workshop on scientific communication.</p> <p>To do: new online training course on how to make a video.</p>
<p>Ethics, Diversity and Inclusion</p> 	<p>Introduction to fundamental EDI concepts. Awareness and prevention of unconscious bias.</p>
<p>Scientific communication (2/2)</p> 	<p>Practical workshop. Revision of popularized texts. Preparation of videos. Pop-talks exercises.</p> <p>To do: 1st version of your texts. Prepare pop-talks.</p>
<p>Preparing your project (2/2)</p> 	<p>Review of your mentoring project plans *Feedback on your Google Doc, then 1-to-1 calls</p>

APPENDIX 3 :

MENTORING RESEARCH PROJECT

What are the project requirements?



Original

Pursue or deepen an innovative research project in progress; don't reproduce an analysis you've already published.

From your current research

Give your team a sub-project extracted from research you're already working on, rather than creating a new project ex nihilo. This saves you time! Your mentees will act as research assistants.



Concise and focused

Bear in mind that your mentees will have 8 months to complete the project from start to finish, without any initial knowledge. Take into account their learning curve: start with simple tasks and progress to more complex ones. For example, imagine tasks that you would be able to complete in 2-3 weeks.

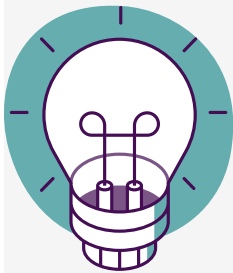
APPENDIX 4 :

MEETINGS GUIDE

First meetings

The breakdown below is intended as a guide. If you feel that, in your case, the objective has been achieved in a little less or a little more time, feel free to adapt the activities accordingly. Each step is important, and is inspired by the [ORBYTS](#) keys to success.

For the first few months, we recommend meeting twice a week. From about the eighth week onwards, except in cases where the steps below have not yet been completed, you will meet with your mentees only once a week. The young people will be working on the next stages of their project. It's at these meetings that you'll be able to see the progress made during the mentees' independent project work session, answer their questions and guide them towards the next steps (see next section).

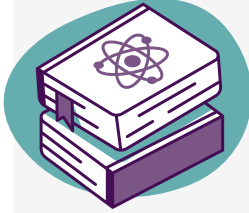


Meeting 1: Getting to know each other

Objectives : Getting to know each of your mentees and establishing the basis of the relationship is a solid foundation for the success of the project. Clarify the logistical details of future meetings (location, date, medium).

Tips : Share your background, your study choices, your interests outside research... Ask your mentees open-ended questions: "What motivated you to take on this project?", "If you had all the time and money in the world, what would you do?" or "What would you like to do if you were guaranteed success?", "What are the things you're most proud of having accomplished in the last 1-3 years?", "What skill would you dream of learning?"...

Meetings 2-3: Familiarization with the research project



Objectives : Introduce your mentees to the major issues that your research addresses, and those you propose they work on. You can also start by outlining the methods you use.

Tips : Start with what your mentees already know, and gradually introduce new concepts. Start with the general and work up to the details of their project. This is an opportunity to show them an application of the scientific approach (problem, hypotheses, methods...), and to get them thinking with you: why did you choose this method to answer this question? How does their project fit into a broader research question?

Meeting 4-5: 1st contact with equipment/data



Objectives : Familiarize your mentees with the hardware, software, data, models... required for the project. These will probably be the most challenging encounters for mentees, as everything will be new!

Tips : Prepare equipment in advance. Start simple: "turnkey" codes (no programming on their part), a limited subset of your data, a bacterial culture ready to observe... Then, little by little, encourage them to make the equipment and data their own. For example, in a code or model, suggest that they modify a few parameters or some initial data, and observe the result. Be patient, encourage trial-and-error, and make sure you use the most appropriate [keys to success of section 4](#) !



Meeting 6: Assigning roles and tasks

Objectives : Plan the project and empower your mentees. Assign each mentee a role in the project, long-term tasks and tasks for the next meeting. Clarify with each mentee your expectations for their logbook. You can use [appendix 5](#).

Tips : Use your mentees' logbooks to track their progress. Show them how their roles and activities complement each other in carrying out the project. Encourage them to talk to each other outside meetings and to help each other out, especially if your group includes young people of different levels.

Typical weekly meeting schedule

This schedule is provided as a guide only: you are free to structure these work and discussion sessions in the way that best suits your working style and your team. However, the following objectives must be achieved: **review of the work** carried out by the team during the week, **answers to mentee questions**, **progress** on the project and guidance towards the **next steps** to be taken.



10min

Mentors arrive and settle in



30-50min

Review of mentee logs. For each :

- Review the week's progress. Tip: let the mentees speak so they can express what they've done in their own words, and make sure they understand.
- Discuss the results, if any. Ask them what they think of it and what steps they plan to take next, then make suggestions.
- Answer any outstanding questions.
- Remind them of the importance of their task within the team, the project and the larger scientific question to which it belongs (see the "three to five levels" exercise on [p.29](#)).



55min

The mentees work on the project, alone or in teams as required. You can then help them with any questions or difficulties encountered, or use this time to validate their results for the previous week.



5min

Debriefing and summary of the meeting with your mentees and planning for the next meeting

APPENDIX 5 :

SETTING EFFECTIVE OBJECTIVES

The example of the SMART(ER) method

The SMART method was originally devised by Doran (1981) to guide the definition of effective corporate objectives. This version has been adapted by [Thésez-vous](#).

S

Specific : detailed and focused, leaving no doubt as to the exact task in hand.
Clear **action verbs**.

M

Mesurable : quantifiable, we can see that it has been achieved.

A

Achievable : can be achieved without too many "sacrifices". **Accessible and Ambitious** : can be achieved without requiring too many changes in habits, but represents a **motivating challenge** whose attainment generates satisfaction.

R

Realist : takes into account the **abilities** of your mentees, and the **context** of the project: level of the young people, limited duration (8 months), cumulation with courses. Unattainable objectives that are systematically postponed lead to discouragement and procrastination.

T

Time-defined : the time available is limited (over the year and in the week with the school)! Give your mentees **deadlines**, help them identify the time needed to achieve a goal.

ER

Evaluate et Readjust objectives, according to the progress of your mentees, the project, their changing availability and yours... If you find that certain objectives will not be achieved on time, or that they were too ambitious, take the time to reassess them with your team. Reassure them: it's normal for objectives to evolve over time!

Example: Instead of "Literature reviews and reading notes", suggest :

- "Lisez-chacun.e, une sections de l'article"
- "Each of you read a section of the article".
- "Identify at least 3 points you found interesting and 3 points you found less interesting".

APPENDIX 6 :

OTHER RESSOURCES

InitiaSciences ressources

Our Frequently Asked Questions for mentors

https://initiasciences.ca/faq_mentor-e-s/

Our 2024-2025 mentors present their projects

<https://initiasciences.ca/projets-2022-2023/>

A mentor from 2022-2023 shares her experience

<https://initiasciences.ca/nos-mentor-e-s-2/#temoignage>

Mentoring and teaching resources

Effects of mentoring on young people's mental health, school perseverance and sense of belonging. Future of Good et Mentor Canada. Infographie. <https://futureofgood.co/state-of-mentorship/>

What factors facilitate a good mentoring relationship? Review article.

De Wit, D. J, DuBois, D. L., Erdem, G., Larose, S., & Lipman, E. L. (2020) Predictors of mentoring relationship quality: investigation from the perspectives of youth and parent participants in Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada one-to-one mentoring programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(2), 192-208.

<https://www.mentoringcanada.ca/sites/default/files/2021-03/Summary%20Predicators%20of%20MRQ.pdf>

Day-to-day mentoring. Webinar.

Duck, S. Everyday Mentoring. 26th oct. 2020.

<https://mentoringcanada.ca/en/events/research-practice-webinar-series-part-2-sophia-duck>

Links between self-beliefs and learning.

Travaux de Carol Dweck.

<https://learning-theories.com/self-theories-dweck.html>

Resources on equity, diversity and inclusion

What are the risks of mentoring marginalized young people when you belong to the dominant culture? Review article

Lindwall, J. (2017). Will I be able to understand my mentee? Examining the potential risk of the dominant culture mentoring marginalized youth. *Journal of Youth Development*, 12(1), 72.

https://www.mentoringcanada.ca/sites/default/files/2021-03/Summary_3_Will_I_be_able_to_understand%5B1%5D.pdf

Centre de ressources inter-universitaire en équité, diversité et inclusion. In French.

<https://institutedi2.ulaval.ca/centre-ressources/>

Réseau Interuniversitaire Québécois EDI (RIQEDI) Toolbox. In French and English

<https://rqedi.com/boite-a-outils/>

Scientific communication resources

RaccourSci. Blog / Trousse à outils de l'Acfas. In French. Blog.

<https://www.raccoursci.com/>

SciPlus. Astuces pour la vulgarisation en vidéo (entre autre. In French. Chaîne YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/@SciPlus/videos>



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