

PRESS RELEASE
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ELRIG UK Announces Profs Ijeoma Uchegbu and Marcus Schindler as Keynote Speakers at Drug Discovery 2024

Drug Discovery 2024: Connecting Minds, Transforming Science, Empowering Community will take place at ExCeL London from 2–3 October

Cambridge, UK, 2 May 2024: The European Laboratory Research & Innovation Group (ELRIG) UK, a not-for-profit, volunteer-led organisation for the drug discovery community, today announced the keynote speakers for its flagship conference, Drug Discovery 2024: Ijeoma Uchegbu FMedSci, Professor of Pharmaceutical Nanoscience at University College London (UCL) and Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) at Nanomerics, and Marcus Schindler PhD, CSO and Executive Vice President of Research and Early Development at Novo Nordisk.

ELRIG Drug Discovery 2024 takes place from 2–3 October at ExCeL London and will focus on connecting minds, transforming science and empowering community. The event is free to attend and promises 2,000 delegates the opportunity to hear from more than 100 speakers across 14 scientific tracks presented in collaboration with Cell & Gene Therapy Catapult, Royal Society of Chemistry, SBi2 and SLAS. This year's topics include therapeutic themes, such as mechanisms of ageing and cell and gene therapy, alongside more practical aspects of drug discovery encompassing advances in assay design, high-content imaging, small molecules, target identification, disease modelling and therapeutic translation, as well as discussions around innovation and collaboration in the sector. There will also be a TechTheatre covering sustainability in drug discovery, and robotics, automation and AI, as well as 260 posters and over 200 exhibitors. Early-stage companies will have the opportunity to exhibit as part of the Breakthrough Zone, and early-career professionals can attend the dedicated 'Network Like a Boss' event and Learning Hub. ELRIG will also be hosting school students as part of its 'Big Adventures in Tiny Lab Coats' initiative.

Ijeoma Uchegbu is Professor of Pharmaceutical Nanoscience at UCL, a fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, a governor on the Wellcome board and Co-Founder and CSO of Nanomerics. She will also take up the position of President of Wolfson College, University of Cambridge later this year. Prof Uchegbu has served as Chair of the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Scientific Secretary of the Controlled Release Society and UCL Provost's Envoy for Race Equality. Her pioneering work on the mechanisms of drug transport led to the discovery of transformational peptide nanoparticles that can be delivered across the blood–brain barrier, namely enkephalin pain medicine candidate, Envelta™. She has been awarded various prizes for her work and is listed in Bloomsbury Publishing's *Who's Who 2024*. Prof Uchegbu will showcase how nanoparticles can be used to enhance efficacy and minimise off-targets effects during her talk on the first day.

Marcus Schindler was appointed Executive Vice President for Research and Early Development and CSO at Novo Nordisk in 2021. Prior to joining the company in 2018 as Senior Vice President for External Innovation and Strategy and later Senior Vice President for Global Drug Discovery, Prof

Schindler was Vice President, Head of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases Innovative Medicines at AstraZeneca and Head of Research at (OSI) Prosidion. He also worked in various leadership roles at Boehringer Ingelheim, after having started his career with Glaxo Wellcome/GSK. Prof Schindler holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge and is Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Gothenburg. His keynote presentation will focus on therapeutic approaches for metabolic disorders, such as obesity and diabetes.

Melanie Leveridge, Chair, ELRIG UK, and Vice President Discovery Biology, AstraZeneca, said: *“ELRIG is committed to delivering leading-edge scientific meetings on an open-access, and we are thrilled to bring Europe’s largest drug discovery conference to London. We’re proud to present an outstanding lineup of speakers at this year’s event and very much look forward to having two distinguished scientists, Profs Uchegbu and Schindler, share their insights with us during the keynote talks. In addition, we have a wide range of other learning, networking, exhibition and award opportunities available to help transform research and empower the drug discovery community.”*

Ijeoma Uchegbu FMedSci, Professor of Pharmaceutical Nanoscience, UCL, and CSO, Nanomerics, said: *“I’m delighted and honoured to be asked to open the ELRIG conference this year. I love to discover and learn how medicines work and to convey this to the broader audience.”*

Marcus Schindler PhD, CSO and Executive Vice President of Research and Early Development, Novo Nordisk, said: *“It will be my great pleasure to give a keynote presentation at Drug Discovery 2024, an event that seeks to bring together talented scientists, dedicated to investigating the medicines of tomorrow.”*

Registration is now open. Please visit <https://elrig.org/portfolio/drug-discovery-2024/> for further information.

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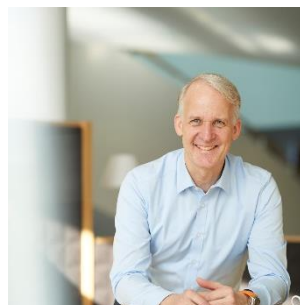
Notes to Editors



Melanie Leveridge, Chair, ELRIG UK, and Vice President Discovery Biology, AstraZeneca



Ijeoma Uchegbu FMedSci, Professor of Pharmaceutical Nanoscience, UCL, and CSO, Nanomerics



Marcus Schindler PhD, CSO and Executive Vice President of Research and Early Development, Novo Nordisk

Please contact Codon Communications for high-resolution images.

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About ELRIG UK

Since incorporation in 2004, ELRIG has consolidated its reputation as a best in industry UK-based not-for-profit volunteer-led organisation, operated by and for the life sciences community, and dedicated to the delivery of leading-edge scientific meetings and conferences on an open-access basis for optimum accessibility across all levels of its 22,000-strong global community.

The Board delegates its tasks to a series of [Work Groups](#), who work with the ELRIG team to ensure it achieves its objectives.

ELRIG continuously strives to advance its ED&I and sustainability strategic pillars, to both inspire and align with the ESG strategies of its delegates, exhibitors, sponsors and all other stakeholders.

For more information, visit the [ELRIG website](#) or follow on [LinkedIn](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and [Instagram](#).