



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

# **MENTOR APPLICATION PROCESS GUIDE**

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## ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO BECOME A MENTOR?

### Who Can Apply?

We welcome applications from professionals who meet the following criteria:

#### *a. Essential Requirements*

- **For On-site (IIP) Mentors:** Must be employed at AKU or AKDN agencies in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) or Pakistan.
- **For Virtual (VIP) Mentors:** Can be employed at any AKU or AKDN agency globally (East Africa, East and South Asia, Europe, Americas, or any other location)
- Minimum 2 years of professional experience in your field.
- Ability to commit at least 2 hours per week for mentorship activities.
- Department head/supervisor approval to participate.
- A meaningful project suitable for a 3-12 months duration.
- Commitment to inclusive, intercultural mentorship practices.

#### *b. Preferred Qualifications*

- Previous mentoring, supervision, or teaching experience.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Understanding of diverse cultural contexts.
- Passion for developing emerging talent.
- Active involvement in current departmental projects.

### What Support Mentors Provide

Your role varies based on internship mode:

#### *a. For On-site (International) Internship Programme (IIP) Mentors*

- Minimum 2 hours/week structured mentorship (1:1s, feedback, coaching)
- Departmental orientation and workspace access (desk, computer, tools)
- On-ground logistical support for field visits and site access
- Coordination of work-related transportation when needed
- Project-specific resources and materials
- Weekly team touchpoints (1 hour/week for intern to interact with team members)
- Mid-term and end-term evaluations
- Exit debrief and documentation

#### *b. For Virtual Internship Programme (VIP) Mentors*

- Minimum 2 hours/week virtual mentorship via Zoom/Teams
- Access to digital resources, shared drives, and collaboration tools
- Project supervision and regular feedback
- Weekly check-ins and progress reviews



- Mid-term and end-term evaluations
- Exit debrief and documentation
- NO physical or logistical arrangements required

### **What Does the Programme Provide?**<sup>1</sup>

Strategic Division of Responsibilities: The programme is designed so mentors focus exclusively on mentorship and project supervision, while GEO handles all logistical, administrative, and professional development infrastructure. Programme Fee Coverage Ensures:

#### ***a. For On-site (IIP) Interns***

- Complete logistical support: Housing, visa processing and payment, airport transfers, daily shuttle transportation, welcome package (SIM card, meals, merchandise)
- Comprehensive programme infrastructure: Pre-arrival guidance, full orientation, ongoing administrative coordination, cultural excursions, networking events, farewell dinner
- Professional development: 60+ hours of workshops, speaker series, asynchronous courses, career-building sessions, certificates

#### ***b. For Virtual (VIP) Interns***

- Technical infrastructure: Virtual platforms (Zoom, portal), technical support, collaboration tools
- Professional development: 60+ hours of workshops, speaker series, asynchronous courses, networking opportunities, career-building sessions, certificates
- Programme coordination: Weekly check-ins, ongoing support, and administrative management

#### ***c. What This Means for Mentors***

You provide **ONLY**:

- ✓ Project supervision and mentorship (minimum 2 hours/week)
- ✓ For IIP: Workspace, equipment, project resources, on-ground field/work visit logistics
- ✓ For VIP: Virtual meeting time and digital resource access

You do **NOT** provide:

- ✗ Any accommodation, visa, or transportation arrangements
- ✗ Living expenses, meals, or financial compensation
- ✗ Administrative or logistical coordination

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<sup>1</sup> Mentors can dedicate their time and expertise to what matters most—developing the intern's professional capabilities and ensuring project success—while GEO manages everything else. For the complete programme fee breakdown, see Mentor Manual.



## QUICK DECISION CHECKLIST!

Before applying, confirm you can answer "yes" to all:

- ☐ I have obtained approval from my department head/supervisor
- ☐ I have a meaningful project that will last 3-12 months
- ☐ I can commit at least 2 hours per week for mentorship
- ☐ I can provide workspace and equipment access (IIP) OR virtual meeting time (VIP)
- ☐ I can support on-ground logistics for field visits (IIP only)
- ☐ I understand the programme covers accommodation, visas, and professional development
- ☐ I am committed to creating an inclusive, supportive learning environment
- ☐ I can complete mid-term and end-term evaluations

## APPLICATION PROCESS: FOUR SIMPLE STEPS!

### **Step 1: Submit a Terms of Reference (TOR)**

a. **Positions Criterion:** The programme coordinators will work with you to craft positions that are:

- Tailored to your departmental needs and priorities
- Feasible for both virtual and on-site execution
- Engaging with meaningful project deliverables
- Educational with clear learning outcomes for professional and intellectual growth

b. **Submission Option A: Online Microsoft Form (Recommended)**

- Visit: <https://www.aku.edu/geo/gmp/Pages/Mentor-Application.aspx>
- Click "Apply Now"
- Complete the MS Form TOR online
- Submit electronically

c. **Submission Option B: MS Form and Word Template (For Multiple Positions)**

- Access the link at the top of the [Microsoft Form TOR](#)
- Download the Word TOR template from the [Mentor Resources folder](#)
- Complete one form per position/supervisor
- Email to: [aku.iip@aku.edu](mailto:aku.iip@aku.edu)

d. **Internship Areas/Fields/Streams:**

We welcome positions in the following areas, and more. Each stream is meant to provide students with comprehensive knowledge and skills relevant to their chosen streams.

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Health Sciences                     | • Accounting & Finance      |
| • Communications, Media and Marketing | • International Development |
|                                       | • Data Sciences & IT        |



- Education
- Social Sciences & Humanities
- University Advancement
- Policy & Partnerships
- Cultural Development
- Environmental Science & Sustainability

*If your proposed internship doesn't fit these streams, indicate the appropriate category under **"Other"** and we'll accommodate you.*

## **Step 2: Virtual Interviews and Final Selection**

### ***a. After GEO's thorough screening process***

- Review Shortlist: You'll receive applications of 3-5 pre-screened candidates who match your requirements
- Co-Interview: Conduct 20-minute virtual interviews with shortlisted candidates alongside programme coordinators.
- Select: Rank and select your preferred candidate(s) within 72 hours of interviews
- Confirmation: GEO will notify you of final placements

***b. Interview Timeline:*** Typically 1-2 weeks after TOR submission, depending on recruitment cycle.

## **Step 3: Onboarding and Orientation**

### ***a. GEO Role Post Intern Selection***

- Offer Letter & Paperwork: GEO sends official offers and manages all contracts, NDAs, and onboarding documentation
- AKU Access: Biometric Access to Department and AKU ID Card (Onsite interns), IT setup for email, systems, and required software
- GEO Orientation: Comprehensive briefing on AKDN/AKU, data security, risk management, programme features, and professional development curriculum

### ***b. Mentor/Departmental Orientation Role***

- Team introductions
- Workspace tour and designated work area
- Project overview and expectations
- Department-specific policies and procedures
- Communication preferences

***Mentor's Primary Role Before Start of Internship:*** Host a team kick-off meeting with your intern, relevant colleagues, and the programme coordinator.



## **Step 4: Begin Mentorship<sup>2</sup>**

Once your intern arrives, you'll establish the foundation for a successful placement through structured orientation and regular engagement:

- Week 1: Comprehensive orientation covering workspace, team, project scope, and expectations (detailed guidance in Mentor Quick Start Guide)
- Weekly 1:1 meetings: 30-60 minute structured mentorship sessions for progress review, feedback, and coaching
- Regular progress tracking: Monitor milestones and deliverables using task boards and check-ins
- Continuous feedback loop: Provide timely, specific feedback to support skill development and project quality
- GEO partnership: Ongoing coordination with programme coordinators for troubleshooting, resources, and support

## **IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE**

### **A. Hybrid Internship Option**

We offer intentional hybrid placements for candidates who wish to experience both modes:

- Combines virtual and on-site components
- Provides flexibility and diverse learning experiences
- Requires planning for both virtual setup and on-site orientation/logistics

### **B. Hybrid Placements Due to Visa/Permit Delays**

In the event of delays in visa/permit issuance, recruited on-site candidates will begin on a hybrid internship placement:

- Interns start virtually on the assigned date while awaiting visa approval
- Once the visa/permit is issued, they transition to on-site for the remaining duration
- Mentors should plan for virtual supervision initially, then on-site orientation upon arrival

### **C. Internship Duration & Extensions**

- Minimum Duration: 3 months (12 weeks)
- Standard Duration: 3 to 12 months (dependent on student availability and academic calendar)
- Extensions: Available upon mutual agreement with the intern
- Process: Email [aku.iip@aku.edu](mailto:aku.iip@aku.edu) 2 weeks before the current end date

**Questions?** Contact us at [aku.iip@aku.edu](mailto:aku.iip@aku.edu) or visit: <https://www.aku.edu/geo/gmp/Pages/Mentor-Application.aspx>

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<sup>2</sup> For detailed first-week orientation steps and ongoing mentorship best practices, see the Mentor Quick Start Guide (separate document) and Mentor Manual.