WHY? SUMMITS

**Updated:** 23 June, 2026

for the latest programe update, please download agenda on conference website

**23 - 24 September,** 2026

**Frankfurt,** Germany


# PPM SUMMIT FRANKFURT 2026

## 34th European Pharma & Biotech Project, Program and Portfolio Management Conference

*Premium Gold Sponsor:* Planisware

*Silver Sponsor:* PLATFLOW

# PPM WORLD TOUR 2026

# WHY THIS CONFERENCE?

In today's pharma and biotech environment, portfolio decisions are being made under greater pressure than ever. Development costs continue to rise, evidence evolves unevenly, timelines shift, resources are constrained, and leadership teams are expected to commit investment with greater speed, clarity, and confidence. In this setting, competitive advantage no longer comes from having more data alone. It comes from being able to interpret the right data, challenge assumptions, weigh trade-offs, and make clear, defensible decisions at the right time.

PPM Summit Frankfurt 2026 is designed for leaders who need to improve the quality, speed, and consistency of portfolio decision-making across increasingly complex pipelines. Over two focused days, the conference will explore how leading organisations prioritise assets, strengthen forecasting, improve governance, align cross-functional stakeholders, deploy constrained resources more effectively, and build portfolios that are more agile, more disciplined, and more value-driven.

The programme combines strategic keynotes, practical case studies, high-value panel discussions, AI-relevant reserved sessions, interactive War Room Workshops, and peer-led Think Tank Roundtables. The result is a conference built not around theory alone, but around the real portfolio decisions life sciences leaders must make when evidence is incomplete, trade-offs are difficult, and the cost of getting it wrong is high.

## Who Will Attend?

This conference is designed for senior decision-makers from pharma and biotech organisations who are responsible for portfolio choices, investment decisions, planning, governance, and execution.

## Attendees will include leaders from:

- Portfolio Management
- Project and Programme Management
- PMO and Enterprise PMO
- R&D Strategy and Operations
- Portfolio Governance
- Resource Planning and Capacity Planning
- Forecasting and Scenario Planning
- Pipeline and Asset Strategy
- Clinical Development
- Development Operations
- Business Planning
- Finance partnering with R&D and portfolio teams
- Decision Analysis and Strategic Planning

Typical job titles may include Head of Portfolio Management, VP Portfolio Strategy, Director of Portfolio Governance, Head of PMO, Head of R&D Operations, Director of Resource Planning, Portfolio Excellence Lead, Head of Strategic Planning, Development Operations Leader, and senior cross-functional leaders involved in asset and investment decisions.

# CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

## By attending, delegates will gain:

- Clearer approaches to prioritising assets, programmes, and indications when evidence is incomplete
- Stronger methods for improving forecasting, scenario planning, and investment confidence
- Practical ideas for making governance more transparent, disciplined, and decision-led
- Better ways to align portfolio ambition with real organisational capacity and execution reality
- Stronger approaches to improving cross-functional alignment around difficult portfolio trade-offs
- Insight into how AI can genuinely improve prioritisation, forecasting, scenario modelling, resource planning, and portfolio monitoring
- Practical frameworks for building more agile, focused, and value-driven portfolios
- Peer-tested lessons that can be applied immediately back in the business

## Conference Topics:

The conference will focus on six core themes shaping portfolio decision-making in pharma and biotech today:

- **Smarter Prioritisation and Better Portfolio Decisions**
  How to make sharper choices across assets, programmes, and indications when evidence is incomplete and trade-offs are unavoidable.
- **Forecasting, Scenarios and Investment Confidence**
  How stronger forecasting, better scenario planning, and improved risk visibility support more robust investment decisions.
- **Governance, Transparency and Decision Discipline**
  How to improve stage-gate reviews, decision rights, portfolio forums, and overall decision quality across the portfolio.
- **Resource Allocation, Capacity and Portfolio Feasibility**
  How to align strategic ambition with real capacity, reduce over-commitment, and strengthen delivery realism.
- **Cross-Functional Alignment Around Portfolio Choices**
  How R&D, finance, PMO, commercial, regulatory, and development teams can work from shared priorities and clearer decision criteria.
- **Building an Agile and Value-Driven Portfolio**
  How to respond faster to changing evidence and business conditions while maintaining focus, discipline, and value creation.

## Conference Format

The conference is designed to be practical, interactive, and highly relevant to senior life sciences leaders. Across two days, delegates will take part in:

- keynote presentations that set the strategic direction
- case studies showing how pharma and biotech organisations are solving real portfolio challenges
- panel discussions that test different views on the hardest decision-making questions
- reserved sessions focused on enabling technologies, better data, predictive analytics, and AI-supported insight
- Start with a Why, a structured opening roundtable designed to spark meaningful networking from the outset
- War Room Workshops, where delegates work through realistic portfolio scenarios and decision trade-offs in smaller groups
- Think Tank Roundtables, where the biggest questions raised during the panels are explored in greater depth with peers

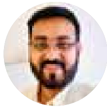
This format is designed to help delegates do more than listen. It is built to help them benchmark, challenge assumptions, exchange practical experience, and leave with stronger ideas, sharper contacts, and more useful takeaways.

# TESTIMONIALS

WHY? SUMMITS

"It was an honor to be part of such a prestigious event and to contribute to discussions. Thanks Why Summits for the opportunity to engage with such a knowledgeable audience and networking with industry leaders !!

★★★★★



**Dhawal Upadhyay**
General Manager - Global Program Management
**Intas Pharmaceuticals (Biopharma division)**

"A big bravo to the Why Summit Team for organizing the great conference.  Excellent speakers, fantastic attendee!

★★★★★

**Bhaskar V. Sathaye**
Lead Project Engineer
**The Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson**

"It was an honor to be part of such a prestigious event and to contribute to discussions. Thanks Why Summits for the opportunity to engage with such a knowledgeable audience and networking with industry leaders!!

★★★★★

**David Swift**
Senior Procurement Leader
**Lonza**

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak in front of this specialized PPM audience within the broader context of PLM.

★★★★★

**Raffaele Marranzini**
CEO
**Platflow**

"Thanks to Why Summits and the Great Speakers and Panels. Very inspiring. So many great things to do to to provide a better Life for our patients.

★★★★★

**Emmanuel Happe**
Senior Leader | Global Director
**Lonza**

"Reflecting on my participation in the 22nd American Pharma and Biotech Project, Program, and Portfolio Management Conference in San Francisco last week, I am inspired by the wealth of knowledge shared and the incredible community of experts and lifelong learners I had the pleasure of working with and connecting to.

★★★★★

**Noel Decker**
VP and Head, Science & Development Project Management, Strategy and Business Operations
**Emergent BioSolutions**

"It was a real pleasure being part of this great event.

★★★★★

**Blerim Shkodra**
Sr Director Capital Procurement & Category Leader
**Lonza**

"It was a very transparent discussion on Agile, waterfall and hybrid methodologies. I have fully enjoyed participating in this panel!

★★★★★

**Mugunthan Maheswaran**
Sr Project Manager, Technology, Digital & Operational Excellence
**Roche**

"Very good and engaging discussion! Thanks Why Summits for being part of the panel

★★★★★

**Christophe De Vleeschouwer**
Director, Pipeline Project Management
**GSK Vaccines**

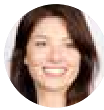
"Always a fun time MCing the Why  Summits conferences! It's the intersection of a topic I'm so deeply passionate about (PPM), the industry I know so much about (life science in general, pharma in particular), and  the people who - dare I say it - have become my friends.

★★★★★

**Dave Penndorf**
PPM Advisor
**Groundswell Pharma Consulting, LLC.**

"We were proud to be Sponsors for the 31st European Life Sciences Project & Portfolio Management Conference in London. Two really energising days of learning and connection. Huge thanks to Why Summits for such a well-run event. The presentations, panels and workshops sparked great conversations around portfolio strategy, governance, risk and innovation across the sector. Most of all, it was fantastic to reconnect with familiar faces and meet new Life Sciences leaders who share the same passion for PPM.

★★★★★



**Merryn Horneman**
Life Sciences Delivery Partner
**Mi-GSO-PCUBED**

# INDUSTRY PIONEERS ATTENDING FROM

WHY? SUMMITS

GSK
Pfizer
Lilly
MERCK
Roche
sanofi
AstraZeneca
Bristol Myers Squibb
EMD SERONO
NOVARTIS
abbvie
Boehringer Ingelheim
Johnson&Johnson
AMGEN
VERTEX
Genmab
GILEAD
Takeda
novo nordisk
BAYER
teva
Biogen
Daiichi-Sankyo
CSL
Otsuka
Adaptimmune
Mylan
astellas
VIATRIS
SANDOZ
BIONTECH
moderna

# CONFIRMED **SPEAKERS**

WHY? SUMMITS

**Dr. Silke Rodrigues**
Global Business & Portfolio Development
**medac**

**Jörn Lenz**
Head of Business Development Hematology
**medac**

In chair DAY 2

**Finn Tram**
Strategic Planning Leader (Corporate, Enterprise, Transformation, Portfolio, Benefits, Director)
**Terumo Europe**

**Kamil Mroz**
Senior Director, Project Management Advisor (R&D PPM)
**GSK**

**Holger Deppe**
Director, Program Lead
**Nuclidium GmbH**

**Svenja Merle**
Director Global PMO Pharma
**B. Braun Group**

**Dr. Ramzan Tabasum**
E2E Strategic CAPEX Program Lead Small Molecules
**Lonza**

**Olga Apryshkina**
Global Program Effectiveness Coach
**Novartis**

**Martina Hubensack**
Head of Portfolio Management N&I, Fertility, CM&E, Bioelectronics and Global Health
**Merck Healthcare**

In chair D

**Anastasia Lunger**
Head of Global Program Management N&I, Fertility, CME, GH | R&D Strategy, Portfolio & Hubs
**Merck Healthcare**

**Srinivasan Ravichandran**
Head of Portfolio, Transformation & Performance
**Merck**

**Thomas Büchert**
Senior Director Global R&D Program Management Late Development
**BioNTech SE**

**Jens Lohrmann**
Global Head Cell & Gene Therapies Portfolio Management (Technical R&D)
**Novartis**

**Alice Schlichtiger**
Project Leader LumiraDx
**Roche Diagnostics**

**Alba Martínez Munuera**
Senior Program Manager Drug Development
**CureVac**

**Hamid Nasiri**
Senior Business Development Manager
**Engelhard**

**Concetta Giuliani**
Global Program Manager
**Celex Oncology**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 1

8:40 **Chairmans Opening Address**

8:45 **START WITH A WHY? ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

### Meet Your Peers, Share Your Priorities, and Set Your Objectives

A short, structured icebreaker designed to help delegates connect early, share their priorities, and start the conference with more relevant conversations. In tables of eight, attendees will briefly introduce themselves and discuss:

- who they are and what they do
- why they are attending the conference
- why PPM matters in their role or organisation
- what they want to learn or take away
- who they would like to meet, exchange ideas with, or partner with

This session helps turn introductions into meaningful networking from the very start.

## SMARTER PRIORITISATION AND BETTER PORTFOLIO DECISIONS

In pharma and biotech, some of the most important portfolio decisions are made before certainty exists. Global Project, Program and Portfolio Management leaders must execute seamlessly, enabling decision-making where to invest, accelerate, and where to pause or stop — while clinical evidence is still evolving, cross-functional teams are operating under pressure, and the cost of backing the wrong priority is high. At the same time, AI is reshaping how we work, gain insights, and how quickly decisions can be informed by them

The first block of conference sessions focuses on current reality of driving portfolio decisions and programs strategy execution— and what human leadership looks like when data, AI, and strategic judgement must work together under pressure conditions. It explores how to apply clearer decision criteria, surface risk earlier, and make stronger calls without waiting for perfect data — while ensuring that the speed of AI-enabled insight does not outpace the quality of the decisions it supports.

9:00 **KEYNOTE**

### Mission Altitude: Leading AI Transformation in R&D PPM

What if the biggest obstacle to AI transformation isn't the technology?

Global Program and Portfolio Management leaders already operate in one of the most complex environments in any industry — cross-functional teams spanning functions, disciplines, and geographies; drug development timelines shaped by uncertainty; strategic decisions made with incomplete evidence, under constant pressure, and without the luxury of waiting for the full picture. Some days, it feels less like running a program and more like navigating a space mission.

AI is now evolving faster than any structure, team, or governance model was built to absorb. The question is no longer whether it works — it's how to lead people through transformation with clarity and purpose, when the pace of change has outrun every playbook in the room.

Drawing on two years leading AI transformation within R&D Global PPM, Anastasia reflects on what it truly takes — building capability step by step, upskilling teams under pressure, and earning the trust that makes transformation executable. What was built. What was learned. And what only becomes visible when you finally have the altitude to see it.

**Anastasia Lunger,** *Head of Global Program Management N&I, Fertility, CME, GH / R&D Strategy, Portfolio & Hubs,* **Merck Healthcare**

9:30 **RESERVED SESSION**

### From Portfolio Data to Better Prioritisation: Using Integrated Insight and AI to Compare Opportunities More Clearly

Strong prioritisation depends not only on judgement, but on the ability to bring together the right evidence in a clear and decision-ready way. Yet in many organisations, the data needed to support portfolio choices sits across multiple functions, systems, and assumptions, making comparison slower, less consistent, and more vulnerable to bias.

This session will explore how better portfolio visibility, integrated data, and AI-enabled insight can improve prioritisation quality. It will look at how organisations can connect portfolio, clinical, financial, and operational information to compare opportunities more clearly, surface early risk signals, strengthen trade-off discussions, and support more consistent decision-making across assets and programmes.

10:00 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### What Makes a Portfolio Decision Defensible - and Why Do So Many Prioritisation Processes Still Break Down?

Most companies have portfolio reviews. Many have prioritisation frameworks. Yet decisions still get delayed, revisited, or weakened by inconsistent criteria, competing agendas, and limited cross-functional alignment.

This panel will examine what high-quality prioritisation looks like in practice. Senior leaders will discuss where prioritisation processes fail, what stronger organisations do differently, and how to make portfolio choices that are faster, clearer, and more defensible.

**Discussion points:**

- how to compare assets fairly when evidence maturity differs
- how to define decision criteria that support real trade-offs
- where bias and internal politics most often distort prioritisation
- how to balance scientific promise, commercial value, and execution feasibility
- where AI can genuinely strengthen prioritisation, and where human judgement must remain central
- how much evidence is enough to make a decision
- how to ensure prioritisation leads to real resource shifts, not just discussion

**Concetta Giuliani,** *Global Program Manager,* **Celex Oncology**

10:30 **Morning Coffee and Networking**

## FORECASTING, SCENARIOS AND INVESTMENT CONFIDENCE

In pharma and biotech, better portfolio decisions depend not only on choosing the right assets, but on understanding how likely different outcomes are, where the risks sit, and how assumptions may shift over time. When forecasting is weak or scenario planning is superficial, organisations can overestimate value, underestimate delivery risk, and commit resources with more confidence than the evidence justifies.

The second block of conference sessions focuses on how stronger forecasting, scenario planning, and risk visibility can support better investment choices across the portfolio. It explores how organisations are improving the quality of assumptions behind their decisions, testing uncertainty more rigorously, and creating a clearer basis for prioritisation, trade-off decisions, and executive confidence. It also examines how predictive analytics and AI can strengthen forecasting by improving risk visibility, modelling alternative scenarios more effectively, and highlighting where assumptions may be too optimistic.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 1

11:00 **CASE STUDY**

### Seeing Around the Corner: How Better Forecasting Improved Portfolio Decisions and Investment Confidence

Portfolio decisions are only as strong as the assumptions behind them. This case study will show how one pharma or biotech organisation improved forecasting across timelines, costs, probability of success, resource requirements, and value expectations in order to make more robust and better-informed portfolio choices.

The session will examine how the company built stronger forecasting discipline into portfolio discussions, reduced overconfidence in assumptions, and created a more realistic basis for investment decisions. It will also show how forecasting became a more strategic capability rather than a planning exercise completed too late to influence decisions meaningfully.

**Martina Hubensack** *Head of Portfolio Management N&I, Fertility, CM&E, Bioelectronics and Global Health,* **Merck Healthcare**

11:30 **RESERVED SESSION**

### From Static Forecasts to Smarter Scenarios: Using Predictive Analytics and AI to Improve Risk Visibility and Investment Confidence

Traditional portfolio planning often relies on fixed assumptions that quickly become outdated as evidence evolves, timelines move, and external conditions change. What decision-makers increasingly need is not just a single forecast, but a clearer view of the scenarios that could unfold and the implications each one carries for investment, resourcing, and portfolio balance.

This session will explore how predictive analytics, AI, and more dynamic scenario planning can support better portfolio decisions. It will look at how organisations can test assumptions more rigorously, detect forecast drift earlier, compare alternative paths with greater clarity, and bring scenario-based thinking into portfolio reviews in a way that supports faster and more confident executive choices.

12:00 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### How Can Forecasting Improve Decision Confidence Without Creating False Precision?

Forecasting is essential to good portfolio decision-making, yet many organisations still struggle to find the right balance between analytical rigour and practical realism. Too little forecasting discipline weakens decision quality. Too much confidence in fragile assumptions can create a false sense of certainty and lead to poor investment choices.

This panel will examine how pharma and biotech organisations are improving forecasting, scenario planning, and risk visibility without overcomplicating the process. Senior leaders will discuss how they test uncertainty, challenge assumptions, and use forecast-based insight to support more credible portfolio discussions and stronger executive decision-making.

**Discussion points:**

- how to improve confidence in forecasts without creating false precision
- which assumptions matter most in portfolio investment decisions
- how to challenge overly optimistic timelines, costs, and value expectations
- where predictive analytics and AI can genuinely improve forecasting quality
- how scenario planning can support better prioritisation and trade-off decisions
- how to reflect uncertainty in executive discussions without slowing decisions down
- how to make forecasting more useful across portfolio reviews, governance forums, and resource planning
- where organisations most often get forecasting wrong, and what stronger teams do differently

**Svenja Merle,** *Director Global PMO Pharma,* **B. Braun Group**

**Dr. Ramzan Tabasum,** *E2E Strategic CAPEX Program Lead Small Molecules,* **Lonza**

12:30 **Luncheon**

## GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND DECISION DISCIPLINE

In pharma and biotech, stronger portfolio decisions do not depend only on better analysis. They depend on having the right governance around them. Even where organisations have clear priorities and robust data, decision quality can still suffer when stage-gate reviews are inconsistent, decision rights are unclear, portfolio forums lack discipline, or key choices are revisited without structure or accountability.

The third block of conference sessions focuses on how leading organisations strengthen governance, improve transparency, and create more disciplined decision-making across the portfolio. It explores how to make portfolio reviews more objective, how to reduce bias and ambiguity in decision forums, and how to ensure that governance supports timely action rather than delay, confusion, or repeated debate. It also considers how better digital workflows, clearer decision traceability, and faster synthesis of portfolio inputs can help governance operate with more consistency and control.

13:30 **CASE STUDY**

### From Process to Discipline: How Stronger Governance Improved Portfolio Decisions

Good governance should do more than organise meetings and approvals. It should improve the quality, consistency, and credibility of portfolio decisions. This case study will show how one pharma or biotech organisation redesigned governance to support better stage-gate reviews, clearer decision rights, stronger portfolio forums, and more effective executive oversight.

The session will look at how the organisation created a governance model that improved transparency, reduced unnecessary escalation, and helped teams move from discussion to clear decisions with greater speed and confidence. It will also address how stronger governance improved alignment across functions while ensuring that difficult portfolio choices were made with the right level of challenge and accountability.

**Svenja Merle,** *Director Global PMO Pharma,* **B. Braun Group**

14:00 **CASE STUDY**

### Redesigning process landscape and governance to assure better portfolio decisions

This case study demonstrates how a well-defined structure, a rigorous process, and input from interdisciplinary stakeholders - aligned under a shared governance framework - lead to defensible portfolio decisions.

**Dr. Silke Rodrigues,** *Global Business & Portfolio Development,* **medac**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 1

14:30 KEYNOTE

### The Day Aladdin Lost His 1001 Excel Sheets: From Spreadsheet Chaos to Structured Decision-Making in Business Development

- How to reduce Excel-driven complexity with structured BD processes
- The role of process-guided tools in improving data quality and decision-making
- Best practices for enabling effective collaboration across multidisciplinary teams

**Jörn Lenz,** *Head of Business Development Hematology,* **medac**

15:00 **Afternoon Coffee and Networking**

15:30 PANEL DISCUSSION

### Why Do Portfolio Governance Processes Still Slow Decisions Down - and What Does Better Discipline Really Look Like?

Many companies have governance structures in place, yet portfolio decisions still move too slowly, return for repeated debate, or become vulnerable to subjectivity and internal politics. The issue is often not the existence of governance, but the way it is designed, used, and enforced.

This panel will examine what effective portfolio governance looks like in practice. Senior leaders will discuss how they improve the quality of stage-gate and portfolio review decisions, where governance most often breaks down, and how to make decision-making more transparent, more disciplined, and more actionable across the organisation.

**Discussion points:**

- how to make governance forums more decision-focused and less update-driven
- how to define decision rights clearly across portfolio, R&D, finance, and leadership teams
- where subjectivity and bias most often enter governance discussions
- how to improve transparency around why decisions are made
- how better systems and decision traceability can support stronger governance discipline
- how to stop governance from becoming slow, repetitive, or overly bureaucratic
- how to strengthen stage-gate discipline without reducing flexibility
- what distinguishes governance that enables action from governance that delays it

**Srinivasan Ravichandran,** *Head of Portfolio, Transformation & Performance,* **Merck KGaA**
**Dr. Silke Rodrigues,** *Global Business & Portfolio Development,* **medac**
**Thomas Büchert,** *Senior Director R&D Program Management,* **BioNTech SE**

16:00 **Afternoon Coffee and Networking**

## INTERACTIVE BREAK OUT SESSIONS

### Parallel War Room Workshops

These small-group working sessions are designed to move from ideas to action. Each War Room Workshop will place attendees into a realistic portfolio decision scenario and ask them to work through the trade-offs, tensions, and implications together. Rather than listening to another presentation, participants will test assumptions, challenge options, and explore how different decisions affect value, risk, timing, feasibility, and alignment across the portfolio.

### Parallel Think Tank Roundtables

These facilitated peer discussions are designed to take the biggest questions raised during the panel discussions and explore them in more depth. Each Think Tank Roundtable will focus on one critical portfolio challenge, giving delegates the opportunity to benchmark approaches, compare decision logic, challenge conventional thinking, and discuss how their organisations handle the same issue in practice. The value lies in going beyond surface-level views and getting into the nuance of what actually works, what repeatedly fails, and where the hardest trade-offs still sit.

16:30 DAY 1 - PARALLEL WAR ROOM WORKSHOPS

### 1. Early Asset Prioritisation War Room

Work through a realistic early-stage portfolio scenario in which several assets show promise, but evidence maturity, strategic fit, commercial attractiveness, and delivery risk vary significantly. Participants will assess which opportunities deserve priority, which need more evidence, and which should not progress further - while working within real resource constraints and incomplete information.

### 2. Forecasting Under Uncertainty War Room

Explore how different assumptions around timelines, costs, technical probability of success, regulatory risk, and market opportunity can materially change the attractiveness of an investment decision. Participants will examine how shifting assumptions alter the shape of the portfolio and what level of confidence is needed before moving forward.

### 3. Governance Under Pressure War Room

Step into a portfolio review scenario where unclear decision rights, inconsistent criteria, and repeated escalation are slowing progress. Participants will identify where governance is breaking down, what decisions are not being made clearly enough, and how to redesign the discussion so that the organisation can move from debate to action.

### 4. AI for Better Portfolio Decisions War Room

Test where AI can genuinely improve portfolio decision-making and where expectations are still running ahead of reality. Participants will explore practical use cases in prioritisation, forecasting, scenario modelling, and portfolio monitoring, while also discussing where human judgement, cross-functional challenge, and governance remain essential.

**Srinivasan Ravichandran,** *Head of Portfolio, Transformation & Performance,* **Merck**

### 5. Defensible Program Decision-Making War Room

**Overview:**

Navigate a high-stakes program decision involving competing priorities, conflicting stakeholder views, and limited capacity. Focus on making decisions that are credible, transparent, and executable while balancing strategic outcomes, risks, and benefits.

17:00 DAY 1 - PARALLEL THINK TANK ROUNDTABLES

### 1. What makes a portfolio decision truly defensible?

This roundtable takes the prioritisation panel one step further by examining the foundations of decision credibility in more detail. Delegates will discuss how organisations define decision quality, how much evidence is enough, and how leaders distinguish between a well-reasoned decision and one that is merely well-defended politically.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 1

**Topics for deeper discussion:**
- what evidence threshold is realistic at different stages of the portfolio
- how to balance scientific promise against commercial and operational reality
- what makes a decision framework credible across different stakeholder groups
- how to document and communicate the rationale behind difficult choices
- how to know when a decision is ready to be made rather than endlessly refined

### 2. How much forecasting discipline is enough?

This roundtable builds on the forecasting panel by going deeper into how companies can improve forecasting without overengineering the process. The discussion will focus on how leaders challenge assumptions, handle uncertainty honestly, and avoid creating false confidence through over-modelled detail.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**
- which assumptions deserve the most scrutiny in portfolio forecasting
- how to challenge optimism bias in timing, cost, and value expectations
- how to present forecast uncertainty to leadership without weakening confidence
- where scenario planning adds most value and where it becomes excessive
- how AI and predictive analytics can improve forecasting quality in practical ways

### 3. Why do governance forums still struggle to drive action?

This roundtable takes the governance panel into a more candid peer discussion on why portfolio governance often feels heavier than it should. Delegates will examine what stops forums from being decision-led, where governance design often breaks down, and how to create stronger accountability without unnecessary bureaucracy.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**
- why governance meetings often drift toward updates instead of decisions
- how to sharpen decision rights and reduce ambiguity between functions
- how to stop repeated re-litigation of the same issues
- what transparency should really look like in a portfolio forum
- how to improve the traceability of decisions, assumptions, and accountability

**Alice Schlichtiger,** *Project Leader LumiraDx,* **Roche Diagnostics**

### 4. Where can AI create the most value in portfolio decision-making today?

This roundtable will explore AI more critically and practically than the earlier discussions, focusing on where it is already improving portfolio work and where expectations remain inflated. Delegates will compare use cases, constraints, and internal readiness across their organisations.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**
- which portfolio decisions are most suitable for AI-supported insight
- where AI can improve speed, consistency, and visibility in practice
- where poor data quality limits AI usefulness
- where AI risks creating false confidence or weaker challenge
- how to balance AI-enabled analysis with human judgement and governance discipline

**Srinivasan Ravichandran,** *Head of Portfolio, Transformation & Performance,* **Merck KGaA**

### 5. How Should Companies Challenge Bias in Program Decision-Making?

**Overview:**

This roundtable explores how bias influences program decisions, governance, and benefit realization. Delegates will discuss where bias enters program discussions, how it affects strategic choices and resource allocation, and what practical approaches can improve objectivity while maintaining agility and leadership judgment.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**
- Which biases most often distort program decisions and outcomes
- How stakeholder interests and executive sponsorship influence program direction
- How to build constructive challenge into program governance without slowing delivery
- How to distinguish informed confidence from overconfidence in program leadership
- How bias affects assumptions around benefits, risks, dependencies, and change readiness
- How to create more transparent and evidence-based program decision-making processes

17:30 **Chairmans DAY 1 Closing Remarks**

17:45 **Networking cocktail Reception**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 2

8:55 **Chairmans DAY 2 Opening Remarks**

## RESOURCE ALLOCATION, CAPACITY AND PORTFOLIO FEASIBILITY

In pharma and biotech, even well-prioritised portfolios can fail when strategic ambition is not matched by realistic capacity. Organisations often approve more programmes than teams can properly support, spread critical capabilities too thinly, and create portfolios that look strong on paper but are difficult to execute in practice. The result is predictable - delays, over-commitment, resource conflict, and weaker delivery across the portfolio.

The fourth block of conference sessions focuses on how leading organisations align portfolio ambition with real organisational capacity, deploy resources more effectively, and improve the feasibility of portfolio choices before execution risk escalates. It explores how to connect strategic intent with delivery reality, how to make more disciplined resourcing decisions, and how to avoid the chronic overloading that undermines both portfolio performance and investment value. It also examines where better capacity visibility, predictive modelling, and AI can help organisations identify bottlenecks earlier, test deployment scenarios more realistically, and make feasibility a stronger part of portfolio decision-making.

9:00 **KEYNOTE**

### From Portfolio Logic to Team Reality: Why PPM Performance Breaks Down at Team Level - and What Leaders Can Do About It

- Why technically robust portfolios still stall once execution moves to teams.
- Explore the hidden team level dynamics that slow decisions and increase delivery risk - and the early
- patterns leaders can act on before timelines and budgets are impacted.

**Olga Apryshkina,** *Global Program Effectivness Coach,* **Novartis**

9:30 **RESERVED SESSION**

### From Capacity Blind Spots to Smarter Deployment: Using Better Data and AI to Improve Resource Allocation Across the Portfolio

A portfolio can look balanced at governance level and still be deeply misaligned at execution level. Without clear visibility into capacity, capability bottlenecks, and competing demand across functions, organisations risk committing resources in ways that create hidden strain and reduce overall portfolio performance.

This session will explore how better capacity visibility, integrated resource data, and AI-supported modelling can improve portfolio feasibility. It will look at how organisations can identify bottlenecks earlier, test alternative deployment scenarios more effectively, and make more realistic decisions on portfolio load, sequencing, and resource allocation across programmes and functions.

10:00 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### Why Are So Many Portfolios Still Over-Committed - and What Does Real Resource Discipline Look Like?

Over-commitment remains one of the most common and most damaging portfolio problems in life sciences. Too many programmes, too little capacity, and insufficient willingness to make hard trade-offs can leave organisations trying to do everything while executing too little well.

This panel will examine how pharma and biotech leaders improve resource discipline across the portfolio, make feasibility a more explicit part of decision-making, and create stronger links between ambition, capacity, and execution. The discussion will focus on what it takes to move beyond theoretical prioritisation and build portfolios that teams can actually deliver.

**Discussion points:**

- how to test whether a portfolio is realistically deliverable before execution suffers
- where organisations most often underestimate capacity constraints
- how to identify and manage critical capability bottlenecks
- how to make resource feasibility a stronger input into portfolio decisions
- where AI can genuinely improve capacity planning and deployment decisions
- how to avoid approving more work than the organisation can execute well
- how to link prioritisation decisions to real redeployment of people and budget
- what leading organisations do differently to reduce chronic over-commitment

**Jörn Lenz,** *Head of Business Development Hematology,* **medac**
**Thomas Büchert,** *Senior Director R&D Program Management,* **BioNTech SE**
**Alba Martínez Munuera,** *Senior Program Manager Drug Development,* **CureVac**

10:30 **Morning Coffee and Networking**

## CROSS-FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT AROUND PORTFOLIO CHOICES

In pharma and biotech, portfolio decisions rarely fail because one function lacks insight. They fail because different functions evaluate the same opportunity through different lenses, work to different assumptions, and optimise for different outcomes. R&D may focus on scientific potential, finance on return and affordability, commercial on market opportunity, and development teams on execution realities. Without shared priorities, clearer decision criteria, and better trade-off logic, alignment becomes slow, fragile, and heavily dependent on personalities rather than process.

The fifth block of conference sessions focuses on how leading organisations improve cross-functional alignment around portfolio choices. It explores how to create a stronger shared basis for decisions, how to reduce friction between functions, and how to ensure that trade-offs are understood, challenged, and owned collectively rather than pushed from one team to another. It also considers how better data visibility, clearer information flow, and more intelligent synthesis of inputs can help teams work from a more consistent and decision-ready view of the portfolio.

11:00 **CASE STUDY**

### Decision making in ambiguous and uncertain situations.

- How do Pilots make decisions in the cockpit where lives and multi hundred millions are at stake
- What lessons Business Leaders and especially PPM leads can retain

**Dr. Ramzan Tabasum,** *E2E Strategic CAPEX Program Lead Small Molecules,* **Lonza**

11:30 **RESERVED SESSION**

### Creating a Shared View of Priorities in Complex Projects: Connecting Teams, Assumptions, and Decision Criteria More Effectively

Aligning complex projects becomes increasingly difficult when teams operate with different assumptions, competing priorities, and varying interpretations of success, risk, and urgency. As complexity grows, misalignment can slow decision-making, create conflicting expectations, and make trade-offs harder to navigate.

This session will explore how organizations can create a stronger shared view of priorities across complex projects by improving alignment between teams, dependencies, and decision criteria. It will examine how greater visibility, coordinated planning, and more transparent trade-offs can help stakeholders work from a common understanding, enabling faster decisions, stronger collaboration, and more effective project delivery.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 2

12:00 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### How Do You Get Functions to Support the Same Portfolio Priorities Instead of Protecting Their Own?

Most organisations recognise the importance of cross-functional alignment, but achieving it in real portfolio discussions is much harder. Different incentives, different metrics, and different risk perspectives can pull teams in opposite directions - especially when resources are constrained and priorities need to shift.

This panel will examine how pharma and biotech leaders improve alignment across portfolio, R&D, finance, PMO, commercial, regulatory, and development teams. The discussion will focus on what helps organisations create a more unified decision-making culture, where trade-offs are surfaced early, debated productively, and translated into clearer action across the portfolio.

**Discussion points:**

- how to create shared decision criteria across different functions
- where cross-functional alignment most often breaks down in portfolio discussions
- how to manage competing priorities without slowing decision-making
- how to improve trust and transparency between portfolio, R&D, finance, and development teams
- how to make trade-offs clearer and easier to own collectively
- how better information flow and decision-ready insight can support alignment across functions
- how to reduce the role of functional bias and defensive behaviour
- what practical changes help move from alignment in theory to alignment in action

**Martina Hubensack,** *Head of Portfolio Management N&I, Fertility, CM&E, Bioelectronics and Global Health,* **Merck Healthcare**

**Jens Lohrmann,** *Global Head Cell & Gene Therapies Portfolio Management (Technical R&D),* **Novartis**

**Alice Schlichtiger,** *Project Leader LumiraDx ,* **Roche Diagnostics**

12:30 **Luncheon**

## BUILDING AN AGILE AND VALUE-DRIVEN PORTFOLIO

In pharma and biotech, portfolio strength is no longer defined only by how many promising assets an organisation holds, but by how well it can adapt when evidence changes, risks evolve, priorities shift, and business conditions become more demanding. The challenge is not simply to react faster. It is to do so without losing strategic focus, execution discipline, or value creation across the portfolio.

The sixth block of conference sessions focuses on how leading organisations build portfolios that are more adaptive, more resilient, and better able to respond to change without creating instability or confusion. It explores how to increase portfolio agility while maintaining clear priorities, stronger governance, and disciplined decision-making. It also examines how better visibility, dynamic monitoring, and AI-supported decision support can help teams detect change earlier, understand implications faster, and respond with greater confidence.

13:30 **CASE STUDY**

### Adapting Without Losing Focus: How One Company Built More Agile Portfolio and Program Decision-Making

As pipelines evolve and external conditions shift, leadership teams need both portfolios and programs that can respond quickly without falling into constant reprioritisation, weakened accountability, or loss of strategic focus. This case study will show how one pharma or biotech organisation improved its ability to adapt portfolio investments and program decisions as evidence changed, risks evolved, and priorities shifted—while still protecting long-term value, benefits realization, and delivery performance.

The session will examine how the organisation strengthened agility through better prioritisation, clearer governance, more disciplined trade-off decisions, and a structured approach to managing change across both portfolio and program levels. It will also explore how the company distinguished healthy adaptability from reactive churn, ensuring that strategic investments remained aligned while programs retained focus, stakeholder confidence, and execution quality.

14:00 **RESERVED SESSION**

### Turning Portfolio Agility into a Practical Capability: Using Better Visibility, AI and Dynamic Decision Support to Respond Faster to Change

Many organisations want a more agile portfolio, but in practice they still struggle to detect change early, assess implications quickly, and translate new information into confident decisions. The result is often either slow response or overreaction.

This session will explore how stronger portfolio visibility, dynamic decision support, and AI-enabled monitoring can help organisations respond faster and more intelligently to changing evidence, shifting priorities, and emerging risks. It will look at how to support adaptation in a way that strengthens portfolio value rather than undermining focus and execution.

14:30 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### What Does an Agile Portfolio Really Look Like in Pharma and Biotech?

Agility is widely discussed, but often poorly defined. For some, it means faster decisions. For others, it means more frequent reprioritisation. In reality, portfolio agility is only valuable when it improves the organisation's ability to respond to change while preserving strategic clarity, resource discipline, and execution confidence.

This panel will examine what true portfolio agility looks like in practice, how leading organisations build it, and where many companies get it wrong. Senior leaders will discuss how to adapt portfolios without creating instability, how to respond faster to new evidence, and how to maintain value creation in a more uncertain and fast-moving environment.

**Discussion points:**

- what distinguishes an agile portfolio from a reactive one
- how to respond to changing evidence without constant disruption
- how often portfolio priorities should realistically be revisited
- how to maintain strategic focus while adapting to new risks and opportunities
- where AI and dynamic monitoring can genuinely improve responsiveness
- how governance, forecasting, and capacity planning support portfolio agility
- how to protect value when priorities shift quickly
- what practical changes help organisations become more adaptive without losing discipline

15:00 **Afternoon Coffee and Networking**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 2

## INTERACTIVE BREAK OUT SESSIONS

### Parallel War Room Workshops

These small-group working sessions are designed to move from ideas to action. Each War Room Workshop will place attendees into a realistic portfolio decision scenario and ask them to work through the trade-offs, tensions, and implications together. Rather than listening to another presentation, participants will test assumptions, challenge options, and explore how different decisions affect value, risk, timing, feasibility, and alignment across the portfolio.

### Parallel Think Tank Roundtables

These facilitated peer discussions are designed to take the biggest questions raised during the panel discussions and explore them in more depth. Each Think Tank Roundtable will focus on one critical portfolio challenge, giving delegates the opportunity to benchmark approaches, compare decision logic, challenge conventional thinking, and discuss how their organisations handle the same issue in practice. The value lies in going beyond surface-level views and getting into the nuance of what actually works, what repeatedly fails, and where the hardest trade-offs still sit.

15:30 **DAY 2 - PARALLEL WAR ROOM WORKSHOPS**

### 1. Resource Allocation and Capacity Feasibility War Room

Work through a portfolio scenario in which strategic ambition clearly exceeds available capacity. Participants will decide how to sequence programmes, redeploy constrained skills, and reduce overload without damaging strategic priorities or creating hidden execution risk elsewhere in the portfolio.

### 2. Driving Success in Joint Developments: Tactical Lessons from a Program Management Perspective

Examine the pain points, risks, and opportunities that arise when different corporate cultures, processes, and timelines collide in a joint development. Based on real-world program collaboration experience, participants will benchmark common alignment pitfalls using live polling, explore fast-track tips to streamline cross-partner communication, and work in breakout groups to solve critical day-to-day bottlenecks like differences in governance, resourcing, decision-making, and communication.

**Alba Martínez Munuera,** *Senior Program Manager Drug Development,* **CureVac**

### 3. Project Risk Management War Room

Mapping scenarios, identifying key risk factors, and building response plans under constrained timelines and resources

Delegates work through a realistic late-phase development scenario — unexpected clinical safety signal, CMC timeline slip, regulatory query. Tests how project teams map risk interdependencies, assess scenario implications, and escalate decisions to program and portfolio level with the right evidence and framing.

### 4. Scenario Rebalancing War Room

Work through a dynamic portfolio rebalancing exercise in which changes in risk, timing, or market potential force a re-evaluation of current priorities. Participants will assess what should change, what should stay protected, and how leadership can make rebalancing decisions with discipline.

### 5. AI-Enabled Portfolio Monitoring War Room

Examine how dynamic monitoring, predictive signals, and AI-supported decision tools can help portfolio leaders detect emerging issues earlier and respond faster. Participants will explore how to distinguish meaningful signals from noise and how to integrate AI-supported alerts into real decision processes.

**Svenja Merle,** *Director Global PMO Pharma,* **B. Braun Group**

16:15 **DAY 2 - PARALLEL THINK TANK ROUNDTABLES**

### 1. How do you stop chronic over-commitment?

This roundtable builds on the resource allocation panel by focusing on one of the most persistent execution problems in life sciences portfolios: approving more work than the organisation can realistically deliver. Delegates will discuss how stronger organisations create feasibility discipline before overload becomes visible in execution.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**

- what chronic over-commitment looks like before delivery failure becomes obvious
- how to challenge strategic ambition when capacity does not support it
- which capability bottlenecks matter most in portfolio feasibility
- how to link prioritisation decisions to real resource reallocation
- what practical mechanisms help organisations say no earlier and more clearly

### 2. What does strong cross-functional alignment actually look like?

This roundtable takes the alignment panel deeper into the realities of how functions work together around hard portfolio choices. Rather than discussing alignment as an aspiration, delegates will examine what it looks like in decision forums, how it breaks down, and what helps functions move from parallel views to shared ownership.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**

- how to create common decision criteria across different functions
- how to resolve situations where functions are optimising for different outcomes
- how to improve trust between portfolio, R&D, finance, PMO, and development teams
- how to make trade-offs visible early enough to avoid late-stage conflict
- what structures, behaviours, and leadership practices create real alignment

**Holger Deppe,** *Director, Program Lead,* **Nuclidium GmbH**

### 3. What does an agile portfolio really look like in practice?

This roundtable takes the agility panel beyond the headline concept and into practical detail. Delegates will discuss what healthy adaptability looks like, how often priorities should really be revisited, and how to avoid confusing agility with instability.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**

- what triggers should lead to a formal portfolio rethink
- how to respond to change without constant reprioritisation
- how to maintain strategic focus while adapting to new evidence
- what governance changes support agility without weakening discipline
- how to distinguish productive adaptation from reactive churn

**Hamid Nasiri,** *Senior Business Development Manager ,* **Engelhard**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

# DAY 2

### 4. How should portfolio leaders use AI without over-relying on it?

This roundtable will focus on how AI fits into leadership judgement, not just analytical capability. Delegates will discuss how to use AI as a support tool for better portfolio visibility and faster evaluation, while ensuring that decision ownership, challenge, and accountability remain strong.

**Topics for deeper discussion:**

- where AI adds value in live portfolio environments today
- where AI outputs need the most scrutiny and challenge
- how to prevent AI-supported analysis from weakening critical thinking
- what internal capabilities are needed to use AI credibly in portfolio management
- how leaders should frame AI as a decision support tool rather than a decision maker

### 5. Scenario Mapping at Program Level

How program leaders identify key factors, stress-test assumptions, and translate portfolio-level uncertainty into executable project decisions

Peers compare how they translate high-level portfolio scenarios into concrete program-level planning — resourcing contingencies, go/no-go criteria per workstream, and how scenario outputs actually change what project teams do next week. Bridges the gap between portfolio strategy and project execution reality.

**Concetta Giuliani,** *Global Program Manager,* **Celex Oncology**

17:00 **Chairmans Closing Remarks – End of the Conference**

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