

GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGE - SUSTAINABILITY IN PHARMACEUTICS

**ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Programme call for
applications**

**BIP Ref.: 2023-1-BE02-KA131-HED-
000117677-8**

The University of Parma (Italy), jointly with the University of Paris-Saclay (France), the University of Helsinki (Finland), and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark) offers the opportunity to participate in an ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Program (BIPs). The Blended Intensive Program is officially approved by the EU in the framework of the ERASMUS+ 2021/2027 program.

BIPs are one of the new and innovative formats of student mobility introduced by the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 Program. These programs, jointly developed by multiple higher education institutions, feature advanced and innovative pedagogical approaches that combine short-term face-to-face (physical) mobilities with portions of virtual learning.

BIPs are inherently transnational and transdisciplinary, as curricula are developed and taught together by partner institutions in different countries. The combination of in-person and virtual learning spaces allows students and mentors to experience and exchange highly collaborative, challenge-based, and research-steeped methods of teaching and learning.

During the mandatory virtual component of the program, participants will have the chance to enhance and refine their expertise concerning Business development, managing, sustainability in sciences and ice breaking skills development, aligning with the European Commission's commitment to leverage digital technologies for education and foster sustainability methodologies above all.

Total number of participants per institution:

The Blended Intensive Program is open to a limited number of participants from each partner institution, and each institution will independently decide how many candidates to select. The agreed number of participants will not exceed 24.

BIP calendar (both virtual and physical periods)

The Virtual program will start on the **21nd of April 2026** and will end on the **22th of May 2026**. It is divided in 2 parts: on Monday/Tuesday, students will meet with selected speakers to improve their soft skills and gain awareness on topics such as Business development, managing, sustainability in sciences. On Thursday/Friday the candidates will meet with mentors to practically implement the skills gained.

The in-place program will be held in **Helsinki** and will start on **25th of May 2026** and will end on **the 29th of May 2026**. On the final day, there will be a session where candidates will showcase the skills they have acquired.

ECTS credits (with credit equivalents for non-ECTS partners)

The successful completion of the program, both in its physical and virtual parts, awards 4 ECTS.

Teaching methodologies

Face-to-face lectures, on-field class, case-studies presentations, self-learning, and online group meetings for data analysis and discussion.

Venue for the physical period of attendance

The physical part of the BIP will take place in **Helsinki, P.O 56 (Viikinkaari 5), 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland, Monday 25th until Friday 29th of May 2026**

The call for applicants

Description of the program

The University of Parma (Italy), in collaboration with the University of Paris-Saclay (France), the University of Helsinki (Finland), and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), offers its students the opportunity to participate in an intensive blended program (BIP). The intensive blended program is officially endorsed by the EU under the ERASMUS+ 2021/2027 framework. This year, the course is in its third edition and is coordinated by the University of Helsinki, whereas University of Parma will be partner.

Never before has human well-being and healthcare taken such a central role in public interest as it does now. The development of new technologies and the ability of small entrepreneurial entities to address clinical/therapeutic needs require the adoption of dynamic teaching methodologies sensitive to labor market changes. The overall aim of this project is to facilitate the transition from student life to active and professional life in the pharmaceutical and biotechnological fields. To this end, the project aims to enhance skills such as initiative development, self-confidence, and the effective application of all knowledge acquired by students at a fundamental level (hard skills), as well as cross-cutting competencies and soft skills. In order to complete this project, participants will need to establish connections between these different competencies and enhance their presence by engaging in a self-entrepreneurial situation, managing the creation of a business in collaboration with colleagues. Emulation and positive pressure are generated by the competition among various teams formed around a common project in the field of Health.

Motivation at the basis of the BIP

The BIP initiative aims to pool the diverse competencies and skills from the four participating universities, delivering them to students hailing from distinct European regions. By doing so, students can absorb these insights in Parma and potentially adapt them to their own regional contexts.

Program learning objectives

Participating in this BIP program provides students, as well as mentors, with a unique opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge, and to leverage from the precious insights of expert. Across all the virtual modules, students will be guided by instructors through a journey from knowledge to action, addressing the complexities of various topics including business development, managing skills, and sustainability in science. They will learn to navigate the intricacies and conflicts often associated with these issues, enhancing their education, fostering awareness, and contributing to human, professional, and institutional advancement. Moreover, they will actively engage in fieldwork, data analysis, data presentation, entrepreneurship and collaborate through online meetings beyond the whole week spent in Parma.

The final exam will consist of a presentation of an idea by the teams, taking into consideration market analysis, business development, SWAT analysis and other parameters.

Language of Teaching

All the modules and courses are taught in ENGLISH language (B1 minimum level required, B2 preferred for candidate selection).

Program content, detailing physical and virtual components

Virtual period

The program consists of **20 hours** of short lessons and training with mentors that will be made available for all participants starting from the 22nd of April.

There are four main sessions, divided as follows:

Session 1 (4h):

Presentation of the BIP program, ice breaking. Topic: How to find innovative idea? In the first part of the virtual meeting, students will be asked to present a pitch (around 1 minute), in order to introduce themselves to each other. The students will then discuss on how to build a solid body of soft skills such as presenting data to experts. In the second part of the 1st session, students will be divided into teams and will start working at the final idea with the help of the mentors.

Session 2 (4h):

Management, interpersonal skills and start-up company. Speakers will be recruited by the University of Parma and Paris-Saclay. This session will explore key strategies and challenges in navigating the entrepreneurial landscape of biotech startups. With the help of experts in the field, the participants will delve into the intricacies of effective management practices tailored to the unique demands of biotechnological ventures, including team building, project management, and resource allocation. Moreover, the session will examine the critical components of launching and scaling a biotech start-up, from ideation and product development to market entry and growth strategies. Additionally, participants will explore the significance of international collaboration in fostering innovation and expanding market reach in the biotech industry. Through case studies and interactive discussions, attendees will gain insights into successful approaches to building and managing biotech start-ups, leveraging international partnerships, and navigating regulatory frameworks across different jurisdictions. By the end of the session, the participants will be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to drive sustainable growth and competitiveness in the global biotech market. In the second part of the 4th session, students will start working at the final idea with the help of the mentors.

Session 3 (4h):

Business plan and economy. Speakers will be recruited by the University of Parma and KUL. This session will delve into the intricate dynamics of entrepreneurial ventures within the biotech sector. With the help of expert in the field, the participants will explore the essential components of crafting a robust business plan tailored specifically to biotechnological innovations. Topics will include market analysis, revenue models, funding strategies, and regulatory considerations unique to the biotech industry. Through case studies and interactive exercises, attendees will gain practical insights into navigating the financial landscape of biotech startups, identifying opportunities for investment and growth, and mitigating risks inherent in biotechnological ventures. Moreover, the session will address the broader economic implications of biotechnology, examining its role in driving innovation, creating jobs, and fostering economic growth. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to develop and execute successful business strategies in the dynamic and rapidly evolving biotech landscape. In the second part of the 3rd session, students will start working at the final idea with the help of the mentors.

Session 4 (4h):

Intellectual properties. This session will focus on the critical role of intellectual property (IP) in fostering innovation and protecting breakthroughs within the biotechnology sector. Participants will explore key

aspects of IP management, including patent strategies, trademarks, trade secrets, and copyright law, with a specific emphasis on their application to biotechnological products and processes.

Through discussions led by experienced professionals and legal experts, attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of the IP landscape in biotech, including the complexities of securing patents for biological innovations, navigating international IP regulations, and addressing ethical and societal considerations. Real-world case studies will illustrate successful IP strategies and common pitfalls, offering practical insights into how companies leverage intellectual property to gain competitive advantages and attract investment. Interactive exercises will enable participants to analyze IP scenarios, develop strategies to protect their innovations, and evaluate the potential risks and benefits of different approaches. Additionally, the session will explore the broader economic and societal impacts of IP in biotechnology, highlighting its role in incentivizing research, driving industry growth, and promoting collaboration while ensuring accessibility. In the second part of Session 4, students will work on refining their final project ideas, with guidance from mentors, to integrate effective IP strategies into their business concepts. By the end of the session, participants will be well-equipped to navigate the complexities of intellectual property in the biotech field and leverage it as a cornerstone of their entrepreneurial success.

Session 5 (4h):

Sustainability. Speakers will be recruited by the University of Helsinki. In the field of biotechnology, sustainability is a paramount factor involved in research, development, and application. This session delves into the intersection of biotechnology and sustainability, exploring how advancements in biotech can contribute to environmental preservation, resource efficiency, and societal well-being. With the help of experts in the field, participants will examine innovative approaches to the use of therapeutic molecules, highlighting practices that minimize ecological footprints and promote circular economy principles. Moreover, the session will address ethical considerations surrounding biotechnological interventions in agriculture, healthcare, and pharmacy, emphasizing the importance of responsible innovation and equitable access to biotechnological solutions. Through case studies and interactive discussions, attendees will gain insights into the multifaceted challenges and opportunities in achieving sustainable development goals through biotechnology, fostering a holistic understanding of the role of biotech in shaping a more sustainable future. In the second part of the 2nd session, students will be divided in teams and will start working at the final idea with the help of the mentors.

Physical module

The program will include 16 hours of in-person sessions at the University of Helsinki. The finalized on-site schedule will be made available on the official website once all details have been confirmed. Key highlights will be visits to pharmaceutical companies and sites of interest within the biotechnology and pharmaceutical sectors.

These external activities will be led by team leaders at the respective companies. Visits to multinational cosmetic and pharmaceutical organizations provide a wealth of benefits, enriching students' educational journeys while offering critical industry insights. These experiences bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge gained during virtual sessions and its practical application in real-world settings, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors.

Students will gain firsthand exposure to advanced technologies, innovative formulation techniques, and rigorous quality control measures employed by industry leaders. Additionally, they will develop a deeper understanding of the stringent regulatory frameworks governing pharmaceutical production, ensuring safety, efficacy, and adherence to international standards. Observing the collaborative efforts of multidisciplinary teams—including pharmacists, chemists, and biomedical engineers—provides insight into the processes behind developing life-saving treatments and innovative cosmetic solutions.

The visits will also serve as valuable networking opportunities, enabling students to interact with industry professionals, such as scientists, researchers, and executives. These interactions open pathways to mentorship, career advice, and insights into emerging industry trends. Furthermore, students may

discover potential internship or employment opportunities, enriching their professional prospects. Participating in guided tours, presentations, and interactive sessions enhances students' communication, teamwork, and critical thinking skills. By engaging with real-world scenarios and multidisciplinary challenges, they cultivate the collaborative abilities essential for thriving in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries. The remainder of the program will focus on implementing and refining the soft skills gained during these experiences. Students will have the opportunity to develop and present their innovative ideas, culminating in a final presentation on the last day. This unique event will allow students to showcase their creativity, problem-solving skills, and novel approaches to industry challenges before a distinguished panel of experts, including startup founders and market analysts. This final presentation offers an invaluable platform for students to gain constructive feedback, validate their concepts, and enhance their confidence. Exposure to diverse perspectives from experienced professionals helps students explore the broader implications and potential applications of their projects. Engaging with scientists, entrepreneurs, and market experts also provides valuable insights into market trends, technological advancements, and the challenges they may face.

Such experiences are instrumental in shaping students' academic and professional trajectories, equipping them with the tools and perspectives needed to succeed in dynamic and rapidly evolving fields.

Eligibility and participation criteria

Participation to the program is open to students of the following disciplines and/or degree programmes:

University of Parma

Pharmacy and CTF. PhD students in Drug sciences.

University of Paris-Saclay

Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP

University of Helsinki

Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP

University of Copenhagen

Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP

Each participating University will establish internal criteria for candidate selection, including the number of candidates and the requirements necessary for selection.

Eligibility and participation criteria for the University of Parma

To apply for this program, students must be regularly enrolled for the academic year 2025/2026 in the fourth or fifth year of a master's degree in LM-13 (PHARMACY OR CTF) or a doctoral program. There are 6 positions available. However, depending on the selection process conducted by the partner universities, there may be a possibility of selecting more than 6 students. For this reason, the University of Parma will prepare a ranking list.

At the time of the application submission, applicants must demonstrate proof of English language competence at the B1/B2 level (CEFR). This can be certified by the University of origin (see application procedures below). Level B2 will be a preferential criterion.

The selected students must communicate their acceptance or withdrawal within 3 days from the publication of the selection results by contacting their university program coordinator (see below).

Selected students will be contacted with further instructions upon completion of the selection procedures.

How to apply

Students interested in participating should fill out the application form published in the website by **23rd February 2025**.

The application form must contain the following attachments:

- *Copy of valid ID or passport;*
- *Transcript of Records (A certificate of enrolment at the home University with a list of passed exams andgrades);*
- *Language certificate (If not already present as an exam in the Transcript of Records);*
- *Motivation letter (containing, if applicable, previous experiences abroad);*
- *CV*
- *Other documents and certificates (optional).*

Selection criteria and procedures

There are **6** positions available, to be distributed among doctoral students and undergraduate students. **However, in any case, undergraduate students will have priority over doctoral students.** The available positions will be assigned to **eligible** undergraduate students until the spots are filled, after which any remaining positions will be offered to doctoral students according the ranking list.

The selection process will consist of an evaluation of qualifications and an interview, with a maximum score of 40 points. Candidates must achieve a minimum of 30 points to be deemed eligible.

Undergraduate students will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

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| Grade average | up to 8 points |
| Motivational letter in English | up to 6 points |
| Certified language skills | up to 4 points |
| Number of credits earned relative to years of enrollment | up to 2 points |
| Interview | up to 20 points |

In case of a tie, preference will be given to the older candidate.

In case the number of applications exceeds the available positions, doctoral candidates' CVs will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

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| Duration of doctoral program | up to 4 points |
| Publications or conference participations | up to 8 points |
| Scientific-professional and language skills | up to 4 points |
| International experience | up to 4 points |
| Interview | up to 20 points |

In case of a tie, preference will be given to the candidate in the least recent doctoral cycle.

Financial support

As a part of the ERASMUS+ Program, financial support may be guaranteed by the selected student's home University. Each partner university is responsible for the management of the financial aspects of the mobilities in accordance with the provisions of the competent ERASMUS+ National Agency.

No financial support is available for students from the University hosting the physical part of the Program (University of Copenhagen), as they will not be travelling for purposes of participation in this program (non-mobility participants).

Contacts

University of Parma (Coordinator)

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