



ICON selects Microsoft as a preferred technology partner to power AI-enabled clinical development

June 22, 2026

DUBLIN--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 22, 2026-- [ICON plc](#) (NASDAQ: ICLR) today announced that it has selected Microsoft as a preferred technology partner – further advancing ICON's previously announced plan to invest in digital innovation and AI over the next three years. This partnership incorporates an enterprise-wide deployment of Microsoft 365 Copilot along with an enterprise-grade cloud, data and AI infrastructure to further scale Orbis, ICON's secure, governed agentic AI platform.

Through Orbis, ICON is building an intelligence layer that connects expertise, data, and AI across the trial lifecycle. By combining frontier model capabilities with ICON's operational expertise, it has significant impacts on the trial lifecycle through:

- **Accelerating study design** using AI-enabled protocol digitisation, optimisation and scenario modelling.
- **Streamlining operational execution**, supporting workflows across feasibility, site identification, start-up, monitoring, data review and regulatory documentation.
- **Enhancing patient and site engagement**, offering intelligent assistants for burden reduction, safety insights and improved communication.
- **Strengthening decision-making**, enabling real-time detection of risks, trends and operational signals.

The partnership with Microsoft directly supports the three key focus areas of ICON's AI strategy:

1. **Intelligence Layer.** Microsoft will support the development of a modern data layer, powered by Microsoft Fabric and Azure data services, that connects, harmonises and governs ICON's clinical, operational and enterprise data. This unified foundation gives Orbis trusted, real-time data at scale enabling better decisions, faster.
2. **Productivity.** ICON is expanding Microsoft 365 Copilot and Copilot Chat to every employee across the organisation – enabling the automation of high-volume, repeatable tasks and redirecting human expertise to higher-value activities.
3. **Domain-specific agents.** Using Microsoft Azure, Microsoft AI Services and Microsoft Foundry – alongside access to other frontier models – ICON will further develop and deploy agents embedded directly within clinical trial workflows, securely and responsibly, accelerating the path from prototype to production-grade agentic AI.

Barry Balfe, Chief Executive Officer of ICON plc, commented,

"The industry is moving to AI as core infrastructure, and we are determined to be at the forefront of this transition to the next generation of clinical trials. Our partnership with Microsoft is an important step in our strategy to lead the CRO industry, providing us with productivity tools, and a data foundation to further scale Orbis at speed, enabling our teams to work more intelligently, faster and deliver better outcomes for customers, sites and patients."

Elena Bonfiglioli, Global Business Leader Health and Life Sciences Microsoft, said:

"AI is playing a defining role in the future of clinical development, and real impact depends on having the right data and agentic foundations in place, alongside deep domain knowledge and expertise in execution. ICON's decision to deploy Microsoft 365 Copilot across the organisation, alongside Azure and Fabric, signals a foundational step and a serious commitment to embedding AI at scale across the clinical trial lifecycle. ICON's leading clinical research expertise, coupled with Microsoft's best-in-class cloud, data and AI capabilities, create a strong foundation for Orbis – to deliver faster insight, more efficient operations and better experiences across the clinical trial ecosystem."

About ICON plc

ICON plc is a world-leading clinical research organisation. Offering deep operational and medical expertise we accelerate innovation, driving emerging therapies forward to improve patient outcomes. From molecule to medicine, we deliver integrated consulting, clinical development, commercialisation and post-marketing solutions to pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, government and public health organisations worldwide. With headquarters in Dublin, Ireland, ICON employed approximately 40,100 employees in 97 locations in 55 countries as of December 31, 2025. For further information about ICON, visit: www.iconplc.com.

Learn more about the Orbis platform here: <https://www.iconplc.com/solutions/technologies/ai/orbis>

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Media contacts:

ICON:

Lisa Henry (GMT time zone)
Weber Shandwick (PR adviser)
+447785 458203
lhenny@webershandwick.com

ICON Press Office
iconnews@webershandwick.com

Source: ICON plc