

Join Our Team as a Microbial Phenotyping Intern (3 Month Role)

Role Summary:

We are seeking a PhD student with experience in microbiology, molecular biology, or image-based assays to join our R+D team for a 3-month internship. This role suits a driven individual who can independently set up experiments that profile our microbes and read early signals of how they work. 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 high-throughput phenotyping, video-based insect assays, 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:

This project profiles our strains at scale by imaging microbes, capturing growth and behaviour as structured, comparable data. It then links that microbe-side profile to our video-based insect assays, extending them from insect response to chemistry towards the effect of biological actives. Together this gives a crude mode-of-action data set that informs primary screening for new insect control microbes, so the team can promote the most promising strains sooner and choose more accurate follow-up assays

Key Responsibilities:

- **Laboratory support:** Set up and run microbial phenotyping, preparing strains and plates under the guidance of the team.
- **Assay development:** Apply our video-based insect assays to read the effect of biological actives, generating crude mode-of-action signals via insect behaviour.
- **Data analysis:** Collect and analyse phenotype and assay data, feeding findings into primary screening decisions.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with our discovery and screening teams, gaining insight into how microbiological research connects to broader commercial goals.

What We're Looking For:

- **Educational background:** Currently pursuing a PhD in life sciences or a related field.
- **Technical skills:** Familiarity with microbiological, imaging, or assay techniques 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 "Phenotyping 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.