

DAY 1 Wednesday 19 August 2026

Greenhouse Tech Hub, Level 3, 180 George St, Sydney

9:00 - 10:00am **Registration / Pre-meeting Networking / Coffee**
Level 3 Reception & Telford Room

10:00 - 10:10am **Welcome to Country**
Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council

10:10 - 10:25am **Welcome from the Chair & Presentation of RISE Fellowships**
Dr Abby Bloom - Chair | ACM CRC
Three RISE Fellowships awarded to early-career women in STEM with exceptional potential, supporting their path to management-level roles.

10:25 - 10:30am **CEO Welcome**
Luke Preston - Chief Executive Officer | ACM CRC

10:30 - 11:00am **Keynote - Extreme Sailing for Science**
Lisa Blair OAM - Adventurer | Climate Activist | Author | Multi-World Record Sailor
Fastest person to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around Antarctica.
Holder of 8 world records.

11:00 - 11:15am **R&D Update**
Dr Stephen van Duin - Research & Development Director | ACM CRC

11:15 - 11:30am **Research Portfolio Update**
Dr Puneet Garg - Research Portfolio Manager | ACM CRC

11:30 - 12:00pm **Practical AI for Competitive Composites Manufacturing**
A/Prof. Scott Barnett - Deputy Head of Translational Research & Commercialisation, Applied Artificial Intelligence Institute (A2I2)
Deakin University

12:00 - 1:00pm **Networking Lunch** Level 3, Greenhouse Tech Hub

RESEARCH PROGRAM UPDATES AND Q&A

1:00 - 1:30pm **RP 1: Composite Materials**
Dr Tristan Shelley - Senior Research Fellow, Advanced Composites Manufacturing & Sustainable Industry Design | The University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ)
RP 1 Leader

1:30 - 2:00pm **RP 2: Manufacturing Processes**
Prof. Garth Pearce - School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering
The University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney)
RP 2 Leader

2:00 - 2:30pm **RP 3: Simulation and Performance Prediction**
Prof. Asim Bhatti - Faculty of Science, Engineering & Built Environment / IISRI
Deakin University
RP 3 Leader

2:30 - 3:00pm **RP 4: Design and Integration**
Dr Luigi Vandl - Director, Centre for Advanced Materials Processing and Manufacturing (AMPAM), Senior Lecturer | The University of Queensland (UQ)
RP 4 Leader

3:00 - 3:30pm **Afternoon Tea / Chat Breakout / Networking**
Opportunity to build on fireside chat topics and other business

3:30 - 3:45pm **Industry Spotlight: AMRF Capability**
Ben Leavold - Lead Engineer, Advanced Composites | Advanced Manufacturing Readiness Facility (AMRF)

3:45 - 4:00pm **ACM CRC Education and Training Update**
Prof. Everson Kandare - Aerospace Engineering, School of Engineering | Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
Education and Training Program Leader

4:00 - 4:55pm **HDR Presentations**
Finalists for the Best HDR Presentation

4:55pm **LIVE VOTING OPENS - Best HDR Presentation**
Winner announced on Day 2

4:55 - 5:00pm **Closing Remarks**

5:00 - 7:00pm **Networking Drinks and Canapes**
Greenhouse Tech Hub, Level 3, 180 George Street, Sydney

DAY 2 Thursday 20 August 2026

Greenhouse Tech Hub, Level 3, 180 George St, Sydney

8:30 - 9:00am **Arrival / Networking / Coffee**
Level 3 Reception, Greenhouse Tech Hub

9:00 - 9:30am **Keynote - From Token to Discovery: A New Paradigm in Physical Science**
Dr Tong Xie - Associate Lecturer, School of Photovoltaic and Renewable Energy Engineering (SPREE) | The University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney)

AI & Strengthening the CRC - Open Discussion

Part 1 (approx. 30 min)

Practical AI for Competitive Composites Manufacturing (Open Discussion)

This will be an open session to discuss the following:

- What are the successful AI use cases in composites and advanced manufacturing
- What problems in your industry could realistically be solved with AI in the next 1-3 years
- What's holding adoption back - skills, trust, confidentiality/security, cost
- Where ACM CRC should take a leadership role in AI across its research programs to support better industry
- What "responsible" and "optimum" AI looks like in a manufacturing context

Part 2 (approx. 30 min)

Strengthening the CRC - Open Discussion

This will be an open session to discuss the following:

- How ACM CRC can further strengthen collaboration and engagement between industry and research partners across projects
- How ACM CRC can accelerate the path from research outcomes to industry adoption, in line with its \$8.3 billion economic impact target over the next 15 years
- How ACM CRC can further improve its systems and processes for partners
- How ACM CRC can help maintain and sustain Australia's competitive edge in composites manufacturing

10:30 - 11:00am **Morning Tea**
Opportunity to build on fireside chat topics and other business

11:00 - 11:45am **From Discussion to Action**
Key themes, agreed actions and next steps from the morning's AI and CRC process improvement session, and how they move ACM CRC toward its \$8.3 billion economic impact target over the next 15 years.

11:45am **LIVE VOTING CLOSES - Best HDR Presentation**

11:45 - 11:50am **Best HDR Presentation Award**
Winner announcement and trophy presentation

11:50 - 12:00pm **Closing Remarks**
Reflections on the two days, thanks to our partners and speakers, and next steps for ACM CRC - from the Chair, CEO and R&D Director.

12:00pm **Lunch**
Join us for lunch and continued conversation

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & SPEAKERS

DAY 1 KEYNOTE



Lisa Blair OAM

World Record-Holding Solo Sailor | Climate Activist | Author

Holds multiple solo circumnavigation sailing records, including fastest person to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around Antarctica. Awarded the Order of Australia Medal for services to sailing. Currently partnering with ACM CRC, Steber International and UNSW Sydney on sustainable composites.

DAY 2 KEYNOTE



Dr Tong Xie

Associate Lecturer, UNSW Sydney | CEO & Founder, GreenDynamics

Leads UNSW Sydney's AI4Science initiative within SPREE. Built DARWIN, the first large language model for the physical sciences, and MIST, a reasoning model for chemistry. Ranked among NCI Australia's Top 10 HPC-AI Talents.

SPEAKER



A/Prof. Scott Barnett

Deakin University | Applied Artificial Intelligence Institute (A2I2)

Leads the AI for Manufacturing team at A2I2, helping manufacturers apply AI to quality and productivity. Delivered 24 industry R&D projects in five years, including with Harley-Davidson and Carbon Revolution. Founded Melbourne's 1,400+ member AI Engineering Network.

VIEW AGENDA ONLINE

Australian Composites Manufacturing CRC
Annual Partner Meeting 2026

