

Join Our Team as a Natural Product Chemistry Intern (3 Month Role)

Role Summary:

We are seeking a PhD student with experience in natural product chemistry or analytical chemistry, and who is capable of running natural product extractions and preparing fractions independently, to join our R+D team for a 3-month internship. This role suits a driven, chemistry-trained individual who can set up experiments and work methodically. 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. 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 will use BugBiome's proprietary collection of more than 2,500 microbial strains to create a curated natural-product extract library that will be screened by BugBiome for novel insecticides. BugBiome currently evaluates polar and low-molecular-weight fractions produced from microbial fermentations by an external collaborator. This project will bring that capability in-house, establishing a structured library of natural-product fractions from our own microbial collection. We are looking for a student with strong practical chemistry skills to lead the extraction and fractionation work. The student should be comfortable independently developing and carrying out natural-product extraction, separation and fractionation workflows. Previous microbiology experience is not required, as full training in microbial culture, fermentation will be provided.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Library building:** Ferment and extract selected high-value strains, producing polar and small fractions towards a core set of strains with the support of the John Innes Metabolomics platform where needed.
- **Screening:** Apply our insect screening platform to the natural-product extract library.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with our interdisciplinary teams, gaining insight into how natural product chemistry connects to broader commercial goals.

What We're Looking For:

- **Educational background:** Currently pursuing a PhD in natural product chemistry, analytical chemistry, or a related field.
- **Technical skills:** Hands-on extraction and fractionation experience is preferred, and confidence with analytical methods is valued.
- **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 "Natural product 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.