

## CUSTOMER STORY

# A Decade of Partnership Driving Scale, Savings & Speed in Global R&D

### Executive Summary

A top 10 global biopharmaceutical company — headquartered in the United Kingdom, with R&D operations spanning 30+ sites across four continents and four core therapeutic areas (respiratory, immunology & inflammation, oncology, HIV, and infectious diseases) — has partnered with Science Exchange since 2015. Over more than a decade, that relationship has evolved from an initial procurement pilot into the foundational infrastructure through which the company sources, contracts, and manages external R&D across its global footprint.

What began as an investment in procurement efficiency has matured into a more strategic operating capability: a unified layer that connects researchers, suppliers, and procurement through a consistent system of execution. Today, that foundation is extending further through a joint Savings Initiative that positions Science Exchange not only as the infrastructure layer for external R&D, but as an active partner in delivering measurable cost discipline.

Most recently, the company's Savings Initiative — a dedicated joint program operated with Science Exchange — delivered a 10% supplier discount the company had previously been unable to secure through years of direct negotiation. The outcome underscores the platform's evolution from a passive transaction layer into a strategic procurement partner with the ability to influence measurable business value.



✓ **\$ 100M+**  
in R&D spend orchestrated  
since 2015

✓ **295**  
unique suppliers  
under one master agreement

✓ **~6x**  
order volume growth  
from 2022 to 2025

✓ **445**  
researchers and procurement users  
globally

## THE CHALLENGE

### Scaling External R&D Without Losing Control of Cost and Complexity

The company's R&D investment has grown approximately 90% since 2016, with a pipeline now spanning more than 60 assets in clinical development. As scientific ambition increased, so did the organization's reliance on external partners across its global research ecosystem. The mechanisms used to engage external science were not designed to scale at the same pace — supplier engagement, negotiation, and execution were inherently decentralized across sites, teams, and therapeutic areas.

#### **Global Scale, Distributed Ownership**

R&D operations across 30+ sites in the UK, US, EU, India, Asia-Pacific, and Canada meant supplier relationships, negotiations, and engagement standards lived in many places at once.

#### **Untapped Enterprise Leverage**

When research teams negotiate independently with specialty suppliers, the company cannot fully apply the purchasing power of the broader enterprise. Discounts achievable at global scale remain inaccessible at the engagement level.

#### **Pressure to Move From Reactive to Proactive**

Procurement leadership sought to evolve from a reactive cost-tracking function into a proactive cost-discipline partner — quantifying value and demonstrating measurable return on external R&D.

#### **Rising External Spend**

External research spend expanded alongside pipeline growth. Without a centralized layer, procurement had limited visibility into supplier concentration, duplicated engagements, and pricing inconsistencies.

## THE SOLUTION

### From Infrastructure to Strategic Procurement Partnership

The company's relationship with Science Exchange has unfolded in two distinct but connected phases. The first phase established Science Exchange as the infrastructure layer for sourcing, contracting, and managing external scientific services. The second phase built on that foundation with an explicit savings program designed to convert platform activity into measurable cost outcomes.

#### **Phase One (2015–2024): Establishing the Infrastructure Layer**

Over the first decade of partnership, Science Exchange became the unified front door for external R&D sourcing across the company's global research footprint — replacing fragmented, site-specific workflows with a standardized experience supported by unified compliance, contracting, and payment infrastructure.

#### **Phase Two (2025–Present): Activating Cost Discipline at Scale**

In 2025, the partnership entered a new phase with the launch of a dedicated Savings Initiative. Through this joint program, a Science Exchange-led team takes an active role in supplier-level cost negotiation on behalf of the company's research teams, with measurable savings commitments and shared performance incentives.

### One global platform for external R&D

A single, consistent interface used by 445 active researchers and procurement users across 30+ sites globally — for sourcing, scoping, contracting, milestone tracking, and payment.

### Active supplier negotiation as a service

A dedicated team identifies supplier-level savings opportunities, negotiates on the company's behalf, and tracks realized savings against defined annual targets

### Curated supplier network under one agreement

295 actively engaged suppliers operate under a single master agreement, giving researchers fast access to specialized capability while reducing per-engagement contracting burden.

### Native integration with enterprise systems

Science Exchange integrates with the company's procurement, content management, and analytics infrastructure — including SharePoint, ELN, Ariba, and Power BI.

## THE SOLUTION

### Compounding Adoption, Expanding Scale, and Early Proof of Savings

The trajectory of the partnership reflects a compounding model of value creation. More teams, sites, and use cases have converged onto a single platform — transforming Science Exchange from an optional tool into the default mechanism for engaging external R&D across the organization.

Annual external R&D spend orchestrated through the platform grew in parallel — from approximately \$5.5M in 2022 to nearly \$19M in 2025, with cumulative spend now exceeding \$100M.

### Active savings: a new dimension of value

The Savings Initiative is still in its early innings, but the first year has already produced a meaningful proof point: a 10% supplier discount negotiated by the Science Exchange team on behalf of the company's research operations. The supplier in question had been a target for direct discount negotiation by the company's own procurement team for some time — without success.

A discount the company had pursued directly without success was secured through a Science Exchange-led negotiation — establishing a new model for how enterprise R&D customers can capture savings at scale through their procurement platform.

## A LASTING PARTNERSHIP

### Why This Model Sustains and Scales Over Time

The durability of this relationship reflects a set of underlying principles that align closely with how global R&D organizations actually operate.

**Respect the operating reality of a global enterprise.** The company's R&D footprint spans dozens of sites across four continents. Science Exchange was deployed in a way that mirrored that distributed structure — site by site and team by team — rather than forcing a one-size-fits-all rollout.

**Integrate with the systems already in place.** Science Exchange operates inside the company's existing enterprise stack — including SharePoint, ELN, Ariba, Power BI, and the broader procurement and finance toolset.

**Evolve as customer priorities evolve.** The first phase of the partnership focused on establishing the infrastructure layer. The second phase emerged as procurement leadership shifted its focus from visibility to measurable cost discipline.

**Align around measurable outcomes.** The Savings Initiative is structured with shared performance targets and incentives, meaning Science Exchange has a direct stake in delivering savings outcomes — not simply maintaining platform availability.

### What This Means for Other Global R&D Organizations

**Procurement infrastructure is a long-term investment, not a one-time deployment.** The compounding value of an external R&D platform is realized over years — but the trajectory matters from day one.

**Distributed R&D footprints need infrastructure that respects local autonomy.** Site-by-site rollouts that mirror real operating structures drive the adoption required for value to compound across the enterprise.

**The next frontier is active savings, not just visibility.** Procurement leaders are increasingly moving beyond reporting toward shared, quantifiable savings outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

### The Operating Layer Behind Modern R&D Execution

For this top 10 global biopharmaceutical company, Science Exchange has become more than a procurement platform. Over more than a decade, it has evolved into the operating layer through which external R&D is executed — connecting researchers, suppliers, and procurement in a single system that supports both scale and control. The introduction of active savings marks the next phase: as R&D investment continues to rise, organizations are no longer looking solely for visibility into external spend — they are looking for mechanisms that directly shape outcomes.

See what Science Exchange can do for your global R&D portfolio.

One platform to source, contract, govern, and pay external scientific partners — integrated with the enterprise systems you already run on, with the option to add active savings programs on top.

[Request a demo](#)