October 2026 CHMI Semiannual Meeting Summary

The Center for Composite and Hybrid Materials Interfacing (CHMI), an NSF Industry-University Cooperative Research Center (I/UCRC), held its Fall 2026 Semiannual Meeting on October 14-15, 2026, in Atlanta, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by Georgia Institute of Technology at the Global Learning Center and brought together faculty, students, industry partners, and government representatives from CHMI's three university sites: Georgia Institute of Technology (GT), Oakland University (OU), and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK). The meeting provided an opportunity to review center activities, strengthen collaboration among members, engage with industry partners, and discuss future directions for the center.

Attendance Overview

The meeting drew strong participation from CHMI's academic, industrial, and government stakeholders.

- **Total in-person attendance:** 44
- **Industry Advisory Board (IAB):** 13 representatives from 10 member companies
- **Faculty and staff:** 17
- **Students:** 14
- **NSF participation:** Debasis Majumdar, NSF Program Director, participated virtually.

Pre-Meeting Activities

Meeting activities began on the evening of October 13 with a welcome dinner for IAB members, faculty, and invited participants. The gathering provided an informal setting for networking and discussion prior to the start of the formal meeting program.

Opening Remarks and Center Updates

The meeting officially opened on the morning of October 14 with welcoming remarks from Mr. Nathan Schulz (IAB Chair) and Dr. Chris Muhlstein (Center Director). Dr. Muhlstein provided updates on CHMI operations, membership, finances, ongoing activities, and future planning. Discussions highlighted the center's continued emphasis on industry-relevant research, student engagement, and collaboration among the participating universities and industrial partners.

Day 1 Highlights – Research Presentations and Networking



Day 1 featured presentations on active CHMI research projects and related center activities. Faculty and student researchers shared progress on ongoing efforts addressing challenges in composite and hybrid materials interfacing, manufacturing, joining, characterization, and structural performance. These presentations generated active discussion between researchers and industry representatives and provided valuable opportunities for feedback and technical exchange.

The evening program was held at the Advanced Manufacturing Pilot Facility (AMPF) at Georgia Tech. The event combined a facility visit, student poster session, and networking reception, providing attendees with an opportunity to learn about Georgia Tech's advanced manufacturing capabilities while engaging directly with CHMI students and researchers. IAB representatives, faculty, and students discussed research activities, career development, and future collaboration opportunities in an informal and interactive environment. The event highlighted CHMI's commitment to connecting students with industry partners while showcasing state-of-the-art manufacturing infrastructure available to support collaborative research initiatives.



Day 2 Highlights – Strategic Planning and Future Directions

The second day of the meeting began with 5-minute pitch presentations of proposed research concepts for the next round of CHMI projects. Faculty members and research teams from the three CHMI university sites presented a diverse set of ideas addressing challenges relevant to composite and hybrid materials interfacing and aligned with the interests of CHMI member organizations. The concept presentations stimulated discussion among industry representatives and researchers and provided valuable input for future project development within the center.



The Industry Advisory Board conducted strategic planning discussions addressing future research priorities, member engagement, communication practices, and center development. Participants discussed broad areas of continuing interest to industry, including composite joining and bonding, structural integrity, coatings and interfaces, sustainability, and fundamental adhesion and fracture science. These discussions will help guide future center activities and project planning efforts.

Industry participants emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong connection between fundamental research and practical industrial applications while continuing to support collaborative research involving faculty, students, and industry partners. Discussions also addressed opportunities to enhance member communications, strengthen outreach efforts, and improve reporting and information sharing throughout the center.

IAB Leadership and Center Development

The Industry Advisory Board announced new co-chairs for the upcoming term: Natalia Rivera-Gonzalez of Syensqo and Tyler Daspit of Dominion Energy. Participants expressed appreciation for the contributions of current and past IAB leadership and their continued commitment to CHMI's success.

The IAB also discussed several initiatives intended to support CHMI's continued growth and visibility. These included modernization of outreach and marketing materials, enhanced engagement with prospective member organizations, and improved communication of CHMI's research, education, and workforce-development activities. Participants also discussed opportunities to further strengthen student participation and visibility within the center.

Closing Remarks

The meeting concluded with summary remarks from Industry Advisory Board representatives and CHMI leadership from all three university sites. Participants reflected on the productive technical discussions, strong student participation, and valuable industry engagement that characterized the meeting. Appreciation was expressed to all attendees for their contributions and continued support of CHMI's mission.

The October 2026 Semiannual Meeting reinforced CHMI's commitment to advancing composite and hybrid materials interfacing through collaborative, industry-engaged research, workforce development, and innovation. The meeting highlighted the value of sustained partnership among universities, industry members, students, and government stakeholders in addressing challenges relevant to the composites and advanced materials community.

Acknowledgements and Next Meeting

CHMI thanks the faculty, students, industry members, and government representatives who contributed to a productive and successful Fall 2026 Semiannual Meeting. Special appreciation is extended to the Georgia Institute of Technology team for hosting the meeting and to the Industry Advisory Board members for their active participation and guidance throughout the event.

Planning is underway for the next CHMI Semiannual Meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for **March 30-April 1, 2027**, at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The meeting will continue CHMI's tradition of bringing together academic researchers, students, industry partners, and government representatives to review progress, discuss emerging opportunities, and strengthen collaborative research efforts.

CHMI gratefully acknowledges the continued support of the National Science Foundation and the active engagement of its member organizations, whose participation remains essential to the center's success.