

Internal Grant of INDICASAT (IGI)

BACKGROUND

INDICASAT-AIP is committed to high-quality research that impacts our society. Considering the relevance of obtaining international funding, INDICASAT AIP proposes to conduct an internal grant call – IGI. This grant is intended to provide practical experience for investigators in applying to funds following formats from international agencies.

The IGI call is focused on key research lines in the areas of Biotechnology, Biomedicine and Biodiversity. This call recognizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach, among the intra- and extramural researchers with skills in basic, applied, and clinical investigations, and adaptive technologies. The IGI seek to promote not only originality and innovative research but also the creation of new capacities within the institute to address the challenges that our country faces.

The IGI funding program is divided in two types, one focused on the generation of preliminary data for future international grant applications (IGI-01). The other IGI grant is intended to strengthen current highly productive research lines, and to accelerate breakthroughs that establish new capacities for the country (IGI-02). More information is available at: www.indicasat.org.pa

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The IGI funding program aims to address significant gaps in the research lines mentioned above and provide an opportunity to advance research so that INDICASAT-AIP scientists can ensure that they are implementing national and/or global need-based research priorities. Work funded by the IGI is channeled through Panamanian public funds and must directly advance research projects focused on development of new and/or validation of previously developed research.

Investigators awarded through the IGI will be expected to engage with national and/or international collaborators to conduct research activities and advance in their research fields of biodiversity, biomedicine and biotechnology.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Areas of focus include all high-priority research areas of INDICASAT-AIP. **These areas are defined broadly, and the examples cited are not intended to preclude or constrain other projects or proposals.** Potential applicants are encouraged to submit proposals in their own areas of interest or formulate questions different from those presented in this announcement. Innovative, novel ideas to address challenges, and generation of national capacities in research are the core of IGI's research funding. Among the areas within Biodiversity, Biotechnology, and Biomedicine, the Institute has identified important focus categories: (1) basic research, (2) clinical investigations, (3) applied investigation, and (4) adaptive technologies (operational research).

Categories of interest include but are not limited to:

1. **Basic research:** Refers to all research that address fundamental questions to explain scientific theories for better understanding and prediction of other phenomena. It can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory.
2. **Applied investigation:** Refers to the use of scientific theories to develop techniques or technologies, which can be used to mediate and alter natural or other phenomena. This category focuses on the development of technology and techniques.
3. **Clinical investigations:** Research where scientist interact directly with human subject with the aim to test a treatment, medical devices, diagnoses tools, and perform population studies.
4. **Adaptive technologies (operational research):** Refer to the implementation of already existing technology, tools or techniques in order to improve their performance and their implementation in the community/society.

IGI proposals should not be previously awarded by national and international funding agencies. The proposed project may be supplemental to funded projects from other sources. In practical terms, the objectives of these proposal may be aligned with ongoing project objectives, but may not duplicate the specific objectives of those projects.

FUNDING AND AWARD PERIOD

There are two grant types:

- 1) **Exploratory grants (IGI-01):** limited to \$50,000 total funding (direct costs) over a period of up to two years.
- 2) **New, Innovative, continuity or capacity building grants (IGI-02):** limited to \$100,000 total funding (direct costs) over a period of up to three years.

KEY DATES

Intent Form Launch	By June 30, 2021
Intent Form Deadline*	July 30, 2021 at 5:00 pm EST-Panama
Application Deadline*	Oct 29, 2021 at 5:00 pm EST-Panama
Application Review	November, 2021 -January, 2022
Award Notifications	March 30, 2022

***The Intent Form and application must be received by 5:00 PM EST-Panama on their respective deadlines.** They will not be accepted after these dates -- no exceptions will be made. Intent Forms must be sent to internalgrant@indicasat.org.pa

ELIGIBILITY

- The Principal Investigator (PI) must be an INDICASATAIP scientist, either post docs or investigators.
- The research team may be a multidisciplinary group. However, scientists and clinicians from public, private, domestic and foreign research laboratories, medical centers, hospitals and universities are eligible to apply only as co-PI.
- Applicants for IGI-02 must have previous experience in managing research grants.
- The applicant research team should have a publication record within the area of the proposed research.
- The PI must have at least 30% dedication time available at the moment of application (no more than two active grants).
- Only one IGI application as PI is accepted per scientist.
- Students are not eligible for IGI grant calls.

Question regarding eligibility can be addressed to the program Chairs Patricia Llanes pllanes@indicasat.org.pa and Amador Goodridge, agoodridge@indicasat.org.pa

BUDGET

A “Budget summary” for the proposed research project is required and must be submitted with the application and within the allowable two-page limit. This should include the available resources for this grant and justification of budget items.

A detailed budget table should be prepared using the budget template available. **Your budget must not exceed the maximum amount of the corresponding grant type.** Funds can be requested for 2-3 years depending on the grant type. It is required that the funds awarded under this program be used for direct research support (direct costs). No overhead will be charged to IGI grants.

Allowable costs under this award include:

- Small pieces of laboratory equipment and laboratory supplies
- Computer hardware and software if used strictly for data collection and/or analysis
- Salary for technical staff (lab technician, undergraduate thesis students)
- Support for travel to scientific and professional meetings any given year
- Purchase and care of laboratory animals
- Internal core facilities

Not allowable as Direct Costs under this award include:

- Computer standard software (e.g., Microsoft Office)
- Construction or renovation costs
- Tuition
- Rent for laboratory/office space
- Salary and/or compensation for researcher team members

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

1. Intent Form Submission

The first step in applying to the IGI for any research grant is to submit an Intent Form (IF). Applications will not be accepted without a previous IF. **The IF and completed application must be submitted by a single Principal Investigator (PI).** The purpose of the IF is to ensure that all applicants are eligible for the competition they are applying to and to assist IGI staff in planning for peer reviews. **IFs will not be accepted after the deadline date. No exceptions will be made.** The applicant is responsible for adhering to the space limitations (described below).

The IF should have the following information:

- Name of the principal investigator
- Contact information for the principal investigator
- Current position at the time of submission
- Proposal title
- Area of focus of the submission, such as Biotechnology, Biomedicine, and Biodiversity (options will be available to choose from within the form)
- Summary (1,000 characters including spaces)
- Objectives (1,000 characters including spaces)
- Overall impact on the field (1,000 characters including spaces)
- Three recommendation of reviewers

Note: Additional attachments not specifically outlined above are not allowed and will not be considered.

IGI grant request recommendation of reviewers. The selection of reviewers should avoid conflicts of interest, including (but not limited to):

1. The PI is a current or former trainee of the suggested reviewer/s.
2. The PI and suggested reviewer have published together in the last four (4) years. This excludes workshops or large consortia.
3. The PI and suggested reviewer have been co-investigators on a grant application or award in the last four (4) years.
4. The suggested reviewer may receive financial benefit from the PI receiving an award.

2. Full Application Submission

The required materials including the application format, templates, and instructions, will be available online in the INDICASAT AIP webpage. The full application must consist of the following documents and must not exceed the maximum page limit allowed for each section:

1. Problem Statement (1 page)
2. Work Plan (5 pages)
3. Available Resources & Budget Justification (2 pages)
4. Budget
5. Biosketch(es) – PI/Co-PI/Key personnel – limited to 4-5 pages each (the NIH format will be provided)
6. Letters of support (external collaborators)

Applications will be reviewed by IGI and a select panel of experts with special attention to:

- Originality
- Capacity building
- Quality of the work plan/proposal
- Feasibility of the proposal
- Experience of research team

Additionally, reviewers will consider:

- Significance of the question being studied
- Applicant information
- Quality and adequacy of available resources and budget
- Impact

The PI who submits the application must be the same PI who submitted the IF. It is **imperative** that you proofread your application before submission; you will not be allowed to make any changes to the application after the deadline or once applications are under review.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that:

1. The proposal is in formal standard English language (British or American).
2. The application is submitted by the receipt date/time deadline. Once submitted, you will receive a confirmation e-mail from IGI chairs that your application was successfully submitted.
3. Letters of collaboration/support from extramural partner are required together with your application and must be submitted by the receipt date/time deadline.
4. Additional documents from those provided in the application package will not be allowed.

ETHICAL/REGULATORY APPROVALS & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If awarded for funding, the IGI requires:

- Any necessary human or animal ethical and/or regulatory approvals are kept current, and may also require specific reporting throughout the lifetime of the award.
- Annual scientific and financial reports
- Conference abstracts and manuscript publication (optional)

Human/Animal Ethical Assurances

Human subject ethical approval is not required at the time of application. Investigators have up to 90 days after receipt of their award notification to submit these documents. However, the IGI encourages investigators to initiate their certification applications on a schedule that recognizes that approvals at many institutions can take more than 90 days. The IGI accepts only certifications that apply specifically to the funded project and must include the name of the awardee. An award letter will not be issued unless the appropriate certifications are submitted within the 90 days from award notifications and include the name of the awardee (PI). The same applies for animal ethical approvals.

Annual Scientific and Financial Reports

Interim Scientific & Financial Reports must be submitted at the end of each reporting period as long as the grant remains active. Final Scientific & Financial Reports must be filed within 90 days of the grants' end date. All reports must be submitted electronically via email (PDF or shareable link) to internalgrant@indicasat.org.pa.

Publications, Presentations and Abstracts

Electronic copies of publications (URL links are allowed), presentations and abstracts that report research supported by funds from the IGI must be submitted together with the scientific report.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Multiple and Overlapping Submissions

Multiple submissions from one applicant as PI are not permitted.

Review Process Overview

All proposals are subject to a blinded peer-review process. In the first stage, applications are reviewed and rated by a minimum of two peer scientists with expertise in the proposed area of research. Applicants must include recommended reviewers in the IF.

Nondiscrimination and Harassment Statement

The IGI is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and discrimination. The IGI strictly prohibits harassment and discrimination based on race; creed; color; religion; sex; sexual orientation; national origin; ancestry; age; citizenship status; marital status; physical or mental disabilities; pregnancy, gender identity or expression (including transgender status); genetic information; and any other characteristic.

This program announcement is posted on the INDICASAT AIP website at www.indicasat.org.pa

For additional information, please send all inquiries to internalgrant@indicasat.org.pa.
