

Join Our Team as an Assay Development Intern (3 Month Role)

Role Summary:

We are seeking a PhD student with experience in microbiology, analytical chemistry, or assay development to join our R+D team for a 3-month internship. This role suits a driven individual who is comfortable with Design of Experiments (DOE) and confident at the bench. You will help take our AMPS assay beyond its current baseline and towards its full sensitivity. You will work closely with a cross-functional team of scientists. As this is a wet lab role, it will be largely laboratory based at Norwich Research Park.

Option to learn valuable skills in DOE design, high-throughput plate work, and data analysis. This role is a great way to gain hands-on experience outside academia at a fast-paced, IndieBio backed start-up.

Company Overview:

BugBiome is focused on discovering and developing biopesticides derived from crop microbiomes. By isolating and characterising beneficial microbes, we create innovative solutions that naturally protect plants from pests. Our mission is to improve crop protection, reduce reliance on traditional pesticides, support yield, and promote environmental sustainability.

Project Focus:

AMPS was built on 24 substrates. This project takes a DOE approach across the full substrate space, so the assay draws on every substrate worth including rather than the current 24 limited substrate list. The aim is maximum sensitivity. You will design the substrate panel, run the plates and read out which substrate utilisation patterns correspond to the desired outcome. Support of media kitchen and biofoundry at Earlham.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Experimental design:** Design a DOE across candidate substrates to maximise assay sensitivity.
- **Laboratory support:** Prepare and run plates at a scale of around 100 plates. Media kitchen on site at John Innes and robotics available at Earlham if you are interested in setting it up high throughput!
- **Data analysis:** Identify which substrates are informative of microbe function.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with our interdisciplinary teams, gaining insight into how assay development connects to broader commercial goals.

What We're Looking For:

- **Educational background:** Currently pursuing a PhD in life sciences, chemistry, or a related field.
- **Technical skills:** Familiarity with DOE and laboratory plate work is preferred, and a willingness to learn and adapt is essential.
- **Team player:** Able to work collaboratively with diverse teams while managing tasks independently.
- **Proactive attitude:** Enthusiasm for problem-solving and a proactive approach to driving projects forward.

What We Offer:

- **Hands-on experience:** Work with advanced technologies and methodologies in a supportive learning environment, with the option to gain some business development exposure.
- **Professional development:** Build your skills and knowledge, and gain valuable industry experience outside of a university.
- **Collaborative culture:** Join a young, friendly, dynamic team with regular team socials.

To apply, send alicia@bugbiome.com and chris@bugbiome.com an email with your CV using the subject line "Assay development Intern". Please tell us why you are interested in the role, the doctoral training programme you are on, and when you would be available. The ideal timeline is Q4 2026 (October to December), 2027 possible.