



Irish
Polymer
Group

Irish Polymer Group Conference 2026

Thursday 23rd April
Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone,
Co. Westmeath, Ireland

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STAY AHEAD OF THE INDUSTRY

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 23RD APRIL

	8.30	Doors Open - Coffee, Networking & Exhibition Viewing.
MORNING SESSION BEGINS, CHAIRD BY LOUIS GOOR	9.00	Opening Address - Louis Goor, IPG Chairperson.
	9.10	Keynote - Dexcom - Their Journey to Ireland Seán Cooney, Director of Engineering, Dexcom, Athenry.
	9.45	The Evolving Global Supply Chain & Sustainability Alfredo Nasta, ExxonMobil, discussing the rapidly changing global polymer supply chain, its effect on material availability, circularity and sustainability of the industry.
	10.15	Efficient Design & Development to Reduce Time to Market André Jansen and Tim van Loon, IGS GeboJagema, exploring design & development ideas that ease communication, save time and reduce cost.
	10.45	Polymer Apprenticeship Update Jennifer Lynch, Apprenticeship Project Executive, Ibec, will bring us up to date with the latest developments in the Polymer Apprenticeship scheme.
10.50 COFFEE BREAK		
	11.00	Exhibition Viewing - See the exhibitors list on the next page.
	11.30	Efficient & Compliant Validation Dr. Christoph Stoeger, Technical Manager, Development, Engel, will talk us through how intelligent machines can ease the pain of validation.
	12.00	Panel Discussion - Scale to Scalability: Building Businesses that Grow As businesses evolve, moving from small-scale operations to fully scalable enterprises presents both opportunities and challenges. This panel brings together industry leaders to share their insights on scaling strategies, internal decision-making, and risk management. Panellists will discuss how they assess growth opportunities, balance operational capacity with market demand, and navigate the risks associated with business expansion. Attendees will gain practical perspectives on the steps, trade-offs, and strategic thinking required to build sustainable, high-performing organisations in today's dynamic business environment. PANEL MODERATOR Kenny O'Brien PANEL MEMBERS Gerry Kilcommins - Cardiac Booster, John Curley - Trend Technologies, Andrea Cawley - EY, Pat Whyte - Invermed
	12.50	Polymer Connect Update Caitríona Mordan, Cluster Manager, ATIM, will update us on the latest news from the all-island polymer network.
	13.00 LUNCH	Networking & Exhibition Viewing - See the exhibitors list on the next page.
AFTERNOON SESSION BEGINS; CHAIRD BY LORNA O'GARA	14.10	Turnkey Predictions and Practicalities Dave Raine, Managing Director, Sumitomo Demag UK, looking at building resilience and shaping the future of efficiency and quality in polymer manufacturing.
	14.40	Operation Clean Sweep & the Pellet Loss Regulations Mark McAuley, Director Polymer Technology Ireland (PTI), guides us through the new requirements on all Irish companies to control & reduce their pellet loss.
	15.00	Funding Sustainable Polymers: Grant funding and R&D Tax Credits Demystified Darragh Gaffney, Business Lead, Leyton & Dr. Eoin Murray, Head of R&D, 3A Composites, Building resilience and shaping the future of efficiency and quality in polymer manufacturing.
	15.30	Sustainable Solutions for Process Cooling Mark Hopper, Process Cooling Manager, Summit Systems Ltd, will guide us through the most energy efficient technology for process cooling.
	16.00 SUMMARY, CLOSE AND EXHIBITION VIEWING	

CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

Applied Polymer Technologies (APT)

ARBURG Ltd

Delta Q

Engel

Ewikon Hot Runner Systems

FANUC Ireland

First Polymer Training Skillnet

Hasco

HB Therm

IGS GeboJagama

Innovize Ireland

Invotek Polymer Solutions

IPC - Innovative Polymer Compounds

JHL Engineering Ltd

JL Goor

JL Goor Materials

Labotek

NCC

Performance Masterbatches / Colloids

Polymer Connect

Polymer Technology Apprenticeship

SEPRO

Sumitomo Demag

Summit Systems

TSM Polytech

Yushin Automation

Book your place at
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GUEST SPEAKERS



LOUIS JM GOOR

Chairman of IPG, JLGoor Ltd & JLGoor Materials Ltd.

Louis has a Bachelor of Engineering from University College Galway graduating in 1991. He has since served in JLGoor & JLGoor Materials in Sales, Operations, Managing director, and now Chairmans roles.



SEÁN COONEY

Director of Engineering, Dexcom.

Seán Cooney is a Director of Engineering at Dexcom based in Athenry, Co. Galway, where he provides strategic leadership for the engineering functions supporting advanced medical device manufacturing and site scale up. With a formal engineering background and twenty years' experience in medical device environments, he focuses on building scalable operating models, developing technical leadership capability, and driving sustainable performance across quality, cost, and delivery.

Seán brings extensive experience in materials engineering, supply chain robustness, and system reliability - ensuring resilient manufacturing solutions that ultimately deliver the best possible outcomes for patients.



ALFREDO NASTA

Senior Sales & Marketing Leader, ExxonMobil.

20+ years experience at ExxonMobil, experienced across Retail Fuels, Finished Lubricants, and Chemical Polymers in the EAME region. Proven track record leading B2C and B2B marketing strategies and business transformations for global brands including Mobil 1, Mobil Super, Mobil Delvac, and ExxonMobil Signature Polymer Brands.

Currently Europe Polyethylene Market Development Manager, leading market development and supporting the industry's transition toward circularity. Chemical Engineer by background, with advanced marketing education from Kellogg School of Management and executive leadership training at Thunderbird and UNC. Based in Brussels.



ANDRÉ JANSEN

Sales Manager, IGS GeboJagama,
a world leading Mouldmaker originated in the Netherlands.

André is responsible for the commercial relationship with healthcare ophthalmic customers, with a focus on long-term partnership and added value by innovative improvements on the customer side. He has more than 30 years of experience in technical sales in the injection moulding and manufacturing industry and has worked for IGS GeboJagama since 2011.



TIM VAN LOON

Manager R&D & Cam, IGS GeboJagama,
a world leading Mouldmaker originated in the Netherlands.

Tim is responsible for operation and innovation within the R&D and Cam departments, for example model-based definition and standardisation projects to create an efficient workflow.

He has been with IGS GeboJagama since 2020 and started as a project engineer within the R&D department.

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JENNIFER LYNCH

Apprenticeships Project Executive, Ibec.

Jen helps manage the Polymer Technology Apprenticeships and has experience with apprenticeships in other sectors.

Jen works closely with employers and education providers on the development and promotion of the apprenticeship programme which is run in collaboration with industry and technological University of the Shannon, Athlone.



DR. CHRISTOPH STOEGER

Technical Manager, Development, ENGEL.

Dr. Christoph Stoeger works as Technical Manager in Development at ENGEL, where he is responsible for the development of digital assistance systems with a focus on application technology. Before moving into industry, he earned his doctorate in mechatronics with a focus on robotics, combining in-depth technological expertise with practical solutions for injection moulding technology.



KENNY O' BRIEN

Centre Manager, Applied Polymer Technologies (APT) based in TUS.

Kenny O' Brien is currently Centre Manager at Applied Polymer Technologies (APT) based in TUS (since September 2024) and former General Manager at Athlone Extrusions Ltd. who are part of the Swiss Schweiter Technologies Group. Kenny started his career in 1990 having completed a degree in Polymer Technology from Athlone IT, now a Technological University. Kenny has worked in the Polymer Industry in Ireland for 36 years in Injection Moulding, Blown Film, Electronics and Sheet Extrusion and has extensive experience in Manufacturing and Strategic Management having worked for Japanese, American, British, Irish and Swiss companies including Motorola. He also completed a Masters Degree from Trinity College in 2009 in International Business.

He is currently a steering Committee member of First Polymer Training Skillnet and regularly contributes to education as a part time Lecturer(HR and Management/ Leadership) and Upskilling at the Technological University of the Shannon:Midlands and Midwest. Former roles include IBEC National Committee member, Chairman Plastics Ireland , Enterprise Ireland Manufacturing Group Committee Member, Company Director.

Kenny has unique experience in General Management , Operational Management and Plant Management combined with multinational Company working experience, sale of Athlone Extrusions in 2017 and post sale integration experience to August 2024 and is now leveraging his experience within TUS, APT and PRISM to further develop TUS Industry collaboration and Applied Polymer Technologies.



JOHN CURLEY

Managing Director, Trend Technologies Europe.

John has been in the Polymer industry all his career having graduated in Polymer Engineering from TUS Athlone in 1994. He then completed an MBA in Business Practice in the IMI from 2007-2010.

He has served in senior and influential roles during his career - most notably:
1997 - 2010: Tech Group Europe (Now West Pharma) Start-up team & Business unit manager.

2011 - 2018: MGS Manufacturing Group Ireland Start-up team & Plant Manager

2018 - Present: Trend Technology Europe, Managing Director.

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GUEST SPEAKERS



GERRY KILCOMMINS

Chief Operating Officer, CardiacBooster.

Former Medtronic Vice President Worldwide Operations - Interventional Vascular & Structural Heart

Prior to joining CardiacBooster as Chief Operating Officer, Gerry has worked with Healthdyne, Becton Dickinson, CR Bard, AVE and Medtronic. He became General Manager of Medtronic Ireland in 2003. Over the past 20 years Gerry has been in roles of increasing responsibility at a Medtronic Business Unit, Group and Corporate level. In recent years with the company, he has held responsibility for circa 25 manufacturing plants and approx 18,000 employees in the US, Mexico, Canada, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Vietnam, Singapore and China. His base of expertise also includes the scaling and launching of several major new products and therapies.

Gerry has extensive experience across R&D, Advanced Manufacturing Engineering, Operations and Supply Chain. He has been involved in over fifteen acquisitions, has led Operational Excellence/Lean, DFM and Manufacturing network transformations across Medtronic.

Gerry graduated from the University of Galway (Ireland) with a Degree in Manufacturing Technology and in 2003 was awarded a Masters in Management & Business Science from Trinity College, Dublin. More recently he achieved both a Diploma in Corporate Governance and a Professional Certificate in AI Governance, awarded by the Corporate Governance Institute.

In 2008, Gerry was recognized with a Medtronic Wallin Leadership award. During 2011, Gerry held the position of President of the American Chamber of Commerce, Ireland and was also Chairman of the Irish Government sponsored Ireland West Region Enterprise Action initiative. He recently served as a member of the Ibec (Irish Business & Employers Confederation) Board of Directors for 3 years. Gerry took early retirement from Medtronic in May 2024. He was announced as the AmCham (American Chamber of Commerce) US/Ireland Global Leadership Business Award Winner 2024. In August 2024, Gerry was conferred with an honorary doctorate by the University of Galway for his contributions to the medical technology industry in Ireland.

Gerry resides in Mountbellew in North County Galway (Ireland) with his wife Pauline. They are proud parents to two daughters, Bronagh and Muirne. Outside of his professional life, Gerry has a variety of interests. He is a hobby farmer, which reflects his roots and interest in the land. Gerry is also an avid sports enthusiast, having played Gaelic Football over many years. His commitment to the sport extends beyond playing, as he has recently served as chairman of his local GAA club. Additionally, Gerry follows other sports with great interest, notably hurling and rugby.



ANDREA CAWLEY

Client Relations Lead, EY Consultancy.

Andrea Cawley is Client Relations Lead with EY Consultancy specialising in the manufacturing and technology sectors. In her current role, she partners with organisations to accelerate business performance through targeted consultancy spanning Operational Excellence, AI, Cybersecurity, Risk and Sustainability.

Her indepth knowledge of manufacturing comes from 11 years as Commercial Director with Automatic Plastics, a manufacturer for pharma and medtech.

Andrea is a Chartered Director with expertise in governance, compliance, strategy and excellence in directorship and on company boards and is a Certified Six Sigma Green Belt with a Masters in Economics.

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GUEST SPEAKERS



PAT WHYTE

Chief Executive Officer, InverMed.

Pat is a highly experienced Plastics Engineer with over 40 years of business leadership in the medical devices industry. He has a strong track record in establishing and scaling successful manufacturing companies, with particular expertise in the application of plastics for minimally invasive medical technologies.

Since 2006, Pat has served as CEO and owner of InverMed, where he leads the development and manufacture of innovative medical devices from concept through to commercialisation. Under his leadership, the company has built a reputation for delivering high-quality, precision-engineered solutions to the global healthcare sector.

Pat's contributions to the plastics industry have been widely recognised. He has received multiple awards, including the TUS Polymer Department Alumni Award for Services to the Plastics Industry and an Outstanding Contribution Award at the Skillnet Ireland 25th Anniversary Awards.

In addition to his commercial achievements, Pat is deeply committed to industry development and skills training. He was instrumental in establishing First Polymer Training Skillnet, serving as its first Chairman, and continues to play an active role on its Steering Committee. He has also been a long-standing member of the Irish Polymer Group, including serving as Chairman for several years.



CAITRÍONA MORDAN

Cluster Manager, ATIM.

Caitríona Mordan is deeply committed to driving innovation and bolstering competitiveness within the manufacturing sector. As Manager for the ATIM (Advanced Technologies in Manufacturing) Cluster, Caitríona has played a pivotal role in accelerating industry digital and sustainable transformation of 70+ companies since the cluster's inception in 2021.

With a diverse career spanning roles such as EU Project Officer at the ADAPT Centre (The Irish Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence) and Dublin City University, Caitríona boasts a proven track record of facilitating collaborative projects and implementing impact frameworks. She previously worked as Communications and Public Engagement Manager at Engineers Ireland where she led national educational outreach programs and promoted STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) initiatives. Caitríona sits on a number of boards including Applied Polymer Technology (APT), Irish Polymer Group and CircVET (circular economy practical training tools for manufacturing industries).



LORNA O'GARA

Business Development Manager, Ultrapolymers.

Lorna has a B.Sc. in Polymer Technology from Athlone IT, now TUS and has many years' experience working in the polymer industry. After graduating, she started her career working with Irish Customer Extruders, then spent time working in the UK and Europe in Technical sales roles for Polyurethane systems and Conductive Coatings for plastics. She then worked for Trend Technologies as Key Account manager working with global OEMs of computers, telecoms, consumer goods and healthcare products.

After a career break to spend time with her family, including a relocation to Brazil for 4 years, she joined the Ultrapolymers team in 2015 where her current role is Business Development Manager.

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GUEST SPEAKERS



DAVE RAINE

Managing Director, Sumitomo Demag UK & Ireland.

Dave began his career in engineering in 1982 as an apprentice toolmaker at an injection moulding company in Cramlington, Northumberland. Completing a traditional 1980s apprenticeship laid the foundations for a career built on technical excellence, discipline, and a deep understanding of manufacturing from the shop floor up.

After progressing through manufacturing roles in Northumberland, Dave moved into pharmaceutical packaging in 1990 as a Development Technician at a new facility in North Shields. The transition into new product development expanded his technical capability and introduced him to commercial and customer facing aspects of the industry.

In 1994, Dave made an unexpected but pivotal move into Sales, driven by an opportunity to work closely with the Demag Hamilton business via Hardie Polymers, the then agent for the company. Leveraging his engineering background, he quickly established credibility with customers, progressing through roles including Technical Manager and Technical Director. In 2007, he joined Demag Hamilton full time, continuing to build long term customer relationships and commercial leadership.

In 2015, Dave joined FANUC UK, a major supplier to the Irish medical manufacturing market, further strengthening his leadership experience within highly regulated, technology driven environments.

In 2022, he returned to Sumitomo (Demag) as Managing Director of the UK & Ireland operation. The past three years have been among the most challenging and rewarding of his career, navigating complex market conditions and an ever changing world

Across more than four decades, Dave has led through significant industry disruption, including the 1999 mobile phone manufacturing collapse and the 2007 financial crisis, Covid, Brexit, and ongoing economic uncertainty.

He is known for his resilience, integrity, and unwavering focus on customers' interests, underpinned by a career that never lost sight of its engineering roots.



MARK MCAULEY

Director of Polymer Technology Ireland (PTI),
the national trade association for the polymer industry within Ibec.

Mark McAuley is Director of Polymer Technology Ireland (PTI) the national trade association for the polymer industry within Ibec. PTI advocates for Ireland's thriving plastics and polymer manufacturing sector. It supports the sector through regulatory guidance, technical training, national apprenticeships, and policy leadership to foster growth and sustainability.



DARRAGH GAFFNEY

Business Lead, Leyton Ireland.

Darragh supports companies across Ireland in accessing innovation funding and tax incentives, including R&D tax credits and grants. With a background spanning industry and innovation networks, Darragh previously served as Director of Growth at IRDG (Innovation Network Ireland) and R&D Director at Monaghan Biosciences. He works closely with businesses across manufacturing, life sciences, and technology sectors, helping them invest in innovation and scale sustainably.

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GUEST SPEAKERS



DR. EOIN MURRAY

Head of R&D, 3A Composites,
a global manufacturer of polymer sheets and composite materials.

Dr. Eoin Murray is Head of R&D at 3A Composites, a global manufacturer of polymer sheets and composite materials. Based at the Athlone Extrusions site, he leads R&D strategy and customer-focused product development.

With 13+ years' industrial R&D experience, he specialises in innovation management, commercialisation and IP strategy. He holds a BSc, MSc and PhD in Chemistry, and an Executive MBA. In 2020, he was awarded Europe's Chemist of the Year (PhD level) for inventing and commercialising chromatography technologies now sold globally.



MARK HOPPER

National Sales Manager for Summit Process Cooling,
part of the Summit Systems Group.

Mark Hopper is National Sales Manager for Summit Process Cooling, part of the Summit Systems Group. He joined the business in June 2024 as Northern Sales Engineer, bringing more than two decades of experience within the industrial cooling sector. Following a strong first year supporting customers across the region, Mark was quickly promoted to National Sales Manager on 1 April 2025.

Throughout his career, Mark has built a reputation for delivering practical, energy-efficient cooling solutions tailored to demanding production environments. His technical expertise spans process chillers, temperature control systems and optimised cooling strategies, helping manufacturers improve process stability, reduce energy consumption and enhance operational efficiency.

Prior to joining Summit Systems, Mark spent 11 years at Aqua Cooling, initially as a Service Engineer for five years before moving into a Sales Engineer role for the following six years, gaining extensive experience in designing and specifying bespoke cooling systems for a wide range of industrial applications. Earlier in his career, he also spent eight years with other process cooling companies in a service engineering role, building a strong technical foundation in installation, maintenance and fault finding across industrial cooling systems.

In his current role, Mark leads the UK cooling sales team, strengthening customer partnerships and driving strategic growth across process cooling applications within the plastics industry and beyond. He remains focused on helping customers move beyond basic temperature management towards efficient, performance-led cooling solutions that deliver measurable long-term value.

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STAY AHEAD OF THE INDUSTRY FEES

DELEGATE TICKET

€150 / person

EXHIBITOR SPACE FEE €350

(Please contact Catherine Collins before purchase)

IPG MEMBER TICKET

€100 / person

STUDENT / THIRD LEVEL DELEGATE TICKET

€30 / person



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