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| Press Release |

**Premiere of *smartLAB connects* – New digital event to serve as substitute for LABVOLUTION this year**

- Attractive conference program

- Core topics: Digitization, sustainability and the pandemic

- smartLAB declared an integral part­ of LABVOLUTION

**Hannover, Germany.** Running over two days from 7 to 8 September, the first-ever *smartLAB connects*, a digital conference supporting the LABVOLUTION trade fair, will substitute as a “digital layover” for this European showcase for innovative laboratory equipment and optimization of laboratory workflows. This new development is due to the pandemic, which has made it impossible to host the Hannover-based trade fair as an onsite event this year.

Featuring an attractive conference program, big-name speakers and experts from the world of laboratory technology, *smartLAB connects* will be broadcast online on both days of the event from the streaming studios of the Media Factory at the Hannover Exhibition Center. As with LABVOLUTION, the content will focus on the topics of digitization, sustainability and the pandemic. In three parallel live streams, interested parties from all areas and functions of the laboratory industry can inform themselves in digital forums and workshops or via product information, as presented by the participating companies and institutions.

“With our *smartLAB connects* event, we are providing a first-time digital conference platform for the laboratory industry, and have developed a high-quality, informative program surrounding the brand core of LABVOLUTION, featuring attractive participation opportunities for interested companies,” reports Dr. Jochen Köckler, Chairman of the Managing Board of Deutsche Messe.

Bernd Heinold, Project Manager for LABVOLUTION/smartLAB connects at Deutsche Messe adds: “In direct exchange with the market, we came to the conclusion that another digital trade show for the laboratory industry would be without added value. We put this feedback at the center of our considerations when developing *smartLAB connects*, and incorporated it into our further product development. The differentiation from a digital trade show is also underlined by the new label ‘*smartLAB connects’*. But of course, the thematic and content-related proximity to LABVOLUTION remains.”

As a focal point of LABVOLUTION since 2015, smartLAB is also an integral part of the digital conference in September. “Together with our long-standing partner, the Institute of Technical Chemistry at Leibniz University of Hannover, we are currently developing a program that focuses on aspects of the development, production and logistics involving active ingredients and vaccines,” explains Heinold. “In September, we can already look back on one and a half years of the pandemic. At *smartLAB connects*, we will discuss lessons of the pandemic so that we can derive fields of action for the future,” he added.

This year, smartLAB will also host the conference part of the AnalytikTag (Analysis Day) of the Institute of Energy and Environmental Technology (IUTA). “The AnalytikTag regularly takes place every year in November in Duisburg. This year unfortunately, it is not possible to organize this format at our institute. We are therefore delighted to be able to bring part of the program to *smartLAB connects*,” declared Dr. Thorsten Teutenberg, department manager at IUTA.

The new initiative link\_the\_lab, which aims to support exchange and knowledge transfer within the laboratory industry and is focused on communication standards and data formats in the laboratory, will also be integrated into the *smartLAB connects* conference program. As part of a live stream, a digital laboratory assistant will be presented which can already safely support workflows in the laboratory on the basis of connected devices.

Biotechnology and the life sciences have become the focus of public interest in the last one and a half years and they also enjoy a high priority at *smartLAB connects*. This is substantiated by the topic of genome editing, in which the possibilities for overcoming future challenges in the context of plant breeding are illustrated and discussed on the basis of concrete projects – as well as by the renewed staging of a scientific symposium, organized by BIOspektrum and the Association for General and Applied Microbiology (VAAM), the German Toxicology Society (GT) and the German Genetics Society (GfG). The focus will be on current approaches to vaccines and the use of artificial intelligence in pandemics. Departing from a scientific point of view, the conference will also focus on the topic of sustainability.

Another highlight of *smartLAB connects* is the Sustainability Day, which will take place for the first time in cooperation with NIUB Sustainability Consulting. Three sessions will focus on the topics of plastics in the laboratory, sustainability in scientific enterprise as well as sustainability at life science companies and the question of what contribution can be made in the laboratory so that future generations can live as well as we do today in an ecologically intact and just world.

The *smartLAB connects* program will be completed by two further elements which were already part of LABVOLUTION 2019. The LABVOLUTION Award honors innovative solutions which demonstrably increase the factors of efficiency and quality in the laboratory. This year, the award will be supplemented by two special prizes that are specifically aimed at students and Ph. D. candidates.

Advanced education and training is the central topic of the activities of the Berlin-based Life Science Learning Lab (Gläsernes Labor), which is now offering digital Lab 4.0 workshops for technical employees and laboratory technicians in the life sciences for the second time in September. The program, which focuses on digitization, automation and miniaturization, offers sessions on topics such as paperless research documentation with the electronic lab book and next-generation sequencing.

Companies can present themselves via a number of different participation packages. The focus is on digital sponsorship and partnership offers. For startups, there are separate participation opportunities at attractive conditions.

The next regular LABVOLUTION will take place from 9 to 11 May 2023.

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