

# INNOVATION CHALLENGES 2021



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## 1. Programme Outline

Methodological approach

The Ribomed Innovation Challenges aims at training (junior) researchers in the development of collaborations with industry based on the identification of opportunities in RNA therapeutics that can be matched with their scientific capacities. The programme will be organised into four sequential phases that are aimed at:

- 1) Identifying opportunities for collaborations with industry and other external organisations;
- 2) Selecting the best collaboration ideas matching the opportunities identified;
- 3) Presenting the ideas for collaboration and discussion with industry representatives;
- 4) Establishing collaborations with industry.

The diagram below provides an overview of the activities to be organised under each phase.

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### Identification of Opportunities - Mar/Apr 2021

- Engage (junior) researchers;
- Presentation of the programme;
- Preliminary identification of scientific capacities;
- Identify targets in industry and external organisations;
- Workshop "Reaching out to industry";
- Engage industry and external organisations;
- Identify opportunities for collaboration.

#### Main Output

- Catalogue of IMM capacities;
- Engage companies;
- Collaboration opportunities.

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### Selection of Ideas - May 2021

- Identification of ideas for collaboration;
- Discussion and selection of ideas with group leaders;
- Internal presentation for selection of the best ideas.

#### Main Output

- Ideas selected for presentation.

3

### Presentation to Industry - June 2021

- Define format and organise meeting(s);
- Coaching prior to presentation to industry;
- Presentation and discussion with industry.

#### Main Output

- Ideas selected by industry.

4

### Proposals

- Prepare proposals for the ideas selected by industry;
- Negotiation and formalization.

#### Main Output

- Proposals for collaboration;
- Collaborations.

# 2. Project Approach and Methodology

Step-by-step approach



## Identification of Opportunities

March - April 2021

**Week 1** - The TTO will **launch the programme on 1 March 2021**. Group leaders involved or interested in Ribomed activities will encourage (junior) researchers to participate in the programme. Interested researchers can participate individually or in teams (within the same or from different research groups) and communicate their interest to the TTO.

**Week 2** - An **online presentation of the programme** will be scheduled with interested researchers to present the planned activities and have a Q&A session. A preliminary identification of scientific capacities that can be of interest to industry will be done.

**Week 3** – Researchers will work with the TTO to identify companies and external organisations that could be interested in the scientific capacities identified. A list of companies in RNA therapeutics is already available for the task.

**Week 4 / 6** – The TTO will organise a **workshop** where experienced industry profiles in university – industry collaboration will provide best practices and tips in successfully reaching out to industry. Researchers will work with the TTO in establishing **contacts with target companies and external organisations** to engage them in the programme.

**Week 7 / 8** – Researchers will work with the TTO in the **identification of collaboration opportunities** with engaged companies and external organisations.

The goals of this phase are to engage **5 companies or external organisations** in the programme and **10 collaboration opportunities**.

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## Selection of Ideas

May 2021

**Week 1** – Collaboration opportunities identified in the previous phase will lead to the work by researchers of **identification of ideas** that use relevant scientific capacities or research results that would be best fit to respond to the collaboration opportunities.

**Week 2 / 3** – Ideas identified by researchers will be discussed and fine-tuned with the respective group leaders and/or other research groups / facilities at IMM that might have relevant expertise for the implementation of the ideas. Each researcher / team will send their **pre-selected ideas** to the TTO.

**Week 4** – An internal meeting will be organised for researchers / teams to present their ideas to the iMM research community. Discussion for inputs and advice will be held. Participants will vote in the ideas for **final selection of the ideas** to be presented to industry.

The goal of this phase will be to identify **at least 1 idea to respond to each collaboration opportunity** identified in the previous phase.

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## 3

### Presentation to Industry

June 2021

**Week 1** – The TTO will discuss with participating companies and external organisations the best format for the meeting(s) dedicated to the presentation and evaluation of the ideas for collaboration selected in the previous phase. According to feedback, the meeting(s) will be scheduled and organised.

**Week 2 – 3** - The TTO will provide a template for a pitch presentation of ideas and will schedule individual meetings with researchers / teams **to review and provide advice on pitch presentations**.

**Week 4** – Meeting(s) with companies and external organisations to present and discuss ideas for collaboration.

At the end of this phase, we expect that **ideas for collaboration are selected** by companies and external organisations for working on proposals for collaboration.

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## 4

### Proposals

Continuous

Interaction with companies and external organisations to **define proposals and terms for collaboration**.

Formalisation of collaborations.