

# Strategic Events Call: Guidance For Applicants

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*The University of Cambridge Engineering Biology Interdisciplinary Research Centre (EngBio IRC) is accepting applications for strategic events organised by IRC faculty members. Events will be designed around a half or full day programme of talks, workshops and discussions for up to 30 people. The IRC will assist in the administration of events, whilst applicants will be responsible for setting the programme.*

The aims of this call are to:

- Connect research groups addressing similar challenges in different departments
- Establish new connections between research groups across the university
- Support our membership in preparing to apply for large-scale funding grants
- Identify areas of interest that would benefit from further support by the IRC

## Eligibility

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Applications must:

- Be co-lead by a minimum of two IRC faculty members ([see list of eligible members](#))
- Cover an area of research with significant relevance to Engineering Biology, or an area of research that may benefit from the application of Engineering Biology techniques. Engineering Biology is defined as the application of engineering principles (e.g. modularisation and standardisation of tools and parts; use of the design-build-test cycle) to biological systems ([see list of IRC research themes](#))
- Events must take place within 6 months of the application being approved.

## Criteria

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The IRC are looking to support events in areas that are of interest to members but not already covered by our other activities. This could include:

- Engineering biology tools and techniques (e.g. lab automation)
- Emerging areas of research with impact on, or overlap with, engineering biology (e.g. AI and machine learning)
- Application of engineering biology principles to specific problems or challenges (e.g. antimicrobial resistance)
- Preparation for upcoming collaborative funding applications with relevance to engineering biology (e.g. sLoLa grants)

We are also looking to support events that are interdisciplinary and bring together groups of researchers from across the university in new and interesting ways. Suggested speakers and participants should include:

- Researchers from multiple schools and departments
- Researchers who have not previously had significant interactions with the IRC or its members
- Open applications, participation from different career levels and participation from external partners are welcome, but not required

Applications will be assessed based on their relevance to engineering biology and their interdisciplinarity, i.e. the distribution of suggested speakers and participants across different fields and university departments.

## What is Expected of Applicants

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Applicants will be expected to:

- Identify relevant speakers and participants
- Manage the programme, including speaker invitations and collection of talk details
- Disseminate information about the event to relevant channels e.g. sending invitations to selected invitees for closed events, or sharing registration details with relevant contacts for open events
- Lead the event on the day and chair sessions, discussions and workshops
- Summarise the event in a short report (1-2 pages). This report may be used by the IRC on its website (where relevant) or for reporting. Reports will be due no later than 2 months after the event

## What is Expected of the IRC

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The IRC will support applicants by:

- Providing template programmes
- Organising room bookings and catering
- Providing dissemination materials e.g. digital posters, social media graphics etc.
- Disseminating information about the event via established IRC channels, where relevant
- A member of the IRC may attend the event for all or part of the day to assist with administration (catering etc.), where relevant
- Providing funds of up to £3000 to cover the venue hire, catering and short-distance travel expenses for 1-2 speakers. Funds will be administered directly by the IRC and no funding will be transferred to applicant's departments.

## How to Apply

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Please submit your application via [this form](#) (questions [below](#)).

The call will open on a rolling basis, with applications reviewed monthly.

The IRC will endeavour to respond by the second week of the month following the application.

## Appendices

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### List of Appendices

[Suggested Programme Format - Half Day](#)

[Suggested Programme Format - Full Day](#)

[Example Programme - Molecular Tools for Synthetic and Engineering Biology](#)

[Application Form Questions](#)

### Suggested Programme Format - Half Day

**13:00-13:10** Welcome coffee and registration

**13:10-14:30** Session 1: opening remarks and 3-4 talks

**14:30-15:00** Coffee and discussions

**15:00-16:20** Session 2: 3-4 talks or workshop and closing remarks

**16:20-17:00** Drinks and discussions

### Suggested Programme Format - Full Day

**09:00-09:10** Welcome coffee and registration

**09:10-10:30** Session 1: opening remarks and 3-4 talks

**10:30-10:50** Coffee and discussions

**10:50-12:10** Session 2: 3-4 talks or workshop

**12:10-13:10** Lunch

**13:10-14:30** Session 3: 3-4 talks or workshop

**14:30-15:00** Coffee and discussions

**15:00-16:20** Session 4: 3-4 talks and closing remarks

**16:20-17:00** Drinks and discussions

## Example Programme - Molecular Tools for Synthetic and Engineering Biology

Example of a recent event in this format co-hosted by the School of Biological Sciences and the EngBio IRC.

13:15	<b>Welcome coffee and registration</b>
13:30	<b>Session 1</b> , chaired by Graham Ladds
13:35	<b>Opening remarks</b>
13:40	<b>Mark Howarth</b> , Pharmacology Empowering proteins using bacterial superglues
13:55	<b>Florian Hollfelder</b> , Biochemistry Title TBC
14:10	<b>Jenny Molloy</b> , Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology Developing open source toolkits for biomanufacturing
14:25	<b>Jim Haseloff</b> , Plant Sciences Engineering a plant-based platform to grow protein reagents
14:40	<b>Laura Machesky and Jenny Molloy</b> , Engineering Biology IRC
14:50	<b>Coffee and discussions</b>
15:15	<b>Session 2</b> , chaired by Laura Machesky
15:20	<b>Nicola Patron</b> , Plant Sciences Recoding plant metabolism
15:35	<b>Lorenzo di Michele</b> , Chemical Engineering and Biotech DNA nanotechnology tools for synthetic cell engineering
15:50	<b>François Nédélec</b> , Sainsbury Laboratory Digital exploration of cytoskeletal systems
16:05	<b>Claudia Bonfio</b> , Biochemistry Molecular rules for assembling synthetic compartments
16:20	<b>Closing remarks</b>
16:25	<b>Drinks and discussions</b>

[Programme PDF](#)

## Application Form Questions

Please complete this form to apply for the Engineering Biology IRC Strategic Events Call. Before submission please read the Guidance for Applicants.

### Applicant 1 Details

1. Name
2. Email address
3. Job title
4. Department/Affiliation

### Applicant 2 Details

5. Name
6. Email address
7. Job title
8. Department/Affiliation
9. Any additional applicants?

### Additional Applicant Details

10. Name(s)
11. Email address(s)
12. Job title(s)
13. Department/Affiliation(s)

### Event Details

14. Event title
15. Brief description of subject area (100-200 words)  
What are the main challenges or opportunities in this area? What aspects of this subject would the event cover?
16. Relevance to Engineering Biology (100-200 words)  
How is this topic relevant to engineering biology? Engineering Biology is defined as the application of engineering principles (e.g. modularisation and standardisation of tools and parts; use of the design-build-test cycle) to biological systems.
17. Event category  
Which of the following categories is most relevant to your event:
  - Engineering biology tools and techniques (e.g. lab automation)
  - Emerging areas of research with impact on, or overlap with, engineering biology (e.g. AI and machine learning)
  - Application of engineering biology principles to specific problems or challenges (e.g. antimicrobial resistance)
  - Preparation for upcoming collaborative funding applications with relevance to engineering biology (e.g. sLoLa grants)

- Other. Please describe.
18. Suggested date or timeframe

### Event Format

19. Which format do you propose for your event? Suggested programme formats and examples are available [here](#).
- Half-day
  - Full-day
20. Which type of sessions do you plan to include in your event?
- Talks
  - Workshop
  - Other. Please describe
21. Do you have any additional comments, requests or changes to suggest regarding the programme format?
22. Will the event be open invite, or invitation only?
- Open invite
  - Invitation only
  - Other. Please describe
23. If open invite, what is your suggested audience (students, postdocs, faculty members, external invitees etc.)?
24. If Invitation only, please list any suggested invitees

### Suggested Speakers and Sessions

25. Please list the names of suggested speakers. As a guideline, we anticipate around 6 suggested speakers for a half day event, and 10 suggested speakers for a full day event. We recognise that your planned session format may require more or fewer speakers.
26. Please describe the suggested themes for each session and workshop below.