

# QUALITY TIMES



A YEAR OF EXCELLENCE  
AND TEAMWORK  
**WHY WELLBEING MATTERS**  
CAN WE BUILD IT? YES, WE CAN  
**MES IN PHARMA**  
QACC BUSINESS  
**DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – 2025**

SPOTLIGHT  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
90 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP  
& LEGACY!  
**EVENTS**  
SAVE THE DATE  
**THANK YOU**

# A year of excellence and teamwork



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As we approach the end of another year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what truly makes SPGL special – and that, without a doubt, is **you**, our people.

Our purpose has always been clear: **to help our customers bring medicines to market faster while enhancing patient safety**. But this year, more than ever, I've seen how our mission comes to life because of the dedication, passion, and expertise each of you brings to every project and every challenge.

I am continually inspired by the way our team comes together, supporting one another and embracing our culture of **"Right First Time."** This isn't just a standard we meet – it's a mindset we live every day. Whether it's sharing knowledge, solving complex problems, or mentoring colleagues, your commitment to excellence and collaboration has shone through in ways that make me incredibly proud.

This year has been a powerful reminder of the strength of our values – **Excellence, Teamwork, People, Clients, and Trust**. These aren't just words; they are the principles that guide how we work, how we care for one another, and how we make a meaningful impact for the life sciences community – and ultimately, for the patients whose lives we touch.

As we celebrate this festive season, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you. Thank you for your dedication, your energy, and for making SPGL not just a place of work, but a place where people come together, achieve extraordinary results, and make a difference that matters.

Here's to another year of learning together, achieving together, and continuing to deliver **right first time, every time**.

Wishing you, your family, and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. 🍷

**Jay Lad**

**Managing Director**



# Why wellbeing matters!

By **Lindsay Marsh**

Administration & HR Associate Director



**Most people recognise the importance of wellbeing and understand that looking after oneself and practicing self-care is essential. In the workplace, wellbeing was once considered part of health and safety, but today it encompasses much more than just physical safety. True wellbeing includes job satisfaction, sense of purpose, autonomy, and positive relationships with colleagues. It's a shared responsibility – management and employees alike play a role in fostering a healthy environment.**

## The Business Case for Wellbeing

Looking after your wellbeing isn't just good for you, it's good for the organisation. Numerous studies show a strong link between employee happiness and productivity. Wellbeing practices can prevent stress, create positive working environments, and boost employee engagement. For employers, supporting staff wellbeing is a smart investment in both people and performance.

### Practical Tips

- **Schedule Time Off:** Plan your holidays and breaks in advance to ensure you have time to switch off and recharge.
- **Seek Support When Needed:** If you're feeling overwhelmed, reach out for help. Trying to manage everything alone can lead to burnout. Support networks, whether colleagues, friends, or professionals are vital.
- **Socialise Regularly:** Spending time with others is scientifically proven to benefit your health. Try to see friends and family in person on a regular basis.
- **Eat Well:** Nutrition is at the heart of wellbeing. Aim for a balanced diet rich in whole foods to support both physical and mental health.
- **Find a Hobby:** Pursuing interests outside of work helps you unwind and brings joy and balance to your life.
- **Prioritise Sleep:** Getting enough sleep is essential for mental and physical health. Aim for 7–8 hours per night and to establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
- **Move Regularly:** Incorporate movement into your workday – take short walks, stretch at your desk, or try standing meetings. Even brief activity breaks can reduce tension and improve focus – my favourite is hula hooping!
- **Practice Mindfulness.** Encourage mindful moments, such as deep breathing, meditation, or simply paying attention to small daily activities. Mindfulness can reduce stress and increase calm.

### What can we do to help?

As a small company with a close-knit management team, we care about supporting employee wellbeing. We regularly look at how we work and see where we can improve, using both our own experiences and the latest guidance. Your thoughts matter too – if you have ideas to help us strengthen our approach to wellbeing, we'd love to hear them!





# Can we build it? Yes, we can – but only with quality at the heart

By **Jay Lad**  
Managing Director

In today's world, the answer to "Can we build it?" is a resounding yes. But the real question is: **can we build it well, on time, and within budget?** For organisations investing in large-scale projects – whether in energy, technology, or pharmaceuticals – the stakes have never been higher. Every pound spent must deliver value, and every project must stand the test of time.

## Why Quality Assurance Matters More Than Ever

Project overruns and operational hiccups are no longer acceptable. The construction sector has long battled issues with field quality, leading to delays and unreliable facilities. Yet, other industries have shown that embracing robust quality assurance can dramatically reduce these risks and costs.

Designing quality into a project from the outset – known as "Quality by Design" (QbD) – is essential. While engineering teams often have quality embedded in their processes, construction teams are typically driven by cost and speed. The result? Safety and task completion take precedence, and quality can fall by the wayside. But safety and quality should go hand in hand. Zero accidents and zero defects should be the goal.

## The Missing Link: Construction Quality Assurance (CQA)

Quality standards must be set for every phase of a project, not just engineering. Construction and commissioning are critical stages that directly impact how a facility operates and how reliable it will be. A well-planned commissioning programme is vital, but it's meaningless if the facility is riddled with defects. That's where a

comprehensive Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) plan comes in – defining clear standards and aligning everyone involved.

## Why Bring in the Experts?

Construction teams are often temporary, making it hard to maintain long-term quality initiatives. Engaging a third-party quality management firm can be transformative. These experts understand operational needs and can weave quality into every step, ensuring a smooth handover from construction to commissioning, keeping costs and timelines in check.

## What Makes a CQA Programme Work?

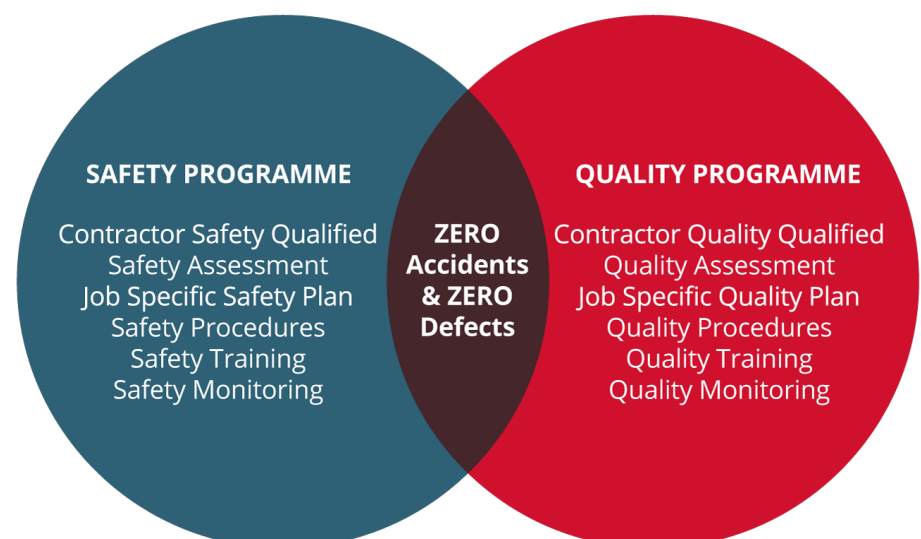
- **Risk Assessment & Criticality Analysis:** Focus on systems that could impact cost and schedule.
- **Subcontractor Assessments:** Audit early to catch issues before they escalate.
- **Field Inspections & Reporting:** Identify and resolve problems before they affect commissioning.

- **Clear Procedures & Documentation:** Consistency is key.
- **Traceability & Control:** Manage changes rigorously to protect safety and timelines.
- **Training:** Build a 'right-first-time' culture across the team.

## The Bottom Line

A well-executed CQA programme doesn't just ensure a smooth project turnover – it delivers long-term performance, reliability, and safety. By integrating quality assurance from the start, organisations can reduce delays, lower costs, and accelerate time to market.

Ultimately, choosing a strong construction firm is only half the battle. Bringing in a third-party CQA expert early can make all the difference. Success means reaching optimal operation quickly, maximising return on investment, and ensuring safety and reliability for years to come. ✓



# MES in pharma: a system engineer's journey at SPGL



By **Jolien Vanthielen**  
Project Leader

As of May, this year, I celebrated six and a half years at SPGL – something I never imagined when I first joined. Back then, I didn't expect to stay so long, but I'm genuinely glad I did. The opportunities I've had, the projects I've worked on, and most of all, the fantastic atmosphere among colleagues and the management team have made it a truly rewarding journey.

It all started with a message on LinkedIn inviting me to an introductory chat with SPGL. From that very first conversation, the team made me feel completely at ease – something that truly matters when considering a new opportunity. My first project was at Sanofi, where I joined as a system engineer and worked on digitalising production processes by implementing a new version of the MES system.

So, what is MES, and why is it so important in pharmaceutical manufacturing?

**Think of MES as the brain of the production floor – it keeps everything running smoothly and ensures nothing slips through the cracks.**

## What is MES?

MES is a digital manufacturing execution system that manages and monitors the production process on the shop floor in real time. In the pharmaceutical industry, MES integrates and controls various aspects of manufacturing, from raw material usage to finished product delivery, ensuring efficiency, compliance, and quality at every stage. Think of MES as the brain of the production floor – it keeps everything running smoothly and ensures nothing slips through the cracks.

## Key functions of MES in the pharmaceutical industry:

- **Batch Management:**  
Pharmaceutical products are produced in batches. A MES system manages and tracks each batch, from raw materials to final product.
- **Recipe Management:**  
Simply, MES is a kind of cookbook with different recipes, master batch records (MBRs), for the manufacturing operators. By execution of the MBRs a consistent pharmaceutical product is made with the correct raw materials, equipment, conditions and controls. An MBR can give information on manual actions, measurements that need to be performed, digital actions that need to be followed up and a lot more. During a later project at Sanofi, I wrote the MBRs for a new production process.
- **Production Tracking:**  
During the execution of an MBR every action is documented in real-time. This gives information about the status of the production process. When there is a deviation from the planned process this will be documented as an exception. This exception gives an immediate overview of the unusual aspects from a production process so that corrective actions can be taken.
- **Traceability and Compliance:**  
When using MES every used equipment and raw material will be logged during the production process. In the pharmaceutical





industry it is really important that every action is traceable because this is essential for audits, inspections, and compliance with global regulations.

- **Quality Assurance:**

All the produced batches of a pharmaceutical product need to have a quality control. These quality checks are already performed during the production process by quality signatures, testing and controls. But also, during the release of the batch an exception-based review will be done by quality assurance. This ensures that the products meet the required standards for safety and efficacy.

- **Integration with Other Systems:**

MES doesn't work in isolation, it integrates with other systems like ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), PI data archive system, DCS (Distributed Control System) and many more possibilities. The connection between the different systems is a very interesting part of MES because it integrates and synchronises the entire production process of a company.

### Discovering My Strengths

As MES System engineer, I mainly worked on the topic of integration MES with other systems. I created interfaces between scales and MES

which makes it possible to have a digital weighing without paper printouts.

### In the pharmaceutical industry every measurement needs to be accurate and traceable

This is very important because in the pharmaceutical industry every measurement needs to be accurate and traceable. By using MES, the raw materials that are used are also automatically checked for their expiry date. Also interfacing of small equipment like pH, conductivity, density meters give a

big advantage. The measured data is immediately available digitally in MES and is traceable after execution of the batch.

When I started the project, I had no knowledge of MES or other digital systems in the pharmaceutical industry. SPGL took me out of my comfort zone, and I ended up in an engaging work environment, with colleagues who gave me all the space & support to expand my knowledge and develop technically. I also learned how a pharmaceutical company is organised and what my competences are. SPGL has helped me to discover and develop my career, factoring in my interests and what I value within a project. This is how I discovered that my interests lie in the scientific background of the production process. A year ago, I started a new project as a MSAT (Manufacturing science & technology) DSP Process Engineer at Sanofi. During this period, I have acquired substantial knowledge and look forward to further enhancing my technical expertise in this field.

Learning MES from scratch to now, working as a Process Engineer, SPGL has been instrumental in shaping my career. I'm excited for what's next and grateful to be part of a team that values growth, curiosity, and collaboration. ✓





# QACC business development update – 2025



By **Dr. Loyal Lutfi**  
Director Quality Assurance  
Consulting and Compliance

& **Jerry Young**  
Business Development  
Director, Quality Assurance  
Consulting and Compliance

At the start of 2025, our primary objective was to expand both our client base and the range of Quality Assurance services offered by the SPGL QACC team to the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device sectors.

To support this goal, we joined several prominent industry organisations, including:

- **Oxford Biotechnology Network (OBN)**

A leading network supporting startup biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies across Oxford, surrounding science parks, and London. With over 230 members and more than 50 annual events, OBN provides valuable networking and profile-raising opportunities.

- **One Nucleus**

Based in Cambridge, One Nucleus supports biotechnology and pharmaceutical startups across

the Cambridge science parks, London, and Southeast England. It hosts over 30 events annually, offering extensive networking opportunities.

- **Medilink Midlands**

A life sciences organisation focused on stimulating and supporting the medical device industry in the Midlands and Southeast England. With over 300 members and 36+ events per year, Medilink provides a strong platform for industry engagement.

SPGL QACC has actively participated in over 26 events hosted by these organisations over the past year.



These engagements have been instrumental in networking and enhancing the visibility of our services across key sectors. Notably, we attended the annual Medilink Midlands exhibition in Birmingham, which featured over 100 exhibitors. We leveraged the event's networking app to further raise our profile within the UK medical device industry.

**These engagements have been instrumental in networking and enhancing the visibility of our services across key sectors.**

Since 2023, SPGL conducted different kinds of audits including, Investigator Site Audits (ISAs), laboratory audits, Phase I audits, Contract Research Organisation





(CRO) audits, Quality Management System audits, Gap Analysis, and due diligence audits. The audits were conducted in different countries including, **Jordan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Poland, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Spain, Ireland** and the **Netherlands**.

In 2025, SPGL QACC successfully increased the number of repeat audits from existing clients and conducted audits for a new U.S.-based biotechnology company.

### Our ongoing business development strategy focuses on expanding our client base and increasing repeat business

We have also established Confidentiality Agreements and Master Service Agreements with several biotechnology firms and a

venture capital group to support upcoming projects requiring audit services.

Our ongoing business development strategy focuses on expanding our client base and increasing repeat business, which will enable

the QACC team to grow. Despite a recent slowdown in capital investment – particularly within the biotechnology sector – there are encouraging signs of recovery, with increased investment activity, especially in the United States. ✓





# SPOTLIGHT



## **Lotte Michiels** **Senior Project Leader**

Hi there! I am Lotte, 38 years old and started with SPGL in 2018.

### **Tell us a bit about your background and what you did before you joined SPGL**

I graduated as a bioengineer and started my career in the food industry. In my first job as an R&D engineer for Milcobel I was responsible for developing new formulas and recipes, but I also helped design new packaging materials and even joined a team of engineers and technical experts in the development of a new Green Field production plant.

After a year, my passion for the brewing process brought me to my favorite Belgian brewery: Duvel Moortgat. I joined them as a supply and demand planner for six brands and later evolved towards a production management position in the bottling and conditioning plant.

Five years later, I left the brewery to join SPGL and to start my first job in the pharmaceutical industry. Not coincidentally at the neighbours: Pfizer Puurs.

### **How do you find working for SPGL from a technical and personal perspective?**

SPGL enriches me in so many ways. They encourage me to do multiple functions in different companies, and each new job comes with new insights and technical challenges. On top of that, you learn how to present yourself during interviews.

Working with new systems/programs and new colleagues keeps me alert.

Also, regular training keeps you up to date with other projects and industry trends.

From a personal perspective, SPGL naturally guides me. It's in their DNA to take good care for their employees. Although it is a business, they always put my well-being first. This is truly valuable to me. ✓

### **Getting to know Lotte!**

#### **What is your favourite food?**

Sushi

#### **What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I love being outside: whether it is for sports or to play with my children or to spend time with friends. Outdoors is always better (although I don't like the cold 😊).

#### **If you were stuck on a desert island and you could have two people with you, who would they be?**

I was once stuck on a desert island for real (in Nicaragua) and despite being adventurous it was a scary experience so I would opt for a good woodcutter and carpenter to make us a solid boat 😊

#### **If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose?**

Definitely somewhere in the South! It always feels like coming home when I'm touching South-American soil. The colors, the music, the food, the language, the people. I love it!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Sam Vervliet** & Stephanie welcomed baby Marie in January. Very many congratulations to them both.



Welcome to **Robbert Jacobs** who joined as a Engineer Level III in March 2025.



Welcome to **Kristel Trekels** who joined as Project Leader in April 2025.



Welcome to **Gitte Van Heurck** who joined as a Project Leader in May 2025.



Welcome to **Robin Geertsen** who joined as a Talent Acquisition Specialist in October 2025.



Welcome to **Lisa Steckx** who joined as a Graduate Specialist in October 2025.



Welcome to **Dorien Van Tiggel** who joined as a Specialist Level III in December 2025.



# 90 years of leadership & legacy!

Some milestones are simply too extraordinary not to celebrate! This year we wanted to celebrate the incredible individuals who have helped shape our journey. We are proud to honour **90 years of combined service** from four exceptional members of our team:

## Lindsay: 20 years of service

For two decades, Lindsay has been the operational heartbeat of our team. Her dedication to keeping things running smoothly has been a cornerstone of our continued success.

## Jahed: 20 years of service

With a sharp analytical mind and meticulous attention to detail, Jahed has expertly managed our finances, playing a key role in our growth and stability.

## Kathrin: 30 years of service

Our team's "Technical Guru," Kathrin is the go-to expert for field-related challenges. Though she works quietly behind the scenes, her brilliance shines through in everything she does.



## Stefan: 20 Years of service

Over the past two decades, Stefan has led our Belgium team with energy, purpose, and heart. His leadership has not only driven success but also fostered a strong, supportive team culture. ✓





# EVENTS

## Management meeting

Both our Belgium and UK teams got together for a productive forward-thinking strategy session themed around “Growth Enablers”, followed by a visit to Clays bar and dinner in Shoreditch.





# EVENTS

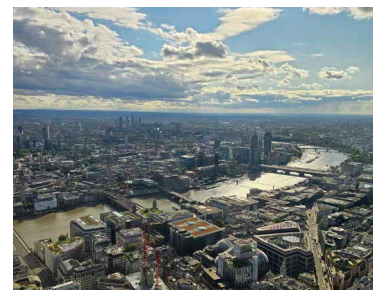
## Spring drinks

We bid a fond farewell to Michel Bullen and enjoyed a spring drinks event with some staff at our Berchem office.



## Horizon 22

Our UK team took some time to catch up and enjoyed a visit to Horizon 22 in London. We experienced some great views followed by a team dinner.

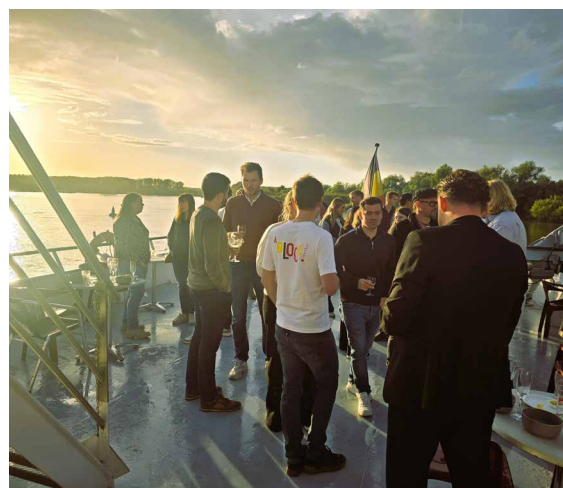
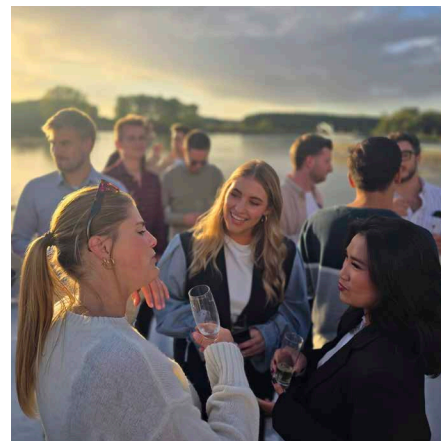




# EVENTS

## Summer event

This year, we took to the River Scheldt (De Schelde) aboard the boat Verdi for an unforgettable day of great company, drinks, and a delicious BBQ.



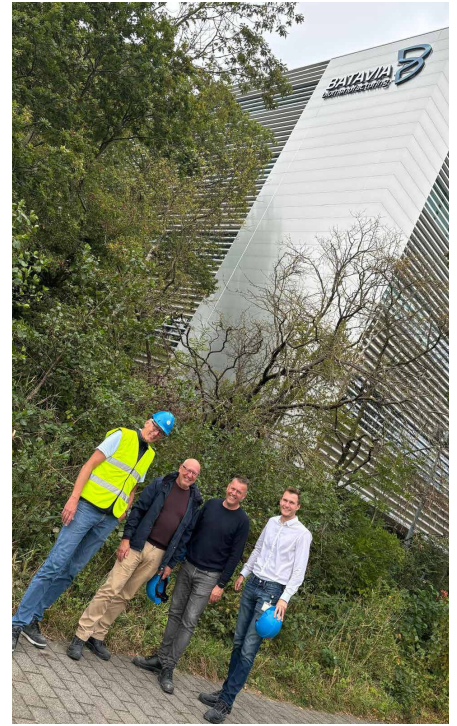


# EVENTS

## ISPE Netherlands

SPGL was proud to sponsor ISPE's inaugural event in the Netherlands, hosted at Batavia Biomanufacturing's impressive new 12,000m<sup>2</sup> state-of-the-art vaccine facility in Leiden. This milestone gathering brought together industry leaders, innovators, and passionate professionals for an evening of knowledge sharing and meaningful exchange.

Having been part of Batavia's project execution team from day one, it was especially rewarding to showcase our lean "Single-Test C&Q Approach", which helped accelerate the delivery of their new facility.





# EVENTS

## ISPE UK Annual Conference & Awards Dinner

SPGL attended the ISPE UK Annual Conference & Awards Dinner held at the fantastic Etihad Stadium. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet professionals from across the industry, explore innovative projects and ideas, and gain valuable insight into the latest engineering developments shaping our future.





spgl✓

2026



**NEW YEAR**  
*Event*

SAVE THE DATE 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026  
ANTWERP

# A heartfelt thank you to our team



As we reflect on the past year, we want to extend our sincere gratitude to every member of our team for your unwavering dedication, resilience, and hard work. Your commitment to excellence has played a vital role in our continued success, and we are truly fortunate to work alongside such a talented and driven group of individuals.

## Special Recognition

We'd like to give a special shout-out to the following teams and individuals whose contributions have been especially impactful:

### **Lonza Team: Sam Vervliet, Gitte Van Heurck, Kristel Trekels and Valerie Igwe**

Thank you for your hard work and commitment in successfully delivering a complex project under challenging circumstances and tight deadlines. Your collaboration, focus, and teamwork were truly outstanding!

### **Batavia Team: Dave Thomas, Gregory Donal, Jesse Gallery, Ed Waalewijn and Paul Lenzi**

Thank you for your exceptional dedication in delivering the CQV programme for the new 130,000 ft², five-floor vaccine facility. An outstanding achievement that showcases your professionalism and teamwork. Bravo!

### **Evotec Team: Mehdi Bennani, Stef Vernelen, Robbert Jacobs and Adnan Hasan**

Thank you for your outstanding effort, resilience, and dedication in navigating a challenging environment. Your hard work and commitment have not gone unnoticed – well done!

### **Gregory Crispeyn**

An integral part of our organisation whose leadership and insight have been invaluable.

**Thank you all for making 2025 a year to be proud of. We look forward to building on this momentum together in the year ahead. 📌**