



## The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Winnipeg Centre Terms of Reference – Mentorship Program

### Purpose

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Winnipeg Centre (the “Centre”) is creating a new service to its members, named the Mentorship Program. The Centre recognizes that members at every level of experience may wish to pass on knowledge to another member, and also learn from others. This program is intended to provide two functions for members:

- Match members who would like to be guided by a more experienced member with a willing volunteer mentor, and
- Match members with training that is suitable for their interests and experience, and
- Inform the coordinator of Beginners sessions for the Centre meetings, about suitable topics that would most benefit members.

### Program Description

The Mentor Program would involve the following:

- Creating a new, appointed position for the Centre, the Mentorship Coordinator. In general, the person in this position would coordinate calls for registration of Mentors (experienced members willing to mentor) and Learners (members desiring a mentor), maintain an online spreadsheet of Mentors and Learners that is visible to Council, assist in coordinating appropriate contact between Mentor-Learner pairs of members, and plan events to further the goals of the Mentor program
- A call for volunteers to enrol in a Mentor Registry (this may precede appointment of the Mentorship Coordinator, who may be appointed from volunteers for Mentor positions)
- A call for members requesting Mentors, to establish the Learner registry
- The Mentorship Coordinator would match Mentors to Learners and facilitate initial and ongoing contact
- The Mentorship Coordinator would attend Council meetings and work with Council as a non-voting member to plan and execute on events to support Mentor activities and report on current progress
- The Mentorship Coordinator would provide appropriate topics to the coordinator of Beginners Sessions for meetings to ensure that topics of interest to members would be covered
- The Mentorship Coordinator would keep in touch with Mentors and Learners to ensure they are satisfied with assignments and make any changes required.
- The Mentorship Coordinator would coordinate the presentation of RASC developed courses (such as the NOVA courses) to members along with Council
- The Mentorship Coordinator would coordinate with the Loaner Scope Program Coordinator to encourage members to borrow and use Loaner Scopes as much as possible. Council commits to expanding the Loaner Scope pool provided the use of the existing pool increases.

## Operational Resources

The following operational resources will be provided to the Mentorship Program:

- An annual budget of \$500 would be approved by Council to fund expenses incurred by the Mentorship Coordinator in the execution of duties of the position
- A page on the website would be created and maintained, with content provided by the Mentorship Coordinator
- An area on the Centre's Google Drive would be provided to allow the Mentorship Coordinator to post the Mentor/Learner registry and any other relevant documents.

## Resources to be Developed

The following resources will be developed by Council in cooperation with the Mentor Coordinator:

- Mentor / Learner Registry template
- Initial Website page
- Google Drive Area
- Description of the Program to be distributed to members interested in becoming Mentors and/or Learners
- Additional educational resources in cooperation with RASC National (eg NOVA program)

## Expectations of Mentors

- The Council of the RASC Winnipeg Centre appreciates the time and effort our mentors take to assist other members of the organization. The Mentorship Program operates under the auspices of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and the RASC Winnipeg Centre. The Mentorship Program exists to support the objectives of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and the RASC Winnipeg Centre to promote interest in, and the study, knowledge, and enjoyment of astronomy and allied sciences, and to further the progress of astronomy in Canada. All actions taken by mentors in the Mentorship Program must support these objectives.
- The Mentorship Program is administered by the Council of the RASC Winnipeg Centre. Therefore, in the event of any issues arising between Mentor and Learner, or between Mentor and the RASC Winnipeg Centre, decisions of the Council shall be final.
- A Mentor must be a member in good standing of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.
- By the act of registering to serve as a Mentor, a Mentor agrees to abide by all the terms of the Mentorship Program.
- A Mentor must work in good faith with the Learner at all times. In particular, the Mentor must encourage the safe use of astronomical equipment, for example, solar observing equipment. As well, where the Mentor recommends any type of astronomical equipment for the Learner, the recommendation must not unfairly promote one supplier or manufacturer over another. The Mentor must not be in a conflict of interest when recommending equipment.
- The Mentor must not accept payment from the Learner for the service of mentoring.
- The Mentor must treat any personal information given by the Learner, such as telephone number or address, as private.

- The Mentor must protect and use responsibly any assets of the RASC Winnipeg Centre used for mentoring such as loaner telescopes.
- Where a Mentor witnesses a Learner acting in a manner that could subject that Learner to disciplinary action or expulsion from the RASC Winnipeg Centre, the Mentor will immediately report the incident to the RASC Winnipeg Centre Council, typically via the Mentorship Coordinator.
- Mentors shall not mentor members under 18 years old.
- A Mentor who volunteers to assist a Learner with training in a particular topic or activity, is also eligible to register as a Learner in a different topic or activity.

### Expectations of Learners

- A Learner must be a member in good standing of the RASC Winnipeg Centre and be at least 18 years old.
- By the act of registering to serve as a Learner, a Learner agrees to abide by all the terms of the Mentorship Program.
- A Learner must work in good faith with the Mentor at all times. In particular, the Learner must seek instruction from the Mentor, for the safe use of any astronomical equipment, for example, solar observing equipment. As well, when a Learner requests advice on possible astronomical equipment for purchase by the Learner, or the Mentor recommends any type of equipment, the Learner is under no obligation to take such advice and the Mentor-Learner interaction will not depend on the purchase or ownership of any particular equipment.
- A Learner must not offer payment to the Mentor for the service of mentoring.
- A Learner must treat any personal information given by the Mentor, such as telephone number, address, or email, as private.
- A learner must protect and use responsibly, any assets of the RASC Winnipeg Centre or by the Mentor, used for mentoring, such as loaner telescopes, cameras, or resource materials.
- Where a Learner witnesses a Mentor acting in a manner that could harm others or subject the Learner to unwanted attention, the Learner will immediately report the incident to the RASC Winnipeg Centre Council, typically via the Mentorship Coordinator.
- Learners shall only become eligible for mentorship under this program, once they reach the age of 18 years.
- A Learner who registers for training and mentorship in one topic or activity, is also eligible to register as a Mentor in a different topic or activity.

### Current exception (June 2021)

- Until further notice, mentoring will not be conducted in person. Only remote means will be used for mentoring such as video conferencing (Zoom, Teams, etc.), telephone, or email.