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Light metal, weighty questions: ALUMINIUM 2026 announces first conference sessions

The first speakers and sessions of the ALUMINIUM 2026 conference programme are confirmed. On two stages, political leaders, industry associations and global players will discuss what is moving the industry today – including Europe's first new primary smelter in over three decades, automotive competitiveness, and the future of carbon pricing.

ALUMINIUM, the global meeting place for the industry, returns to Messe Düsseldorf from 6 to 8 October 2026 with more than 800 exhibitors and partners and 21,000+ trade visitors expected. Alongside six halls brimming with new technologies and innovations, a full conference programme on two stages adds essential context, with international experts tackling the question of where politics, regulation and markets are heading in the years ahead. All sessions are included in the visitor ticket.

How to compete, how to decarbonise: two tracks in Hall 7a and Hall 6

The **ALUMINIUM Conference**, organised with official event partner Aluminium Deutschland in Hall 7a, delivers strategic knowledge for decision-makers: markets, trade and industrial policy, supply chain resilience, and the outlook for key user industries including automotive, aerospace, defence, packaging and construction. The new **Sustainability & Recycling Conference** in Hall 6, hosted in collaboration with industry analyst CRU, puts circular economy, low-carbon production and carbon regulation under the microscope.

The speaker line-up reflects the calibre of the conversation: political leaders such as Mona Neubaur, Deputy Minister President and Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's industrial heartland, who delivers the opening keynote; the heads of major industry associations including Aluminium Deutschland and European Aluminium; and senior executives from global players such as Novelis, Constellium, Hydro, Speira, Schüco and Airbus Defence and Space.

"What makes this year's programme special is how close it sits to the daily reality of our visitors", says Patrick Herman, Event Director of ALUMINIUM at RX. "The questions on our stages are the same ones being discussed in boardrooms across the industry right now. In Düsseldorf, you hear them answered first-hand – and two hours later you are sitting across the table from a potential supplier or partner. One visit, multiple business-critical conversations: that is exactly the idea."

ALUMINIUM Conference: strategy for a decisive decade

After the official opening on 6 October – with welcomes from Event Director Patrick Herman, Aluminium Deutschland Director General Angelika El-Noshokaty and European Aluminium Director General Paul Voss – **Mona Neubaur** sets the political tone with her opening keynote on aluminium's critical role in Europe's industrial and energy agenda.

Among the first-day highlights is **“Enabling Europe's First Primary Aluminium Smelter in Over Three Decades: Low Carbon, in Europe, for Europe”**. Maxime Vandersmissen, Chief Commercial Officer of Arctial, presents the project for a 0.6-million-tonne primary smelter in Finland, powered by fossil-free electricity – a landmark for European material security at a time when more than 60% of the continent's primary aluminium demand is met from outside the EU.

In **“Automotive under Pressure – Can Europe Keep its Competitive Edge?”**, senior commercial leaders from Novelis and Constellium debate how the aluminium supply chain can support the automotive industry as it faces tightening environmental regulation and escalating global competition.

The user-industry perspective continues on day two: **“Packaging for a Changing World”** brings Novelis and Speira together on aluminium's role as a preferred packaging material amid regulation, consumer demand and global competition, while **“Building Beyond Carbon”** with Schüco explores new materials and strategies for Europe's construction sector.

Sustainability & Recycling Conference: from regulation to opportunity

Opened by Paul Williams, Head of Aluminium Value Chain at CRU, the Sustainability & Recycling Conference translates the sustainability agenda into market realities. **“Aluminium Demand – From Energy Transition to AI”** examines how renewable energy infrastructure and the rise of artificial intelligence are reshaping demand patterns and supply chains.

Regulation takes centre stage in **“Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM): Implementation and Current Status”**, a practical assessment of what CBAM means for producers and traders today, and in **“Carbon Pricing: The Future Direction of Carbon Prices”**, where CRU analysts map the trends, regulatory shifts and technologies shaping tomorrow's carbon costs.

On day two, **“Aluminium as a Strategic Raw Material”** sees Marijn Rietveld, VP and Head of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships at Hydro, examine transparency in the value chain and future-proofing industries. Technical sessions on recycled content and alloy design for recycling complete the track.

The conference stage is anchored in the **Sustainability & Recycling Area** in Hall 6 and Hall 5, combining exhibition space, showcases and a networking lounge – giving this year's overarching sustainability theme the space it deserves.

The conference programme is being continuously expanded in the run-up to the event, with the latest sessions available at www.aluminium-exhibition.com.

Beyond the stages: awards, pavilions and digital services

On 6 October, the popular **Women with Metal Awards**, presented with Women with Metal, ALFED and Aluminium International Today, honour the work of the many women shaping the global aluminium industry, and those who champion them. The new **ALUMINIUM Innovation Awards**, created with International Aluminium Journal, celebrate the inventive spirit driving the industry

forward, from low-carbon manufacturing and automation to product innovation. The public online vote runs from 7 to 23 September, and the winners will be announced at the award ceremony on 7 October.

Five **Themed Pavilions** – Foundry, Primary, Surface, Magnesium and Sustainability – give specialist fields a dedicated home on the show floor. The **Newcomer Pavilion** introduces young companies to the industry, while the **Country Pavilions** from Denmark and Norway, joined by the Aluminium Scandinavia Pavilion, open doors into the key Nordic markets.

New for 2026 is **ALUMINIUM NOW**, a mobile-friendly web solution that helps visitors navigate their three days in Düsseldorf, from finding the right exhibitors and sessions to capturing contacts via the integrated Colleqt QR function – a practical companion that works even offline.

Opening times and tickets

ALUMINIUM 2026 is held from 6 to 8 October 2026 at Messe Düsseldorf, Germany, occupying halls 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7a. Visitor access is via the Hall 6 and South entrances. Daily opening times are 9:00 to 18:00. Tickets are sold as a 3-day pass for €52 when booked in advance, compared with €105 on site – a saving of more than 50%. The pass provides full access to all three show days, including all conference and award sessions. Information and tickets are available at www.aluminium-exhibition.com.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About ALUMINIUM

ALUMINIUM is the world's leading event for the aluminium sector. Every two years, it brings together industry leaders in Düsseldorf, Germany, for a dedicated exhibition and conference, driving meaningful conversations, innovation and business ventures. Taking place 6–8 October 2026, this year's edition focuses on sustainability, circular economy, and technological transformation. ALUMINIUM is the flagship of a global RX series for the aluminium industry, including ALUMINIUM USA in Louisville, ALUMINIUM China in Shanghai, and the new ALUMINIUM Arabia in Riyadh. www.aluminium-exhibition.com

About RX

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