



Back to Growth:

Innovative Life Sciences for a Competitive Europe
Brussels, 10-11 June 2025



Europe's life sciences sector has been a beacon of remarkable progress, innovation and growth. But in recent years, it has been losing ground to competitors in places like the United States and China. That's why **boosting the competitiveness** of strategic industries such as the **life sciences** has become a central policy goal for the EU Commission.

EU policymakers and business leaders face a number of key challenges: How can **Europe strengthen its economy** without jeopardizing the transition to a more sustainable future? How can the EU close its productivity and innovation gap with other regions while continuing to advance its climate and environmental goals? And how can it **boost domestic industries in health and agriculture** while keeping food and health care products affordable to European consumers?

We believe the **answer** lies in rapid technological and scientific **innovation**, supported by **smart policies** that promote more **sustainability-enhancing tools, breakthrough healthcare and agriculture solutions, and greater productivity**. So, what could that future look like? What do we mean by 'innovation' and how can it help reach the EU's long-term goals?

Find out at our exclusive event in Brussels where we will bring the farm to the city and the lab to the showroom. Meet leaders from EU politics, business and civil society and see for yourself how AI- and tech-driven innovations are revolutionizing European agriculture and health – for the benefit of European farmers, consumers, patients, and society.

AGENDA JUNE 10:

- // **12:00 - 12:30: Registration (open during the entire event)**
- // **12:30 - 13:30: Welcome Lunch**
- // **13:30 - 13:35: Regenerating Growth: The Future of Agriculture is Now – and It Is Competitive!**
Jens Hartmann, Bayer Crops Science EMEA
- // **13:35 - 13:50: Building Competitiveness: The Geopolitical Need for Innovative Agriculture**
Prof. Jonathan Holslag

Jonathan Holslag (born June 1981) is a Belgian professor of international politics at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, renowned for his expertise in global power dynamics. He has authored several influential books, including *A Political History of the World*, and has advised European policymakers while lecturing at institutions such as Harvard and Sciences Po. In 2024, Holslag entered politics and was elected mayor of Tienen, a city known as Belgium's "sugar capital" due to its central role in sugar production. As mayor, he is responsible for agriculture, bringing his strategic vision to local governance while continuing to champion realism in international affairs.

- // **13:50 - 14:35: This is what Farming needs! The European Farmers' Voice**
Farmers' Panel: A Call for Innovation & Technology
 - Petra Bohnsack, DE
 - Daniele Dalle Palle, Azienda Agricola San Giovanni, IT
 - George Mailat, RO
 - Willem Derynck of Groene Kring (Young Farmers), BE

 *Health for all,
Hunger for none*



// Parallel Sessions:

// 14:45 - 16:00: Innovation Showcase: Opening the Farm Gate

Introduction by Frank Terhorst, Bayer, followed by guided tours in the Garden of the Museum through the Integrated Crop Management exhibition.

// 15:00 - 16:00 Unlocking Excellence: Accelerating Pharmaceutical R&D and Innovation

Parallel Session in the VIP Room:

Ensuring the resilience and competitiveness of the innovative pharmaceutical sector in Europe amidst geopolitical challenges:

- Christine Roth, Bayer Pharmaceuticals
- Dr. Christian Rommel, Bayer Pharmaceuticals
- Lothar Roessig, AskBio
- Dr. Sangeeta Jethwa, Bayer Pharmaceuticals

// 16:00 - 16:30: Coffee Break

// Paralell Sessions:

// 16:30 - 16:45: Rooting Ideas in Science

Dr. Simon Maechling, Bayer

A Scientist's Reflection on the Farmers' Toolbox - Simon Maechling is an Innovation Manager at Bayer Crop Science. Driven by a passion for science, innovation, and agriculture, he builds strategic R&D partnerships around the world to accelerate impactful solutions.

// 16:30 - 17:50: Digital Health: Accelerating Digital Therapeutics & Policy Improvements

Parallel Session in the VIP Room: Panel Discussion

- Felix Kohler, HiDoc Technology
- Stephane Thorlander, Agora Health
- Dr. Lars Lomberg
- Tomislav Sokol, MEP

// 16:50 - 17:45: From Vision to Action: Moving to a more resilient and competitive agriculture

A panel discussion about ambition, potentials, and challenges in European farming

- Karin Guendel, Bayer
- Paul Temple, Global Farmer Network
- Tessa Avermaete, Run & Harvest
- Richard Zaltzman, EIT Food

// 17:50 - 18:00: Closing Remarks

Matthias Berninger, Bayer

// 18:00 - 21:00: Reception hosted by Bill Anderson, CEO Bayer AG

END DAY 1



AGENDA JUNE 11:

// **09:00 - 09:30: Registration**

// **09:30 - 09:50: Introduction & Opening Remarks**

Welcome by moderator Jacki Davis & Opening Remarks by Bill Anderson, CEO, Bayer AG

// **09:50 - 10:10: Keynote Speech**

Erika Staël von Holstein, Re-Imagine Europa

Erika Staël von Holstein is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive of Re-Imagine Europa (RIE). She has over two decades of experience in bridging science, technology, society, and policy, with a focus on societal transformation and the impact of narratives on shaping our world.

// **10:10 - 10:40: Fireside Chat**

Bill Anderson, CEO Bayer AG and Erika Staël von Holstein, Re-Imagine Europa

// **10:40 - 11:10: Coffee Break**

// **11:10 - 11:20: Enabling the Future of Biotechnology in Europe**

Video Documentary Premiere

// **11:20 - 11:50: Your Cells, Your Cure**

Marinna Madrid, Co-Founder Cellino

Marinna is a co-founder and Chief Product Officer at Cellino, a venture capital-backed biotech company building a biomanufacturing platform to scale production of personalized induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC)-based therapies. She received her PhD and MA in Applied Physics from Harvard University, where she co-invented laser-based intracellular delivery techniques. She received her BSc in Biophysics from University of California, Los Angeles, after transferring from Riverside Community College. She is the recipient of the Harvard Graduate Prize Fellowship, the Catalyst Accelerator Grant from Harvard Medical School, and is on the Forbes 30 Under 30 2019 list for Healthcare. She has several patents, peer-reviewed publications, and wrote the first review paper on autologous iPSC-based cell therapies. She is also passionate about access to education and the role the community college system plays in providing upward mobility for historically disadvantaged groups.

// **11:50 - 12:50: Europe's Next Breakthroughs: Unlocking Life Sciences Innovation**

A panel discussion:

- André Guillaume, Leaps by Bayer
- Prof. Dr. Dirk Inzé, VIB-UGent
- Dr.Dmitrij Hristodorov, Forbion

// **12:50 - 13:00: Closing**

// **13:00 - 14:00: Networking Lunch**

END DAY 2