

PRESS RELEASE

AZL Aachen GmbH in cooperation with Aachen Center for Integrative Lightweight Production (AZL) of RWTH Aachen University

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AZL Annual Partner Meeting: International lightweight network emphasizes future mobility concepts as important drivers for lightweight production

Recently, 130 representatives of the AZL Partner Network consisting of more than 80 Partner Companies from 21 different countries, met in Aachen for their fourth Annual Partner Meeting. During a workshop session, the partners discussed future topics for collaboration and identified trends for the lightweight industry.

During the two-day meeting in the prestigious Aachen football stadium Tivoli, the AZL Partner Companies and Institutes were updated on the activities of 2016, which comprised meetings of four well-established workgroups; as well as project meetings of four running Joint Partner Projects in which AZL Partner Companies jointly fund pre-competitive research and development initiatives. In order to define future topics, the AZL Partners discussed upcoming market trends and barriers in a workshop session. Mobility and transportation in general were identified as most important markets for lightweight technology. Future mobility concepts including autonomous driving and electric mobility have high impact on lightweight products, technologies and materials according to the open feedback of the participants.

Dr. Thierry Renault, Manager of Partnerships for Composite Technologies at Faurecia Clean Mobility states: “Our aim is to become a global leader for supplying composite parts for the highly cost-driven automotive industry. We regard cost-neutral weight reduction and the provision of efficient engineering tools as the key challenges for composites in automotive mass production. Composite players need to act and cooperate on all levels in the composite value chain in order to compete with fast developing alternative technologies.”

On the first day, the participants got an insight into research and development on new mobility concepts at the RWTH Aachen Campus. In form of guided tours, they visited neighboring institutes and companies of AZL, who collaborate in the recently opened Production Engineering Cluster at the RWTH Aachen Campus. The RWTH spin-off e.GO Mobile AG presented the e.Go Life, an electric car which was developed in a 3-year development process on the RWTH Aachen Campus. The ramp-up of the serial production in spring 2018 is the starting point for the envisaged production capacities of 10,000 cars per year. The institute for

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Production Engineering of E-Mobility Components (PEM) presented its ramp-up factory for emission-free complete system for cities. Lastly, the Laboratory for Machine Tools and Production Engineering (WZL) of RWTH Aachen University showed quality assurance equipment and research results for composite systems and provided additional insights into the broad collaboration between research and industry on the RWTH Aachen Campus. Schuler presented its 1,800 tons composite press which is currently integrated into a self-regulating production system within the BMBF-funded Project “iComposite 4.0”. Furthermore, AZL presented the manufacturing of hybrid parts, consisting of continuous carbon fiber thermosets and overmolded thermoplastic stiffening structures.

Dr. Hartmut Saljé, Head of Corporate Engineering at Muhr und Bender KG opened the meeting with a keynote and presented a broad range of lightweight components for automotive applications: “At Mubea and our subsidiary Carbo Tech, we produce innovative and efficient lightweight products and work on e-mobility solutions. In the past, our co-developments together with RWTH Aachen have contributed a lot to our technological leadership in order to keep track on the fast development for automotive applications. This is why we situated our Centre for Lightweight Design in the Production Engineering Cluster on the RWTH Aachen Campus to collaborate with innovative companies and institutes on site on our metal- and composite-based lightweight solutions.”

To enhance the collaboration between industry and academia, AZL presented the new building blocks of the concept for co-locating development activities on the RWTH Aachen Campus, which is one of the largest research landscapes with a strong focus on production technologies. Based on various tools for identifying trends and defining development projects in terms of Open Innovation, the “AZL Premium Partnership” will also include office space within the Production Engineering Cluster.

Alongside the site visits and workshop session, the interactive program of the AZL Annual Partner Meeting comprised several options for networking as well as so called “Speed Dating Presentations”, in which 11 Partner Companies as well as 7 Institutes from the network presented their innovations in 6-minute presentations. The next AZL Annual Partner Meeting in 2018 will take place on June 27th and 28th, 2018 in Aachen.

Pictures:

Download the high-resolution pictures at: <http://azl-aachen-gmbh.de/media/>



Picture 1: The participants of this year's AZL Annual Partner Meeting visited the recently opened Production Engineering Cluster at the RWTH Aachen Campus. In close neighborhood to 14 other companies and institutes, AZL opened its offices and machinery hall with large-scale equipment earlier this year.

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Picture 2: The AZL is located on the RWTH Aachen Campus connecting research and industry in 16 newly opened clusters. On the RWTH Aachen Campus competences and equipment along the entire lightweight process chain are represented. *Copyright: Campus GmbH/ Steindl*



Picture 3: Dr. Thierry Renault, Manager of Partnerships for Composite Technologies at Faurecia Clean Mobility providing insights into composite in automotive mass markets during his keynote at AZL Annual Partner Meeting 2018. *Copyright: AZL Aachen GmbH/ Fröls*



Picture 4: Dr. Hartmut Saljé, Head of Corporate Engineering at Muhr und Bender KG introducing the Mubea Centre for Lightweight Design in the Production Engineering Cluster on the RWTH Aachen Campus. *Copyright: AZL Aachen GmbH/ Fröls*

About AZL:

RWTH Aachen University is one of the worldwide leading universities in the field of production technology. The Aachen Center for integrative Lightweight Production (AZL) of RWTH Aachen consolidates the lightweight expertise of eight partner institutes with 750 scientists on the RWTH Aachen Campus. The AZL builds an international partner network between these institutes and more than 80 international companies involved in lightweight production.

For this, AZL consists of two separate entities: The AZL of RWTH Aachen University addresses the transformation of lightweight design in mass production with basic research and development of lightweight products, materials, production processes and systems with access to the latest full-scale machines and automation systems. As a service provider partnering with companies in the field of lightweight production

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technology, AZL Aachen GmbH provides industrial services in the areas of engineering, consultancy and project management, networking and business development. With the AZL Partnership, the AZL Aachen GmbH enables the close cooperation between the lightweight industry and the research institutes of RWTH Aachen Campus along the whole value chain. The AZL Partner Network consists of more than 80 industrial partners representing the entire lightweight production value chain from the raw material producer, over molders, manufacturing equipment suppliers, Tier 1 and Tier 2 to OEMs, from SMEs to large multinational corporations, from Germany to Mexico, China or Japan, from 21 different countries in total.

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