COG: CRO Summit Europe

Novotel Amsterdam City, Netherlands

15th & 16th September 2026

Clinical Outsourcing Group

PREVIOUS SERIES SPEAKERS

Paul Johnson – Executive Director, Strategy Development – **PharPoint Research**
Sybil Wilson – Vice President, Global Commercial Operations – **Veristat**
Charlene Dark – COO – **Avania**
Earl Seltzer – Executive Director, Strategy & Innovation – **CTI Clinical Trial & Consulting Services**
Jasmina Jankicevic – CMO – **Indero**
Megan Liles – Vice President, Clinical Delivery – **HGI Clinical**
John Mann – Senior Vice President, North American Operations – **Avance Clinical**
Trish Landry – Senior Vice President, Clinical Operations – **Beaufort CRO**
Claudia Christian – CCO – **FHI Clinical**
Sandy Robbins – Vice President, Commercial Operations – **MMS**
Chris Learn – Senior Vice President, Cell & Gene Therapy – **Parexel**
Lorraine Rusch – CEO – **Cardiovascular Clinical Sciences**
Jeanne Hecht – CEO & Chairwoman – **Lexitas Pharma Services**
Krystyna Kowalczyk – CEO – **Kapadi**
Karen Chu – Founder & CEO - **HiRO**
David Pomfret – VP, US Clinical Operations – **Mobius Medical**
Kirk Wroblewski – CIO – **ProPharma**
Andreas Lysandropoulos – SVP, Global Therapeutic Area Head Neuroscience – **Parexel**
Lisette Wagenaar – Global Head, Vendor Management Office – **IQVIA**
Christel Slot – Director, Business Unit Operations – **Syneos**
Gary Zammit – CEO – **Clinilabs**
Gaia Kiru – Head of Operations & Partnerships – **Imperial College London (ICTU-Global)**
Andreas Moschos – Co-Founder – **NEXT CRO**
Nikhil Khadabadi – CMO – **Eclevar Medtech**
Nicolas Thevenet – Director, Operations – **Euraxi Pharma**
Sverre Bengtsson – CEO – **Digital Trial Consultants**
Maryna Todoriuk – Trial & Clinical Senior Expert – **MEDSIR**
Yuri Kartashov – Chief Research & Development Officer – **TRIALT**

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DAY 1 | 15th September 2026

08:00 **Registration & Morning Refreshments**

08:50 **Organiser's Welcome Address**
Alexander O'Leary – Director – **PBC Group**

08:55 **Chair's Welcome Address**
Sverre Bengtsson – CEO – **Digital Trial Solutions**

Section A
Partner Collaboration

09:00 **OPENING KEYNOTE**
Strategic Alliances: Turning CRO Collaboration into Competitive Edge

The evolving clinical research environment increasingly favours alliances between small- to mid-size CROs with complementary strengths, enabling access to sophisticated trials beyond any single organisation's reach. Understanding how to structure effective inter-CRO collaborations whilst maintaining operational efficiency and quality is essential for sustainable growth.

In this session, XXX will share practical insights into winning business through strategic CRO-CRO partnerships, exploring joint bid strategies, complementary capability presentations, and unified defence meetings that increase sponsor confidence. Discussing operational integration frameworks, technology synchronisation, and talent-sharing strategies that build seamless collaborative environments, preserving individual strengths whilst eliminating the handoff inefficiencies that typically challenge multi-vendor trial execution.

09:25 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for Medidata

09:50 **KEYNOTE**
Strategic Alliances: Mastering CRO-CRO Bid Defence Strategies

Strategic partnerships enable CROs to compete for complex trials that would otherwise remain out of reach, but success hinges on the bid defence meeting itself. When executed well, joint defence presentations demonstrate not just combined capabilities, but genuine operational synergy that reassures sponsors and differentiates your alliance from competitors.

In this session, XXX discuss how to prepare for and conduct successful CRO-CRO bid defence meetings, exploring what sponsors expect to see, how to present a cohesive partnership story, and strategies for addressing concerns about multi-vendor coordination. Discussing how best to prepare, role allocation between partners, response coordination techniques, and methods for demonstrating seamless integration that build sponsor confidence and distinguish your alliance from competitors.

10:15 **PANEL**
Collaboration: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to collaboration.

10:35 **Morning Refreshments & Networking Break**

Section B
Vendor Integration

11:10 **KEYNOTE**
Partnership Excellence: Building a Strategic Supplier Collaboration Framework

Successful supplier management demands more than procurement processes and contractual agreements, requiring an organisation-wide commitment to relationship cultivation and governance. Understanding how to configure internal structures, define clear accountability, and embed enduring oversight practices is vital for optimising supplier value whilst mitigating risk.

In this session, XXX will offer practical guidance on establishing resilient supplier management frameworks, examining how dedicated Business Supplier Owner (BSO) responsibilities, multi-disciplinary supplier strategy forums, and bespoke information systems influence relationship strength and operational performance. Exploring stakeholder engagement approaches, supplier evaluation methodologies, internal capability development, and joint governance models that help organisations convert disparate supplier touchpoints into cohesive partnership networks.

11:35 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for AG Mednet

12:00 **KEYNOTE**
Managing the Extended Network: Effective Oversight of Suppliers, Functional Providers, and Sub-CROs

CROs are routinely outsourcing critical functions to an expanding network of functional service providers, specialist vendors, and sub-contracted CROs. This layered delivery landscape introduces significant oversight responsibility, and when accountability is unclear, communication breaks down, or performance gaps go undetected, the consequences cascade quickly across timelines, data quality, and sponsor confidence.

In this session, Niels examines what effective vendor management looks like when the CRO itself is the outsourcing party, exploring how to structure engagement and governance frameworks that maintain clarity of accountability across a multi-tiered supplier network. Discussing how to build productive working relationships with functional providers and sub-CROs without duplicating effort or creating

friction, how to design oversight mechanisms that provide genuine visibility into partner performance rather than a false sense of control, and how to intervene early and proportionately when delivery risk emerges.

Niels Daems – Vendor & Strategic Proposal Lead – **QbD Clinical**

12:25 **PANEL**
Vendor Integration: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to vendor integration.

12:45 **Lunch & Networking Break**

Section C
Tailored Expertise

14:00 **KEYNOTE**
Extended Reach: A CRO Rescue Study Case Study in Rare Disease

CROs operating in rare disease research face uniquely complex recruitment challenges, and knowing when and how to intervene as a rescue partner can determine whether a study succeeds or stalls entirely. Examining the strategic, operational, and relational approaches a CRO deployed to revive a failing rare disease trial and meet recruitment targets in Turkey.

In this session, Gülden will present a detailed case study of a CRO engagement to rescue a stalled rare disease study, exploring how geography, patient population characteristics, and local healthcare infrastructure shaped a tailored recruitment strategy outside of traditional Western European markets. Discussing the critical role of primary care physician relationships in identifying and referring rare disease patients, the advantages of engaging non-European recruitment markets, and the site activation tactics that unlocked previously untapped patient populations. Drawing on real-world lessons from Turkey, this session will offer practical insights into building the local partnerships and investigator networks needed to deliver on recruitment commitments in challenging rare disease programmes where every eligible patient counts.

Gülden Ortaç – General Manager – **KlinAR CRO**

14:25 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for TRI

14:50 **KEYNOTE**
Navigating the Complexities of MedTech and Combination Studies: The Impact of EU IVDR

MedTech studies present distinct operational and regulatory challenges that differ fundamentally from biopharma trials. With the introduction of EU IVDR bringing significantly stricter requirements for diagnostic devices used within clinical studies, sponsors must now navigate an increasingly complex

landscape spanning standalone device investigations, combination studies, and the implications of evolving regulation on study start-up strategy and partner selection.

In this session, Laura explores how the structural and regulatory differences between MedTech and pharma trials shape every phase of study start-up, and what to understand before selecting a CRO partner in this space. Examining how device-specific protocol expertise, KOL engagement strategies, and EU IVDR compliance considerations impact feasibility, site readiness, and regulatory pathway navigation, and how to evaluate whether a CRO truly has the dedicated capability to manage the trial.

Laura Van Vaeck – Co-Founder & Director, Regulatory and Startup – **Franklyn Health**

15:15 **PANEL**
Tailored Expertise: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to Tailored Expertise.

15:35 **Afternoon Coffee & Networking Break**

Section D
Optimising Resources

16:00 **KEYNOTE**
Trials Without Borders: Conducting Clinical Research in Conflict-Affected Regions

CROs often navigate complex geopolitical realities, as some of the most strategically valuable patient populations exist in regions experiencing active conflict or post-conflict instability. Understanding how to operate effectively and ethically in these environments whilst maintaining data integrity, participant safety, and regulatory compliance is essential for sponsors seeking truly diverse and scientifically robust trial populations.

In this session, Vitaliy will share practical insights into the unique operational challenges facing CROs working in conflict-affected regions, whilst making the compelling case for why countries like Ukraine remain valuable recruitment partners despite the risks. Discussing risk mitigation, contingency protocols, and participant protection strategies that enable responsible trial execution in challenging environments, preserving data quality whilst capturing the significant advantages that experienced site networks in these regions continue to offer.

Vitaliy Solskyy – Chief Scientific Officer – **People Value Research (PVR)**

16:25 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for Biorce

16:50 **KEYNOTE**
Quality Excellence: Strategic Quality Management for CROs in the ICH E6 R3 Era

Effective quality management has become increasingly critical for CROs navigating evolving regulatory expectations and sponsor demands for robust oversight systems. Understanding how to implement comprehensive quality frameworks that balance compliance rigour with operational efficiency is essential for maintaining competitive advantage whilst ensuring patient safety and data integrity.

In this session, XXX demonstrates the importance of building resilient quality management systems for CROs, exploring how ICH E6 R3 requirements, risk-based monitoring approaches, and proactive quality control processes impact regulatory inspection outcomes and sponsor confidence. Discussing internal audit programme design aligned with current guidelines, quality metrics that drive continuous improvement, and integrated risk management frameworks to help CROs transform quality oversight from reactive compliance burden into strategic differentiator.

17:15 **KEYNOTE**
Site Partnership Excellence: Expanding Clinical Research to Emerging European Markets

Effective site partnerships for CROs are needed to unlock recruitment potential and operational opportunities within Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Understanding how to navigate national healthcare structures, engage university medical centres, and leverage underutilised patient populations is essential for accelerating timelines whilst ensuring research quality and patient-centred trial delivery in these emerging regions.

In this session, XXX will explore how to build productive healthcare and commercial partnerships in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, examining national research office engagement, academic principal investigator identification, and regional patient access strategies. Discussing governance navigation across diverse regulatory environments and integrated care approaches to help CROs demonstrate to international sponsors the superior patient access opportunities, cost efficiencies, and treatment-naïve populations that Eastern and Southeastern European healthcare systems and academic research centres provide.

17:35 **PANEL**
Optimising Resources: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to resources.

18:00 **Chair's Day 1 Summary & Closing Remarks**
Sverre Bengtsson – CEO – **Digital Trial Solutions**

18:10 **Networking Drinks & Canapés Reception**

(complementary admission to all participants)

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DAY 2 | 16th September 2026

08:30 **Registration & Morning Refreshments**

08:55 **Chair's Welcome Address**
Sverre Bengtsson – CEO – **Digital Trial Solutions**

Section E
The Strength of Europe

09:00 **KEYNOTE C-SUITE PANEL**
Europe Clinical Research Renaissance: Strengthening the Continent's Position in Global Trials

Europe's clinical research landscape is undergoing significant transformation, creating opportunities to attract international trial sponsors and reposition the continent as a preferred destination for global studies. Recent EMA regulatory initiatives promise enhanced efficiency, yet realising Europe's full competitive potential requires strategic coordination across stakeholders.

This panel brings together leaders from European CROs to discuss strategies for attracting international sponsors. Examining how EMA regulatory reforms, national healthcare infrastructure developments, and Europe-specific competitive advantages influence sponsor site selection and operational planning. The discussion will cover streamlined approval pathways, public healthcare patient recruitment capabilities, data infrastructure strengths, and investment priorities necessary to position Europe as the market of choice for sponsors seeking quality, speed, and innovation in clinical trial delivery.

Panel Chair: **XXX**

09:45 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for Partner

10:15 **KEYNOTE**
Bringing the Trial to the Patient: Harnessing the Power of Home-Based Clinical Research in Europe

Decentralised and home-based trial models represent one of the most significant shifts in clinical research delivery in a generation, expanding access to underrepresented patient populations, reducing participant burden, and opening new possibilities for recruitment and retention that traditional site-based models simply cannot match. As regulatory frameworks continue to mature and the technology underpinning remote delivery grows more sophisticated, the case for embedding home-trial approaches into mainstream study design has never been stronger.

In this session, Nicolas explores the practical and strategic power of home-based clinical research; examining the patient access opportunities unlocked by decentralised delivery, the technology and service innovations driving this evolution, and what meaningful implementation looks like across different study types and therapeutic areas. Discussing how sponsors and CROs can navigate the regulatory approval landscape for home-trial components, build the operational infrastructure

needed to deliver remotely without compromising data integrity or participant safety, and engage patients as genuine partners in shaping models that work for them. Helping the industry move from pilot programmes to scalable, patient-centred delivery as standard.

Nicolas Thevenet – Director of Operations – **Euraxi Pharma**
Reserved for representative from BfArM

10:40 **PANEL**
European Clinical Research: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to European Research.

10:55 **Morning Refreshments & Networking Break**

Section F
Technology Disruption

11:25 **KEYNOTE**
Transformation to a Digital First CRO: From Automation to Intelligent Insights

The digitalisation of clinical research assets represents a fundamental shift that extends far beyond simple efficiency gains, creating the foundation for advanced analytics and AI-powered innovation. Understanding how to navigate this transition whilst addressing complex regulatory, data governance, and implementation challenges is essential for organisations seeking sustainable competitive advantage.

In this session, XXX will divulge insights from implementing 'digital workers' across diverse business functions, exploring how robotic process automation, natural language processing, and machine learning capabilities impact operational excellence. Discussing the progression from basic automation to hyper-automation, regulatory considerations, and strategic frameworks for technology selection to help organisations build comprehensive digital strategies that deliver measurable improvements in quality, speed, and risk management whilst unlocking the full value of data assets.

` 12:00 **KEYNOTE**
Reserved for Partner

12:25 **KEYNOTE**
Platform Agility: Managing Multiple EDC and eTMF Systems in Multi-Sponsor CRO Environments

The proliferation of electronic data capture and trial master file platforms presents significant operational challenges for CROs working with diverse sponsor portfolios. Understanding how to maintain staff proficiency and optimise efficiency across multiple technology ecosystems is essential for balancing sponsor preferences with internal capability development.

In this session, XXX will discuss how to manage varied EDC and eTMF requirements, exploring how training frameworks, standardisation strategies, and resource models impact start-up timelines and performance. Discussing staff competency across platforms, technology evaluation criteria, and workflow optimisation to help CROs build sustainable multi-platform strategies that accommodate sponsor preferences whilst maintaining excellence and avoiding productivity losses from excessive technology fragmentation.

12:45 **PANEL**
Technology Disruption: Q&A Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session provides a unique opportunity to engage directly with this section's presenters, gain further perspectives, and explore challenges facing CROs and trial sponsors with regards to the adoption of technology.

13:00 **Lunch & Networking Break**

13:50 **Delegate Prize Draws**

Section G
Artificial Intelligence

14:00 **KEYNOTE**
The AI Revolution: Transforming Clinical Trials with Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is playing a pivotal role in transforming the way we approach trial architecture development, budgeting, medical monitoring, and oversight. Navigating regulatory requirements while prioritizing the needs of patients and sites in an evolving technological landscape.

In this session XXX will explore how to effectively leverage AI to modernise clinical research operations, focusing on the vast opportunities presented by automation and data-driven decision-making. From shaping early feasibility models to guiding country and site selection strategies and stakeholder mapping, AI brings real strategic value to trial architecture development. Drawing from her experience managing complex trials and consulting for technology companies, understanding the industry's pain points and the urgent need to move beyond paper-heavy processes, to optimise workflows for patients, sites, and CROs. Demonstrating how AI can serve as a productivity enabler rather than a technological hindrance.

14:25 **KEYNOTE**
AI in Clinical Research: Build vs. Buy Technology Solutions

CROs face mounting pressure to accelerate study timelines, reduce costs, and deliver high-quality data in today's competitive and complex clinical trial environment. The quest for effective technical solutions that enable clinical trial professionals to achieve more with fewer resources—without compromising quality—has reached unprecedented urgency.

In this session, XXX will examine the strategic considerations for in-house AI development versus off-the-shelf solutions in clinical research. Through practical examples, we'll explore where AI has already delivered tangible benefits for CROs and biopharmaceutical companies, while providing a framework to evaluate these technologies to prevent rework, address privacy considerations, and mitigate potential safety risks.

14:50 **KEYNOTE**

AI as a Competitive Differentiator: How CROs Can Harness Oversight Intelligence to Win Studies

As AI becomes foundational to clinical oversight, CROs are uniquely positioned to lead, but only if they evolve beyond buzzwords and apply AI to real operational advantage. CROs that master quality AI implementation can differentiate their services, reduce trial costs, and consistently outperform competitors, not just by promising innovation, but by proving it.

In this session, XXX explores how CROs can build smarter, more efficient oversight strategies by adopting closed loop, validated AI systems that meet sponsor expectations while driving internal performance. Attendees will learn how to: Assess internal operational needs to match the right-fit AI partner, Embed AI into oversight workflows for risk scoring, data review, and resource allocation, Demonstrate measurable value to sponsors during bids and delivery, Build scalable governance models for future AI growth.

15:15 **KEYNOTE CLOSING PANEL**

CRO Summit Europe 2026: Looking Ahead - Trends and Opportunities Panel Discussion

This interactive Q&A session brings together key thought leaders from today & yesterday's summit to discuss the critical trends shaping the clinical research landscape over the next 12 months. Panellists will share insights on emerging opportunities, address evolving challenges facing trial sponsors, and explore how the industry can adapt to meet tomorrow's demands.

This is your chance to engage directly with summit presenters, gain forward-looking perspectives, and participate in shaping the conversation about where our industry is headed in the year ahead.

15:30 **Chair's Summary & Closing Remarks**
Sverre Bengtsson – CEO – **Digital Trial Solutions**

End of Conference