

APCONIX

a better decision

January 2018

Happy New Year to all our friends and colleagues! Our second full year of trading was an exciting and eventful one as we grew to 16 staff and associates, continued to expand our client list (now including our first company in India), won our first business award, and most importantly, helped 4 of our clients to achieve successful regulatory approval to begin clinical trials.

Here are a few of our 2017 highlights:

People

ApconiX welcomed 3 new colleagues in 2017 - Marie Cumberbatch, Rob Wallis and Karen Jones. Marie is an immunologist with over 30 years expertise in oncology and immune-oncology biomarkers. Rob is a veteran Safety Pharmacologist having spent 30+ years at Pfizer and has a worldwide reputation in drug-induced QT prolongation and non-clinical cardiovascular safety.

Karen Jones joined ApconiX in December as Senior Scientist following a successful career at AZ, culminating in a recent Nature publication. Karen's skills will help to drive continued growth in our ion channel laboratory capability. Lab throughput doubled in 2017, with a tailored service that delivered >80% of hERG screening data to clients in under one week (we'll share more of that story later in the year).



Marie, Rob, Karen



In July we said farewell to our placement student from the University of Manchester, Lauren Eades. Her project was to compare and evaluate the utility and comparability of human stem-cell derived cardiomyocytes for ion channel profiling. Lauren's work was presented in a poster at the Safety Pharmacology Society in Berlin. Lauren was a big part of our first year and we wish her lots of success in her future career.

Alliances and Business Development



An opportunity arose early in the year leading to an exciting new alliance with PhysioStim of France (www.physioestim.com). With a GLP facility, a range of sophisticated cardiovascular assays and many years of drug safety experience, PhysioStim's expertise is a perfect complement for our capabilities at Apconix. Together we now provide a European Centre of Excellence for cardiac safety testing. We launched this new alliance with Marie LeGrand and Richard Printemps from PhysioStim (pictured) with a joint booth at the Safety Pharmacology Society Annual Congress in Berlin.

<http://www.drugdiscoverytoday.com/view/46385/new-drug-discovery-alliance-to-tackle-high-rate-of-failure-in-drug-development/>

Another major development was entering an agreement to provide toxicology and ion channel profiling services to Nottingham-based Sygnature Discovery. These are the type of mutually beneficial alliances we hope to build over the coming years.

Throughout the year, the growth of our client list continued to exceed expectations, with turnover increasing almost 5-fold on 2016. We are now working with more than 60 biotech companies, pharma, universities, research institutes, charities and government agencies. Apconix clients are located all across the world, and we were delighted to begin working with our first client in India - Bugworks Research Inc - who are developing novel antibiotics.



Website and branding

After a lot of hard work and planning, 2017 saw the launch of our new branding, logo and website www.apconix.com. We think the website and exhibition stand look fantastic and both have received great feedback. Many thanks for the hard work that went into them by Cynara Livera from CST Marketing Management and all at ZoolDigital (<https://zooldigital.co.uk/>).

The new website reflects our focus on 5 main areas: ion channel screening, provision of drug project toxicology, due diligence, toxicology specialists and target safety assessments (TSAs). The demand for TSAs has grown markedly over the year, reflecting an increasing awareness in the industry that understanding the normal biological role of a target is key to building an early picture of potential safety risks.

Publications

Two papers authored by Apconix were publicly recognised in 2017. Jane Stewart and others published a paper in TIRS that was named the DIAs most accessed/downloaded journal article of 2016 for 'Birth Control in Clinical trials' Ther Innov Regul Sci. Mar; 50(2):155-168. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4766962/>

A paper authored by Ruth and others entitled 'Translational Biomarkers of Neurotoxicity' was named one of the top 10% most downloaded articles in Toxicological Sciences. Toxicol Sci. Dec;148(2):332-40. <https://academic.oup.com/toxsci/article/148/2/332/2461479>

Our successful collaboration with FDA NCTR also led to papers on computational drug repositioning for rare diseases (Delevan et al., Drug Discovery Today, In press), lessons learned from 2 decades of anticancer drugs (Liu et al, TiPS 38, 852-872, 2017) and the use of a liver toxicology knowledge base (LTKB) to classify drug induced liver injury (Thakkar et al. Exp Rev Gastroenterol and Hepatol, 12, 31-38, 2017.)

Claire wrote a chapter on mechanisms leading to carcinogenesis for the book 'Comprehensive Toxicology 3rd Ed' for Elsevier press, now available on Amazon!

And finally...

A major highlight on which to end the year was to receive the Bionow 'Start-up Company of the Year 2017' award. It was great recognition of our efforts to date and a huge thank you to all our staff and associates for making this happen. We were delighted to accept the award at the Bionow annual awards dinner, with many of our clients and supporters in attendance.



This year we will continue to attend key conferences including the SOT annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas (in March), the BTS annual congress in Newcastle (in April), Teratology Society in Clearwater, Florida (in June), EUROTOX in Brussels and the European Teratology Society in Berlin (both September). We hope to see many of you there.

Best wishes for a happy and successful 2018 from Rich, Ruth, Mike

Handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is 'Rich', the second is 'Ruth', and the third is 'Mike'.

and from the rest of the team (Jane Stewart, Claire Sadler, Damian Deavall, Guy Healing, Paul Duffy, Nigel Barrass, Mike O'Donovan, Pete Ballard, Julie Knight, Jane Barber, Marie Cumberbatch, Rob Wallis, Karen Jones)

For more information please contact hello@apconix.com or visit www.apconix.com