



Juliette Deschepper

- **Current Role:** Site Manager Trainee at J&J
- **STAR Programme:** Junior CRA
- **Programme Year:** September 2024

How Juliette Launched Her Clinical Research Career with ECCRT's STAR Programme



Before the STAR Programme

Before joining the STAR Programme, I studied Pharmacy at the University of Ghent. I graduated as a pharmacist in pharmaceutical care, focusing mainly on providing good care in the pharmacy. I did a year's internship in an officina in Ghent and quickly discovered that this did not suit me 100%. For me, it was not a job I would want to do every day, I mostly missed the challenge and variety.

I have always been very interested in the healthcare and researching innovative and/or better therapies for different diseases, so I was looking for something in that direction. Quite by chance, I heard about ECCRT and immediately did my research. This program seemed ideal for me to delve further into clinical research and gain a lot of experience. I also knew beforehand that it was not easy to get into a large pharmaceutical company, such as J&J, without any experience. This was another reason why the STAR Programme seemed like a perfect opportunity for me to take.



Why ECCRT?

The STAR Programme seemed very interesting since we would really get to work in the field. The program consists of one week of education and training followed by three different internships. During the first internship, you learn about the role of a study coordinator in the hospital. Next, you intern at a pharmaceutical company as a site manager, and finally, you intern at a CRO. By going through this track, you get the perfect picture of how clinical trials are conducted from different points of view. For me, this was very interesting to discover where my interests lie.

ECCRT seemed like the ideal opportunity to gain a lot of experience and make connections.



Experience During the Programme

My first internship was, for two months, as a study coordinator at UZ Gent. Here I learned about the role of a study coordinator within clinical research. Then I did an internship at Johnson&Johnson as a site manager, where I learned how clinical studies are monitored at the different sites. During this internship, I also experienced how important monitoring studies is and that there is a lot involved.

At Johnson&Johnson, we were soon left to our own devices and had to work very independently. This was very exciting for me, but at the same time it is the best way to learn a lot. We could go to anyone on the J&J team with all our questions and uncertainties. We were really part of the team and not just an intern. We were also given a mentor here, who would guide us and who we could always turn to. Before we could start working as Site Managers ourselves, we had to go through an onboarding process. This involved going through various training sessions and going on observation visits to the various sites where clinical studies were underway. This onboarding process lasted three months and from then on we were effectively allowed to start working ourselves at different studies.

During both internships we were guided very well and got the perfect picture of the different roles inside clinical research.



Where Are You Now?

Currently, I am still doing an internship at Johnson&Johnson as a Site Manager. Recently, I heard that several positions were opening up at Johnson&Johnson. I informed myself about this and quickly applied for the jobs. They are vacancies that were running at IQVIA and ICON, which are two CROs, as a junior CRA. So I would be working as a consultant at J&J through IQVIA or ICON.

I was invited for an interview at both and received a salary proposal. I made my choice and will start as a CRA I at IQVIA. I am very much looking forward to working as a CRA myself and being part of the J&J team.

Since I was given and seized this opportunity, I have decided not to do my last internship at CRO.

During this internship, I discovered where my interests really lie and what I want to delve further into. I am very grateful to ECCRT for all that I have learned and for giving me this unique opportunity.



Final Word of Advice

The STAR Programme is the ideal opportunity to delve deeper into clinical research and learn about major pharmaceutical companies. You will learn about clinical research from different perspectives, giving you the perfect picture of how everything works.

The program is perfect for anyone who does not yet know 100% what they want to do next and have an interest in clinical studies. And who knows, maybe the opportunity is there to start as a study coordinator or CRA.