



The Future of Thermosets: AI and Emerging Industry Innovations

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SPE® THERMOSET TOPCON 2026 ANNOUNCES CALL FOR ABSTRACTS FOR STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION: ABSTRACTS DUE APRIL 10, 2026 - POSTERS DUE APRIL 24, 2026

The organizing committee for the SPE® Thermoset Div. TopCon invites graduate and undergraduate students to submit abstracts on innovative thermoset composite technologies for its fifth annual student poster competition. The competition will be held during the SPE Thermoset TopCon Conference at the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin May 12 – May 13, 2026.

Judges who are industry experts, SPE board members, and members of the media will review all posters with student authors on the first day of the conference, May 12, 2026. Awards will be presented to winners during a special ceremony on the event's second day, May 13, 2026.

Abstracts are due by April 10, 2026 and digital PDF copies of posters are due by April 24, 2026 for pre-review by judges. Students will need to bring printed copies of their posters (24" wide x 36" high) to the conference venue on Monday May 11 or early morning Tuesday May 12, 2026. All students presenting a poster in the competition will receive free registration to the conference. Passes include breakfast and lunch on May 12 and May 13 and a networking reception on May 12. Hotel rooms will be available at a discounted rate at a hotel near the conference venue. Students will be responsible for hotel and travel expenses if required for them to attend the event.

The SPE Thermoset TopCon is a valuable educational experience and also provides excellent networking opportunities for those close to graduating who are starting to look for a job.

Send Abstracts to: intuitgroup@gmail.com and contact Teri for a Poster Template and more info.

Visit <https://spethermosets.org/topcon/> for more info on the event.

Poster topics may include subjects such as:

- Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Industry Innovations
- Automotive, Transportation, Medical, Appliances, Oil & Gas and more
- Lightweighting
- Bio-composites
- Nanocomposites
- Glass, carbon, and hybrid fibers
- Recycling and green technologies
- Multi-materials
- Joining technologies
- Modeling and analysis of lightweight materials
- CAFE standards and mandates
- Cost-effective manufacturing
- Use of advanced materials in innovative applications
- Virtual prototyping and design
- Microstructure, failure and fracture
- Failure envelopes and theories
- Additive manufacturing

Students and their posters are ranked according to the following criteria:

- Content (student and poster demonstrate clarity of topic, objectives, and background);
- Motivation for research and technical relevance to conference theme;
- Methodology and approach to problem;
- Quality of proposed research results/findings;
- Conclusions are supported by information presented;
- Presentation (display aesthetics are pleasing and there is a logical flow between sections);
- Knowledgeable (presenter has a good grasp of the subject)
- Understandability (poster is effective even without student being present to explain it); and;
- Overall rank vs. other posters and presenters.

The SPE Thermoset Topcon 2026 event will feature technical presentations and exhibits highlighting advances in materials, processes, and equipment for thermoset technologies in electrical, automotive, off-highway, appliance, aerospace, building and construction, oil and gas and other industries. The 2024 and 2025 events were successful with over 150 attendees.

SPE Thermoset TopCon 2026 sponsors to date include: Plenco, Mar-Bal, IDI Composites, Composites One, LyondellBasell, Cimbar Resources, ICT Molding Solutions, Johns Manville, American Colors, ALTA Performance Materials, Polynt Group, Avinthia, Lambient Technologies, Molding Products, fmtec solutions NA, and Owens Corning.

For more info on the event see: <https://spethermosets.org/topcon/>

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to composites worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about the technological advances. SPE's Thermoset Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments in thermoset technology in multiple industries. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development. For more info on the SPE Thermoset Div., see <https://spethermosets.org/>.

For more information on the SPE (Society of Plastics Engineers), see <https://www.4spe.org/>.