

## **ITHEC: Virtual conference with interactive trade fair format**

### **International conference that makes communication between different time zones possible**

*September 24, 2020.* The fifth edition of the ITHEC Conference on Thermoplastic Composites will be a very special one – it will take place digitally for the first time, from Tuesday 13th to Thursday 15th October 2020. "In addition to 43 lectures and keynote speeches, "ITHEC 2020 – Virtual Edition" offers 25 poster presentations", says Daniel Schäfer, who, as the new project manager for the knowledge platform, has driven forward the transformation of the event. "Also, more than 50 exhibitors will be presenting their products virtually. Participants can also look forward to two award ceremonies and a podium discussion on 3D printing." Since its foundation in 2012, an international technical specialist audience has flocked to Bremen to attend the ITHEC from all over the world (in 2018 there were approximately 400 participants). Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the organisers decided to hold a digital event this year.

### **A new concept facilitates interaction among the audience – even between different time zones**

In order to make all lectures, forums and presentations accessible to the international participants, the ITHEC organisers have developed a special time zone model and extended the exhibition period from two to three days. "This means we can handle the time zone differences", says Kordula Grimm, head of CONGRESS BREMEN and guest events. So the first conference session for Asia and Europe will take place between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM, while the second, for participants from America and Europe, will take place between 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM – German time in each case. "During the second session, the lectures from the first session are repeated, however all speakers are present live for the interactive questions and answers session, enabling genuine interaction with the participants", explains Grimm.

There are also up to 30 additional virtual round tables with industry partners taking place via an integrated videoconferencing tool. In addition, one-to-ones and group meetings with all exhibitors, participants and speakers in video conference format are planned over the entire course of the event.

### **Faster, simpler, more economical: 3D printing**

The rapid technological development of fibre-reinforced components and structures with thermoplastic matrices will be covered by ITHEC with a special on 3D printing with fibre reinforcements. In addition to a whole series of lectures and presentations dealing with new types of production methods, manufacturers of 3D printing solutions for thermoplastic composites are available and will be giving presentations on products and technologies. "As well as researchers and product developers, the ITHEC is also more relevant than ever for specialists working on the development of production processes for the efficient series production of composites", says Schäfer.



Professor Axel Herrmann, Director of the FIBRE Institute at the University of Bremen, who is also one of the founders of ITHEC and an exhibitor at the event, emphasises that: "Fibre-reinforced thermoplastics technology has taken a great leap forward in recent times." Never before have thermoplastic composites been seen in such a wide variety of forms, not least with regard to the diversity of manufacturing processes. "I would like to illustrate this thesis with the example of 3D printing, which is now ready for use, with integrated continuous fiber reinforcements that are suitable for load paths."

The entire conference programme for ITHEC 2020 as well as up-to-date information on the digital edition of the event can be found at [www.ithec.de](http://www.ithec.de) as well as in the ITHEC Interest Group on LinkedIn.

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#### **About ITHEC:**

CONGRESS BREMEN, M3B GmbH has been organising ITHEC with the Fibre Institute at the University of Bremen (FIBRE) since 2012. The event is the world's first and only conference with an accompanying professional exhibition in the sector.

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