



5th EDITION BIST IGNITE PROGRAMME - AWARDS

Overview and Selection Process

October 2022

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

Goal

To promote new collaborations among researchers from the BIST community, facilitating the exchange of knowledge among different scientific fields and exploring new approaches to address complex questions.

Conceptually, results from collaborative research projects supported by the BIST Ignite Programme may serve as the foundation for preparing joint, multi-institutional proposals to apply for external competitive funding.

Description of the Programme

The BIST Ignite Programme is a mechanism to foster new collaborative research among members of the BIST community belonging to diverse centres and with a cross-disciplinary perspective. This programme has a current budget of up to 100.000€/year, dedicated to fund a number of “seeding stage” research projects, as well as a BIST Ignite Award, to recognize the results accomplished by one or more seeding stage projects.

BIST Ignite projects are expected to explore scientific questions and technological challenges through novel multidisciplinary perspectives, fostering the exchange of knowledge across disciplines. Researchers from at least two different BIST centres must be involved in each project.

As mentioned above, the BIST Ignite Programme features a two-stage funding scheme:

1.- The **Seeding Stage** is an internal call for new proposals open to the full BIST community. The only hard requirement is for the proposal to include researchers from at least two different BIST centres who have not collaborated in the past. A minimum of two proposals will be selected by an external panel and receive 25.000€ each. Researchers will have ten months to develop their projects and report on the results.

2.- The **BIST Ignite Award** has an exploratory nature and consists of an additional award of 50.000€ to be spent over a period of 12 months, given to the best project(s) out of those selected during the Seeding Stage. The winner of the BIST Ignite Award is selected by an external panel based on both the preliminary results obtained in the ten months of the project’s Seeding Stage and the perceived potential of continuing the collaboration. Both aspects must be clearly stated in the executive project report. While a proof of concept is not required in the Seeding Stage, designing it is a fundamental requisite to win the BIST Ignite Award.

The BIST Ignite Programme is intended to stimulate the generation of new collaborative partnerships among BIST centres, as well as promote the generation of a pipeline of new research projects needing a multidisciplinary approach. If successful, BIST Ignite Programme projects use the funding to obtain enough preliminary data and research results to apply to more ambitious and competitive external funding calls, as well as produce high-quality publications.

Participation of non-BIST Institutions

The participation of groups from non-BIST institutions is possible, when they provide expertise otherwise not available within BIST. However, at least two BIST centres must still be involved in the project and external groups need to provide their own funding.

Proposal Preparation and Application Process – 2022 BIST Ignite Award

The application consists of a scientific and financial report on the accomplishment of the Seeding Stage project and a 2–4-page proposal detailing the project's next phase. The report **must highlight the scientific results and the benefit of the collaboration**. The continuation budget must clearly indicate the percentage allocated to each centre in case the project is granted. The funds provided can be used to cover any expenses required for the development of the project, except for investment in equipment.

Since the panel members may be unfamiliar with the specifics of each proposal, given their multidisciplinary nature, the proposals should be written so they are understandable by scientists who are non-experts in its field(s).

To solve doubts and provide guidance during the proposal preparation and application process, each centre has a contact point person. Questions may also be addressed to research@bist.eu.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applications by Seeding Stage projects for a BIST Ignite Award will be peer reviewed by a panel of three external researchers who will make a recommendation for the winning proposal(s) during a consensus meeting.

The communication of the BIST Ignite Award winner(s) will take place during December, and funds transferred to allow work to start on January 2023.

Evaluation Criteria

Three aspects will be considered during the evaluation of the reports/proposals from the Seeding Stage:

- Relevance of the results obtained (counts for 50%)
- Viability and justification of continuing the collaboration (counts for 25%)
- Impact (to date and short-term future) (counts for 25%).

For each project, each criterion will be rated from 1 to 5, where 5 is *excellent*, 4 is *very good*, 3 is *good*, 2 is *sufficient* and 1 is *insufficient*.

Relevance of the results obtained during the Seeding Stage (counts for 50%)

5. Excellent. Results are very solid and have exceeded initial expectations. Complementarity of the partners has resulted in the necessary expertise for the project to succeed.

4. Very good. Results reached a good accomplishment level. The collaboration has been relevant for reaching the project's objectives.

3. Good. Results do not quite reach expectations, but collaboration has been productive.

2. Sufficient. Results are far from expectations, or collaboration did not manifest its full potential.

1. Insufficient. No clear results are reported, or collaboration has been lacking.

Viability and justification of continuing the collaboration (counts for 25%)

5. Excellent. Excellent short-term prospects. Objectives are realistic and in the spirit of an exploratory project. The 12-month project is well planned, and objectives are adequate for the time and resources allocated to develop them.

4. Very good. Very good short-term prospect. Objectives are realistic and in the spirit of an exploratory project. The 12-month project is well planned, but minor shortcomings are present with regards to its viability given the time/resources allocated.

3. Good. Good short-term prospects. Objectives are realistic and in spirit of an exploratory project. Yet, viability of the 12-month project cannot be judged from the proposal's description.

2.- Sufficient. Interesting short-term prospects with concrete objectives. But it is unclear whether the exploration will lead to follow-up collaborative research.

1. Insufficient. The 12-month project planning or purpose of the financial support are sufficiently explained.

Impact of the project, to date and in the short-term future (counts for 25%).

5. Excellent. A ground-breaking research direction with novel concepts. Future impact well described. Clear potential for a future larger project.

4. Very good. A new research direction is proposed. Future impact well described. Some potential for a future larger project.

3. Good. *An interesting new research direction is proposed. Potential future impact unclear.*

2.- Sufficient. *Interesting short-term project with concrete objectives. Yet unclear whether the exploration will lead to follow-up collaborative research.*

1. Insufficient. *Novel elements are unclear.*

Calendar for the selection process

15th October 2022	Call for reports/proposals opens
29st November 2022	Call for reports/proposals closes
22th December 2022	Announcement of the panel's decision
January 2023	Transfer of funds
December 2023	Deadline for final report

Eligibility criteria

All applications must involve **at least two group leaders from two different scientific fields and working in two different BIST centres. They should be equally committed to the delivery of the proposed activities.**

Associated researchers and postdocs are welcome to apply, if they have a clearance letter from their group leader, to be submitted along with the report/proposal. The non-compliance with this criterion will render the application invalid.