

Individualized Development Plan (IDP) – Postdoctoral Researchers

The Faculty of Graduate Studies' IDP is a tool to assist postdoctoral researchers, like you, to identify and develop your goals during your fellowship. This IDP is an **abridged version** that has been designed for postdocs who prefer a more streamlined option compared to the full IDP based on their individual preferences.

When creating an IDP, with the help of a mentor, you can enhance your professional growth and skills by:

- **Setting and communicating goals** related to teaching/mentoring, research and/or professional development with your supervisor and other relevant individuals
- **Identifying ways to learn or improve your competencies** to be used during your fellowship and within other professional spaces
- **Identifying your strengths, talents and passions**, as well as opportunities to use them during your fellowship and in your future professional endeavours while building an effective support network

The development of an IDP is a cyclical process. You are encouraged to revisit it over the course of your fellowship as interests and long-term goals evolve. The five steps in working with the IDP are as follows:

1. **Self-Assessment/Reflection:** looking back while planning for the future
2. **Setting Goals:** clarifying the knowledge and skills you need
3. **Exploring Opportunities:** developing a strategy for realizing your plan
4. **Engagement:** acting on your plan to achieve your goals
5. **Check-in:** revisit to update your goals and engagement activities

Further information, resources and relevant contact information can be found on the [Individualized Development Plan \(IDP\) - Postdoctoral Researchers webpage](#).

Self-Assessment/Reflection

To begin, reflect on the following areas. These will most likely change and evolve during your fellowship, but you can use it as a guide as you progress.

What are my...	My Response
...short- or long-term goals for current and future career success?	
...current areas of strength? Where do I want to improve?	
...self-improvement goals? What new skills do I want to acquire?	

Planning Ahead

Keeping your self-assessment/reflection in mind, situate your current portfolio (e.g., achievements and successes), plan out goals and next steps, and then revisit the IDP to describe and identify the skills that your engagement helped to develop.

	Current Portfolio What have I worked on? What are my achievements?	Goals Where do I want to go? What do I want to improve?	Next Steps How will I make that happen? What resources will I need?	Skills Did I achieve my goal(s)? If so, what did I learn?
Career Exploration and Planning				
Communication				
Health and Wellness				
Managing Time and Resources				

Research Dissemination				
Teaching/Mentoring				

Strategies and Tips:

1. Refer to your resume/CV when reflecting on your current portfolio. You do not have to list everything; rather, focus on the main points that give a sense of your work thus far. These points can also be useful when writing a cover letter or when providing a reference with a summary of your experience and involvement.
2. Postdoctoral researchers are strongly encouraged to view all professional skills opportunities and resources at York University – organized under the six competency areas of the IDP – on the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Professional Skills \(GPPS\) webpage](#). The webpage includes a list of resources that can be identified as next steps and opportunities.
3. Use the [IDP Example](#) to get a sense of how to frame and set goals, next steps, and skills. It can also be helpful to speak with a mentor to get further support and to revise your plans based on your short-term and long-term goals.