

Press Release

BioRN Cluster Management GmbH



BioRN Annual Conference 2017 – Joint Forces for Future Innovations

During the [BioRN Annual Conference 2017](#) on October 24, titled “Revolution through Convolution - combining medtech, biotech and digital health to promote health science in our region”, about 120 participants came together from the BioRN Cluster and from the national and international life-science industry, among them representatives of the “[Health Axis Europe](#)” from Leuven and Maastricht. The conference accentuated the importance of the liaison of different technologies and strong collaborations to drive future innovation.



“As special guest of this year’s conference BioRN welcomed [Matthias Graf von Kielmansegg](#) (Federal Ministry of Education and Research, BMBF, Head of Directorate-General “Policy Issues; Strategy; Digital Transformation”). In his welcoming speech, Matthias Graf von Kielmansegg was highlighting the successes of BioRN as an innovative and internationally active Leading Edge Cluster that acts for the benefits of local employment and Germany’s competitiveness in innovation.”

The University of applied sciences, [Hochschule Mannheim](#), was hosting this year’s BioRN Annual Conference. [Prof. Leonhard](#), rector of the University, mentioned in his welcoming words how enriching and important BioRN is for its partner institutions like the Hochschule Mannheim, who has been a member since 1996. The Hochschule Mannheim gained important experiences in the topics of the conference agenda: biotech, medtech and digital health. One example is the innovation partnership [M²AIND](#) of the Hochschule, funded by the [FH impulse](#) programme.

Short Talks and Poster Presentations

This year’s annual conference offered diverse opportunities for members to increase their networking potential. In 3 min short talks and poster sessions the participating companies and research groups of the network could take the opportunity to introduce themselves. This new format of the conference underlined the major task of the BioRN cluster, promoting networking between the cluster members.

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Regional and International Partners of the BioRN Cluster

The focus of the BioRN Annual Conference 2017 did not dwell at the regional level, however; rather it centers on the collaboration potential at the regional and international level to promote the internationalization and competitive ability of top locations. Underlining the synergies and collaboration potential of regional clusters, the [Medical Technology Cluster Mannheim](#), represented by Dr. Elmar Bourdon, and the Cluster of [Individualized Immune Intervention \(Ci3\)](#) in Mainz, represented by Dr. André Rothermel, were introducing their projects and aims. The Ci3 Cluster took the opportunity to present the multi-national EU project [PERMIDES](#), a platform to promote collaborative projects between biopharmaceutical and IT companies. The successful PERMIDES project [AutoMax](#) was jointly presented by Dr. Vitor Vieira (Inova DE) and Dr. Joachim Moecks (bioMcon).

Dr. Julia Schaft from BioRN was giving an overview of “[Health Axis Europe \(HAE\)](#)”, a strategic alliance between the biomedical clusters Copenhagen, Heidelberg, Leuven and Maastricht. She then introduced the new common project, the [Health Axis Europe Partnering Platform](#), which enables facilitated technology transfer between academia and industry.

The innovative infrastructure of the HAE partner [Brightlands Maastricht Cluster](#) with its expertise in regenerative medicine, cardiovascular research and biomedical imaging technologies was introduced by Nico Stam. Michael De Blauwe, from the HAE partner [Leuven](#), was presenting the impressive successes of the KU Leuven R&D ecosystem with a solution for very efficient transfer of knowledge.

Revolution through Convolution of Biotech, Medtech and Digital Health

The conference talks were a sweep of the different technologies and stakeholders in this field. Prof. Carsten Hopf and Prof. Rüdiger Rudolf from the Hochschule Mannheim were giving an overview of the innovation partnership M2AIND and its project M2OGA – solutions and digitalization in human organoid technology and tissue analytics. As member of the BioRN Cluster and the Medical Technology Cluster Mannheim Dr. Lluís Quintana from [Viscofan Bioengineering](#) was presenting the company development from a casing to a biomedical producer. Dr. Gitte Neubauer from Cellzome- a [GSK](#) company was highlighting the strong and successful [collaboration on metabolomics and genomics](#) between the [European Molecular Laboratories \(EMBL\)](#) and GSK. [The technology transfer of the DKFZ](#) was the first technology transfer office in Heidelberg, celebrating its 20 years anniversary this year. Dr. Ruth Herzog was giving an overview of pearls and pitfalls of the DKFZ technology transfer. Dr. Wulf Fischer-Knuppertz from [BIOCRATES Life Sciences AG](#) gave insights into the potential of metabolomics as future routine *in vitro* diagnostics tool.

Dr. Clemens Suter-Crazzolaro was invited as speaker from [SAP](#), the strong regional representative of digital technologies. In his talk he illustrated the digital revolution in health including patient involvement and big data analysis as patients expect future medical decisions to be tailored to their specific needs.

Young startups impress with their innovations in short pitches

At the end of the conference the four young startup companies [Phagomed](#), [Lumobiotics](#), [300 Microns](#) and [LIME Medical](#) were pitching their innovations of phage therapy, photo-switchable drug molecules, 3D cell culture platform technology and finger rehabilitation robot. The startup Lumobiotics is also one of the winners of the recent international biotech semifinal during this year’s [European Health Catapult 2017](#) competition, which is a collaborative programme between EIT Health and the Health Axis Europe.

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Closing remarks

In his closing words, Dr. Friedrich Richter, managing director of the BioRN Cluster, was deeply impressed by the multifaceted pool of innovative companies and researchers in the cluster.

BioRN hopes that the conference contributed to many future collaborations and fruitful follow-up discussions. Further information about the BioRN Annual Conference 2017 can be found on the [BioRN Website](#). A Video about the conference can be watched [here](#).

About the BioRN Cluster Management:

The BioRN Cluster Management GmbH is a public-private partnership between the BioRN Network, the Heidelberg Technology Park, the Rhine-Neckar Chamber of Commerce and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region (MRN). The cluster includes renowned academic research institutions such as the University of Heidelberg, the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), about 70 small and medium-sized biotech enterprises, as well as big pharmaceutical and diagnostic companies such as AbbVie, Boehringer Ingelheim, Janssen/Johnson&Johnson, Merck, Roche Diagnostics and Sanofi.

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