URGE Resource Map for the USGS

This is a draft Resource Map for the Hazards Pod at the USGS. This map was adapted from the “Sample Ph.D. Mentoring Plan” developed by Vashan Wright (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution) and Karin Block (City College of New York and CUNY Graduate Center), License: CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. The resource maps consists of 5 elements: 1) mentoring plan; 2) core work resources; 3) community support and mental health resources; 4) professional development resources; and 5) outreach resources. Some of these will be resources common to all and some will be questions for identifying specific resources based on needs/interests identified during initial meetings while implementing the mentoring plan. A useful resource that touches on many of these items can be found at https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital.

Abbreviations

AGU American Geophysical Union
ESC Earthquake Science Center
GHSC Geologic Hazards Science Center
GSA Geological Society of America
PIV Personal Identity Verification
SSA Seismological Society of America
TA Travel Authorization
TV Travel Voucher
VSC Volcano Science Center

- Mentoring plan
  - Summary of the intent of the resource map as well as the plan for working with new hires/students for connecting them with resources that will be of most use to them, e.g. schedule for initial call(s) and/or meeting(s) to identify needs/interests
  - Onboarding for new hires/students: initiated by supervisor
    - Email communication before employee’s first day: getting their PIV card; ordering computers in advance (with specs provided by new employee)
- Introduce new employee to meet everyone in their local office on their first day (or arrange meetings during the first week). Send emails and/or arrange virtual meeting with their colleagues in remote locations who they will be working with, for an introduction. The supervisor, and possibly some team members, can go to lunch and/or coffee with the new employee on their first day. These are all ways to make the new employee feel welcome (post-covid).

- First day: give big picture overview of the new employee’s projects and team members
  - Give overview of the USGS’s management structure (locations, centers, regions, mission areas, bureau, external collaborators/cooperators)

- First day: fill out paperwork; start setup for resources needed by employee, and let them know who to ask for help
  - How to fill out timesheet (Quicktime); expectations for working hours and attendance
  - IT, email access, computing resources, Active Directory / Intranet
    - e.g. ESC Pasadena employees need to ask Shane / Aaron at ESC-Moffett Field for help with IT/computing issues; GHSC Golden employees need to ask Mark Vigil
  - Office and facilities access
    - Keys to all buildings and offices where access is required
    - e.g. ESC Pasadena employees need to ask Jane / Trudy at ESC-Moffett Field for help with benefits questions, before going to HR in Sacramento; GHSC should see Hayley Matteson and HR in Denver

- Provide new employees with any onboarding documents and/or list of resources specific to their USGS Center and physical location—if they exist—or point them to any center-level or local resources.
  - Caltech email/IT/computing access and benefits (discount gym/pool membership) for ESC Pasadena employees
Several other “at the core” science center internal websites can be found at https://atthecore.usgs.gov/science-centers/

- For supervisors (under “Ensuring a successful start”): https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/supervisors-toolkit
- For new employees, USGS-wide employee handbook and resources: https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/new-employee-information
- There is a “welcome to DOI” training in DOI Talent which is useful.

Individual/Group meeting expectations (interval/frequency, journal articles, presentations, socializing, time management, reviewing manuscripts, revising manuscripts/dealing with rejection, careers, current events, media requests)

- Expectations for the employee/student
  - Supervisor: set up weekly meeting with employee, and also welcome questions through preferred communication medium (chat, email, in-person) at any time
    - Any other required meetings for group/team projects?
  - Any required initial training that must be complete? (e.g. field safety, driving, ethics, depends on the job)
    - For training on talking to the press/media about earthquakes: supervisor should get new employee in touch with USGS Office of Communications and Publishing (OCAP) staff for resources
  - Supervisor should make expectations clear and explicit, for major deliverables, deadlines, and scope of work—and how employee performance will be evaluated (see below).

Evaluations: rubric, frequency for advisor/committee evaluations, encourage self-evaluation (reflection) and review long term goals and how to achieve them

- Fiscal year cycle (October 1 – September 30)—not calendar year.

Critical Elements

- It should be explicit what the requirements are to achieve each level of performance, and what the incentives are at each level of performance.
- If performance is an issue, supervisor should inform employee well in advance, and give plenty of guidance and opportunities to improve. A negative performance rating should never be a surprise.

- Individual Development Plan (IDP): training needs, short-term and long-term goals
- Items specific to research positions
- Conference attendance (months before the actual conference date), travel, review of presentations—approval process is required. See “Core work resources” below for more information.
- Internal USGS review process for publications—required before submitting to a journal. Requirements depend on whether or not the employee is first author. Encourage meeting and collaborating with other USGS scientists who might serve as internal reviewers for you.
  - **BASIS:** accomplishments, work plans for next year, and budgets (annual)
    - Supervisor usually asks for this information in August (before the end of each fiscal year)
    - These are performed once every 4-7 years, depending on grade level but can be done sooner if warranted—determines promotion to next pay grade and depends heavily on research productivity (e.g. publications).
    - Encourage working with supervisor and other colleagues to help employee get the best shot at promotion
  - **USGS mentoring program (for mentoring and career development from others in the USGS):** [https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/mentoring-program-usgs-employees](https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/mentoring-program-usgs-employees)

- **Core work resources**
  - **Code-of-conduct**—all members must sign a code of conduct that addresses inclusivity and diversity, mental health, publications or outputs, social media use, working hours, and vacation
    - USGS [Code of Conduct](https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/code-of-conduct)
    - PART 2635—STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH
  - **Communication plan and expectations, e.g. how do members communicate with each other and what times are appropriate**
    - No formal policy. Options for communication include:
      - MS Teams (chat, channels)—tends to be less formal and used for quick response.
      - Email—more formal, longer format and longer response time.
      - In person (or virtual meeting)—best format for brainstorming and discussion.
      - To encourage work-life balance, the ESC has informal guidelines for communication. These include scheduling meetings for 25 or 50 minute intervals to allow for transition time between meetings (can be set as an Outlook default), and to restrict meeting times
and emails/chats to between 8 am and 4 pm (for example, take advantage of Outlook feature that allows scheduling emails to be sent at a later date/time).

☞ Reporting Policy—addresses issues related to insensitivity, harassment, exclusion and the consequences (e.g. not everyone drinks alcohol; no “locker room” talk); provides additional contacts for reporting outside of official advisor

- USGS Anti-Harassment Program / 703-648-7000
- See Code of Conduct, above

☞ Equipment—where to find, fund individual gear like hiking boots, fund or provide access to sufficient “library” of hiking/camping/outdoor equipment

- USGS provides safety equipment required for work (e.g., high-visibility safety vests, hard hats, etc.), but generally doesn't provide personal gear for fieldwork (e.g., boots, backpack, jackets, etc.). Vehicles may be available and require users to take a defensive driving class. There may also be other research related equipment available.

☞ Conference and workshop participation (how often and who pays for it?)

- Expectation for attendance is that a USGS employee has an official role at the conference (presenter, session chair, conference organizer, etc.) or that the employee is “early career” (e.g., first 3–5 years of employment).
- Internal review of conference abstract by another USGS employee and approval from supervisor is required, before submitting abstract to conference.
- Attendance must be approved by supervisor and by the USGS, through an online sign-up system, which should be done well in advance (3–6 months depending on whether the conference is domestic or international)
- USGS pays for conference attendance (registration, travel, meals and incidentals, etc.) and is commonly included in your project budget at the start of the fiscal year.
- Airline flight and hotel reservations are made through Concur to take advantage of government rates and centralize processing. A travel authorization (TA) must be submitted and approved through Concur before the conference. A travel voucher (TV), which includes uploading receipts, must be submitted 7 days after travel concludes. Meals are reimbursed at a per-diem rate that depends on the location of the conference after the TV is submitted.
- Flights can be changed while travelling, for example to switch flights; a good resource is the Concur Duluth Travel phone line: 1-855-847-6398.
- USGS conference attendance policy is regularly evolving. Sometimes attendance is limited to one in-person “major” (e.g., AGU, GSA, SSA) conference per year. In less restrictive times, it’s common for USGS scientists to attend two or more “major” conferences a year.

☞ Be open to considering attendance at more focused workshops/conferences, especially for groups like SACNAS, NABG, AISES, GeoLatinas and others
- Attendance at these types of conferences could be approved, depending on supervisory concurrence and a connection to USGS mission and official duties.

- **Community support and mental health resources**
  
  - **Resources in DOI and USGS**
    
    - **USGS Employee Assistance Program** (EAP will connect you with local services)
    - **DOI Employee Assistance Program**
    - **USGS Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Office**
      - Offers impartial and confidential counseling and tools for conflict management
      - Has links to USGS Anti-Harassment Policy, where to find help for situations like sexual harassment and hostile work environments, and ombuds services. Note that the ombuds is a way to explore how to deal with issues without triggering required compliance issues.
    - **USGS Employee Resource Groups**
      - Disability Inclusion Network
      - Early Career Scientists Network (ECSN)
      - LGBTQ+ Ally
      - ONYX
      - Professional Latinos
      - Veterans
      - Women in Science Dialogue (WISDom)
    - **DOI Employee Organizations**
    - **USGS Civility & Inclusion Council**
      - Works toward an inclusive workplace environment within the Bureau by fostering and promoting the civil treatment of employees and proactively addressing harassment and discrimination
      - Initiatives include the Peer Support Worker program and Bystander Intervention training
  
  - **Non-USGS Resources**
    
    - **AISES - American Indian Science and Engineering Society**
    - **Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Geosciences**
    - **AWG – Association for Women Geoscientists**
    - **ESWN - Earth Science Women’s Network**
    - **GeoLatinas**
    - **IAGD – International Association for Geoscience Diversity**
    - **NABG - National Association of Black Geoscientists**
    - **Out to Innovate (formerly National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals)**
- SACNAS - Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science
- For ESC Pasadena employees with a Caltech email address: Caltech Center for Inclusion and Diversity

Office-specific options for community-based resources
- Depending on office demographics, each office may encourage and assist new hires with making connections to someone who may understand their experience (e.g., Black male counselor for a Black male student). Offices can also assist new hires with connecting with each other in their cohort, and with finding organizations or social clubs with common identities and/or interests.
- Individual offices may approach the notion of a compilation of community-based resources in different manners (e.g., inclusion in one all-encompassing resource map, a separate document from HR, specific channels on Microsoft Teams for related discussions, etc.); regardless of form, the new hire should be made aware of any such compilation of resources.
- Such a compilation could include:
  - Calendars of local events/mailing lists to join
  - Resources for learning more about the culture of the hire's new home (e.g., Hawaiian language classes)
  - A sampling of activities/institutions that may help them feel at home in their new community, e.g., clubs, religious/spiritual organizations, hobbies, volunteer organizations, musical groups, sports teams
  - A sampling of local businesses/services that might be of use to hires new to the area, e.g., realtors, rental agencies, barbers/hair salons, doctors/dentists, gyms, public transit

Professional development resources

USGS-Wide
- DOI Career, Professional development resources that help employees navigate their career path.
- DOI Talent, Includes mandatory training as well as development courses including those offered by SkillSoft
- For both mentors and interns, opportunities for learning through the Youth and Education in Science program: https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/usgs-portal/ir (it was indicated this will soon be available on a webpage outside of DOI)
- Center for Leadership Development, https://www.opm.gov/services-for-agencies/center-for-leadership-development/

Federal Executive Boards
- Colorado Federal Executive Board, in particular the Rocky Mountain Emerging Leadership Academy
Southern California, Los Angeles Region Executive Board: https://www.losangeles.feb.gov/

**Professional Organizations**
- **SSA**—The Seismological Society of America offers career development seminars, workshops, newsletter for early career researchers, and mentoring.
- **AGU**—The American Geophysical Union offers career development services including a blog, relevant articles, workshops, and seminars.
- **GSA**—The Geological Society of America offers career development webinars, career development units, and mentoring programs.

**Speaking opportunities**
- VSC Seminar (contact: Tina Neal; tneal@usgs.gov)
- ESC Seminar (contact: Susan Garcia, garcia@usgs.gov)
- GHSC Seminar (contact: Ryan Gold, rgold@usgs.gov)
- GHSC Engineering Brown Bag (contact: Simon Kwong, nkwong@usgs.gov)
- NEIC Coffee Klatch (contact: Harley Benz, benz@usgs.gov)
- Landslide Hazard Program (LHP) seminar (contact: Matt Thomas, matthewthomas@usgs.gov)

**Outreach resources**
- **Statement of outreach expectations**: USGS scientists are expected to convey scientific information and results to the public; the manner and amount with which individuals do this may vary substantially depending on center, project, and supervisor level arrangements. Helpful contacts can be found at https://www.usgs.gov/news/media-contacts
- Interactive (in person or on Zoom) media training is available (e.g., contact Heidi Koontz, hkoontz@usgs.gov)
- Opportunities, expectations, benefits, and/or compensation for mentoring new hires and/or students who wish to engage in belonging, accessibility, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (Be A JEDI) efforts
  - Alert all new hires of the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committees & activities
  - Government employees can get credit for this work in their Performance Plan, as long as they plan ahead with their supervisor to include it as a Critical Element in their Performance Plan
  - URGE participation and resources. USGS-Hazards pod materials are collated on SharePoint and the URGE pod website https://urgeoscience.org/pods/usgs-hazards/
  - Direct new employees to compiled resources for conducting outreach
    - USGS YES (Youth and Education in Science) program
    - Earthquake Science Center education outreach Team
ESC database of elementary schools for outreach visits
ESC school materials & activities (in production Apr 2021)

GHSC: See Lisa Wald (lisa@usgs.gov) or Oliver Boyd (olboyd@usgs.gov) for grade-school outreach resources.

- Explicitly acknowledge, discuss, and suggest policies to limit the “time tax” put on people of color for participation in Be A JEDI activities and support a clear path for opting out
  - Introduce DEI committees, explain any participation or work is optional and available to all employees
  - Make available to all employees equity and justice materials (e.g., URGE readings) to reduce this labor falling disproportionately to minoritized employees
  - Provide outreach materials to reduce the burden of creating content

- Information on honoraria and establishing/charging speaker fees (see [https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/ethics_pocket_guide_for_doioe._employees_2017_0.pdf](https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/ethics_pocket_guide_for_doioe._employees_2017_0.pdf), which is also part of our assigned training)
  - Giving out honoraria is illegal for the government because of a limit on gifts to below $20; however, if the person invited to speak could be paid on a contract, then they could be paid a speaking fee.
  - Government employees may accept monetary awards from professional associations (within policy limits, currently $200)