Day 1: Wednesday, 16 September 2026	
Time	**Session Topic**
09:00-09:05	**Welcome by MC and Curtain raiser**
09:05-09:15	**Welcome Address by Chairman of the GPCA R&I Committee** Speaker: **Dr. Waleed Ahmad Al-Shalfan,** *VP for Corporate Sustainability,* **SABIC T&I** and **Chairman,** *Research and Innovation Committee,* **GPCA**
09:15-09:30	**Opening Plenary: Scaling Innovation - The Engine Behind Economic Transformation** *This big-picture address will explore how scaling innovation, beyond breakthrough ideas, can drive sustained economic transformation. Drawing on insights from the region's highly prized technology and innovation ecosystem, a visionary leader will delve into a holistic overview of how research, digital advancement, and industrial capability can be translated into large-scale impact. Key themes will include moving from pilot to platform, enabling innovation through long-term investment and cross-sector collaboration, and deploying advanced technologies to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and economic diversification. This address will offer a practical perspective for leaders and policymakers, on building innovation models that fuel growth, resilience, and sustainable economic progress.* Speaker: **Ahmad O. Al-Khowaiter,** *EVP - Technology & Innovation,* **Aramco**
09:30-09:45	**Ministerial Address: From Innovation to Industrial Advantage: Saudi Arabia's Blueprint for the Future** *Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Energy is playing a pivotal role in translating innovation that delivers into industrial advantage, by strengthening the connection between research, technology, investment, and talent. The address will highlight the Kingdom's approach to building the capabilities, ecosystems, and talent needed to move innovation from discovery to deployment and accelerate industrial transformation. It will offer a strategic perspective on how empowering research and developing the workforce of tomorrow can strengthen Saudi Arabia's competitiveness, resilience, and position as a global industrial leader.* Speaker: **Dr. Majid Algwaiz,** *Deputy Minister of Development & Project Management,* **Ministry of Energy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**
09:45-10:00	**Keynote Address: Innovation with Purpose - How Innovation Ecosystems Turn Science into Industrial Impact** *Innovation is the engine of growth and competitiveness in the chemical industry, and building effective networks is key to turning ideas into impact. This session will explore how global innovation ecosystems foster collaboration, accelerate commercialization, and drive sustainable solutions. It will also examine the GCC context, highlighting opportunities for regional chemical companies to leverage research, technology, and partnerships to scale innovations, enhance productivity, and strengthen their position in the global market.* Speaker: **Dr. Thorsten Loehl,** *VP - Science & Engineering,* **Borouge International**
10:00-10:30	**Future Walk-through: From Vision to Action: Powering the Innovation Playbook for the GCC's Chemical Future**

	This session will delve into how the GCC can transform scientific excellence into industrial and commercial success advancing the future of chemical innovation in the region. Bringing together perspectives from industry, academia and venture capital, the discussion will highlight practical pathways for translating research breakthroughs into scalable technologies, viable spinouts, and revenue-generating ventures, thereby strengthening innovation ecosystems that accelerate commercialization and create long-term economic value for the region. The session will cover: • *Lessons from successful R&D commercialization and spinouts* • *Best practices for bridging the gap between research and industry impact* • *Insights on building sustainable business models around breakthrough technologies* Speaker: **Mahdi Aladel,** *CEO,* **Aramco Ventures**
10:30-11:30	**Strategic Panel: From Discovery to Deployment: Transforming Research into Industrial Impact** *This strategic panel will examine how the chemical industry can move faster from discovery to deployment – turning research breakthroughs into scalable industrial solutions. Panelists will share practical approaches to reduce time-to-market, de-risk scale-up, and ensure innovation delivers real commercial and sustainability impact. The panel will cover:* • *Bridging the gap from lab and pilot to full industrial deployment* • *Leveraging industry-academia-startup ecosystems to accelerate commercialization* • *Aligning research priorities with market demand, capital discipline, and long-term industrial value creation* Panelists: • **Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Farraj,** *General Manager of Corporate Technology,* **TASNEE** • **Dr. Afrah Aldawsari,** *GM - Refining and Petrochemical Technologies Institute,* **King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST)** • **Mohammad Essamuddin Ibrahim,** *GM, Research and Innovation,* **Sipchem** Moderator: **Hasan Alkabeer,** *MD and Partner,* **Boston Consulting Group (BCG)**
11:30-11:35	**Group Photo of Conference Speakers and Attendees**
11:35-12:15	**Inauguration of "INNOVATORS OF TOMORROW" Zone** ***.. Networking Break follows ..***
12:15-13:00	**Leadership Dialogue: Building Bridges of Trust: Unlocking Cross-Sector Collaboration Between Industry, Academia & Government** *Cross-sector collaboration is critical for addressing complex challenges in the chemical industry, from research commercialization to sustainability and talent development. This session will highlight successful collaboration models, uncover lessons from joint initiatives, and discuss how trust, alignment of objectives, and structured partnerships can accelerate impact across the ecosystem. The session will also cover:* • *Practical frameworks for building successful industry-academia-government partnerships* • *Insights into funding mechanisms and risk-sharing strategies* • *Key conditions for long-term collaboration, innovation, and shared success* Panelists:

	• **Dr. Haleema Al-Amri,** *Sr. Director of the Energy Technology Innovation Observatory Department,* **Ministry of Energy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia** • **Prof. Saad F. Alafnan,** *Chairman, Department of Chemical Engineering,* **King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM)** • **Dr. Mohammed Al-Hazmi,** *GM, Chemicals, Technology & Innovation,* **SABIC** Moderator: **Jad Moussalli,** *Partner - Energy and Natural Resources Practice,* **Oliver Wyman**
13:00-14:00	**Networking Lunch and Prayers**
14:00-14:45	**Strategic Panel: Orchestrating Ecosystem Growth - The Role of Innovation Clusters and Hubs** *This strategic panel will explore how innovation clusters and hubs drive industrial growth, technology commercialization, and ecosystem development. Panelists will share insights on designing effective innovation environments, fostering collaboration between academia, government, and industry, and enabling startups and corporates to scale solutions, highlighting practical lessons from leading regional innovation parks and the companies that thrive within them. The panel will cover:* • *How innovation clusters can be structured to enable collaboration, resource sharing, and cross-sector partnerships* • *Mechanisms for translating R&D outputs into commercial solutions and scalable industrial impact* • *Role of anchor companies in clusters to accelerate innovation, mentor startups, and co-create technologies* Panelists: • **Mundhar Al-Rawahi,** *Head Ladayn Program,* **OQ Marketing** • **Antonio Foresti,** *CEO,* **Jcoplastic Middle East** and *MD,* **Jcoplastic S.p.A. (Italy)** Moderator: **José Antonio Alberich,** *Partner,* **Kearney Middle East**
14:45-15:30	**Executive Panel: Talent for Tomorrow - Shaping the Next Generation of Scientific Minds** *Next-generation talent is the lifeblood of the GCC chemical industry to drive technological innovation, support ambitious sustainability and decarbonization goals, and maintain global competitiveness in a rapidly evolving sector. This executive panel will highlight initiatives in education, mentoring, and industry-academia collaboration that ensure a sustainable talent pipeline. Leaders will discuss strategies for building a future-ready workforce, bridging skills gaps, and fostering innovation-driven careers in chemistry, engineering, and related sciences. The pane will cover:* • *Approaches to equip students and young professionals with the skills needed for tomorrow's chemical industry* • *Bridging industry and academia: Collaborative programs, internships, and research partnerships that accelerate career readiness* • *Innovation through people: Creating an environment where scientific minds can thrive, drive R&D, and deliver industrial impact* Panelists: • **Dr. Reem A. Alfrayan,** *President of the Center for Knowledge and Innovation,* **King Abdulaziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba)** • **Azzam A. Al-Muhanna,** *Executive Director, Global Learning & SABIC Academy,* **SABIC** • **Saleh N. Alanazi,** *Learning & Development General Manager,* **National Water Company** Moderator: **Ahmad S. Al-Nasser,** *Representative, Demand Planning, Value Chain Planning,* **Sipchem** and *Co-Chair of the Leaders of Tomorrow Sub-Council,* **GPCA Youth Council**

15:30-15:35	**Closing Remarks from MC**
19:00-22:00	**Gala Dinner** *Location: Al Dana Ballroom*

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Day 2: Thursday, 17 September 2026	
Time	**Session Topic**
09:00-09:05	**Welcome by MC and recap of Day 1**
09:05-09:35	**Keynote Address: Roadmap to the Future of Chemical Innovation: Lessons from Global Leaders** *The keynote address on Day 2 will explore the future of the chemical industry through the lens of global innovation trends and best practices. Drawing on lessons from leading economies, it will highlight how diverse strategies in R&D, digitalization, sustainability, and ecosystem building are driving industrial transformation and competitiveness. The keynote will provide actionable insights on turning ideas into tangible impact, scaling technologies, and shaping a next-generation chemical industry that is sustainable, agile, and innovation-led. The address will cover:* • *Global innovation pathways: Emerging trends and breakthrough technologies shaping the chemical industry worldwide* • *Regional adaptation and industrial transformation: How global best practices can be localized to accelerate regional competitiveness, sustainability, and growth* • *From insight to action: Lessons on translating research, digital solutions, and collaborative strategies into measurable industrial impact* Speaker: **Dr. Alexandra Zakharova,** *Partner and KSA Chemicals leader,* **McKinsey & Company**
09:35-10:30	**Strategic Panel: The Next Frontier of Innovation: Converging Discovery with AI and Supercomputing** *As the chemical industry enters an era defined by digital acceleration, the convergence of AI and high-performance computing is reshaping how breakthrough innovations are discovered and scaled. With unprecedented computational power now at researchers' fingertips, innovation cycles are compressing and entirely new pathways for molecular design are emerging. This session will bring together leading experts to explore how these technologies are transforming research, optimizing processes, and driving the next generation of scalable solutions across industries. The session will cover:* • *Leveraging AI to accelerate chemical research from concept to market-ready solutions* • *How AI-powered modeling is enabling faster, smarter, and more sustainable chemical design* • *Real-world cross-sector examples of AI-driven chemical innovations creating commercial value* Panelists: • **Prof. Raghavan B. Sunoj,** *Professor of Chemistry,* **Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay)** • **Mohammad B. Jalaly,** *Manager,* **Saudi Accelerated Innovation Lab (AramcoSAIL)** • **Saud Abdulaziz Alghwainem,** *Lead Scientist, Data Innovation,* **SABIC** Moderator: **Salam Al Awawdeh,** *Sr. MD – Energy & Chemicals, EMEA,* **Accenture**
10:30-11:00	**Implementation Case Study: The Intelligent Age - Why the Future of Chemicals is AI-Designed** *AI is no longer the future – it is already designing the molecules of tomorrow. The next breakthrough in chemicals may not come from the lab alone – instead it may be generated by artificial intelligence. Smart algorithms are transforming molecules faster than ever before, and innovation in chemicals is now powered by intelligence, not just experimentation. By combining molecular modelling with high-*

	performance computing, AI is accelerating innovation, predicting outcomes, and unlocking novel molecules. *This session gives an overview on how these technologies are converging to reshape the way chemicals are discovered, developed, and commercialized.* Speaker: **Dr. Monica de Mier,** *CEO and Co-Founder,* **Nextmol (Spain)**
11:00-11:15	**Keynote Address: Innovation as the Bedrock of Achieving Plastics Circularity** *Plastic waste presents both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, how do we stop plastic pollution? On the other, how do we unlock the potentially tremendous value of waste? Innovation has a central role to play and is emerging swiftly: new ways to design packaging for recyclability; new technologies to sort waste; new approaches to decontamination and improving the quality of recyclates to meet end market demand; better recycling systems; and the profound impact of digitization, traceability and AI. Innovation for a circular plastic economy presents unique challenges: not least enabling recycled materials to compete economically with virgin materials. But there is also the need to conceptualise innovation at a systems level – new technologies at a single point in the value chain won't succeed unless all parts of the circle are working together.* • *Where are the most exciting ideas and technologies emerging in the plastic circular economy today?* • *What sort of technologies are most relevant for the unique characteristics of the GCC?* • *How do we build innovation at a systems level?* Speaker: **Justin Wood,** *VP, Growth & Engagement,* **Alliance to End Plastic Waste**
11:15-12:00	**Networking break**
12:00-13:00	**Executive Panel: Protecting What Matters: IP Strategy for Safeguarding Innovation Value *(Trademarks, Patents, and Process Know-How)*** *In today's fast-paced chemical industry, innovation drives growth. However, without a clear IP strategy, the value of research and R&D investments can be lost. This session will explore how leading chemical companies protect patents, process know-how, trade secrets, and digital assets while collaborating across ecosystems. We will gain practical insights into balancing innovation with competitive advantage, securing industrial know-how, and turning research breakthroughs into defensible, scalable, and profitable technologies. The session will cover:* • *Patents: Protecting molecules, materials, and applications* • *Trademarks: Securing brand and market differentiation* • *Process know-how and trade secrets: Defending industrial advantage* Panelists: • **Diderico van Eyl,** *GM and Chief Counsel for Intellectual Property,* **SABIC** • **Justin Pierce,** *Partner & Chair of Intellectual Property Division,* **Venable;** *Adj. Professor, Strategic Management of Intellectual Property,* **Georgetown University;** *Host of AI & IP:* **The Legal Frontier podcast series** • **Lamisse Bajunaid,** *Partner*, **Clyde & Co** *Moderator:* **Abdullah Albaze,** *Sr. Business Manager, Oxygenates MEA,* **SABIC**
13:00-13:15	**Closing Remarks**

	Speaker: **Mater Aldhafeeri,** *Secretary General*, **GPCA**
13:15-15:00	**Networking Lunch and Prayers**