



# *South African Journal of Science* **Associate Editor Mentorship Programme**

**Prof. Leslie Swartz**  
SAJS Editor-in-Chief  
[sajs.editor@assaf.org.za](mailto:sajs.editor@assaf.org.za)

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# SAJS Associate Editor Mentorship Programme

- Initiated in 2018 as an opportunity for early career researchers to gain valuable editorial experience working with an experienced Associate Editor
- Open to emerging researchers with a PhD who have a publication record but little or no editorial experience
- Two mentorships are offered each year, in two disciplines represented in the Journal
- Mentees and Mentors are requested to provide feedback on their experiences through a survey conducted at the mid-point and at completion
- Guidelines are provided to Mentees, but otherwise the programme is unstructured so as to allow Mentees to set their own individual goals and expectations, within a reasonable scope of the mentorship
- A Certificate of Completion is awarded to Mentees who successfully complete the mentorship.



## Mentees and Mentors: 2018-2021

	Portfolio	Mentee	Mentor
2018	Social Sciences & Education	Maitumeleng Nthontho	John Butler-Adam
2018	Earth & Environmental Sciences	Yali Woyessa	Nic Beukes
2019	Agriculture and Forestry	Salmina Mokhele	Teresa Coutinho
2019	Engineering and Technology	Ntombi Mathe	Tania Douglas
2020	Cell, Molecular & Health Sciences	Sandiswa Mbewana	Pascal Bessong
2020	Organismal Biology	Sydney Moyo	Bettine van Vuuren
2021	Archaeol, Anthropol & Palaeontol	Jemma Finch	Margaret Avery
2021	Chemistry	Amanda-Lee Manicum	Priscilla Baker



# Mentor & Mentee roles

## Role of SAJS Associate Editors:

Because it is a multidisciplinary journal, the SAJS has 10 Associate Editors who are selected for their expertise in certain fields and who work closely with the Editor-in-Chief. They have the responsibility to make decisions on whether to reject a submission without a review (explaining to the authors their reasons for doing so), and if potentially suitable for the journal, they select and invite peer reviewers, assess reviews, and make a decision on whether to reject, ask for revisions, or accept.

Associate Editors may also provide ideas and recommendations for the directions that the SAJS should take and offer advice to team members as appropriate.

## Role of Mentees:

The role of Mentees is to partner with the Mentor/Associate Editor in order to assist them with these tasks and thus also serve as guardians of the value and standards of the disciplinary area which they represent.



# Mentor responsibilities

- Develop a good rapport and working relationship with your Mentee.
- Provide structured guidance and information, support and advice to Mentee technologically and editorially.
- Transfer disciplinary and other knowledge and share and augment peer reviewer networks.
- Share decisions, reviews and, as necessary, conversations around submissions.
- Raise matters of mutual concern honestly and timeously.
- Build editorial capacity in a less experienced scholar.



## Mentee responsibilities

- Develop a good rapport and working relationship with your Mentor.
- Define and share your goals and expectations of the mentorship with your Mentor.
- Work closely with, and assist, an expert in the scientific field who is also an expert editor.
- Share some of the responsibility of an Associate Editor as appropriate.
- Expand SAJS professional network of reviewers with personal knowledge of colleagues and their expertise.
- Experience working in an editorial community and participate in that community.
- Learn about different subfields and the latest research.
- Learn to discern quality writing and research.
- Gain improved confidence and increased skill sets.
- Raise matters of mutual concern honestly and timeously.



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## Goals

Act as Second Associate Editor in the peer review of at least five submissions, in collaboration with your mentor

Invite and guest edit one research/review paper, to publication and marketing, in collaboration with your mentor

Act as an assessor for two front-section submissions at the request of the Editor-in-Chief

Identify and propose one front-section contribution to the Editor-in-Chief

Write and submit a contribution for the front section (book review, obituary, profile, news item, commentary, etc.) to the Editor-in-Chief

Identify and attend/present a webinar/workshop/event at which you represent/market SAJS

Other individual goals



## Other activities

Participate as a member of the editorial team:

- Advise on policies and procedures
- Attend Associate Editor meetings
- Join NSEF





# What is an Associate Editor Mentee?

- A **Learning** partner :

A lot to learn

Equality

Reciprocity



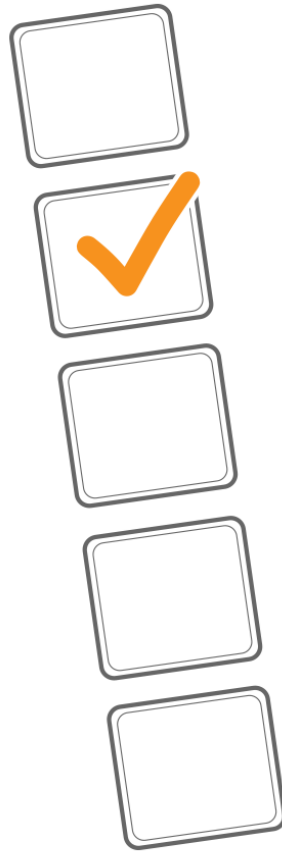
# What skills/lessons do you gain as an Associate Editor Mentee?

- work with other Editor and Admin colleagues (**rapport in a team**)
- ensure reviewer feedback does not contain offensive words (**etiquette in communication**)
- listen and learn about trends in field of specialty along with issues impacting authors and reviewers in their workplaces and in their social contexts



# What skills/lessons do you gain as an Associate Editor Mentee?

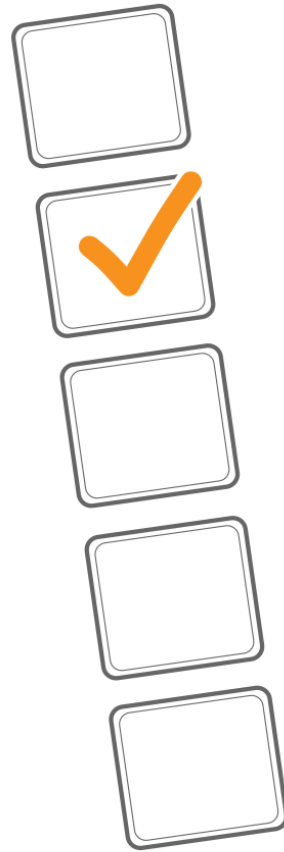
- understanding the editorial process makes you a better reviewer and author
- exposure to new and exciting research
- editors are not gatekeepers of a journal but the architects of it
- patience



# What skills/lessons do you gain as an Associate Editor Mentee?

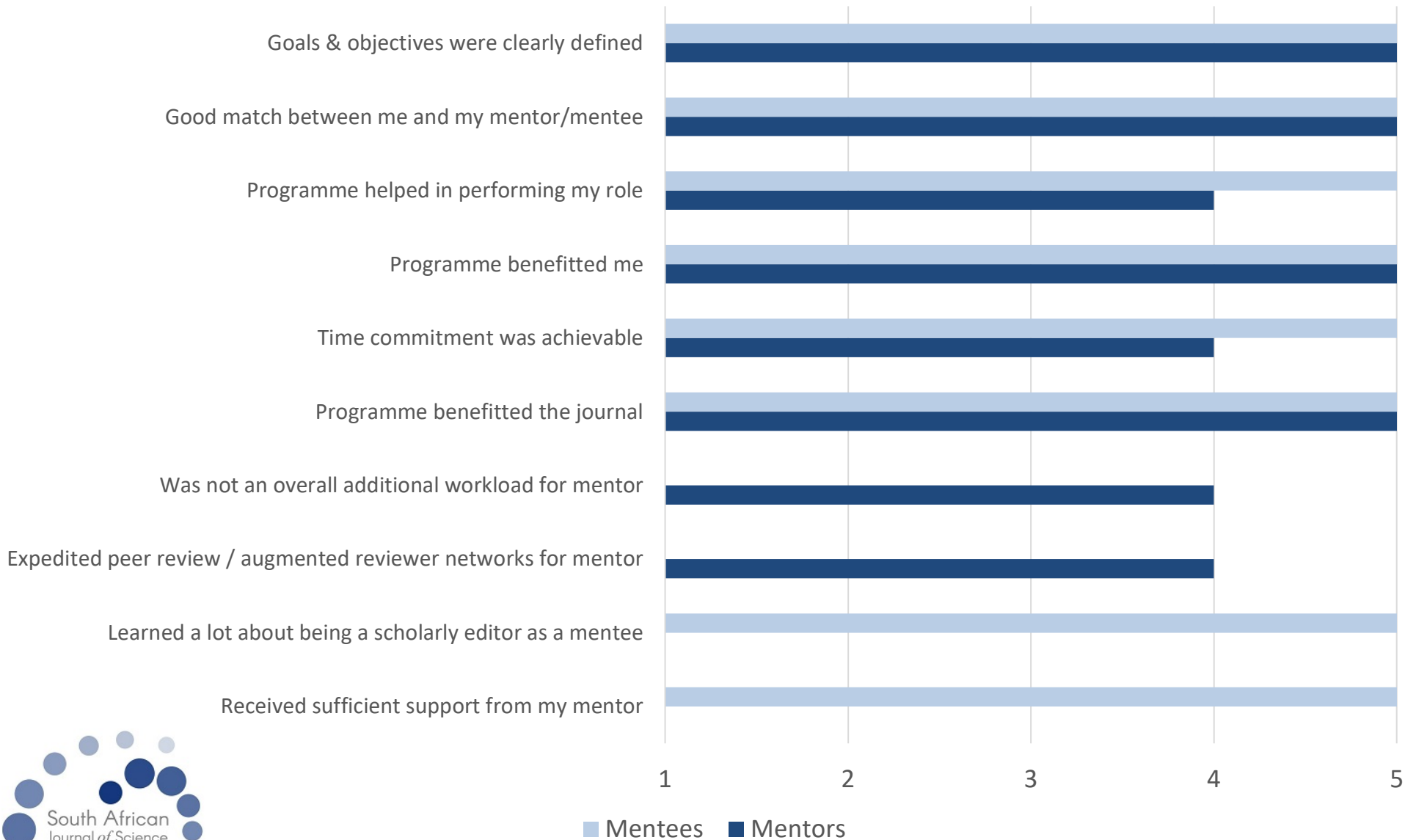
Lastly:

**Enjoy the role** – it is an honor/privilege to be an Associate Editor for a journal that promotes excellence in scholarship in a specialist field of practice or discipline



# Feedback

1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree



# Final words from past Mentees

"Thank you very much for the opportunity to be part of the programme. I really appreciate all the lessons learned."

"Please keep up the good work. This programme is a wonderful opportunity for young researchers."

"I am thankful for the opportunity to have worked with Prof and the rest of the editorial team. It has been a learning journey. I am sincerely grateful."

"Thank you and your team for the opportunity to experience and learn from this important task."

"Thank you so much for the great opportunity I had of working with you. Although I was just a mentee, I felt much like one of the editors. I participated in almost every decision made in my editing team. I am indeed grateful and look forward to seeing the journal going to greater heights."

