

# HOW TO FIND A RESEARCH MENTOR

## GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO STAND OUT

If you are looking for a laboratory to work in, you need to get an opportunity and you have to stand out to get that opportunity.

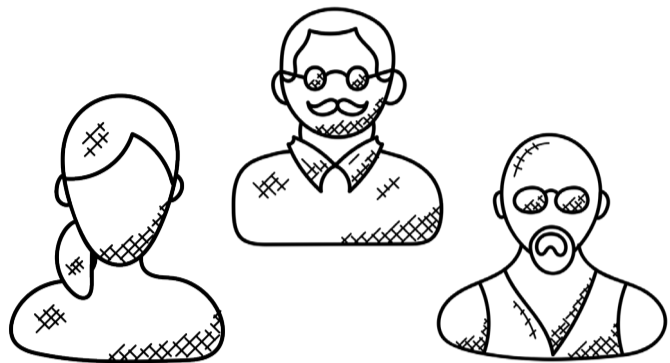
## ROAD MAP TO A MENTOR

1. Identify Potential Faculty Mentors
2. Educate Yourself
3. Write a Cover Letter
4. Interviews



### 1. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL FACULTY MENTORS

Visit the [faculty page](#) to start your search

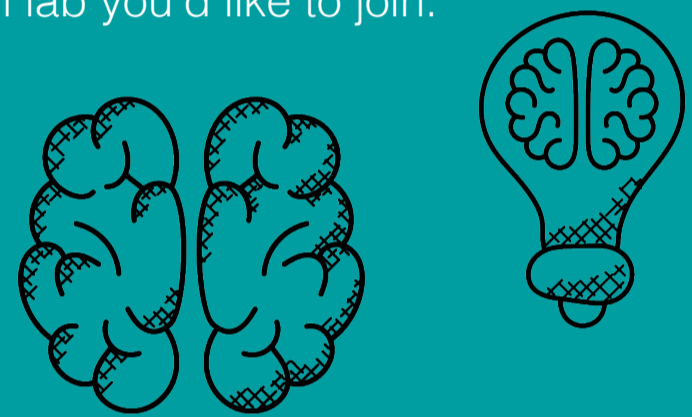


- **Make a big list!** Not all faculty will be taking new students so cast a wide net.
- **Check out each lab's website** from your list of potential mentors. This should help you narrow your list to 8-10 faculty.
- **Still need help identifying?** If you want help identifying faculty members to work with [contact the NSCI Major Director with some information about yourself.](#)

### 2. EDUCATE YOURSELF

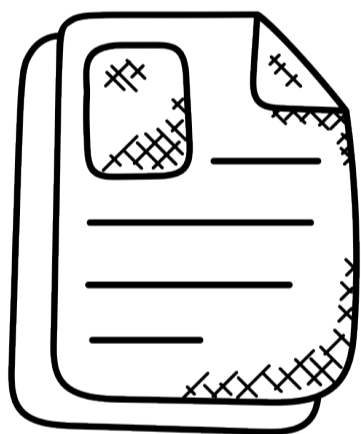
Make an educated choice on which lab you'd like to join.

- **Read up** on each faculty member's work
- **Before approaching** the P.I. (Principal Investigator aka laboratory head), know something about their lab.



### 3. WRITE A COVER LETTER

To get to the interview stage, you need a good cover letter. Your letter should be concise and less than a page.

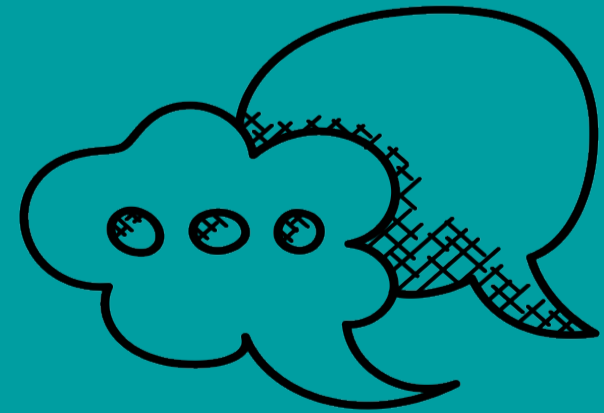


- **Salutations!** Address your letter to Dr. \_\_\_\_ or Prof. \_\_\_\_\_ regardless of their rank (assistant, associate, or full) or degree (MD and/or PhD).
- **State your vitals.** Year? Major? Interested in summer research or during the academic year? Potential Metcalf or Honors student? This is all info faculty need to know.
- **Know your stuff.** Tell the faculty what interests you about their research. Keep it brief & about 3 sentences.
- **Experience.** Write about your past laboratory experience or alternatively that you are eager to learn.
- **Goals.** Write about your long-term career goals (e.g. biotech, pharma, academics, medicine, or you're not sure).
- **Ask!** Request to speak with the faculty member about opportunities in their lab.

- **Ideally** all of your diligent research and networking will lead to 3-5 interviews.
- **Practice answering questions with a friend** Why do you want to do research? What is your particular interest in neuroscience? What are your career goals? Tell me about your previous research. What draws you to this laboratory?
- **Be thoughtful and articulate** try not to pepper your speech with filler-words. Take your time.
- **Show your enthusiasm!**

### 4. INTERVIEWS

You've got this!



## GOOD LUCK !

If you are lucky to get more than one offer, then talk to the members of the respective laboratories. Visit the laboratories. Go someplace where you feel comfortable. Comfortable begets productivity.

