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# Why has AI not delivered on its ambitious promise in drug discovery?

This was the provocative opening posed by Professor Graham Ball during the AI Science Spotlight at BioTrinity in London last week—a question that cut to the heart of today's drug discovery challenges.

Despite a surge of innovation, few AI-derived drug candidates have successfully advanced beyond Phase II clinical trials. Investor confidence is falling, and several high-profile biotech AI firms are pivoting or merging to stay afloat. Trust, clearly, is lagging behind the hype.

Yet Professor Ball did not pose this question without offering a solution. Instead, he unveiled a practical and technically sophisticated strategy to address one of the industry's core inefficiencies: **fragmentation across the drug development pipeline**.



Professor Graham Ball, CSO Intellomx, speaking at BioTrinity, Apr 2025

"Al needs to be linked across the entire pipeline—from target identification through to clinical trials. Automating development with the latest tools means little if you start with the wrong target. And great targets, identified in isolation, often fail when handed off to disconnected downstream processes," Ball noted.

Intellomx, the company he founded, is solving this by integrating its proprietary I<sup>3</sup> platform—renowned for high-precision target identification—with cutting-edge in silico drug development tools and predictive toxicology. The goal: a unified, risk-mitigated platform that carries novel targets from discovery through to virtual clinical trial readiness.

### A Joined-Up Solution for Drug Discovery

The I<sup>3</sup> platform remains central to Intellomx's capabilities, but the integration of **virtual docking**, **pharmacophore analysis**, **physiological state comparison**, and **druggability assessment** represents a significant evolution. Early-stage false positives can now be filtered out with far greater precision, and the system prioritises targets that are both biologically relevant and technically tractable.

"We've already seen this in action," Ball said. "In a recent lung cancer case study, we used I<sup>3</sup> to identify targets in the RAS cascade and validated several through cell-based assays. But with our enhanced pipeline, we can now retrospectively assess off-target toxicity liabilities that weren't apparent before. This gives us confidence to back top-tier targets and avoid costly late-stage failures."



The I<sup>3</sup> platform has long been known for its precision in identifying novel drug targets. Now it's been integrated with powerful downstream automation:

- novel target ID via disease pathway identification and systems biology
- In silico hit identification & optimisation via virtual docking
- ☑ Comparative analyses across physiological states
- ✓ Predictive druggability & off-target toxicity filters
- And soon: virtual clinical trials using Digital Twins

With a **Digital Twin platform** also nearing launch, Intellomx is positioning itself to deliver **virtual clinical trials** within the next 12 months—an ambitious yet credible move given the progress to date.

### In praise of BioTrinity

Professor Ball is extremely complimentary about the access to decision makers provided by the BioTrinity conference. The AI Science Spotlight session was chaired by Philip Simister, Head of Science at OBN, with presentations from Arctoris, Etcembly, IMU Biosciences, Ignota Labs and LabGenius alongside Professor Ball of Intellomx, with the audience enjoying a Keynote from Microsoft's eminently likeable CCIO Mr Umang Patel to kick-off the session. Alongside his Microsoft role, Umang still delivers paediatric clinics one day per week, giving him a unique insight into tech's view of downstream AI and the practical efficiencies that Microsoft might bring to the day-to-day challenges in healthcare.

## **Partnering Opportunity**

Intellomx is now seeking strategic collaborations to deploy its end-to-end, risk-mitigated drug discovery platform. Whether through **fee-for-service engagements** or **out-licensing** of pre-validated assets in oncology, infectious diseases, or autoimmune conditions, there is clear potential for high-value partnerships.

If your organisation is exploring how to reduce risk in early-stage R&D, streamline target validation, integrate AI more effectively across your pipeline or simply seeks a validated target for a particular disease area then you are strongly encouraged to reach out to Professor Ball. The conversation may shape the next generation of AI-enabled therapeutics.

To explore partnership opportunities or learn more about the Intellomx's platform, contact <a href="mailto:simon.haworth@intellomx.com">simon.haworth@intellomx.com</a> <a href="mailto:graham.ball@intellomx.com">graham.ball@intellomx.com</a> <a href="mailto:www.intellomx.com">www.intellomx.com</a>



# **About BioTrinity**

<u>BioTrinity</u>, <u>OBN's</u> flagship two-day conference for the life sciences industry, is designed to catalyse growth for all who attend. The two-day conference features scientific showcase presentations from R&D companies at around the Series A stage, a packed business & investment track, targeted drop-in sessions, satellite sessions, sponsors exhibition, networking events, private partnering meetings and an entrepreneurial academic poster presentation.

BioTrinity is attended by an ever-evolving audience of c.850 delegates, comprising a mix of early stage and emerging life sciences R&D companies, investors, big pharma, academics, charities, government, and a broad range of valued service providers. Delegates attend from the UK, Europe the U.S, Japan, China, Australia and beyond.

### www.biotrinity.com

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# About Intellomx

Intellomx (Intelligent OMICS Ltd) is an international Artificial Intelligence company with a twin-track business model: providing fee-for-service work for global pharma companies, as well as undertaking in-house research using the company's proprietary I<sup>3</sup> platform. Intellomx operates from headquarters in Cambridge UK and via outposts on the West Coast and in Asia. Originally a spinout from the J van Geest Cancer Centre in Nottingham, around 50% of the company's projects are dedicated to oncology however the platform has now been applied and validated successfully across a wide set of diseases such as auto-immune disease and infectious diseases - as well as in plant science.

Intellomx I<sup>3</sup> tools answer questions across the drug discovery and development cycle:



The company is currently seeking partners for assets in ALS, tuberculosis and lung cancer as well as pharma collaborators for fee-for-service projects.

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