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**IBioIC Collaborative Trainings Partnership (CTP) PhD Programme – Call for Projects #10**

1. **Introduction**

A key activity of IBioIC is the support of industrially relevant PhD Projects that bring biotechnology closer to industrialisation. IBioIC currently manage a PhD portfolio of IBioIC and BBSRC funded projects, delivered as part of our Collaborative Training Partnership (CTP). All IBioIC project applications are assessed by way of competition. **This paper is a call for PhD Projects to enter this competition for projects commencing October 2022.** **This call is for collaborative projects between qualifying HEIs and SMEs only.** It sets out the rules, processes and guidelines on how this competition will be operated. IBioIC reserves the right to alter these processes in order to comply with the imposed timetable. Any changes of process will be notified to all entrants.

1. **Criteria for all PhD Projects**

The number of PhD Projects to be awarded in this tenth IBioIC PhD competition are as follows:

* Up to 100% IBioIC funded CTP studentships: 2

Awarded PhD Studentships must be 4 years in duration.

For anyPhD Project to be considered it must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. PhD studentships will only be awarded for projects of 4 years in duration.
2. The topic must align with one or more of these five major themes:
   1. Sustainable Feedstocks
   2. Enzymes and Biocatalysis/Biotransformation
   3. Cell Factory Construction and Process Physiology
   4. Downstream Processing
   5. Integrated Bioprocessing
3. The Project must demonstrate industrial relevance by the innovative use or application of biotechnology.
4. The Project must be championed and led by an IBioIC HEI Partner eligible for SFC funding and must be supported by at least one SME Industrial Partner, which is evidenced through a Letter of Support. If any of the Industrial Partners are not Members of IBioIC at the time of the application, then **all** Industrial Partners **must** become Members **before** funding is awarded. Membership must be maintained for the duration of the Project. For more information on membership costs, please contact membership@ibioic.com. The Project may consist of any number of Partners so long as these criteria are met.
5. The Industrial Partner must commit to providing a 3 to 12 month industrial placement directly relevant to the PhD project.
6. Evidence of additional funding, either in cash, cash equivalent or in-kind from the Industrial Partner is essential to the application (actual requirements vary dependent on funding source as detailed in Section 3). In particular, cash/cash equivalent contributions will be used as a deciding factor during the review process, while taking into account our funding requirement to support SME-led projects.

IBioIC reserve the right to instruct a hold on funding if any of these requirements are not met at any point throughout the duration of the Project.

1. **Value and Funding**

The maximum contribution available is calculated and fixed at time of application based on published stipend/fees with an assumed 2.5% uplift for inflation in addition to a maximum annual consumables, travel and training budget of £5,000. Based on the annual cost of a studentship for academic year 2022-23 and on application of the uplift, the total studentship costs for the four years are assumed to be as follows:

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|  | Published 22/23 funding levels from UKRI | Estimated total studentship cost over 4 years (2.5% annual uplift) |
| Fees | £4613 | £19,154 |
| Stipend | £15,999 | £66,437 |
| Consumables, travel and training budget | £5,000 | £20,000 |
| **Total studentship value** |  | £105,591 |

Therefore, the **maximum contribution from IBioIC is £105,591 per studentship.**

The studentship monies will be paid annually to the lead HEI Partner by IBioIC. **As outlined above, IBioIC’s maximum contribution is calculated taking all project costs into account; however, in practice IBioIC will pay the agreed amount in equal amounts split over the four years as a contribution to stipend and fees only**.

It is expected that £1,500 per annum of the consumables, travel and training budget will be ring-fenced by the HEI Partner to support IBioIC cohort training activities. Evidence of spend against this requirement may be requested throughout the Project.

**HEI Partners, Industrial Partners and/or additional sponsors may wish to contribute to the costs of the project**. Additional costs to the Academic/Industrial Partner may include, as examples, additional consumables budget, a top-up stipend or enhanced training budget.

In addition to the above contributions, the Industrial Partner will be expected to cover **all** costs of the agreed industrial placement (travel, accommodation, lab costs etc.). Those proposed projects that have significant industrial investment, in particular cash/cash equivalent contributions, may be ranked higher in the funding assessment process.

Key points to note for application to IBioIC funding:

* IBioIC will cover up to 100% of the studentship costs. This contribution will be agreed at the application stage and will not vary in line with published UKRI studentship costs. Monies will be transferred directly from IBioIC to the recipient annually upfront in four equal payments. The student will require payment in alignment with published UKRI stipend/fees figures as a minimum and differences between this and the upfront agreed amounts (should they occur) will need to be borne by the HEI and/or Industrial Partners.
* IBioIC funded studentships are only open to HEIs eligible for SFC funding.
* The Industrial Partner can be UK or international, but must be an SME. Any international company will be required to cover costs for visiting students.
* With regards recruitment, applicants can be from the UK, EU or International. However, at application stage, the fees are assumed to be that of a UK student and any additional fees relating to international recruitment will need to be met by the HEI Partner.
* No funding will be released until all agreements have been signed by all relevant parties.

1. **Cohort Training Programme**

All PhDs awarded as part of this competition will be considered to be a Member of the IBioIC CTP. As a Member of the IBioIC CTP the following conditions must be met:

* A Member of the IBioIC CTP Management Team must be invited to and attend student recruitment interviews.
* An introductory meeting between the Academic Supervisor, the student and the Industrial Partner will be undertaken within the first two months of commencing the project.
* The student must be in place by 1st October 2022 otherwise the Studentship may not be funded.
* A Personal Development Plan for each student must be submitted within three months of commencing the Project (developed in conjunction with IBioIC).
* Completion of a PgCert Researcher Professional Development (RPD) or equivalent PhD training by the student at the HEI Partner institution is encouraged.
* The Recipient will be expected to release the student for 2 days per year in order for them to participate in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) engagement opportunities to promote IB to the public. This can be to target any subsection of public including school children, families, interest groups etc and be the most appropriate format to achieve the end result. Training and guidance will be provided at induction and throughout the studentship. Engagement activities can take place locally to the host institution, or as part of the cohort in Glasgow. The student will be required to follow reporting guidelines for their activities.
* The student must be released for a minimum of 10 days per year in order for him/her to participate with other students in the cohort in training in specific Industrial Biotechnology related matters under the instruction of IBioIC.
* The recipient will provide IBioIC with a six monthly report in line with IBioIC reporting requirements. This will include a summary of progress and achievements including scientific, financial and training, in relation to the studentship.
* Please refer to the Award Letter for details of all terms and conditions of the Studentship.

1. **How to enter**

In order to enter this competition, the “IBioIC PhD Project Application Oct 2022 #10” must be completed and returned with requested supporting documentation. Appendix 2 contains instructions relating to the completion of this form which is downloaded as a separate form (Word format).

The Project Lead should complete this and submit their entry via email to the IBioIC Skills Team (skills@ibioic.com) before **Wednesday 18th May 2022 (12 noon).** The intention is to keep entry requirements to a minimum whilst still supplying enough information to allow reviewers to make an informed decision on the relative merit of each project.

1. **Timing and Process for award**

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| **Process** | **Timing** | **Action** | **Managed by** |
| Call opens | 19th April 2022 | Promote call through network | IBioIC |
| Call closes | 18th May 2022 (12 noon) | Collate all applications for review | IBioIC Skills team |
| Minimum criteria check | 20th May 2022 | Eligible applications sent out for peer review | IBioIC Skills team |
| Out for review | June 2022 | Each application reviewed by a minimum of two nominated parties and scored according to technical merit. | IBioIC Skills team |
| IBioIC CTP Exec Group approval | June/July 2022 | Funded projects to be approved in principle | IBioIC Skills team |
| Notification of application outcome | Early July 2022 | Applicants and IBioIC Governing Board notified of decision | IBioIC Skills Team |
| Membership agreements and negotiation of contracts | July 2022 | Agree detailed project outputs, finalise collaboration/confidentiality agreements | Funded HEI/  Industrial Partner |
| Agreement in principle | End July 2022 | Notification of agreements to IBioIC | IBioIC Skills Team |
| Student recruitment | July- Sept 2022 | Advertise studentship and undertake recruitment procedure. | Funded HEI |
| Funding starts | 1 October 2022 – 30 September 2023 | Issue funding as agreed. | IBioIC |

1. **Project Selection Criteria**

PhD Projects will be selected on their technical merits. All Projects meeting the minimum criteria set out above will be scored by a minimum of two independent assessors from an approved pool of reviewers using a point system. The assessors will also comment on whether the work will lead to an awardable PhD (yes/no answer). Projects scoring above the points system threshold will be eligible for funding. Funding will be awarded to projects scoring above the threshold and in descending order from the highest score until all studentships are filled.

Technical merits will include:

1. Technical feasibility (Projects should have a good likelihood of technical success and also include details of metrological methods used to support the work undertaken) maximum 40 points
2. Technical ambition (Projects should have a degree of ambition as well as being feasible; Please provide details of project management activities) maximum 30 points
3. Degree of invention (Projects should be novel) maximum 10 points
4. Industrial relevance (Evidence of industrial relevance should be shown) maximum 20 points
5. **Additional Guidance**

The decision of the IBioIC CTP Executive Group when awards are made shall be final and without appeal. The processes followed and decisions taken by the assessors and IBioIC CTP Executive Group shall be minuted and made available to any Member requesting them.

**Appendix 1 – Glossary**

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| IBioIC | Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre |
| Industrial Partner | A company that has signed an IBioIC Membership Agreement (or Accession Agreement). A competition application can be made by any company so long as the agreement is signed before being awarded funding. |
| HEI | Higher Education Institute |
| HEI Partner | HEI that has signed an IBioIC Collaboration Agreement (or Accession Agreement). For the purposes of the first competition application can be made by any SFC eligible HEI so long as the agreement is signed before being awarded funding. |
| Project Team | A combination of at least one Industrial Partner and one HEI Partner that has formed a team to submit an entry to this competition. |
| CTP Executive Group | The Governance Group formed to oversee the delivery of the IBioIC CTP. |
| Funding Terms | The terms and conditions applied or agreed by any third party in providing Funding. |
| PhD Project | Any PhD Project funded/managed by IBioIC |
| Je-S | Online system used by Research Councils to provide electronic grants services. |

**APPENDIX 2 – Competition Entry Guidance**

* Complete the ‘IBioIC PhD Project Application Oct 2022 #10’ in full and ensure all items on the checklist are included. Applications will be returned if required information is omitted.
* The ‘Project Summary’ section of the application must be no more than 2 pages in total (including project outline, structures, Gantt charts or project map/outline associated with goals linked to technical ambition, feasibility). Any applications which are longer than 2 pages will be cut to 2 pages and only these 2 pages will be taken into account when reviewing the application.
* Font size should be 11, Calibri body. Margin size should be 2.54 cm (top, bottom, left and right) with orientation set at portrait. Applications that fall out with these restrictions shall not be assessed.
* Please append the CVs of both primary and secondary academic supervisors (maximum of 2 pages per supervisor). Please include the numbers of students supervised to completion in your CV.
* Where appropriate please include the CVs of industrial supervisor (maximum 2 pages)
* Projects must demonstrate industrial relevance. A Letter of Support is required from the Industrial Partner as evidence.
* Studentships are 4 years in duration.
* The Excel ‘PhD funding template’ must be completed and attached as part of the submission.