



ARMA Canada Connection Program For New IM Professionals ~Administrative Details~

ARMA Canada Connection Program

The ARMA Canada is pleased to be able to continue to connect members within the Information community. Between new records and information professionals and experienced members of the IM community who are ARMA members. The program is run by the ARMA Canada Education and Programming Chapter Advisor, or a Member of the Membership Development Committee.

Purpose of the Connection Program

The **ARMA Canada's Connection Program** promotes the development of Canadian professionals new to the profession of Records and Information Management by strengthening their professional capacity through allowing them to seek opportunities to understand new approaches being implemented by seasoned ARMA members.

The goal of the Connection Program is to foster Real Learning. **“Real learning is the ability to adopt what you know and know-how to do and adapt it under an everchanging variety of circumstances.”** - David Grebow (<https://knowledgestarblog.wordpress.com/2013/07/23/the-short-definition-of-real-learning/>)

When a new IM employee begin their journey, they encounter an IM program with its own set of IM maturity. This creates its own set of question. Seasoned members have the experiences at adapting their knowledge. This program brings these two groups together.

The Program facilitates the integration of new RIM professionals into the Canadian Information community by matching them with experienced ARMANacs, who can provide advise and guidance on particular pragmatic issues, themes, plans, strategies, approaches.

Connection Program Guidelines

Eligibility

A New IM Professional is someone who has recently entered the information management profession and is an ARMA Canada member in good standing; or, a student studying in the field of Records and Information Management. Students need not be a member at while in the *Connection Program*.

An Experience IM Professorial must be an experienced (greater than 10 years) in either the Records, Information, Archival, or Data Management fields and is an ARMA Canada member in good standing.

The decision to accept an applicant into the program will be based upon a final assessment done by the ARMA Canada Connection Coordinator at the completion of the mentor or mentee screening procedure. The Connection Coordinator has final approval for an applicant's acceptance into the program. No reason will be provided to mentor applicants rejected from participation in the program.

Structure

- The ARMA Canada Connection program pairs a new information professional with an experienced information professional in a context of professional collegiality.
- An ARMA Canada Connection Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee), as chaired by the ARMA Canada Connection Coordinator, oversees the program. The Committee regularly reviews its guidelines on behalf of the ARMA Canada Board of Directors. The guidelines can be publicly disclosed.
- The Coordinator advertises the Connection program to all members, and invites them to join as mentors or mentees. The committee will use the ARMA Canada web site, chapter lists, RIM community and affiliated professional listservs, annual on-site visits to information studies programs, and other venues, as appropriate, to promote the program.
- The mentorship program may be offered in conjunction with affiliated professional associations, eg archival, if both associations are in agreement.
- The Committee receives requests, from new archivists, for mentors and offers, from experienced archivists, to become mentors.
- Subject to availability of appropriate mentors, the committee matches each new information professionals with an experienced archivist. The Committee will make every effort to ensure an appropriate match, however, it cannot be responsible for the outcome of any specific match.
- Wherever possible, mentors should be members of ARMA.
- The Committee is also responsible for: monitoring the program, preparing annual reports for the ACA, and updating the program as required, to ensure that the needs of mentees, mentors and the ACA are met.
- It is the responsibility of the individuals involved to decide on any rules or responsibilities at the beginning, so that there is a clear understanding of expectations.
- The recommended **Program** period is one calendar year, however, the Connection relationship may continue, if both parties agree.
- If the mentor or mentee feels that the Connection relationship is not working for some reason, and this cannot be worked out with the other party, the Connection relationship should be terminated.

Roles and Responsibilities

All roles are strictly volunteer - no remuneration or honorariums will be provided.

Connection Program Coordinator

- Chair the ARMA Canada Connection Committee
- Must be a member of the ARMA Canada Team (Region Manager, Region Coordinator or Secretary/Treasurer)
- Send out Call for new Applications to all ARMA Canada Members.
- Follow up with applicants and program matches 1-2 times per year to ensure they are paired for success
- Provide “Monthly Discussion Items” to Program pairings to discuss, if required.
- Working with ARMA Canada Conference Director to plan annual event prior to ARMA Canada Conference, if required.
- Report to the ARMA Canada Team
- Ensure all new IM professionals are matched with an experience IM professional. This may require creative solutions such as multiple matches per experience IM professional.

Connection Program Selection Committee

- Up to 2 ARMA members
- Assist in matching applicants
- Assist in planning the event prior to ARMA Canada Conference

Applicants to the Connection Program

- Any ARMA Canada Member can participate*
**Students need not be members. As there is no student ARMA rate, this has negated their active participation. To encourage greater awareness and participation, the Membership program will waive active membership in ARMA for students who wish to register/participate.*
- All Participants shall respect each other's **confidentiality**.
- Experienced IM Professionals will share appropriate knowledge and personal experience with their particular New IM Professional. Experienced IM Professionals will help guide the New IM Professional in their professional development by acting as a role model, teacher, coach, counsel and champion.
- Connections agree to stay connected on a regular basis.
- Use of the Monthly Discussion Items sent by the coordinator are not required to be followed but are to be understood as suggested items to start conversations.
- Be open to working with ARMA Canada Connection Coordinator to plan annual event prior to ARMA Canada Conference.
- Be responsible and courteous in the mentorship relationship:
 - Be considerate;
 - Return phone calls;
 - Attend scheduled meetings or call to cancel;
 - Notify change of e-mail address or phone number;
 - Verbally end the mentorship relationship if it does not work.
 - Advise mentorship coordinator when mentorship relationship is terminated

Effective Connection

The **Experienced IM Professional** is responsible for communicating with the **New IM Professional** on a regular basis during the mentorship period. If possible, one meeting per month is recommended, of at least one half hour in duration. This may be supplemented by phone calls and emails. In the case of geographic separation of the mentor and mentee, communication only by phone and email is acceptable. In these communications the mentor is expected to:

- give information relating to career and skill development
- listen and provide feedback
- give advice and concrete suggestions on professional development
- reflect what is expected and valued in the archival profession

Program participants will be asked half through about participation rates. If necessary the Connection Coordinator reserves the right to issue new partner affiliations if the Connection experience is not proceeding according to the roles noted above.

Matching the applicants

#1 Resume submission

To establish eligibility of the mentor, a copy of the applicants resume will be sought. This information will only be kept by the ARMA Canada Connection Coordinator. It will only be kept for the duration of the matching process.

The purpose of the resume is to confirm years of work experience within the field. This confirmation is at the discretion of the ARMA Canada Connection Coordinator.

#2 Guidelines to follow by Connection Coordinator

The success or failure of Connection is closely tied to how well the mentor/mentee are matched. Most sources agree that a mentor should not be the direct supervisor of the mentee or that they even be from the same department if that is possible. If the personality types are tremendously different, there may be problems with the relationship. In addition there must be a sense of win-win in both the mentor and the mentee. Both should want to participate. This relationship can stretch over months or even years.

To begin the match process, the program coordinator reviews the application, interview notes, for information of both the IM Experienced Professional and New IM Professional (including resume for Experienced IM Professional) to determine match suitability. The greatest weight will be placed on the New IM Professional's preferences and needs. A match selection will be made using the match suitability criteria as a guide:

- Preferences of the New IM Professional
- Similar gender/ethnicity
- Common interests
- Compatibility of meeting times
- Geographical proximity
- Similar personalities.

Benefits of a making connections

Some key benefits for an Experienced Professional include:

- Recognition as a subject matter expert and leader
- Exposure to fresh perspectives, ideas and approaches
- Opportunity to reflect on their own goals and practices
- Development of their personal leadership and coaching styles

For a new IM professional, you have direct access to a wealth of practical experience that help you immediately address your particular issues through:

- Exposure to new ideas and ways of thinking
- Advice on developing strengths and overcoming weaknesses
- Guidance on professional development and advancement

Other potential benefits include:

Benefits for new IM Professionals:

- Establish professional networks
- Understand professional workplace culture
- Improve professional knowledge
- Master self-marketing techniques and build confidence
- Identify employment or job training opportunities
- Continue the learning process

Benefits for Experience IM Professionals:

- Develop relationships with new talent
- Share valuable knowledge gained as result of experience
- Develop coaching, communication and leadership skills
- Motivate and support a person to raise their level of professional development
- Gain personal satisfaction through contributing to the ARMA Canada Region and to the Records Management Profession

Procedures

Application Process and Deadlines

1. Call for Applications goes to all ARMA Members by **Sept 15 of each year**.
2. Interested participants submit a completed Application form and a copy of their most recent resume to the Mentorship Coordinator. Contact Info below.
3. Submission deadline is September 30th **of each year**.
4. The Mentorship Selection Committee will meet (if needed, via conference call) and review the Application forms to determine the best possible matches by taking into consideration factors, such as, areas of expertise, career path/work experience and interests.
5. The Membership Selection Committee will notify mentors/mentees of their partner by October 8th **of each year**.
6. Mentorship Program runs from September – June.

Budget

- There is no budget allocated to the Connection program other than the volunteer time spent by the committee and by mentors.

Annual Function

- **IF POSSIBLE** - Held during annual ARMA Canada Conference. Highlights to include meet and greet and/or Question and Answer Panel between Mentors and Mentees

Continuous Improvement

- Survey mentors and mentees after 3 months to see how the partnership and the program are working out.
- Survey at end of term

Monthly Discussion Topics

Examples of Discussion Topics:

- **Life Decisions** - Discuss the good and bad decisions you've made, and how did that impacted your life
- **Goal Setting** - Discuss life goals and or aspirations.
- **Exploring the Mentors Career** - Discuss the knowledge and skills the mentor acquired from their mentor. What positions (paid or volunteer) were most challenging/ rewarding and why? What career experiences have been key in providing building blocks for their growth and development?
- **Conflict Management** - Discuss some examples of win-win solutions that the mentor has instigated in the recent past. Discuss the approach and why they were successful. Discuss current issues that are causing conflict.
- **Career Challenge** – Discuss a particular career challenge and explore how the mentor perceives the situation and what insight he/she may have or any similar experiences he/she has encountered.
- **ETC..**

Resources

<https://Connectionresources.ictr.wisc.edu/PrePostSurveys>