Application of Thierry Marchal for the position of Secretary General of The Avicenna Alliance, Mandate 2024 – 2026

Thierry Marchal in a few words

Thierry has been active in the simulation community since January 1991 when he joined Ansys; he is the Program Director for Healthcare Solutions since October 2006, Chief Technologist Healthcare for EMEA at Ansys and co-chair the Ansys Sustainability Initiative where he brings a healthcare flavor. Closely working with academic and industry leaders, Thierry has developed, and started to implement in collaboration with his colleagues and partners, a vision of personalized healthcare, *in silico* (clinical) trials and Personal Digital Avatar. He is a founding member of the Avicenna Alliance for which he has been the Treasurer (2016 – 2018) then Secretary General since January 2018. He is also participating to the European Commission eHealth Stakeholder group, the EMA stakeholder group and has been an observer of IMDRF. Thierry is a member of numerous Industry Advisory Board and is the (co-)author of more than 120 publications and communications, not mentioning his very active presence on social media and media.

Motivation for the position

Since January 2018, the Avicenna Alliance has changed a lot: our finances are now sound; the number of members has grown steadily; our influence on the policy, academic and industry landscape is becoming obvious and recognized by many (authorities are now asking for our review of their texts referring to *in silico* methods). We have recently added an application working group to ensure that our activities are concretely impacting the Patients and the industry; we have also carefully increased the number of Task Forces generating fantastic value with a real impact on healthcare (both patients, regulators, academia and industry); we have also formalized and professionalized many of our activities (especially on the communication and marketing side (new website, News Letter, Avicenna Days, webinars, social media activities, Avicenna Days, etc.)) and our structures. Yet, we still need to improve a lot.

I'm excited to exploit the network that we have built with the authorities (starting our broadcast from the European Parliament December 5th), the regulators (recently at IMDRF), the academic communities (in close collaboration with VPHi) and the industry actors, from start ups to large international groups, to ensure that *in silico* methods are not just being known but also widely adopted and regulated. Being author or co-author of numerous articles, my name is getting recognized and trusted to provide meaningful advice and guidance; being part of many meetings, events or webinars / presentations, I have the privilege to be positively associated to the Avicenna Alliance to provide enthusiasm, strong, result driven but open leadership.

Suggested Plan for the Mandate

Despite some great progresses accomplished during the last few years, there are still numerous goals that we need to achieve during the next 3 years. Let me mention 6 priorities.

1. *In silico* concepts are gaining more awareness and recognition, and we are spreading the concepts of *in silico*, digital evidence and digital (or virtual) twin in many official texts. While we will still be pushing the visibility of the Avicenna Alliance, it is becoming essential that we further amplify our focus on a **large scale and concrete adoption of *in silico* methods** especially for regulatory approval. This should be achieved through the progress of the *in silico* application working group where I am leading the *In silico* liability Task Force.

   A priority will be to engage with and connect to all the stakeholders to ensure that digital evidence is accepted especially, but not exclusively, in Europe, and that formal and agreed processes to generate digital evidence are defined, regulated and progressively published, paving the way for *in silico* trials. The recent IMDRF meeting revealed that if *in silico* methods are known by many this is still far to be a priority topic for regulators.

2. As we observe a growing interest and demand for *in silico* trials and digital twins; it will be crucial to better **integrate the exceptional work of academic researchers** and professors to benefit from their experience and guidance while giving more industrial, regulatory and global visibility to their achievements. Tightening the collaboration with VPHi and continuing our engagement with EDITH will be essential.

   We will continue the academic presentations during the monthly webinars and encourage formal collaborations with our industry members: we will encourage concrete follow up actions including one on one discussions and actively pushing EU funded projects between members of the Alliance. The industry members will be encouraged to suggest their academic collaborators to join VPHi to further increase this ecosystem.

3. If we have seen a growing engagement with policy makers especially in Europe and more recently Brazil, within the International Working Group. We need to guide closely RPP **to engage more and more systematically with policy makers and regulators in Europe and the rest of the world** in collaboration with the Policy Development and the International Working Groups. A concrete achievement will start with the in silico broadcast from the EU Parliament, starting on December 5th

   We need to create, maintain and grow a Who's Who list of key regulators and policy makers and ensure that we regularly communicate progress with them. Collaborating with RPP and all our members; we need to engage with key policy decision makers, leveraging 2024 elections. We should also consider their national interest (national companies / academic organizations) through the UK in silico and Biomed in silico France initiatives; this translates into working closely with countries leading EU.

4. Our new membership fee has driven many startups towards the Alliance. We need to continue **adding more members and partners** to the Avicenna Alliance: we need more industry members for funding our key projects and provide the resources to drive them; we need more **active** academic members from VPHi to ensure the scientific leadership and acknowledged experts to initiate and amplify our projects; we need more partners to guide our activities to fulfil our mission and, when appropriate, boost our influential visibility.

   To add more weight and finance, we will identify a contact person in the top 10 pharma and top 10 medical device companies with the goal that they will eventually join the Alliance; it will also

be essential to engage with more PKPD and molecular software vendors. Through new marketing materials and external webinars, we will promote our start up membership to welcome fast growing members. Finally, the non-paying partners will be playing a key role. It will be important to welcome agencies such as EMA as well as trade organizations (medtec, pharma but also patients organizations). Our various Task Forces will be central to this activity.

5. In the near future, it will be important to push *in silico* medicine far beyond regulatory approval activities to engage with **clinicians**, towards a large scale deployment of *in silico* methods in the hospitals, and **insurers and payers** who have net yet fully acknowledged the power of in silico approaches. Some Task Forces such as Patient and Public Involvement and Clinical Application are already working in this direction; more executive engagements will be useful to amplify their impact.

6. In collaboration with the Office Manager, Roberta Maggi, and the Treasurer, we need to continue to **better structure our organization and processes**. A special focus will be made on membership payments and agreement. Also, as the number of activities and meetings (Working Groups / Task Forces) are increasing, it will be important to better coordinate them, avoid some duplication of work and favor communication.

   If we will further optimize the rapid payment of memberships, our primary focus should be adding members. We will continue to formalize guidance without over constraining our activities: recommended processes will be preferred to enforced rules to create or define task forces, establish budget, etc.; maintaining and developing our web and various communication activities (including newsletter, internal and external webinars, media and social media) will remain a priority: with the growing experience of our Office Manager, we will ensure a growing and continuous presence outside the Alliance.