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**USNC Mentoring Program Scope and Intent**

The USNC mentoring program is intended to be an opportunity for emerging standards and conformity assessment professionals to enter into a one-on-one relationship with more experienced members of the standards and conformity assessment community for the purpose of retention, development and overall success.

The match of mentor to protégé is based on specific criteria that are indicated by the individual during the application process. For example, the mentor would enter areas of expertise such as TC Secretary, USNC Council member, etc., and the protégé would enter areas he or she wishes to explore. Once paired, the relationship may be conducted entirely electronically or through other means, as agreed by the two parties. The time commitment would be up to the individuals, though guidelines established by the USNC may state that the commitment of the mentor would not be expected to exceed 5 hours per month. The relationship would continue for as long as it is deemed beneficial by the parties involved.

Whereas training is typically a significant volume of information passed from one to many, mentoring is a partnership in which two individuals set their own agenda, and the mentor provides guidance to the protégé in order to assist in achieving the latter’s goals. In the case of standards and conformity assessment professionals, a mentoring program would foster the growth of emerging professionals and enable them to be successful in their endeavors, whether their goals are to take on leadership roles in US or International programs or to be successful contributing experts or delegates. The mentoring program can be seen as a way to retain new standards and conformity assessment professionals and as a means of filling the pipeline for future leaders in the USNC.

Mentoring is not intended to take the place of training, so introductory training webinars and courses offered by the USNC would be a prerequisite to participation in the mentoring program.