

59th Annual General Meeting of the P-D-R 2017

The Pharma Documentation Ring (P-D-R) held its 59th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Berlin, Germany, from the 26th – 29th of September, 2017. The P-D-R is an association whose members represent the information departments of the leading international R&D-based pharmaceutical corporations. The 26 member companies account for 60% of the total global turnover of ethical drugs (approximately \$500 billion); by far the majority of the top 20 global pharmaceutical companies are P-D-R members. 24 companies with a total of 38 delegates attended this year's meeting, which was hosted by Bayer.

The President of P-D-R, Andrew Clark's opening presentation started with an overview of the P-D-R activities over 2016/2017. An official welcome was extended to two new member companies who have joined the organization over the last 12 months, Vertex Pharmaceuticals and Astellas. The theme for this year's meeting was Big Data and the Information Professional, recognizing the fact that Information Leaders have a real opportunity to bring expertise to this space particularly on externally published information and enabling technologies.

Each company attending the annual meeting presented a company update on the evolution of information centers within the respective organizations, providing insight into both challenges and successes with regards to the provision and access of information services. Key trends that emerged surfaced the need to digitally transform and enhance content to make it computable, ensuring that content sets were both in the right format and had the relevant licensing terms associated with them. That there is a growing need to integrate both internal and external data to derive insights and a growing requirement to be able to federate across multiple content sets of many different types using multiple technologies including semantic enrichment, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Understanding how individuals interact with data in their personal lives started to stimulate thinking about strategies for the future, skills, and competencies that might be needed by information teams to meet these.

The P-D-R Topic groups presented throughout the three-day meeting on topics such as:

- “Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning”
- “Published Information Rights in a Complex Big Data World ”
- “Literature Support for Pharmacovigilance”
- “Extraction of Chemical Information”
- “The Use of Dashboards for Competitive Intelligence”
- “Bringing it all together: Learnings from project centralizing both internal and external sources of information”

The highlight of the meeting was a strategic session that focused on the role that information professionals can play in a big data world. Prof. Dr. Ulf Leser from Humboldt Universitat, Berlin was gave a key note speech titled “Biomedical Text Mining Meets Big Data”. After a short introduction and perspective on concepts of innovation in the industry, an interactive session enabled ideation practices to be embraced through crowd sourcing techniques with key takeaways that could potentially be integrated into the future strategies of corporate information centres. In a bootcamp, six start-ups and innovative initiatives could discuss their approach to innovation in the age of big data and present their products to the delegates.

The years 2018 and 2019 will see a P-D-R Board with Helen Malone as President, Andrew Clark and Anni-Barbara Endler-Jobst as Vice Presidents, and Matthias Staab as Secretary.

The meeting closed with Andrew Clark (UCB), President, thanking the members and the board for their active involvement during the year, The 60th Anniversary P-D-R meeting will be held in Vienna, Austria, from September 25th to 28th September, 2018 hosted by Boehringer Ingelheim.