# **Mentoring Scheme Guidance Notes**

Mentoring emerged as a clear request from the SLSA’s 2022 EDI survey data. We undertook a pilot mentoring scheme in academic year 2023/24 as part of the SLSA’s ongoing EDI work to improve community inclusion and diversity by creating channels for the transfer of knowledge from more established socio-legal scholars to those in earlier stages of their careers or those wishing to return following career breaks. We ran the scheme again in 2024/25 and we are now launching our mentoring scheme for 2025/26.

# Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 25 June 2025 | Scheme publicised to socio-legal community |
| 31 July 2025 | Application deadline |
| September 2025 | Participants contacted with outcome and date for October online plenary |
| October 2024-Sept 2025 | Mentees and mentors meet online in plenary and then 1-1 at least 3 times throughout the year |
| February/March 2026 | Workshop 1- Publishing |
| April 2026 | Opportunity to meet in person at SLSA Conference |
| June/July 2026 | Workshop 2- Funding and Impact |

# Eligibility

Size: 10 places

Open to: Members of the SLSA who are nearing PhD completion, early-career, or mid-career.

This scheme forms part of delivering our EDI strategy to widen participation in SLSA and the socio-legal community, including by members employed on precarious contracts.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Applicants should identify as socio-legal scholars or otherwise be carrying out socio-legal research. The purpose of the scheme is not to provide feedback on substantive work in progress. Rather, it will offer opportunities for participants to develop knowledge on how, where, and when to publish, apply for funding, position oneself in the academic labour market, network, engage with the socio-legal community, and so on.

# Implementation

The mentoring scheme will entail:

* An orientation/briefing email for mentors
* An online plenary meeting in October welcoming mentors and mentees to the scheme and setting out general expectations. Mentors/mentees will then be encouraged to liaise and set subsequent meeting times at their own convenience.
* At least 3 online or in person meetings 1-1 with mentors
* 2 x workshops on publishing and impact
* Opportunity to meet at SLSA Conference

Mentees can apply for a bursary to cover the registration fee for the SLSA annual conference in 2026. Those with access to alternative funding for conference attendance will be asked to make use of this where possible, leaving bursaries for those who do not have access to alternative funds.

Any queries should be referred to [mentoring@slsa.ac.uk](mailto:mentoring@slsa.ac.uk).

# Application process

Applicants to submit:

* 2-page application form
* 2-page CV

The purpose of the scheme is to provide support for those who may face structural disadvantage in their academic careers in line with our EDI and anti-precarity commitments. applications will be reviewed by the EDI subcommittee with this in mind.

If there are more than 10 eligible applicants, the EDI subcommittee will select 10 participants via a lottery system.

Question 2d) on the application form is optional but can be used to indicate preferences on who the applicant is matched with. We will attempt to match you with the most appropriate mentor, but of course we cannot guarantee that we will be able to find someone who meets indicated preferences.

# Identifying and Inviting Mentors to the Scheme

In addition to publicising the scheme to potential mentors, the EDI subcommittee will reach out to established members of the socio-legal community to invite expressions of interest to participate in the scheme. This will be done with a view to ensuring maximum inclusivity and diversity of participants.

Those approached to participate as mentors should be made aware of the potential for knowledge transfer in both directions. The scheme will enable senior members of the SLSA to gain insights into the challenges faced by colleagues forging a career in the current climate. This has the potential to foster community cohesion, further the SLSA’s Charitable Objectives, and build an ever-closer sense of community.

# Review

Feedback forms will be completed by both mentors and mentees at the end of the scheme each year. The SLSA EDI Sub-committee will review this feedback when considering whether to continue or amend the scheme going forward.

1. Precarious employment includes fixed-term contracts, zero-hours contracts, and hourly-paid contracts – see <https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10899/Precarious-work-in-higher-education-Oct-21/pdf/UCU_precarity-in-HE_Oct21_l883c067yz25.pdf> for more detail [↑](#footnote-ref-1)