**ICA New Professionals Programme**

**Mentoring Programme**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Who Is a New Professional?**

New Professionals are ICA members with less than 5 years’ experience in the archives and/or records management profession. Anyone with less than 5 years’ experience can self-identify as a New Professional, but the ICA provides financial support for 6-8 applicants each year, who are defined as ‘Active New Professionals.’ These Active New Professionals are funded to attend the ICA’s annual conference and are given additional support and guidance throughout the year or so in which they are considered active.

New Professionals are expected to carry out a range of duties during their active year, including: attend and participate actively in the annual ICA Conference; communicate actively on social media during the Conference; and, after the Conference is over, write an article about the Conference or a related topic for publication on the ICA website, FLASH or other appropriate publication and work on a significant project with fellow active new professionals.

**What Does a Mentor Do?**

The Mentor commits about 4-8 hours a month to liaise with and support a New Professional over the period in which the New Professional is considered active. Communications may be via email, text, Skype, or phone as appropriate. The goal is to offer support and advice on professional and career-oriented issues, to enhance the New Professional’s experience with and understanding of the records and archives profession and various career and professional development opportunities. Mentors may also review draft articles or reports written by the New Professional for publication on the ICA’s website, in FLASH, or in another appropriate ICA publication.

**Who Can Be a Mentor?**

Ideally, the Mentor will be an archives and records management professional, such as a line archivist, manager, or educator. Both mid-career and more experienced professionals are encouraged to participate.

**Mentors must be either individual members of the ICA (Category D) or people who work for Category A or Category C members of the ICA.** Because Category B membership is specifically for designated representatives of regional, national, or international associations, which could have hundreds of their own members, it is not logistically possible for the ICA to include as Mentors professionals who belong to Category B member organizations.

**What Are the Benefits for the Mentor?**

* Sharing experiences, ideas, and skills
* Learning about new professional activities and ideas
* Contributing to the development of the profession
* Enjoying the satisfaction of passing on valuable professional knowledge and experience.

**What Are the Benefits for the Mentee?**

* Sharing ideas with and receiving guidance from an experienced professional
* Learning to give and receive opinions and ideas with professional colleagues
* Receiving constructive feedback on ICA New Professional projects and activities
* Expanding professional contacts in the field.

**How Much Experience Does a Mentor need?**

The goal of the ICA New Professionals Programme is to help support New Professionals as they start their careers. We welcome applications from any ICA members – working, volunteer, or retired – who have an interest in supporting New Professionals. Many of the best Mentor relationships are with working professionals in ‘mid-career’ – that is, with 5-10 years’ experience in the field. These mid-career professionals can offer advice on archival and records management questions and also on more practical career matters, such as planning career moves, applying for positions, and identifying opportunities for further training. Applications from mid-career professionals are welcome; do not feel you do not have enough experience to provide valuable guidance to a New Professional.

**When and How Do the Mentor and Mentee Communicate?**

Mentors should be able to commit sufficient time to provide an average of about 4-8 hours of contact a month with their New Professional Mentee over the year or so in which they are paired together. However, it is recognized that communications will ebb and flow over the course of the period in which the Mentor and Mentee are officially paired, and no formal communications schedule is required.

It is up to the Mentor and Mentee to decide the best way to communicate. Options may include face-to-face meetings if they live in the same city or attend the same conferences or events, but most often communications happen by email, text, Skype, or phone. Communications schedules are entirely up to the Mentor and Mentee, though it is hoped that they can contact each other at least once a month. Throughout the experience, the goal is to engage in a process of constructive feedback, information sharing, and mutual learning.

**What Topics are Discussed?**

The Mentor and Mentee can choose whatever topics they wish. There is no formal agenda for communications. However, to support the relationship, the ICA has put together a list of potential questions that the Mentor and Mentee might ask each other, particularly as they get to know each other. This list will be made available to each Mentor and Mentee at the start of the mentoring relationship.

**What is the New Professional Mentorship Schedule for 2019?**

The 2019-2020 intake of Active New Professionals will be announced by June 22, 2019. It is hoped that this year’s pairings will be made no later than the beginning of September. The Active New Professionals will wind down their activities in May-June 2020, after which the official Mentor-Mentee relationship will end, though it is hoped that lasting relationships will develop, enhancing the professional lives of both Mentor and Mentee.

**I'm interested in Mentoring a New Professional. What should I Do Next?**

If you are an ICA member in Category A, C or D, please fill in our NP Mentor Application form (available on the ICA Mentorship Programme page at https://www.ica.org/en/mentoring-programme) and send it to Laura Millar at Millar@ica.org. If you have more questions about the Mentorship Programme, feel free to contact Laura Millar at the same email address.