

Dear Colleague,

The French Institute of Bioinformatics is seeking reviewers to evaluate the projects submitted to its 2015 call for proposals.

### Background

The French Institute of Bioinformatics is a French national **service** infrastructure whose task is to provide core bioinformatics resources to the life science community (see <http://france-bioinformatique.fr>). Different types of services/resources are offered. The principal ones are the following:

- **Biological information:** provision of specialized databases with high added value that result from the scientific expertise of the laboratory.
- **Tools:** development of tools and online services corresponding to the area of expertise of the laboratory, available in a form that is user-friendly (website, virtual machines, downloads) for human interactions or machine-friendly (web services) for programmatic access.
- **IT infrastructure:** provision of an IT infrastructure means not only allowing users to access material resources (CPU, storage, RAM, network), but also allowing them to access the generalist data collections used in life sciences (e.g., Uniprot-KB, Ensembl, etc.) and providing easy access to the hundreds of programs used in bioinformatics to analyze the data.
- **Training:** tutorials, courses, etc. for the life science community (including university students) in various bioinformatics fields: NGS data analysis, evolutionary bioinformatics, structural bioinformatics and technical domains: learning how to use Linux, various programming languages, the Galaxy environment, etc.

The aim of the IFB's 2015 call for proposals is to improve existing, or to create new resources/services in the categories listed above. It is important to note that this call is not concerned directly with research, but with the provision of the necessary bioinformatics resources/tools/infrastructure permitting scientists to perform research. It is "relatively" easy to find grant money to carry out research, but it is more difficult to obtain soft money for turning the results of a research project into a widely usable service/resource/tool for the benefit of the life science community. The IFB's call aims to address this need and will provide grant money allowing PIs of the selected projects to hire engineers for developing services/resources.

### Reviewing procedure

The reviewer will receive a compensation of 145 € per evaluated project.

The application form is voluntarily light. Therefore, reviewers are encouraged to contact the project PI for further information, if they feel they lack details about the project they are evaluating. This must be done **exclusively via the IFB** that will serve as an intermediate in this process.

Each project will be evaluated by at least 2 reviewers. Each reviewer should evaluate the project independently using an evaluation form provided by the IFB (attached to this message). Then, we will ask the two reviewers having evaluated the same project to compare their reviews and provide a consensus review.

The evaluation form contains the following items:

- **Impact:** relevance and usefulness of the project for the life science community.
- **Originality:** is the service innovative, unique?
- **Quality and efficiency of the implementation:** coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation to task and resources.
- **Sustainability of the service** and complementarity of the participants within the project (when relevant). Can the partners ensure the sustainability of the service (updating of data, dedicated human resources, etc.)?

Each item will be scored on a scale from 1 to 5 (poor, fair, good, very good, excellent) with a maximum possible score of 20 for each project. Projects with a score of 16 or above will be in category A (the project must be funded), projects with a score from 15 to 12 will be in category B (the project might be funded if there is enough funds available for this), projects with a score less than 12 will be in category C (the project cannot be funded in its current version).

The IFB can fund **half of the 40** submitted projects. The second stage of the selection procedure involves adjusting the number of projects in category A according to the available funds, i.e., to end up with a list of, at most, 20 projects in category A.

For the sake of illustration, let us assume that there are 15 category A projects and 10 category B projects after the first evaluation stage. We will ask the reviewers of the 10 category B projects to modify their notation, **if they think it is appropriate**, to upgrade 5 category B projects to category A. For this, they will have access to all the reviews and, if they require it, to the different projects.

We must stress that it is very important for the IFB not to be judge and jury in the project selection. The selection procedure will be exclusively the responsibility of the reviewers.

Attached to this mail, you will find a list of projects we think you could review. Please let us know if you agree to review some of these projects, and if so, which ones. We would be most grateful if you could answer us quickly, especially if you decide to refuse our invitation. If you agree to review one or more projects, we will contact you and provide further practical information about the review procedure.

If you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact me: [jean-francois.gibrat@france-bioinformatique.fr](mailto:jean-francois.gibrat@france-bioinformatique.fr)