



Alliance against Violence and Adversity (AVA): Health Research Training Platform

AVA Triadic Mentorship Program Guidelines

AVA Guiding Principles

- **Strengthen and build capacity** to transform population (community) health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse people, at risk/affected by violence and adversity over the lifecycle;
- **Use a collaborative, innovative**, cross-sectoral/disciplinary/jurisdictional training platform to train hundreds of Canadian service providers and academics in the social services/community health field working with this population; and
- **Make intergenerational and population impacts**, and promote a positive lifespan for girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

AVA is also committed to addressing inequities and health disparities disproportionately impacting girls, women, and gender-diverse people with intersectional identities. This includes, but is not limited to, (dis)ability, race, ethnicity, and gender identity. AVA relies on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives, and Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+) is at the core of reaching AVA's objective. See Appendix A for more details.

Section 1: Program Overview

Background

The purpose of the AVA Triadic Mentorship program is to supplement/enhance scholars' (i.e. graduate student or post-doctoral fellow), existing educational program preparation with AVA's world-class, innovative focus on training to transform population (community) health and social services, specifically to improve the health of girls, women, and gender-diverse people exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and violence.

The AVA Triadic Mentorship program is a mentoring program between a scholar, an AVA community mentor (i.e. community partner agency leader), and an AVA academic mentor (i.e. graduate supervisor) which emphasizes **reciprocal learning** and **partnership** between both mentors and mentee. This program will be the foundation for all recruited high-quality AVA scholars. The mentorship program will include creating an individual development plan (IDP) established collaboratively with the scholar and their mentors, and monthly mentorship sessions (or more often as needed). The mentorship will also work alongside/utilize the AVA curriculum

on AVA's Learning Management System (LMS), Raising Interdisciplinary Scientist Excellence (RISE), to provide educational opportunities to ensure attainment of the scholar's individualized learning goals in line with the scholar's individual development plan (IDP).

The program will host two cohorts per year which will start in January and September. Each cohort will consist of 6 – 8 triads. The application process to participate in this AVA program is described below.

Being a Scholar in the Triadic Mentorship

Being a scholar in this program, you will be guided through a range of AVA Training Platform opportunities and options.

Scholar Responsibilities

- Meet with your mentors on a monthly basis (at the very least) for approximately 18 months.
- Develop an IDP and set research and career goals with the support of your mentors.
- Participate in training opportunities such as AVA Online and **potentially** a community agency internship **after a minimum of 4 months of participation in the AVA Triadic Mentorship program.**
- Participate in AVA's Strategy Development, Management and Evaluation (i.e. Strategic Planning), and Implementation Science Training Programs.
- Complete core courses in the AVA Online Curriculum and optional courses that align with your learning plan and research or career goals.
- Attend virtual workshops with your triad and other AVA triads in your cohort as per the timeline of activities

Scholar Eligibility

Scholars will apply to be part of AVA's Triadic Mentorship program and be selected based on the following criteria:

- EDIA considerations (Appendix B);
- Qualifications and excellence (e.g. grades, awards, community volunteerism);
- Alignment of their research and career goals/interests with girls', women's, and gender-diverse people's health and wellness, and AVA's objectives (see Guiding Principles above); and
- Status as a graduate student or post-doctoral fellow.

Being a Mentor in the Triadic Mentorship (Community Partner and Academic)

Mentors hail from AVA's network of academics and community agency collaborators/partners from across Canada. The purpose of the mentorship is to guide the scholar through a range of AVA Training Platform opportunities and options.

Mentor Expectations

It is anticipated that the below activities will take 2-6 hours per month.

- Meet with the scholar monthly (at the very least) for approximately 18 months.
- Orient the scholar to AVA's individualized development planning, and research and career goal setting process.

- Support the scholar to identify training opportunities in programs such as AVA Online and Community Agency Internship.
- Participate in AVA's Strategy Development, Management and Evaluation Training (i.e. Strategic Planning), and Implementation Science Training Programs.
- Complete core courses in the AVA Online Curriculum and becoming familiar with the additional optional courses so you may be able to recommend courses that align with your mentee's learning plan and research career goals.
- Attend virtual workshops with your triad and other AVA triads in your cohort as per the AVA Triadic Mentorship Program Activities Timeline
- Mentors are encouraged to discuss projects scholars may take on **if they apply** for and are awarded internships in the AVA Community Partner Agency Internship program.
- Community partner mentors are encouraged to contribute to the inventory of potential projects that interns may take on in their internships.

Mentor Eligibility

Mentors will apply to be part of AVA's Triadic Mentorship program and be selected based on the following criteria:

- EDIA considerations (Appendix B);
- Have read and understood the program guidelines and mentor expectations;
- Commitment to fulfilling the mentor expectations as outlined above;
- Mentor's skills and experience (e.g. community-based research, grant writing, early childhood adversity);
- Alignment of mentor's research and/or practice with girls', women's, and gender-diverse people's health and wellness, and AVA's objectives (see Guiding Principles above).

Monetary compensation for Community Partner's Mentor Agencies

Community mentors' agencies can apply for monetary compensation to enable participation in the AVA Triadic Mentorship program. This can help offset various costs, e.g. agency reimbursement for community mentors' absence from regular work. Please contact avatraining@ucalgary.ca to request more information.

Section 2: Guidelines & Process for Creating Triadic Mentorships

Matching Mentors and Scholars

While it is desirable for mentor(s) and/or scholars to have all members of the triadic relationship already established, to ensure equal opportunity for all interested scholars, pre-established triads are not required in order to participate in the AVA Triadic Mentorship Program.

There are 3 ways that a triad can be created:

- 1) The triad is already established and consists of a student scholar, a community agency mentor, and an academic mentor.
- 2) Two of the three people that make up the triad are already connected, but they need support from the AVA team to be matched with a third member (e.g. community partner mentor, academic mentor, student scholar).

- 3) There is one person (either mentor or scholar) that would like to participate in this program, and they need support from the AVA team to create a triad and be matched with the other two members.

IMPORTANT: To assist with the matching, all AVA members are encouraged to enroll as an AVA member on the AVA Member Portal and to create a profile.

How to participate in the Triadic Mentorship Program

To participate in this AVA program, a two-step process is necessary.

Step 1: A request for applicants (RFA) to recruit both scholars and mentors will take place in March and June each year with cohorts beginning in January and September. The notice will be sent to the current network of AVA members first, and if needed, to other networks across Canada. Mentors and scholars will be asked to respond to the RFA by completing an online application to advise AVA Leads of their interest in participating in the program and whether they have all or parts of their triads established, or if they require support in creating a match/matches (see above section for more details). If any challenge is encountered in completing the form online, please contact Carrie.Pohl@ucalgary.ca.

Step 2: AVA Leads will review the online applications that were submitted. For applicants that require matching, AVA Leads will coordinate matches based on applicants' goals, areas of interest and experience. Applicants will be contacted by an AVA Lead to finalize triad matches. If suitable matches are not possible for the upcoming cohort, applications will remain on file for triad matching in future cohorts.

Applicants with pre-established mentors and mentee will be contacted by an AVA Lead to advise whether their application has been accepted for the upcoming cohort. Applicants not accepted for the upcoming cohort may have the opportunity to participate in a future cohort.

Evaluation Criteria

Decisions are based on commitment to EDIA principles (Appendix B) and the above-noted eligibility criteria. If matching is required, this will also be considered (i.e. whether there is an appropriate match available).

Section 3: Triadic Mentorship Activities

Once the mentorship program begins, triads are expected to meet at least once per month and address the activities and topics outlined in the AVA Triadic Mentorship Program Activities Timeline. This document outlines activities that mentors and mentees will engage in either independently or collaboratively. Additionally, mentors and mentees are expected to participate in virtual workshops that will bring together all of the triads in the cohort to share and learn collectively. All mentors and mentees are expected to complete AVA Foundations level courses and then continue to engage with AVA Online courses according to their individual needs and learning plan.

Appendix A

AVA Guiding Principles

AVA's Objectives

- **Strengthen and build capacity** to transform population (community) health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse people, at risk/affected by violence and adversity over the lifecycle;
- **Use a collaborative, innovative**, cross-sectoral/disciplinary/jurisdictional training platform to train hundreds of Canadian service providers and academics in the social services/community health field working with this population; and
- **Make intergenerational and population impacts**, and promote a positive lifespan for girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

The following Guiding Principles outline the AVA team's commitment to fair and equitable policies and practice.

What are AVA's Guiding Principles?

- AVA is committed to addressing inequities and health disparities disproportionately impacting girls, women, and gender-diverse people with intersectional identities. This includes, but is not limited to, (dis)ability, race, and gender identity. AVA relies on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives, and Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+) is at the core of reaching AVA's objectives.
- AVA seeks to ensure EDIA in all aspects of the AVA Training Platform by engaging with Patient Partners and AVA designated Champions who specialize in EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, SGBA+ and Black and Other racialized people.
- AVA aims to strengthen and build capacity to address the intersections between sex, race, (dis)ability, social locations, gender-diversity and other identities, while acknowledging (to the degree possible) the impacts of colonialism, classism, racism, and Canadian culture (albeit recognizing that AVA may influence, but cannot itself change, these things).
- AVA recognizes that diverse voices from community experts, as well as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, and Metis), Black, and other racialized people, continue to be minimal and minimized in academic research; hence, our aim is to have academic, community, Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people, as partners, co-creating culturally safe, supportive, and reciprocal learning for all team members.
- All team members whether academic or community partners, or mentees, are considered trainees engaged in reciprocal learning.

How will AVA do this?

- AVA seeks to ensure EDIA in all aspects of the AVA Training Platform by engaging with Patient Partners and AVA designated Champions who specialize in EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, SGBA+ and Black and Other racialized people.
- EDIA will influence selection of participants to take part in AVA programs (e.g. Community Agency Internship; Early Career Researcher Teaching Release).

- All AVA team members will be asked to attend mandatory annual EDIA training.
- AVA Online includes courses specifically designed to enhance trainee and team members' knowledge and practice related to EDIA.
- SGBA+ and intersectionality are core AVA Online curriculum components. AVA team members, especially leadership, have training in SGBA+, intersectionality and research knowledge that address racialized people.
- AVA prioritizes the inclusion of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people on the AVA team and in trainee recruitment.
- In all training activities, including experiential learning activities, internships, networking and/or other innovative training opportunities, attention will be paid to ensure that the Guiding Principles of AVA are upheld (e.g. by including EDIA assessments in meeting agendas)
- The EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, and Black and Other racialized people Champions are represented at the highest level by being part of the Platform Advisory Committee (PAC). These Champions' opinions are sought frequently and as appropriate.
- The call for applicants will prioritize racialized, (dis)abled, gender-diverse and other identities.
- We will employ best practices in EDIA recruitment and application adjudication, with our EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, and Black and Other racialized people Champions reviewing/providing input into the process and written materials in every form.
- We will seek equity by removing systemic barriers and biases to recruitment by ensuring all PAC members, who will approve calls for applicants and approve final adjudication of applications, have training on unconscious bias (individual) but also from a systems approach (systemic).
- The AVA training platform will develop a broad range of research skills and provide training on emerging approaches to advance rigorous and responsible research (e.g., sex- and gender-based analysis (SGBA+), research data management, research involving Indigenous Peoples, ethics, unconscious bias).
- AVA trainee recruitment efforts will aim to ensure that diverse perspectives and lived experiences (e.g. race, place of origin, religion, immigrants and newcomers, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and age) are represented among AVA trainees. An example of how this will be done is by advertising training opportunities via community partners and academics that provide services and support to diverse people.
- AVA's mandatory core activities will address EDIA (including unconscious bias assessed with the Harvard Implicit Association Test and training with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, which includes unconscious/implicit bias recognition training), Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+), and intersectionality, and Indigenous research methods.
- AVA Team Champions will review and edit these principles and definitions annually.

Appendix B

AVA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Principles

EDIA Definitions

Equity

Means fairness; people of all identities being treated fairly. It means ensuring that the processes for allocating resources and decision-making are fair to all and do not discriminate on the basis of identity. There is a need to put measures in place to eliminate discrimination and inequalities which have been well described and reported and ensure, to the best degree possible, equal opportunities. Equity is needed to achieve equality. For example, treating people as equals in an environment in which historical and systemic disadvantages prevent people from operating as equals can be inequitable – it lacks the fairness of a truly equitable situation (NSERC, 2017)

Diversity

Consists of the conditions, expressions and experiences of different groups identified by age, education, sexual orientation, parental status/responsibility, immigration status, Indigenous status, religion, disability, language, race, place of origin, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status and other attributes. Recognizing and valuing diversity must be accompanied by concerted efforts to ensure inclusion of diverse populations, meaning that individuals are and feel valued, respected and equally supported (NSERC, 2017).

Inclusion:

Requires creating an environment in which all people are respected equitably and have access to the same opportunities. Organizationally, inclusion requires the identification and removal of barriers (e.g., physical, procedural, visible, invisible, intentional, unintentional) that inhibit [applicants'] participation and contribution. Inclusion values and principles include fairness, justice, equity, and respect, by being open to different voices and perspectives, developing an understanding of different cultures, experiences and communities, and making a conscious effort to be welcoming, helpful and respectful to everyone (NSERC, 2017).

Accessibility:

"The provision of flexibility to accommodate needs and preferences, and refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people who experience disabilities. It can also be understood as "a set of solutions that empower the greatest number of people to participate in the activities in question in the most effective ways possible"" (Baker & Vasseur, 2021).

AVA's EDIA Principles

- 1) Priority will be applied to Indigenous, Black and Other racialized people, as well as disabled, gender-diverse and other identities.
- 2) We will seek equity by removing systemic barriers and biases in recruitment, application and participation processes (see AVA's Guiding Principles for examples).

- 3) We will ensure diverse perspectives and lived experiences (e.g. races, places of origin, religions, immigrants and newcomers, etc.) are represented amongst the AVA team.
- 4) We will focus on inclusion by valuing and respecting all contributions, particularly eliminating hierarchies, by treating team members equally.
- 5) Seeking to address the 2 key objectives of the Government of Canada's EDI Tri-Agency Action Plan for 2018-2025 by ensuring fair access to Tri-Council resources and ensuring equitable participation in recruitment of trainees (i.e. Triadic Mentorship Program)
- 6) All AVA members shall participate in EDIA training and it will be part of the core AVA courses in AVA Online.