

Is Digitalisation the Key to Faster Drug Discovery?

R&D remains the fastest-growing area in pharma, advancing at annual rates above 8% worldwide. The adoption of automation, artificial intelligence and data-driven tools transforms laboratories, accelerates discovery and opens new pathways for innovation.

This technological leap takes the spotlight at the Pharmaceutical Automation and Digitalisation Congress, held on 24–25 November 2025 in Vösendorf, Austria. While the Congress covers the full spectrum of digital transformation, one dedicated session focuses on how technology reshapes R&D and laboratory operations.

Key contributions include:

- Helmut Stueber (Associate Partner, Automators GmbH) on SAP Business AI within S/4HANA environments with a focus on the importance of quality engineering and test automation;
- Dr. Ewa Gajewska (Head of Product Management, SYNTHIA™, Merck) on how SYNTHIA™ Retrosynthesis Software redefines molecule discovery through digital technologies;
- Elisa Pedone (Senior Research Scientist & Stem Cell Operations Lead, CellVoyant) on FateView, an AI platform that enables scalable manufacturing of stem cells by predicting and optimising differentiation;
- Erbin Lim (Engineering & Development Director, Pfizer) and Charis Keramidas (GenAI Tech Lead, Pfizer) on next-generation clinical trials, focusing on the role of generative AI and smart analytics in recruitment, feasibility and development;
- Jean-Noël Fehr (Senior Vice President, Partner, Helbling Technik AG) on closing the loop from R&D to manufacturing, accelerating innovation while ensuring compliance.

With technology as its driving theme, AUTOMA 2025 acts as a hub for exchange, debate and collaboration — illustrating how digitalisation is not only accelerating R&D but also redefining the future of pharma.