

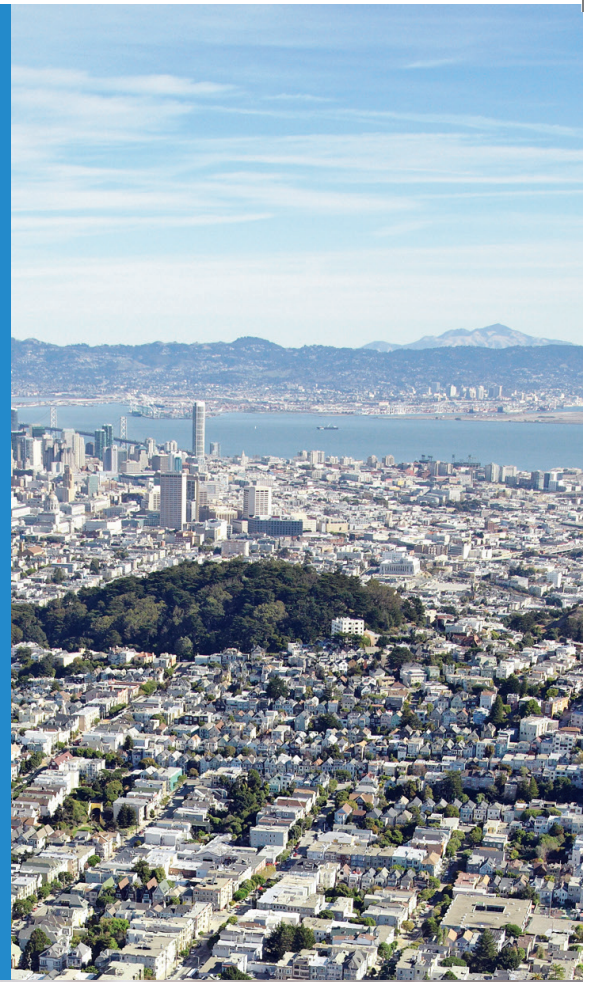
Sponsorship Toolkit



Office of the Vice Provost
Academic Affairs



- 1 Foreword
- 3 Introduction to Sponsorship
- 5 Why Sponsorship Matters
- 7 Equity and Sponsorship
- 8 Sponsorship Self-Reflection and Skills Development
- 9 Sponsorship for Sponsors
- 12 Sponsorship for Sponsees
- 15 Mapping a Sponsorship Network
- 19 Common Considerations About Sponsorship
- 21 Building an Institutional Culture of Equitable Sponsorship
- 25 Learn More



FOREWORD

Many Academic Health Centers have initiated mentoring programs over the past decade, and for good reason. Our research and others have shown that mentoring, a professional, reciprocal relationship focused on the growth and career development of the mentee, is a critical element in professional success and satisfaction.

However, after many years of building a successful faculty mentoring program at UCSF, it has become clear that while mentoring matters, it is not sufficient to create and maintain a climate that supports career advancement and equitable access to influence, particularly for women and faculty who are underrepresented in the health sciences (URiHS).

This is where sponsorship comes in.

As one review has noted, women may be ‘over-mentored and under-sponsored.’ What is sponsorship? Sponsorship is the support by an influential person for the advancement of an individual in whom she sees untapped or unappreciated leadership potential and/or talent. The sponsor has the position and the influence to advocate for those who are unable or unlikely to advocate for themselves. Sponsors do not appoint their protégés/sponsees to positions; rather, they spotlight them and open doors for them, enhancing their credibility and recognition within the institution. To ensure that women and URiHS faculty are equally represented at all leadership levels and have equal access to career

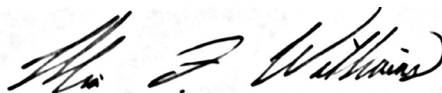
advancing opportunities, sponsorship is needed, and academic health centers need assistance to help build a culture of sponsorship.

This *Sponsorship Toolkit* provides the basic resources needed for both individuals or entire units to enhance their understanding and actions of sponsorship. In the following pages, the Toolkit reviews what is sponsorship, why it matters, and how to seek it out and/or provide it. You will learn that mentorship and sponsorship are distinct activities with complementary but distinct goals, and that while some mentors can also serve as sponsors, all faculty need and deserve access to sponsorship independent of their mentoring needs. It also contains a unique tool that will help sponsors and protégés/sponsees to map out their existing sponsorship networks to maximize their potential. It ends with some links to other resources for those who want to go deeper. We are excited to share this unique Toolkit with you and hope that it helps to help support a creative and equitable institutional culture for all.

Sincerely,



Mitchell D. Feldman, MD, MPhil, FACP



Mia F. Williams, MD, MS

**We use the term URiHS to be inclusive across professions in the health sciences. In medicine this is referred to as “underrepresented in medicine” (UIM) and relates to those racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population. (AAMC, 2023)*



“[My sponsor’s] confidence in me has had a huge impact on me personally and has also given me the confidence I need to work towards being successful at {my institution}. Every time I think I’m not worthy or don’t belong at {my institution}, I remember this person and their confidence in me.”

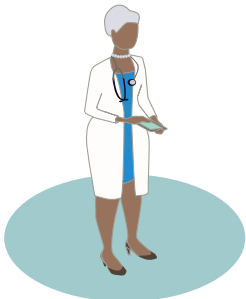
– Ladder Rank, Assistant Professor, White, Woman



Introduction to Sponsorship

What is Sponsorship?

Sponsorship is the “active support by someone appropriately placed in the organization who has significant influence on decision-making processes or structures and who is advocating for, protecting, and fighting for the career advancement of an individual.”



SPONSOR – The individual (with influence within the organization) doing the sponsorship.



SPONSEE – The individual receiving sponsorship. *(The terminology for the individual receiving sponsorship has evolved from protégé to sponsee. For this toolkit, we will use “sponsee.”)*

Sponsorship is Proactive Career Advancement

Providing resources

- Supports attendance to outside conferences or training programs
- Provides financial support for lab materials
- Creates supported role (% time)

Protecting and supporting

- Advocates for positions in and/or outside the home institution
- Voices support and advocates for sponsee during difficult time

Expanding opportunities

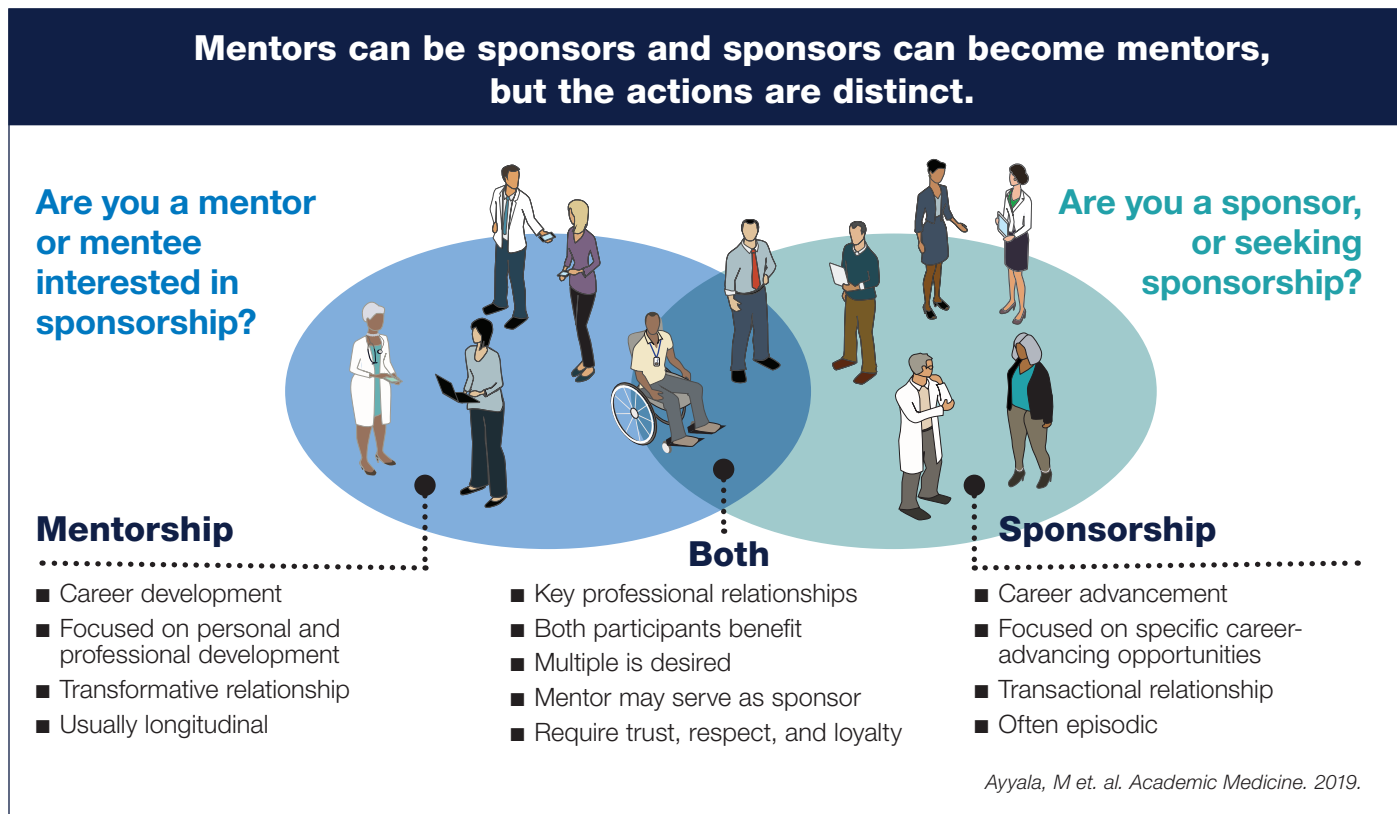
- Talks up to influential individual(s) about strengths and work of the sponsee
- Recommends sponsee to speak at conference in their place
- Introduces sponsee to leaders and collaborators in sponsor’s network

Mentorship and Sponsorship

Mentorship and sponsorship are professional relationships that play crucial and often distinct roles in career development.

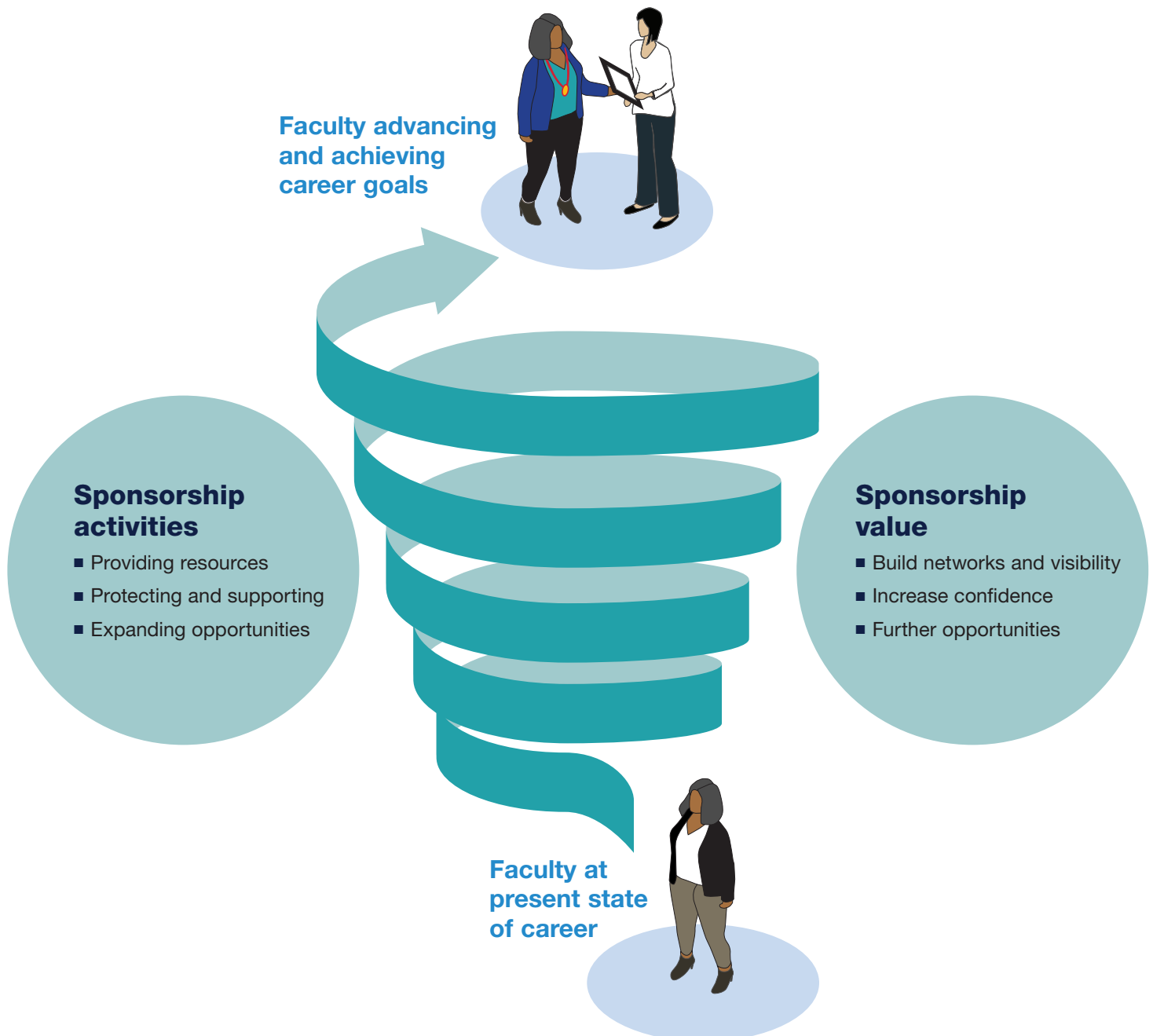
In **MENTORSHIP**, the focus is on the mentor nurturing the mentee's career development and career goals through feedback and coaching, often as a dialogue.

In **SPONSORSHIP**, the focus is on the sponsor **ACTIVELY** promoting and connecting a sponsee to high visibility positions and opportunities.





Why Sponsorship Matters





“Sponsorship is very important for junior faculty, but the unstructured nature of it means that the ones who need it most may not get it because they are not connected to the right people.”

– Adjunct, Assistant Professor, Woman, Black

“Sponsorship plays a big role in career success, especially at academic institutions. Once somebody sponsors you, they set an example for you to sponsor others whenever you can.”

– HS Clinical, Professor, Asian, Woman

“Sponsorship has helped me identify opportunities that might be good for my career, allow leadership to notice me as a candidate for opportunities, and allow me to amplify the impact of my skillset across the larger...community.”

– In Residence, Associate Professor, Asian, Man



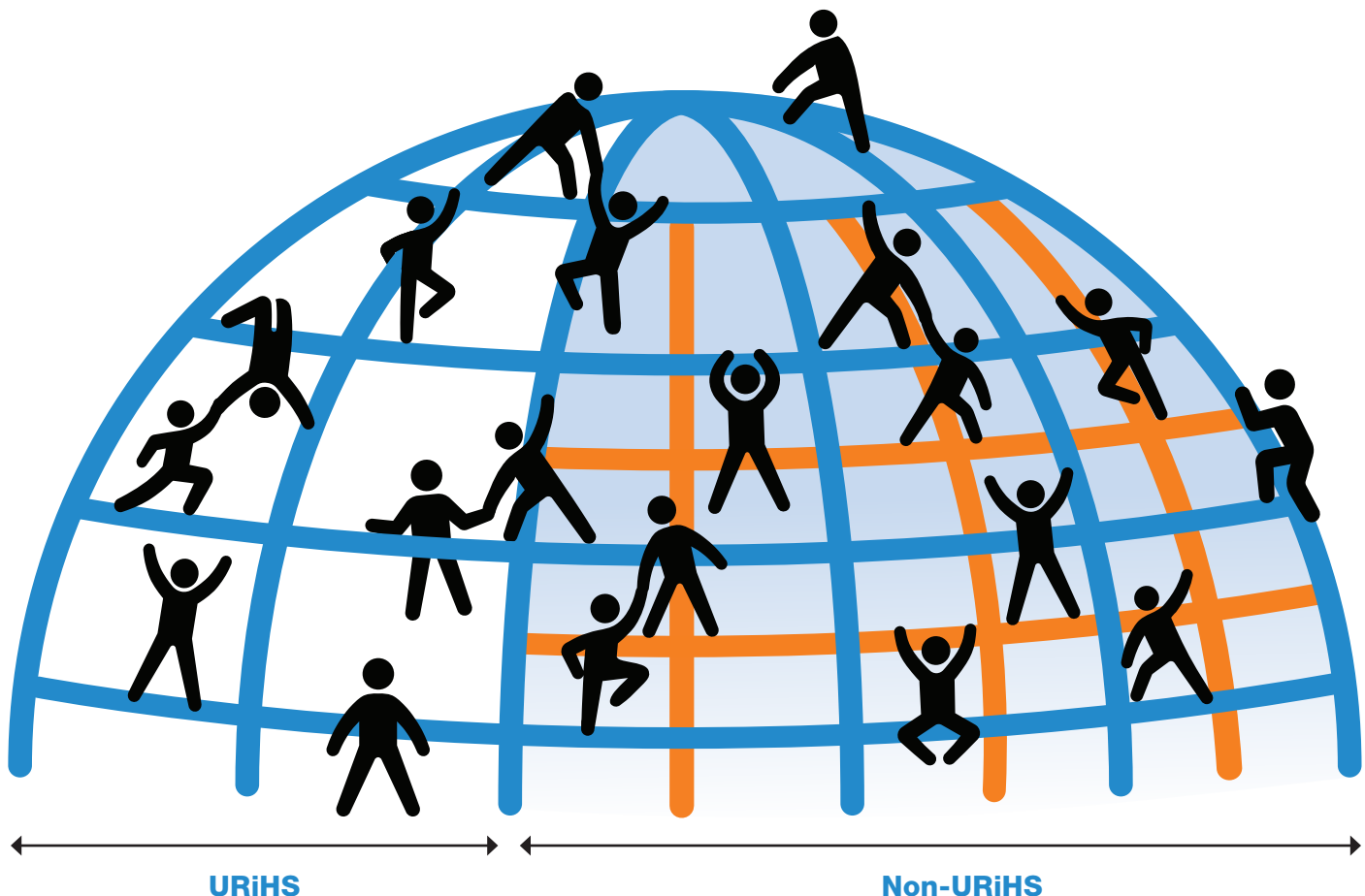
Equity and Sponsorship

Women and those traditionally underrecruited/underrepresented in the health sciences (URiHS) face disparities in advancement, retention, and promotion when compared with their peers.

Reasons for these disparities include bias and stereotype threat, disparities in pay, societal roles outside of professional life, lack of representation in leadership, differences in mentorship, **and differences in access to sponsorship.**

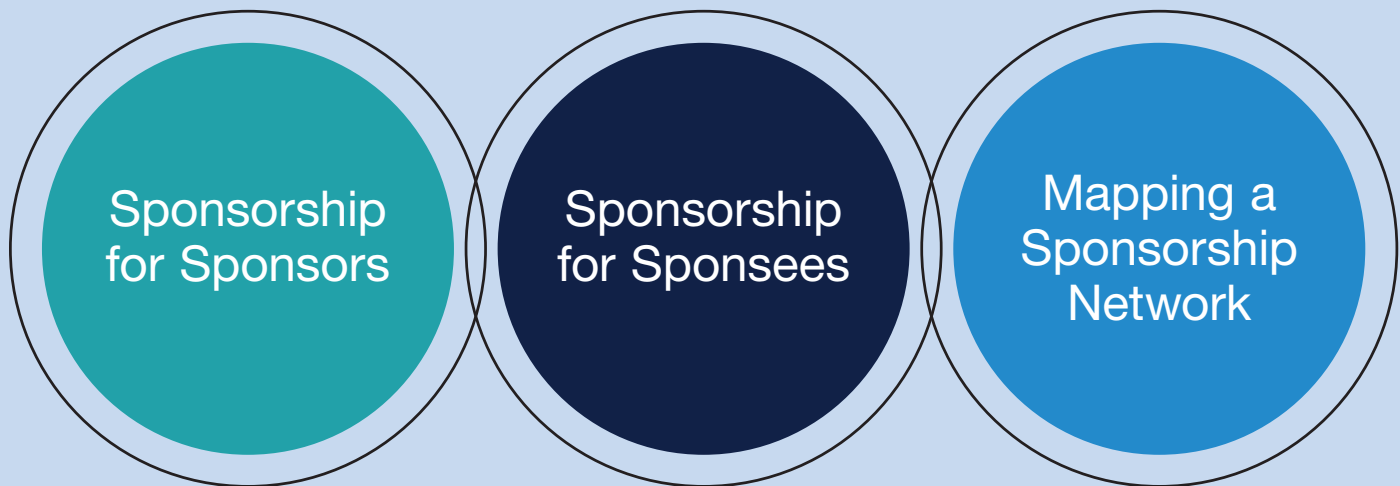
DIFFERENT JOURNEYS TO THE SAME PLACE:

For those who identify as URiHS, there is more distance between professional steps AND fewer sponsors to help you climb those steps.



Sponsorship Self-Reflection and Skills Development

On the following pages we explore considerations for becoming a sponsor or sponsee, including exercises to log your reflections, actions you can take, and how to build a network map.



Sponsorship for Sponsors

Why Be a Sponsor?

- **Generativity** – Provides purpose and meaning for the faculty serving as sponsor.
- **Visibility** – Increases sponsor legacy and brand through sponsee's contributions.
- **Loyalty** – Sponsee expresses support amongst their own network.
- **Honest input** – Unique outlooks of different parts of institution or ranks of faculty.
- **Equity** – By sponsoring, leaders can advance diversity in academic healthcare.

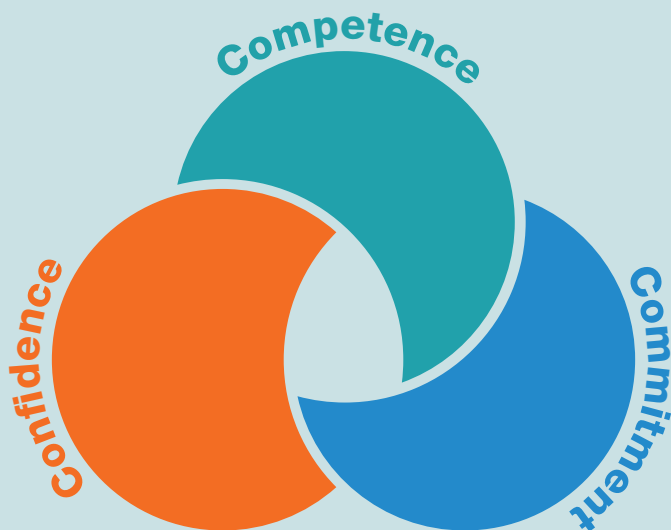
Qualities of an Effective Sponsor

Competence – Know how to sponsor

- Be aware of sponsorship opportunities.
- Pay attention to who, when, and why you sponsor (and your implicit biases).
- Ask effective sponsors how they do it.

Confidence – Understand your role as sponsor

- Understand your network and influence.
- Feel comfortable sharing your network with sponsee.
- Apply sponsorship as a tool to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) efforts.



Commitment – Follow through on your sponsorship actions

- Sponsorship starts with putting someone forward; it does not necessarily end after sponsee gains position.
- Sponsors may need to protect and support sponsee's ability to perform as they develop in the role. This can be followed up with specific feedback to the sponsee.

Am I Ready to be a Sponsor?



Reflect on your readiness for sponsorship and who and how you will sponsor.
Log your thoughts in the following exercises.

SPONSOR EXERCISE 1. Thinking of sponsoring

In what domains do I have influence? With whom do I have influence? Where are they located (e.g., at my institution or elsewhere)?

1.
2.
3.

What is my sponsorship network? How can I reach those people?

(message over social media, text, call, or email that individual)

Person	How to connect (text, call, e-mail)
1.	
2.	
3.	

SPONSOR EXERCISE 2. Who am I sponsoring?

Who are people I have previously sponsored?

1.	3.
2.	4.

Who are my potential sponsees? Specifically, who are excellent people I have not yet sponsored?*

1.	3.
2.	4.

**Equity refocus: Reflect on the individuals listed above and place an asterisk next to everyone who to your knowledge does NOT hold a shared identity with you.*

Who are people I supervise that are less visible AND would benefit from sponsorship?

Remember, not everyone is going to say, "here are my goals, help me get there."

1.	3.
2.	4.

SPONSOR EXERCISE 3. How will I sponsor?

I want to sponsor:	for:
Why this person?	
Why now?	
Do I have the right influence for this position? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO (check one)	
■ If yes, why?	
■ If no, who may be a great sponsor I can connect with:	
How can sponsoring this individual show my insight to leaders?	

Sponsorship for the Sponsee

I Have a Mentor, Why Do I Need a Sponsor?

Sponsors open doors by:

- Expanding network for mentoring and sponsorship.
- Increasing visibility to those out of reach.
- Gaining you a seat at the table.

Sponsors see your potential

- And can empower you to see it too!

Sponsors can provide insight into the hidden agenda for advancement

Sponsors Help You Attain Your Career Sweet Spot



I Want a Sponsor! Now What?



Reflect on where do you want to go professionally.

Log your thoughts in the following exercises.

SPONSEE EXERCISE 1. Where do you want to go in your career?

Reflect on your career goals.

Who can help you move towards these goals? Pick three goals and a sponsor or mentor who can help you attain them.

3-Year Goals	5-Year Goals	10-Year Goals

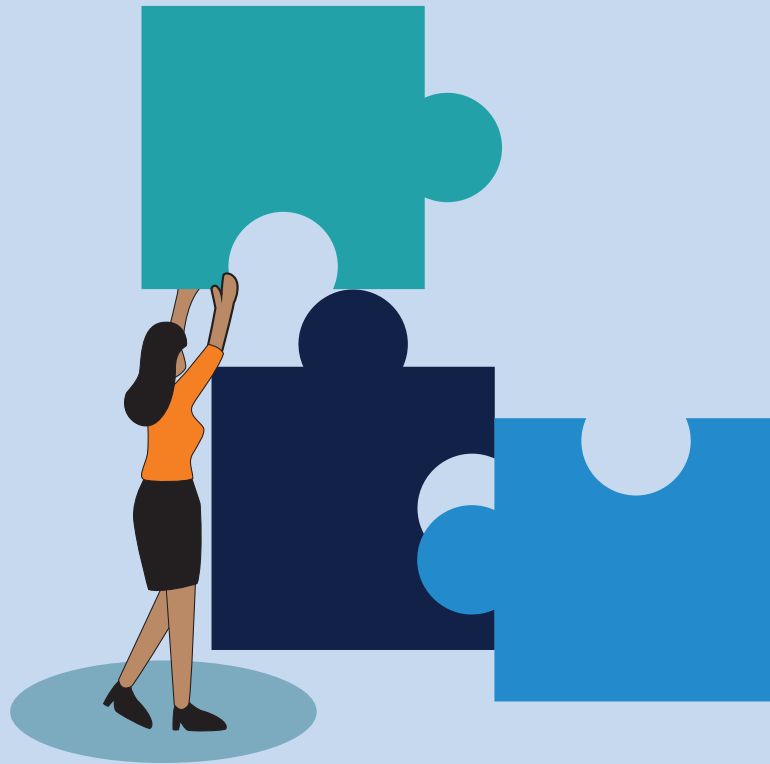
SPONSEE EXERCISE 2. How do I get sponsorship ready?

Sponsors look for someone who:

- ✓ Brings unique viewpoints.
- ✓ Performs 110% → show you are an all-star.
- ✓ They can trust.
- ✓ Is open to honest feedback from the sponsor.
- ✓ Can be loyal and support the sponsor within their own network.

What is one thing I can do to make sponsors aware of the above traits?

(Example: Ask to present at Division Grand Rounds.)



TAKE ACTION:

How Do I Gain Sponsorship?

Make potential sponsors aware of your goals

- Peers may have influence in areas you do not and can act as or connect you to sponsors.
- Mentors know about where you want to go from here...they may be able to sponsor you or connect you with a sponsor.
- Supervisors (e.g., department heads, division chiefs) should know your career direction and aspirations.

Make a Sponsorship Plan

- Ask peers, mentors, and supervisor(s) who you should connect with.
- Then, ask those with network and influence to make that connection.
- If they are unaware of sponsorship, send them this Toolkit!



Mapping a Sponsorship Network

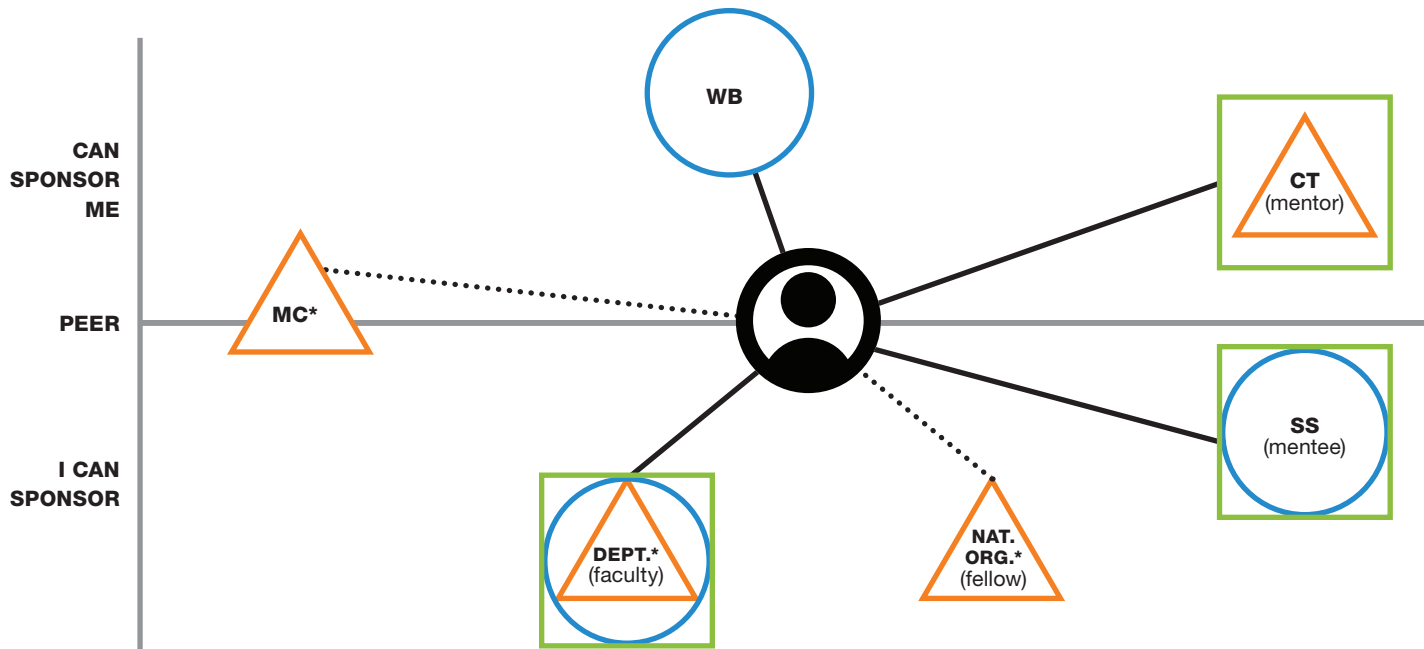
A method for visually mapping your sponsorship network:

- That includes past, present, and potential future sponsors and sponsees.

Identify the strengths and areas for growth as a sponsor/sponsee and reflect on:

- Type of sponsorship you can receive or offer.
- Domains of your career where you may need sponsorship.

Example Map



KEY:

- Provides Resources
- Protects and Supports
- △ Expands Opportunities

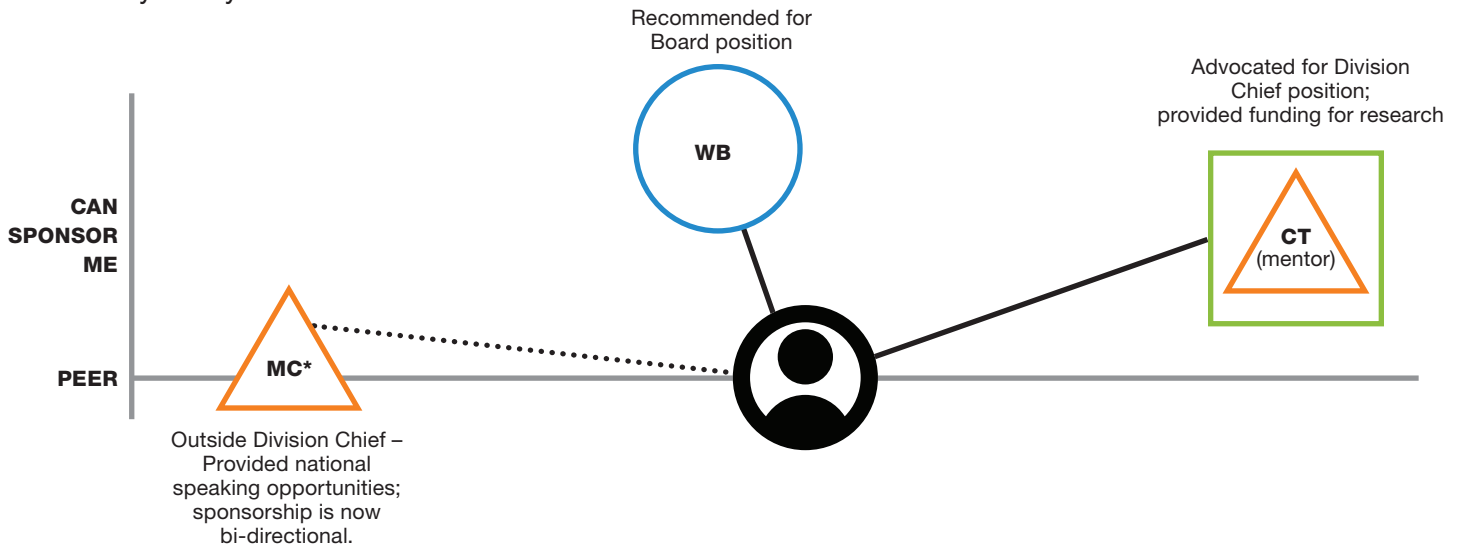
- Inter-institutional
- Intra-institutional

- ABC: Initials of Individual
- *: Holds an Identity Different than Mine

Building Your Map

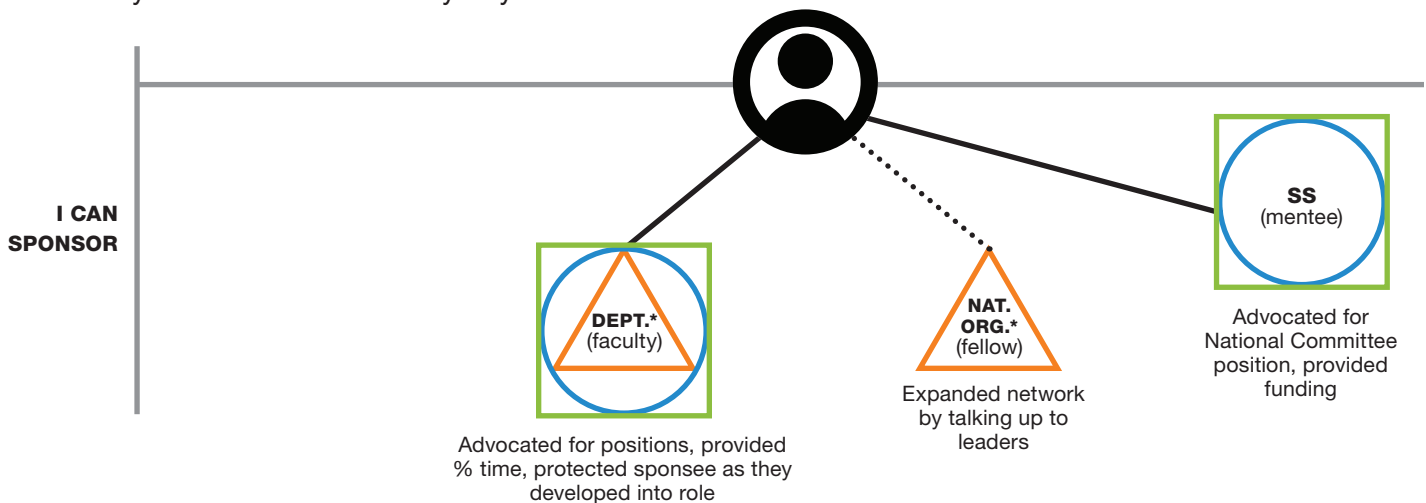
Start with your Sponsors:

- Who are they?
- How can they sponsor you?
- Are they also your mentor?



Then look at your Sponsees:

- Who are they?
- Are they also your mentee?
- Do they hold a different identity to you?



KEY:

- Provides Resources
- Protects and Supports
- △ Expands Opportunities

- Inter-institutional
- Intra-institutional

- ABC: Initials of Individual
- ★ : Holds an Identity Different than Mine

SPONSORSHIP MAP SELF REFLECTION: For Sponsors and Sponsees

Consider who has supported me / who have I supported by:

- Providing resources.
- Protecting and supporting.
- Expanding opportunities.

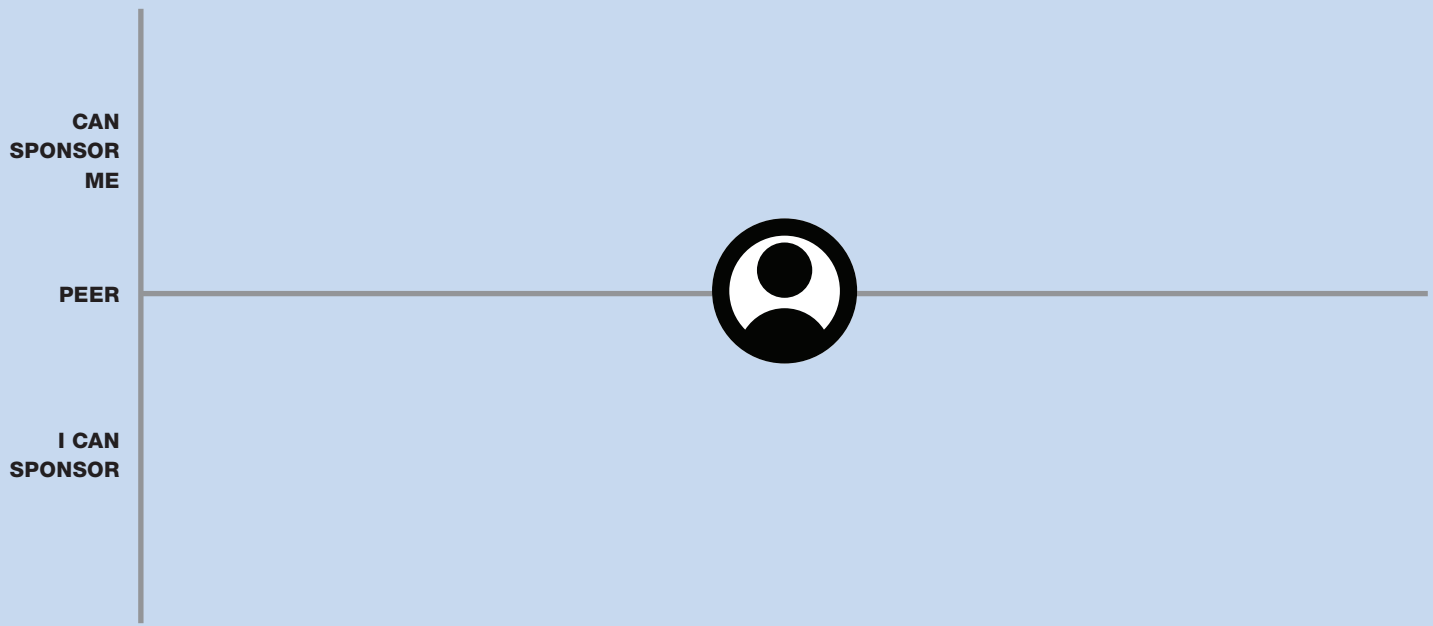
Potential sponsors and potential sponsees:

- Can come from within AND outside of your divisions, departments, ranks, and series.
- Should be from within AND outside my institution.
- May have similar AND different identities to mine.

NOTE: Sponsees may have opportunities to offer sponsorship to their sponsor

- Sponsee may have influence in a career domain their sponsor does not.

TAKE ACTION: Build Your Own Map



KEY:

- Provides Resources
- Protects and Supports
- △ Expands Opportunities

- Inter-institutional
- Intra-institutional

- ABC: Initials of Individual
- ★ : Holds an Identity Different than Mine



Common Considerations About Sponsorship

Transparency

- Sponsorship usually takes place behind closed doors and is often not transparent to the sponsee.
- However, there may be benefits to disclosing sponsorship to the sponsee, including:
 - Allowing the sponsee to see their own potential in a way they had not recognized.
 - Facilitating the sponsee to identify the sponsor as someone they can show loyalty to.
 - Developing the sponsee's awareness that they have a sponsor they can turn to in the future.
- When deciding to disclose sponsorship, some considerations include reflecting on your motivations for disclosing.
 - Is this for your ego or their benefit?
- When disclosing, think of the impact on sponsee:
 - Focus on the reason for sponsorship — you see that person's excellence AND benefit by having them in the role.
 - If protecting and supporting the sponsee in a new role, check in with the sponsee before discussing what you have heard.

Episodic AND potentially longitudinal

Sponsorship relationships may be episodic AND sponsors and sponsees can look for opportunities to maintain connection.



- Sponsee
 - Update sponsor on your success.
 - Thank them for impact on your career.
- Sponsor
 - Check in with sponsee to see how they feel about their performance in this role.
 - Assess if they need support as they develop in the role and follow through with discussions with leaders.

Unsuccessful outcome

Sponsorship is important even if does not lead to attaining position(s) or opportunities because it:

- Creates visibility so that the sponsee is considered by leaders in the future – even if you are not there to sponsor.
- Builds connections for the sponsee.
- May help the sponsee see value in themselves they had not recognized previously.

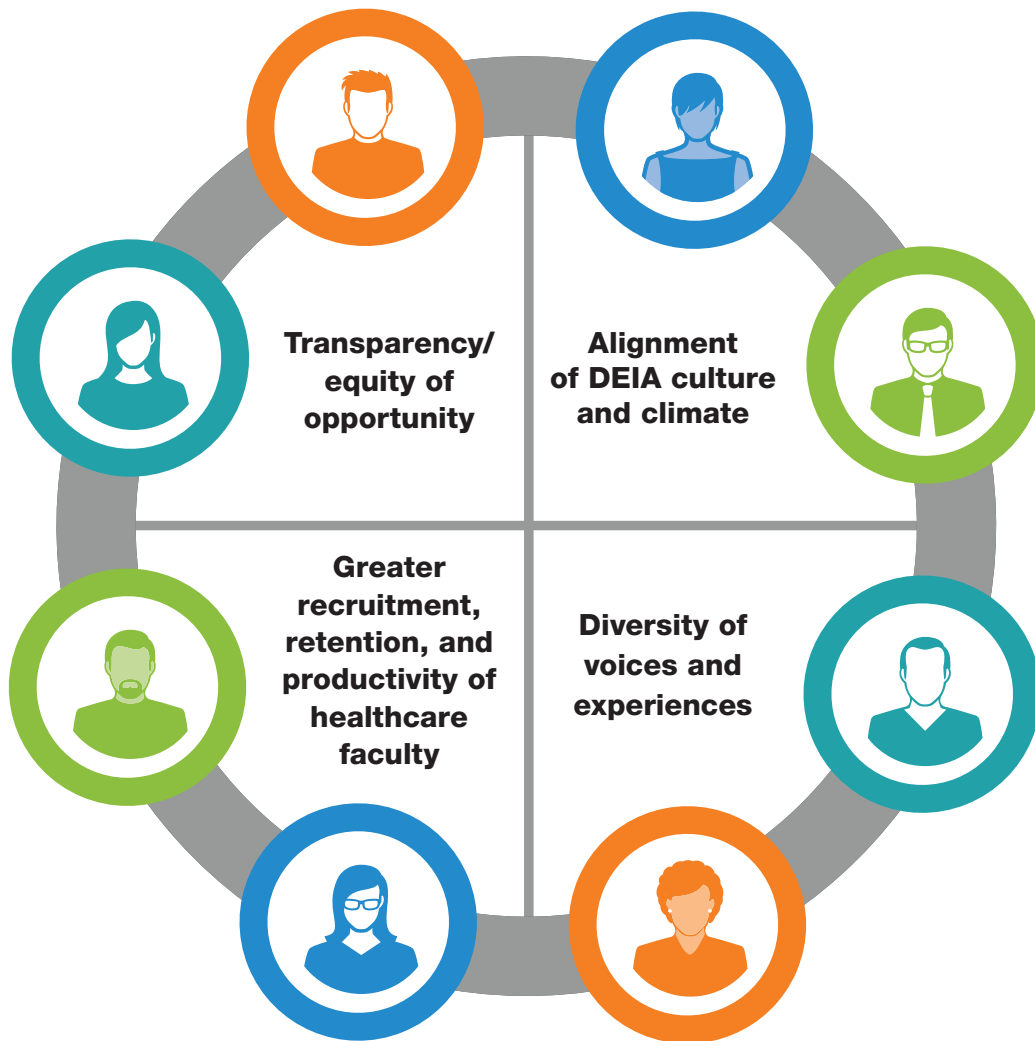
Common Questions about Sponsorship

Issues	Considerations for the Sponsor 	Considerations for the Sponsee 
<p>Position Is there a mismatch of goals?</p>	<p><i>Does the sponsee feel like they are not prepared?</i> Talk them up and consider recommending they talk to their mentor.</p> <p><i>Does the role align with the sponsees' goal?</i> Make sure the position is in the professional direction the sponsee wants to go.</p>	<p><i>What if this is not the position I want?</i> Let your sponsor know and what your career goals are for future opportunities.</p>
<p>Timing Is it the right time?</p>	<p><i>Ask the sponsee why it doesn't feel like the right timing.</i> The answer may be more complex relating to professional or personal responsibilities, self-confidence or more.</p>	<p><i>Talk to a mentor about the timing.</i> Reflect that there is rarely the perfect time to take on an opportunity and that this opportunity may not present itself again in the short term. The sponsor sees something you may not recognize in yourself.</p>
<p>Perception How do sponsees interpret sponsorship?</p>	<p>Encourage your sponsee that sponsorship means getting deserved visibility for their excellence.</p>	<p>Sponsorship shows that other people recognize your excellence. Sponsorship is needed at all levels of your career.</p>

NOTE: Regardless of whether the sponsorship is accepted, make sure the sponsee knows you see their excellence.



Building an Institutional Culture of Equitable Sponsorship





“Our biases around what a particular person should look like for particular roles keeps us from sponsoring certain people who have not served in those roles previously.”

– Professor, Woman, Black and Latinx

“I never was [sponsored]. And that’s the problem, right?”

Professor, Man, Latinx



SPONSORSHIP AT THE INSTITUTION:

Goal = Culture of Equitable Sponsorship

- Facilitates everyone contributing to their maximum potential.
- To achieve this, we need to recognize that not all members of the community have their contributions elevated equally.
 - Merit alone will not elevate excellent faculty.
 - Women and URiHS faculty are less likely to have their excellent skills, dedication to work, AND unique insights highlighted...that's where sponsorship comes in.

How Do
We Get
There?

Sponsorship at the Institution Should Include:

- Clear expectations of leaders, such as department heads, division chiefs, section heads.
- Sponsorship should not be perceived as academic nepotism but rather a career-advancing tool.
- Faculty should be recognized for how sponsoring excellence improves the institution.

Expected to occur at all levels

- Onboarding for leadership/managerial positions should include training on equitable sponsorship.
- Faculty need to know what sponsorship looks like and how to sponsor effectively.
- Sponsees need to know their responsibilities as sponsees.

Performed with competence

- Yearly reviews include check-ins regarding faculty receiving sponsorship and leaders performing.
- Faculty Climate Survey should continue to assess if faculty are receiving sponsorship.
- Leaders should self-assess for acting as sponsors and sponsoring equitably.
- The institution should assess equity in faculty receiving career advancing within and outside of the institution.

Accountable and assessed

- Leadership opportunities should be sent to ALL faculty, to allow equal opportunities for sponsors to act and sponsees to ask for sponsorship.
- Transparent sponsorship facilitates awareness and enables sponsees to have a voice.

Transparent and equitable



Learn More

Business / corporate

- Catalyst, www.catalyst.org
- Center for Talent Innovation (Coqual), coqual.org
- Hewlett SA. The Sponsor Effect: How to Be a Better Leader by Investing in Others. *Harvard Business Review Press*; 2019.

Academic healthcare

- Association of American Medical Colleges. Underrepresented in medicine Definition [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.aamc.org/what-we-do/equity-diversity-inclusion/underrepresented-in-medicine>. 2023.
- Guptill M, Reibling ET, Clem K. Deciding to lead: a qualitative study of women leaders in emergency medicine. *Int J Emerg Med*. 2018;11(1):47.
- Lalani N, Griffith KA, Jones RD, Spratt DE, Croke J, Jaggi R. Mentorship Experiences of Early-Career Academic Radiation Oncologists in North America. *Int J Radiat Oncol Biol Phys*. 2018;101(3):732-740.
- Ibarra, H. A Lack of Sponsorship Is Keeping Women from Advancing into Leadership. *Harvard Business Review*. 2019.
- Levine RB, Ayyala MS, Skarupski KA, et al. “It’s a Little Different for Men” – Sponsorship and Gender in Academic Medicine: A Qualitative Study. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2021;36(1):1-8.
- Patton EW, Griffith KA, Jones RD, Stewart A, Ubel PA, Jaggi R. Differences in Mentor-Mentee Sponsorship in Male vs. Female Recipients of National Institutes of Health Grants. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2017;177(4):580-582.
- Sexton D, Lemak C H, Wainio J A, Career Inflection Points of Women Who Successfully Achieved the Hospital CEO Position. *J Healthcare Management*. 014;59(5):367-836.
- Williams MF, Yank V, O’Sullivan P, Alldredge B, Feldman MD. Faculty knowledge, actions, and perceptions of sponsorship: an institutional survey study. *Med Educ Online*. 2023 Dec;28(1):2218665.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE EDITORS: Mitchell D. Feldman, MD, MPhil, FACP; Mia F. Williams, MD, MS

CONTRIBUTOR: Crystal Liang

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Laura Myers Design

Sponsored by the UCSF Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, the UCSF Office of Faculty & Academic Affairs, and the UCSF Faculty Mentoring Program

© 2023 The Regents of the University of California



UCSF