

LEAP-BIO

LEAP-BIO is a COSME project which aims to **develop IP licensing intermediary services** for early stage assets in **Pharma** and **BIotech**.



CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST ON IP LICENSING INTERMEDIARY SERVICES FOR EARLY-STAGE ASSETS IN PHARMA & BIOTECH (LEAP-BIO)

European Innovative Council and SMEs Executive Agency

Project Acronym: LEAP-BIO	Lead Beneficiary: IMM
Project No: 101084048	Project coordinator : Eurasanté

PARTNERSHIP:



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The biopharmaceutical industry is one of the most dynamic industries which in addition to involving a great amount of research, also requires a significant investment in challenging regulatory approval processes, manufacturing and intellectual property, thus making it increasingly difficult for new companies to enter this competitive market. Very often, biopharma SMEs and start-ups do not have the adequate resources to carry out their research products to the later stages of development and rely on early-stage licensing agreements with larger companies capable of further developing their products and bringing them to the market. On the other hand, industry has been witnessing an increasing trend of big pharma and leading biotech companies embracing open innovation and positioning themselves at the earlier stages of the drug development process to tap into the most promising assets ahead of competition, namely novel drug targets and therapeutic programs opening disruptive therapeutic approaches. With this in mind, it should be no surprise that biopharma is also the industry sector with the highest rate of IP licensing deals. According to GlobalData, southern European regions appear to be lagging behind when it comes to the early-stage licensing trend that is observed in other European regions.

The IP Licensing intermediary services for **early-stage assets in pharma and biotech** (LEAP-BIO) project is co-funded under the “Intellectual Property Licensing Intermediaries” (SMP-COSME-2021-IPLI-01) call for proposals. The consortium includes Eurasanté (France), an economic development agency dedicated to tech transfer and business development in the life sciences sector, Instituto de Medicina Molecular – IMM (Portugal), a leading biomedical research institute that has a Technology Transfer Office with a solid track record in knowledge transfer, and ItalBiotec (Italy), an SME born in 2019 as an evolution of CISI Srl that performs feasibility studies, techno economics analyses and business model development within the biotechnology and circular economy sectors. The project started on the 1st of September 2022 and will last 18 months, ending on the 28th of February 2024.

The LEAP-BIO project aims to address a lack of intermediary services towards IP licensing and exploitation of early-stage assets in key-target European regions/countries, such as Portugal, Spain, France, Italy and Wallonian region (Belgium). The goal of the LEAP-BIO project is to leverage the extensive expertise and networks of the consortium to develop an early-stage focused IP licensing intermediary service for biopharma institutes, SMEs and start-ups in the target regions.

The specific objectives of LEAP-BIO are the following:

- Establish strategies and tools to facilitate the licensing of early-stage assets in the biopharma industry;
- Identify and characterise licensing interests from the top global pharma companies, and well-financed, public listed European biotech companies;
- Identify early-stage assets matching the licensing interests of leading biopharma players;
- Improve the matchmaking process with the combination of digital tools and face-to-face partnering events;
- Support the negotiation of licence agreements of early-stage IP assets;
- Establish a sustainable IP licensing intermediary service of early-stage assets;
- Promote the use of IP Licensing intermediary services - in particular via digital tools - and disseminate best practises to target audiences.

PURPOSE OF THE CALL

Under this call, the LEAP-BIO project is currently seeking applicants from key target regions, namely Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and the Wallonian region in Belgium, who own early-stage assets at the discovery or preclinical stage that match the licensing interests of big pharma and well-funded biotech companies.

LEAP-BIO project will be accepting Expressions of Interest (Eoi) in two independent stages (see section “Deadlines of the Call”).

EXPECTED OUTCOMES / BENEFITS

Applicants will gain access to a specialized free-of-charge IP licensing intermediary service, designed to facilitate the complex process of licensing assets within the biopharma industry. By applying to this call, applicants will increase their chances of securing a successful licensing deal, as their assets will be showcased to companies with matching interests.

Successful applicants, i.e., those whose assets generate interest from potential licensing partners, will have the opportunity to receive support from LEAP-BIO during negotiations, including assistance with negotiating term-sheets.

LEAP-BIO will continuously collect and update the licensing interests from the big pharma and biotech companies. Therefore, to increase the likelihood of successful matches between early-stage assets and the specific licensing interests of leading biopharma players, all assets submitted to the call will be added to a database, which will be regularly evaluated as new licensing interests are collected.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA / WHO CAN APPLY

The assets submitted must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Early-stage assets (discovery and preclinical stages)
- (2) Ready for out-license
- (3) Aligned with the topics of interest listed in the pdf document “Interests from big pharma & biotech” (for more information, please see **Annex 2**)
- (4) Regions: Portugal, Spain, France, Italy and the Wallonian region

Depending on the results from the 1st stage, the 2nd stage could be extended to companies from other European regions. Applicants from the 1st stage can also apply for the 2nd stage, as long as the assets submitted are different from those previously submitted in the 1st stage. On the other hand, entities who did not participate in the 1st stage are welcome to submit assets in the 2nd stage.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Companies interested in submitting early-stage assets should complete the **Asset forms (Annex 1)** only with non-confidential information. To ensure the proper functionality and optimal viewing experience of this PDF form, please open it using Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Applicants should send the completed **Asset forms (Annex 1)** to imm-techtransfer@medicina.ulisboa.pt before the stage deadline (see section Deadlines of the Call).

SELECTION CRITERIA / ASSESSMENT PROCESS

After each stage of the call, the LEAP-BIO consortium will conduct a preliminary matchmaking analysis to determine whether the asset aligns with the licensing interests of potential partners. Assets that effectively align with these interests will be presented to the respective companies to gauge their interest in initiating discussions.

Applicants should expect to receive feedback within two months of the stage deadline.

DEADLINES OF THE CALL

The call will be open to research institutes, start-ups and SMEs from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy and the Wallonian region (Belgium) and will have the following timelines for each stage:

1st stage:

- Open: 17th of May (Wednesday), 9AM CET time
- Closure: 4th of July (Tuesday), 6PM CET time

2nd stage:

- Open: 5th of September (Tuesday), 9AM CET time
- Closure: 19th of October (Thursday), 6PM CET time

CONTACT

For more information, please contact IMM's Technology Transfer Office (imm-techtransfer@medicina.ulisboa.pt)

ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Asset forms (interactive pdf file)
- Annex 2: Interests from big pharma & biotech