

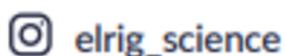


ELRIG

The Drug Discovery
Community

END OF YEAR COMMUNITY REPORT

2025



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2025 IN REVIEW

In 2025, ELRIG experienced an exceptional year, delivering:

- 4 conferences (2-day events),
- 7 forums (1-day events),
- 2 webinars

Welcoming 5,000+ delegates, entirely free of charge.

We remained steadfast in our vision to provide the highest-quality scientific content to the ELRIG drug discovery community at no cost and in venues and places that are easily accessible to our members.

This year also marked our expansion onto the global stage with our first US-based meeting, alongside continued strong engagement with the wider European community. In addition, we achieved a positive financial outcome.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the volunteers who supported our activities, to the sponsors whose generosity enabled our work, and to the ELRIG team for their outstanding performance.



Sanj Kumar
ELRIG
CEO

WHO ARE ELRIG

We reworked ELRIG's vision statement and strategic priorities this year to clarify who ELRIG are and what we do.

We're a not-for-profit organisation building a community of scientists, innovators and industry professionals who are passionate about the future of drug discovery.

We are "run by scientists, for scientists," whether that's today's scientists or tomorrow's.

OUR VISION

At ELRIG, we're working towards a future where:

- Knowledge is shared freely
- Innovation & collaboration thrive
- Future leaders are nurtured
- Every voice is heard



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our core values are all about you, and how we can:



Amplify your research & career

by championing great science, giving people a platform, recognising your talent, and boosting your visibility with our awards.



Connect you with our network

through our open-access events.



Lead our industry in best practice

for inclusivity, representation, equality, diversity and sustainability across our community.

REBRAND & NEW WEBSITE

As ELRIG has grown in scale and ambition, it became clear that we had outgrown our legacy branding and website. It no longer reflected the organisation we're becoming or the community we're building.

We've updated our logo, branding and website in 2025 for a more refreshed, modern style.

Our new logo now includes the tagline "The Drug Discovery Community". So that anyone encountering ELRIG for the first time immediately understands who we are.



OLD LOGO



NEW LOGO

ELRIG

The Drug Discovery
Community

Alongside the rebrand, we also launched our new website in February 2025 to improve our digital presence and user experience.

Our website is always evolving, but our new website is built to grow with us. We wanted to create a smoother, more reliable experience from the moment you land on our website to the moment you arrive at our events. Making it easier to share content that is accurate, current, and easy to find. Whether you're a delegate, Early Career Professional, speaker or exhibitor.

We believe the rebrand and new website reflect our commitment to aligning ELRIG's presence with the quality and ambition of the science we champion.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Rather than a static policy, ELRIG created community-led principles in 2020 to shape the future we envision. We embed them in everything we do. From our governance to speaker selection and informing the work of all eight volunteer-led Work Groups.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

EQUALITY

We monitor who participates in our events by age, gender, ethnicity, disability and career stage. (That's why we ask for this data in our registration form; we want to make sure you feel seen!)

DIVERSITY

We aim for the diversity of our delegates, speakers, and scientific content to represent the diversity of the community. Our diversity targets for our invited speakers:

50%
gender split

30%
early-career professionals

35%
from the Global majority*

**Coined by activist Rosemary Campbell Stephens, we are using "Global Majority" instead of "non-white" to shift the narrative towards who these individuals are (rather than who they are not) as part of our conversation about equity, inclusion and representation.*

INCLUSION

We remove accessibility barriers wherever possible. From financial, geographical, caring responsibilities, religious needs, disabilities (visible and invisible), and more.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES... IN PRACTICE

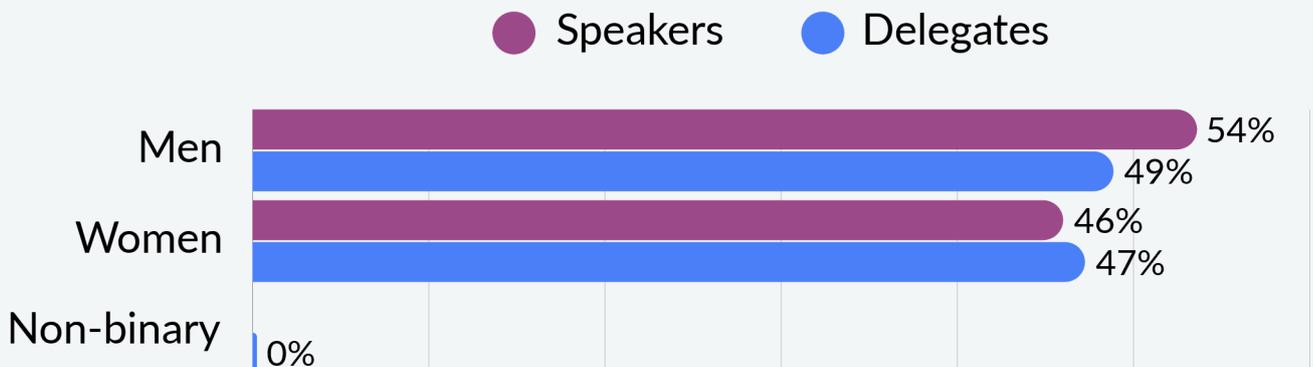
Some delegates and speakers choose not to share their demographic information when registering for our events.

While this section is not mandatory, and we fully respect the choice to opt out, we ask because these details help us measure where progress is being made and where more work is needed.

We hope to build more trust with our delegates by being transparent about how their EDI data is used to track progress, identify gaps, and make targeted, deliberate changes.

We collected data from over 4800 delegates, exhibitors and invited speakers at our events in 2025.

2025 DELEGATES VS SPEAKERS GENDER

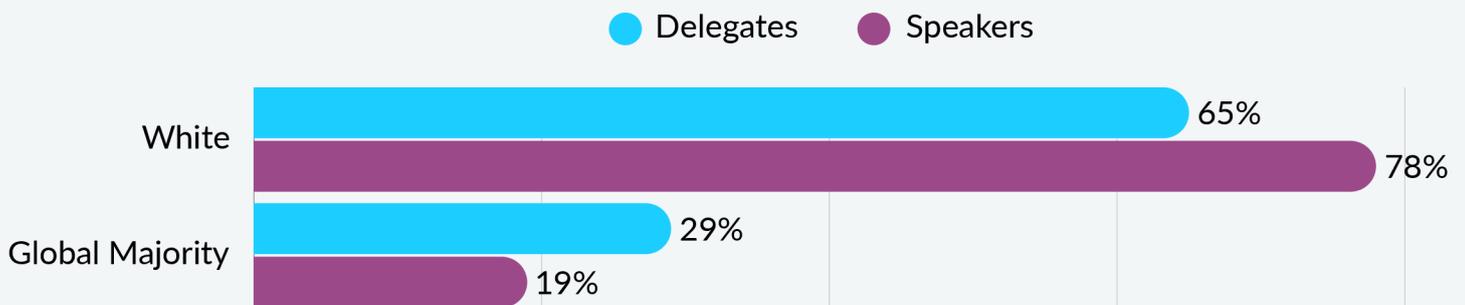


We are pleased to see near-parity between men and women across both delegates and speakers, and will continue to work towards maintaining this balance in 2026.

We recognise that 0.2% of our delegates identified as non-binary. As part of our commitment to creating an inclusive and safe environment, we're encouraged that attendees feel comfortable sharing this information with us.

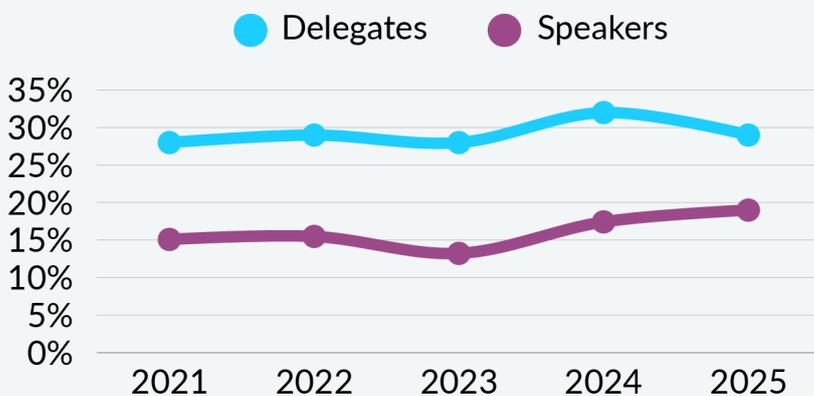
OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES... IN PRACTICE

2025 DELEGATES VS SPEAKERS ETHNICITY



27% of our delegate community identified as being from the global majority, and 18% of our speakers came from the global majority. While both figures fall short of our 35% target, we recognise that this level of representation is strong and reflect our growing community.

HISTORICAL DELEGATES VS SPEAKER ETHNICITY



Compared to 2021, when we first started tracking this ratio, we are getting closer to closing the representation gap between our delegates and speakers.

IMPROVING SPEAKER RECRUITMENT

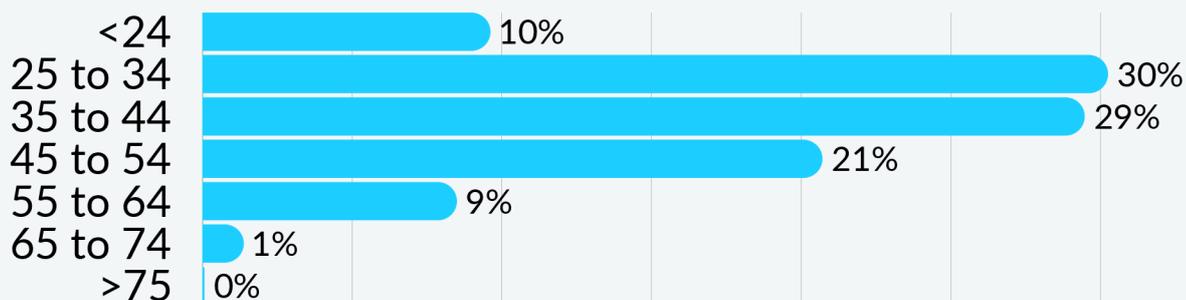


In 2025, we partnered with the Black Medical & Scientific Network and the Afro-Caribbean Commercial Science Network to support our speaker recruitment.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES... IN PRACTICE

2025 DELEGATES AGE

● DELEGATES



We define an Early Career Professional as someone who is within 5 years of finishing higher education and starting their career in life sciences and drug discovery. This includes:

- Undergraduate or Master's student
- PhD students
- Postdoctoral researcher

In 2025, age data was only tracked for delegates, not speakers, which limits our ability to build a complete picture of age and career stage representation across our community.

We do not believe there is an age limit on being an Early Career Professional (ECP). We recognise career breaks and transitions. We define an ECP as anyone undertaking higher education (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD student) or within 5 years of starting their career in life science.

From our delegate data, we can see that 9.6% were under 24, capturing the majority of current students, and a further 30% were aged 25-34, a group likely to include a significant number of ECPs alongside more established professionals.

In 2026, we will look to better monitor the representation of ECP voices across our events.

OUR LEGACY

EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONALS (ECPS)

We want ECPs to leave our events with new friends, a support system and passion for their work. We want them to look at our speakers and think “that could be me”. To empower this belief, we’ve created a range of activities and networking sessions to help boost their confidence and careers.

TARGETED EVENTS & WEBINARS

In 2025, we hosted 2 dedicated ECP webinars to help ECPs navigate their careers & build the knowledge they need:

- Communicating Science in a Digital World
- Drug Discovery 101

Our Early Career Professionals Workgroup also hosted our first Mini Drug Discovery, or fondly known as “Mini DD”.

This free half-day session took place on the setup day of Drug Discovery 2025.

Welcoming 150 ECPs, it combined peer presentations, a keynote talk, networking, and a quiz to create a fun and supportive introduction to the conference ahead.



DEDICATED ECP NETWORKING SESSION

ECPs are often told to “build your network” without any explanation of how to do that or where to start.

NLAB is our answer. A fast, informal networking session often described as professional speed dating, designed to connect ECPs working across the drug discovery field.

Our “bosses” are there so you can learn more about their jobs, their career paths, and the lessons they’ve picked up along the way.

But most importantly, they facilitate the conversations, so you don’t have to stress about conversation starters and awkward silences.

TRAVEL BURSARIES AT DRUG DISCOVERY 2025



Access to great science shouldn't be limited by geography. In 2025, we offered individual bursaries of up to £250 and group bursaries of at least £1,000 to support attendance at Drug Discovery 2025. Applications flooded in within hours of launching, and we are proud to have awarded almost £19,000 in travel bursaries as a result.

OUR LEGACY



EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

The innovative contributions of new scientists are what enable our industry to keep advancing. To uplift the incredible and often under-recognised work of ECPs we've created 2 awards:

- Kirsty Smitten Award: recognising impact in the workplace
- Best ECP Poster Award: recognising ECP research advancing the industry

KIRSTY SMITTEN AWARD

The Kirsty Smitten Award is presented to ECPs who demonstrated impact in the drug discovery.



DEXTER LUTSIL 2025 AWARD WINNER

Congratulations to Dexter for championing student advocacy as an undergraduate, founding The Student Pharmacologist Network and serving as an ambassador for lab-based science for future scientists.

WHO IS KIRSTY SMITTEN?

Kirsty Smitten pioneered work on antimicrobial compounds, earning widespread recognition, including the ECP Impact Award in 2021.

She co-founded MetalloBio in Sheffield to combat antimicrobial resistance and was passionate about inspiring others to seize opportunities for personal growth before passing in October 2023.

ECP POSTER AWARD

Presented to the best ECP poster displayed at our conferences:

Research & Innovation Award Winner:

Long-Hung Pham

Recognised for their poster:

Quantitative Atomistic Graph: A high-throughput computational platform for prioritisation of allosteric and functional residues across the proteome

Therapeutic Oligonucleotides Award Winner:

Sofia Nilsson

Recognised for their poster:

Combination Therapy with GalNAc-siRNA Drugs Targeting Both PCSK9 and APOC3 Resulted in Enhanced Lipid Lowering in Mice

Drug Discovery Award Winner:

Freddie Whiting

Recognised for their poster:

Evolutionary-Informed Resistance Assays (EIRAs)

High Content & Flow Cytometry Award Winner:

Dorottya Horkai

Recognised for their poster:

3D Imaging Flow Cytometry - See the full picture

OUR LEGACY

We recognise the vital role that young companies play in driving innovation. New ideas need visibility. The ELRIG Breakthrough Zone provides startups and emerging companies with a dedicated space to showcase their technologies and research at an affordable price.



Launched for the first time in 2024, we're delighted to see the Breakthrough Zone grow.

At Research & Innovation 2025, five startups joined the zone, and by Drug Discovery 2025 this had grown to 23 organisations.



**INNOVATION
AWARD**

Open to all exhibitors in the Breakthrough Zone, this award recognises emerging science and technology making a real impact in our industry.

**INNOVATION AWARD
WINNER 2025**

**Partition
Bio**

Partition Bio recognised as the most innovative start-up organisation at Drug Discovery 2025 and were invited to present their vision & work in a 10-minute talk on our main stage at the conference.

We're expanding the Breakthrough Zone internationally in 2026, with the zone featuring at both Drug Discovery USA and again at our flagship conference Drug Discovery 2026.

We look forward to welcoming even more innovative organisations and continuing to champion the next generation of science.

OUR LEGACY

ADVENTURES FOR TOMORROW'S SCIENTISTS



Young people need to see STEM as an achievable career paths, which is why each year at Drug Discovery we welcome local school students to experience life sciences first-hand.

This year, students from Christ the King, Hope Academy, and St Peter & St Paul took part in hands-on activities, explored the exhibition floor, and engaged in career talks with our Early Career Professionals team.

The day concluded with a poster challenge where students showcased what they learned and impressed us with their creativity and insight.

FIRST COMMUNITY RUN AT DRUG DISCOVERY 2025

Activities beyond the auditorium are important to refresh your mind.

Our community organised the first pre-conference run ahead of day 2 of Drug Discovery 2025. Keeping in spirit of ELRIG's ethos, this free and open community run allowed delegates and sponsors to network and enjoy some fresh air (and a bit of rain) before the day began.

To appeal to a range of skills they organised a 5K and a 7K loop near ACC Liverpool, running alongside the Mersey and finishing with some warm coffee and pastry from a local coffee shop.



In 2026, we hope to build on the community run at Drug Discovery 2025 and share more initiatives like this at our conferences.

OUR LEGACY

It takes an incredible amount of time, effort and skill to plan our events.

But we're glad we don't have to do it alone. We work with a team of amazing volunteers who are equally passionate about our mission.



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

This new award highlights individuals who have made a lasting impact on ELRIG and the wider drug discovery community.



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD WINNER 2025

Congratulations to award winner, Kevin Moore, for their unwavering commitment to the ELRIG community. Contributing over many years, across multiple roles, from exhibitor to committee member to board member.

We also want to say thank you to our Red Shirt volunteers who joined us at Drug Discovery 2025.

These early-career volunteers often help out with crucial tasks like:

- Helping delegates get their badges
- Managing mics during our Q&As in the auditoriums
- Supporting the ELRIG Hub & ELRIG's Operation team

In return, we cover their travel & accommodation (in addition to our travel bursary fund) to the conference. And best of all, our Red Shirt volunteers have the opportunity to network with the ELRIG committee and conference science committee, building those essential contacts to better understand potential career paths.



REGISTRATION UPDATE

In March 2025, we updated our registration process. We are in awe of the support we've received from the drug discovery community and demand to be at our events is high. This year almost every ELRIG event has been sold out or at capacity.

But we don't want to close the door to the people who need us the most. So we changed our registration process.

We are actively reviewing all registrations for our events to prioritise registration for active researchers, scientists and early-career professionals.

When you register for an event:

- You'll receive an automatic email to say we're reviewing your ticket.
- A member of the ELRIG team will review your form and get back to you.
- If you have been approved, we'll send you a full registration confirmation email.
- If you have not been approved, it's likely that we need more information about who you are.

We've also created new products and packages at different prices, so those with the funds can do their part to support us in a way that suits them and keep our events free-to-attend



THE SCIENCE

We pride ourselves on the high-quality and relevant science we curate at our events. In 2025, our events discussed the most pressing and exciting themes in the industry. From therapeutic oligonucleotides, cell and gene therapy, and functional genomics, to AI, automation, and next-generation screening technologies.

We want to thank the incredible keynote speakers who graced our stages and shared their insights.

RESEARCH & INNOVATION 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Jue Wang
Research Scientist & Co-lead of the Protein Design Team,
Google DeepMind
Talk title: *From rocks to picomolar binders: a short history of computational protein design in therapeutics*



Robert Grundy
CEO,
Intelligent OMICS
Talk title: *Exploiting big data to drive drug discovery through AI and collaboration*

THERAPEUTIC OLIGONUCLEOTIDES 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Prof Rory Johnson
Associate Professor,
University College Dublin
Talk title: *Genomics-powered long noncoding RNA therapeutics for oncology*



Dr Shalini Andersson
Vice President Nucleic Acid
TherapeuticsRNA Gene Cell Therapy at Discovery Sciences,
AstraZeneca
Talk title: *Developing nucleic acids into therapeutics and enabling expansion of target space using targeted delivery*

THE SCIENCE

DRUG DISCOVERY 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Prof Heather Pinkett
Associate Professor, Department of Molecular
Biosciences, Northwestern University
Talk title: *Targeting ABC Transporters: Structural
Prediction and Computational Strategies Against AMR*



Dr Dafydd Owen
Senior Scientific Director,
Pfizer Medicine Design
Talk title: *Drug discovery during the pandemic: The
discovery of a COVID-19 treatment*

HIGH-CONTENT IMAGING AND FLOW CYTOMETRY 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Kelly Zalocusky
Executive Director of Computational Biology
Recurison
Talk title: *High Content Imaging and AI in the era of
Clinical-Stage TechBio*



Cecilia Johansson
Professor of Mucosal Immunology
Imperial College London
Talk Title: *Type I interferons in respiratory viral
infections and in lung cancer*

COLLABORATIONS IN 2025

As we grow, we're finding more and more organisations who want to support the drug discovery community. We're thrilled & grateful to these organisations for their support.

PARTNERED EVENTS

- SLAS 2025 International Conference & Exhibition
- WORC: WORD
- ELRIG DE Forum:
- Health Tech Spring
- SLAS Europe 2025 Conference & Exhibition
- Protein Society: 39th Annual Symposium
- BPS: Pharmacology 2025
- SLAS-ELRIG Meet Up

VENUE PARTNERS & SPONSORS

- AstraZeneca, Cambridge, UK
- AstraZeneca, Gothenburg, SE
- Deloitte Life Science Catalyst Lounge, Cambridge, UK
- GSK, Stevenage, UK
- Innovate Cambridge, UK
- Merck, Boston (MA), USA
- University of Warwick, UK
- University of Leicester, UK

We also want to say thank you to ACC Liverpool for awarding a grant to host our flagship conference.

CONTENT PARTNERS

To ensure the science at our events is at the highest possible quality, we've partnered with a range of organisations to share their insights at our 2025 events. Thank you to all the organisations who have presented on our stages in 2025.



PARTNERSHIPS IN 2025

PREFERRED PARTNER

We also secured our preferred partners in 2025:



Helping our exhibitors with event logistics.

Brockbank Ltd.

Helping our exhibitors with AV requirements at Drug Discovery.



Helping our exhibitors with graphic design and website support.



Producing our comprehensive physical programme at Drug Discovery 2025.

MEDIA PARTNERS

Our media partners have helped us to share the work of our incredible speakers, promote the ELRIG ethos to a wide range of audiences and highlight our community.



#LiveWithChaudhrey #ChatsWithChaudhrey
#OnsiteWithChaudhrey

Technology Networks



EXPLORING DRUG DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT





ELRIG Work Groups

ELRIG has 8 work groups, each focusing on a key initiative to keep our events engaging and inclusive. We asked each of our Workgroup leads to share their achievements for this year and what they are working towards in 2026.

Sustainability Work Group in 2025

- Launched the first sustainability track at Drug Discovery 2025 including ELRIG's sustainability statements
- Hosted a Meet the Workgroup event at Drug Discovery 2025
- Organised the first community fun run at Drug Discovery 2025

Goals for 2026

- All ELRIG speakers to include a Sustainability statement in their presentations
- Generate baseline data on environmental sustainability for ELRIG and partner organizations
- Launch the ELRIG Sustainability Award

Vendor & Sponsor Strategy Work Group

Goals for 2026

- Enhance our relationship with our commercial community
- Deepen our analytical approach to prospecting and understanding the vendor and sponsorship segment of the ELRIG Community

Engagement Strategy Work Group in 2025

- Rebranded ELRIG as The Drug Discovery Community to reflect the broader scope of modern drug discovery
- Introduced a new tagline, logo, and updated website for a more intuitive and engaging community experience

Goals for 2026

- Build a connected online ecosystem to provide resources, insights, and support beyond in-person events
- Ensure ELRIG remains an inclusive and accessible space for all members of The Drug Discovery Community
- Continue supporting a growing and thriving community through both virtual and in-person engagement

Innovation Work Group in 2025

- Delivered 2 Breakthrough Zones featuring over 50 new and emerging companies
- Piloted the new “Consultancy Corner” event at Drug Discovery 2025, which was well received and will be formalised for next year’s conference
- Provided professional development opportunities for Early Career Professionals to present, chair sessions, and network
- Piloted a new layout for commercial booths, resulting in increased footfall and engagement

Goals for 2026

- Growing the Breakthrough Zone in terms of the number of participating organisations as well as bringing the zone to our first US-based conference in 2026
- Improving stakeholder engagement and how we work with different organisations
- Improving Consultancy Corner based on the feedback provided from Drug Discovery 2025

Early Career Professionals Work Group in 2025

- Provided educational content in the form of seminars (online and in person at DD25) and career-based panel discussions (online and in person)
- Held several ECP-focussed events with excellent attendance and engagement throughout the year
- Gave back to community in the form of awards (Kirsty Smitten Award), networking opportunities, opportunities to present (at Mini-DD, ECP Flash Talks at DD25)

Goals for 2026

- Provide opportunities for ECPs to actively participate and present at ELRIG events (e.g., Mini-DD, standalone events, posters, talks)
- Develop career opportunities for ECPs through education, networking, and career highlights
- Strengthen links to the wider scientific community to grow the delegate base

Scientific Programme Work Group

Goals for 2026

- Planning for the 20th anniversary of our flagship conference: Drug Discovery
- Launch our first 2-day conference in the USA
- Focus on more intentional partnering for future events
- Planning ELRIG's 2027 events

Awards Work Group

Goals for 2026

- Investigate the possibility of launching a sustainable award for our exhibitors
- Investigate awards to recognise mid-career professionals in the field
- Review travel bursaries for ELRIG conferences, including ECP travel to Drug Discovery USA

People & Culture Work Group

Goals for 2026

- Analyse if ELRIG's general committee & board truly represent our community
- Develop succession planning processes to support the long-term leadership and continuity of our organisation

ELRIG BOARD UPDATES

Members of ELRIG's Board of Governance typically serve 3-4 year terms, helping us continually bring in fresh perspectives and new ways of thinking. We're delighted to welcome our new Board members and extend our sincere thanks to those stepping down for their dedication and impact.

THANK YOU & GOODBYES



Melanie Leveridge
Outgoing
Chair of ELRIG



Chris Williams
Outgoing
Engagement
Strategy Work
Group Lead

NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Del Trezise
Chair of ELRIG



Laura Ajram
Awards Work
Group Leader



Lisa Mohamet,
Innovation Work
Group Leader



Rob Howes
Sustainability
Work Group
Leader



Alison Leightley
Engagement
Strategy Work
Group Leader

2026 EVENTS

MARCH

Cell & Gene Therapy 2026

ELRIG Conference
9-10 March | Cambridge, UK

APRIL

Innovations In Translational Models: Replacing In Vivo Models With Complex Cellular Systems

ELRIG Forum
22 April | UK

MAY

Advances In Cell-based Screening In Drug Discovery

ELRIG Conference
6-7 May | Gothenburg, Sweden

JUNE

Target Innovation & Novel Screening Technologies

ELRIG Forum
15 June | Berlin, Germany
Drug Discovery USA 2026
ELRIG Conference
16-17 June | Boston, USA

JULY

ELRIG Summer Social

1 July | Cambridge, UK

SEPTEMBER

Precision Medicine & Biomarker Discovery

ELRIG Forum
3 Sept | Belfast, UK
Translational Medicine For Women's Health
ELRIG Forum
Sept | Edinburgh, UK

OCTOBER

Drug Discovery 2026

ELRIG Conference
14-15 Oct | London, UK

NOVEMBER

Protein Sciences In Drug Discovery 2026

ELRIG Conference
17-18 Nov | Stevenage, UK

Next Gen Omics & Imaging: Single Cell And Spatial Biology

ELRIG Forum
3 Nov | Paris, France

DECEMBER

Meet Up

ELRIG SLAS Networking
Dec | London, UK

