



The Activator, the largest scientist-led biotech accelerator.

Supporting academic scientists in launching biotech ventures that address challenges in human and planetary health.



WHO SHOULD APPLY?

- Inventors - Academic trainees or recent grads with a scientific idea, technology, or innovation they want to commercialize through a startup, in both human and planetary health.
- Contributors - Technical, business, or clinical trainees excited to join a founding team and gain hands-on experience in biotech venture creation.

* Individuals and pre-formed teams welcome

WHY JOIN?

- No fees, no equity—built for life science founders
- Meet potential co-founders and build your team
- Get expert feedback to sharpen your pitch; connect with top investors and mentors
- Join a global network of biotech innovators
- Celebrate your progress with awards and prizes

Key Program Components



TEAM FORMATION

Align scientists, business trainees, and early professionals interested in building a venture. Facilitate mutual matching.



STRATEGY SUPPORT

Get long-term guidance from industry mentors, legal experts, and clinical partners to shape your venture, protect your IP, and address real-world needs.



FALL

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Private global seminars with top KOLs. Enable networking with faculty, biotech executives, first-time founders, and investors.



HANDS ON WORKSHOPS

Iterate on science-first business theses; deep-dive workshops with industry experts.



DEMO DAY / THE FORUM

Teams connect with an audience comprising program mentors, renowned science entrepreneurs, industry veterans, and top-tier investors.

Applications open now. Apply at apply.nucleate.org. Rolling admission until **October 20, 2025**. Learn more about Nucleate [here](#).

- **What stage should the technology be at?**

We welcome academic projects at the translational stage, even prior to incorporation. Proof-of-concept data, early preclinical results, or demonstrated technical feasibility is typically sufficient.
- **What kind of mentors or industry partners will I be potentially exposed to?**

Our participants gain exposure to a global network of leading mentors and partners from academia, pharma, biotech, law firms and venture capital. We have a database of over 3000 industry experts and mentors. Our past collaborators have included representatives from Eli Lilly, Sanofi, Genetech, Alnylam, Pillar VC, Amino Collective, and etc.
- **Can projects with prior funding apply?**

Yes. Teams who have raised less than \$1M in institutional capital are eligible. Projects supported by non-dilutive or academic funding are also welcome.
- **Are there regional restrictions?**

No. Nucleate supports applicants globally through 18+ chapters and the Global Virtual Activator. Apply through your local chapter or GVA if outside a chapter region.
- **Can I apply solo?**

Yes! Both individual contributors and pre-formed teams are encouraged. Team formation support is part of the program.
- **What is the time commitment?**

Plan for about 10 hours per month for workshops and mentorship that are mostly virtual. The program is designed to accommodate trainee schedules.
- **Does Nucleate take equity or fees?**

No. Nucleate is a non-profit and takes no equity or fees to participate. No new intellectual property is generated during the program.
- **Do I need academic affiliation to apply?**

We accept applications from current trainees, recent grads, and early career professionals at academic centers.
- **What types of technologies are a fit?**

We welcome innovations in either the Bio track focusing on areas such as therapeutics (e.g., biologics, gene therapy), diagnostics, digital or computational health solutions or biotech innovations addressing climate/sustainability/agtech/synbio challenges in the Eco track. Each region may offer one or both tracks annually, depending on local capacity.
- **Who owns the intellectual property?**

There is no inventive process attached to the Activator program. No new intellectual property is created during or as a part of the Activator program. All intellectual property rights remain with the respective academic institutions and individuals where relevant.

Still have questions? Contact us at asknucleatetech@nucleate.org.