

March 10-11, 2026 | Chicago

Next-Gen EV Battery Innovation Forum

Powering the Next Decade of Electrification

The EV revolution is entering a decisive new phase: beyond today's lithium-ion dominance, breakthroughs in solid-state, sodium-ion, lithium-sulfur, and structural battery composites are reshaping the future of mobility and energy. At the same time, artificial intelligence, design-for-recycling principles, and resilient supply chains are accelerating the pace of innovation. The **Next-Gen EV Battery Innovation Forum**, March 10-11, 2026 in Chicago brings together leading researchers, engineers, and policy experts to explore how these advances will scale from lab to gigafactory — and how they will redefine safety, sustainability, and global competitiveness.

Over two in-depth days of presentations and panel sessions, attendees will gain actionable insights into the chemistry, systems integration, and circular economy practices that will shape the next decade of electric vehicles and grid storage. The forum offers a unique opportunity to connect with peers at the forefront of battery R&D, manufacturing, and policy. Whether you are an innovator, utility leader, or technology strategist, this is the place to chart the path toward the next generation of EV battery systems.

Topics to be Addressed Include:

Organized by



- Breakthroughs in solid-state battery chemistries
- Scaling sodium-ion technologies for EV applications
- Lithium-sulfur and organic electrode innovations
- AI-driven materials discovery and digital twins for R&D
- Structural battery composites integrating energy and vehicle design
- Next-gen anode and cathode development (silicon, high-Mn, high-Ni)
- Advanced electrolyte and interfacial engineering
- Safety and thermal management strategies for high-energy cells
- Designing EV packs for manufacturability and recycling
- Policy and regulatory frameworks shaping the U.S. battery market
- Standards development for safety, performance, and recycling
- Supply chain resilience and localization strategies
- Critical minerals sourcing and sustainability
- Manufacturing scale-up challenges: pilot to gigafactory
- Inline quality control and automation in production
- Grid integration of EV batteries and stationary storage systems
- Modular battery designs for heavy-duty, aviation, and stationary sectors
- International collaboration in R&D and policy alignment
- Investment, partnerships, and commercialization pathways
- and more

Forum Audience:

- Battery scientists & engineers
- AI & computational modeling specialists
- Battery pack engineers & integration managers
- Directors of electrification strategy
- Testing & safety managers
- Fleet electrification managers
- Directors of battery manufacturing & production
- Process engineers & senior managers
- Supply chain & materials strategy leaders
- Design-for-manufacturing specialists
- Utility program managers integrating EVs and second-life batteries
- Microgrid and storage engineers
- Directors of EV charging infrastructure
- Directors of sustainability and recycling
- Policymakers & regulators
- NGOs & nonprofit program directors
- Corporate venture arms of OEMs
- Analysts and academic researchers

<https://nextgenevbattery.com>

Preliminary Agenda *(Note: subject to change)*

Day 1 — Advanced Chemistries, AI & Safety

From Lithium-Ion to What's Next: Mapping the Battery Frontier

- Global trends in next-gen chemistries
- Scale-up and commercialization barriers
- U.S. research and pilot program landscape
- Strategic priorities for EV battery innovation

Solid-State, Sodium-Ion & Beyond: Competing Paths Forward

- Comparative performance and safety tradeoffs
- Manufacturing feasibility and scalability issues
- Regional development strategies and roadmaps
- Timelines for near-term and long-term deployment

AI & Data in Battery R&D: Accelerating Discovery

- Machine learning for materials discovery
- Digital twins for testing and prototyping
- Data sharing and collaboration frameworks
- Integration of AI in laboratory workflows

Next-Gen Anodes & Cathodes: Silicon, High-Mn, High-Ni

- Silicon anodes and energy density potential
- High-manganese cathode performance
- Nickel-rich chemistries and resource constraints
- Pathways to cobalt reduction and sustainability

Safety & Thermal Management in High-Energy Cells

- Thermal runaway causes and propagation risks
- Advances in pack-level safety design
- Monitoring and diagnostic technologies
- Regulatory testing and validation standards

From Lab to Gigafactory: Scaling Emerging Chemistries

- Pilot line experiences and lessons learned
- Cost and manufacturability considerations
- Public-private partnerships and investment
- Roadmaps to large-scale production capacity

Day 2 — Circularity, Supply Chains & Systems Integration

Circular Economy as an Innovation Driver

- Advanced recycling technologies and efficiency
- Second-life strategies and business models
- Eco-design principles for battery packs
- ESG metrics and corporate reporting

Second-Life Batteries in EV Charging & Grid Storage

- Integration of retired EV packs into charging sites
- Grid flexibility and peak demand management
- Economic and environmental benefits
- Challenges of performance consistency and safety

Policy, Standards & Regulatory Roadmaps

- Federal and state policy updates
- International standards harmonization
- Supply chain transparency and traceability
- Impacts of compliance on technology adoption

Resilient Supply Chains & Critical Minerals

- Diversification of critical mineral sourcing
- Localization and domestic manufacturing strategies
- Geopolitical and trade policy considerations
- Risk management for global disruptions

Systems Integration Across Sectors: EVs, Aviation & Stationary Storage

- Modular battery architectures for multiple use cases
- Heavy-duty and aviation sector requirements
- Stationary storage and microgrid applications
- Tradeoffs between flexibility and optimization

Speaking Opportunities



Individuals who wish to deliver a stand-alone 30-minute presentation or organize a 60-75 minute panel session with multiple panelists are invited to submit the following:

1. Name of speaker(s), title, company, and contact information
2. Presentation title (or title of panel or roundtable)
3. Abstract and objective of presentation or session (150 words)
4. Speaker or panelist biographies and photos
5. Bullet list of 3-4 Key Learning Points from the presentation or panel session
6. Session type (from list above)

Proposals should be emailed to speak@smartgridobserver.com by Friday, **November 21, 2025**.

Previous Attendees at Recent SGO Forums on EV-Related Topics Include:

- AARGO EVsmart
- ABB
- AddEnergie
- AECOM
- Al Masaoood LLC
- Alberta Electric System Operator
- AlphaStruxure
- Amazon
- American Wire Group
- Analytics Fire
- AnnDyl Policy Group
- Argonne National Laboratory
- Atlas Motor Vehicles
- Avivv LLC
- Baltimore Gas & Electric
- Bluewav-ai
- Bolt industries
- BorgWarner Inc.
- Boston Consulting Group
- bp pulse
- British Consulate-General, Houston
- Bronzeville Partners LLC
- Burns & McDonnell
- C&H Technology Inc.
- California Energy Commission
- Canadian Electricity Association
- Carleton University
- Catalyze
- CEATI International
- Centre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum
- CENTROSUR
- Chapel Hill Transit
- ChargeHub | Mogile Technologies Inc.
- ChargePoint
- Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)
- CIBC Capital Markets
- City of Anaheim Public Utilities
- City of Chicago
- CityVitae
- Clark University
- Commonwealth Edison
- Concordia Group
- Core One Consulting USA
- County of Los Angeles
- Cox Enterprises
- Customized Energy Solutions
- Danlaw Inc.
- Deepsea Developments
- Duke University
- Eaton
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- ecoPreserve
- Electric Conduit Construction
- Electric Power Board of Chattanooga
- Electrify America
- Enel X
- ESource
- EV Connect
- Fermata Energy
- Flash
- FMI Capital Advisors
- Ford Motor Company
- Francis Energy
- Franklin Electric
- Fullerton Engineering
- General Motors
- George Washington University
- Geotab
- Green Job Builders Inc
- Green Spark
- Green Ways 2 Go
- GTI Energy
- Guidehouse Insights
- Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative
- HARTING
- Hawthorne CAT Power Systems
- HBK Engineering
- HEMBUS
- HP Legacy
- Hunt Energy Solutions
- IEEE Chicago Section
- Illinois Commerce Commission
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Illinois Finance Authority
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- Indiana Toll Road Concession Company
- Interstate Renewable Energy Council
- Inyo Energy
- Itron
- JCREMC
- Jitney EV
- Keysight Technologies
- Kiewit
- Kitu Systems
- KPMG
- Landis+Gyr
- Leidos
- Locusview
- Lubrizol Corp
- Megavolt
- Meruelo Enterprises Inc
- Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
- Microgrid Labs
- NACFE
- NARUC
- New Flyer of America
- New York Institute of Technology
- Nextech Energy Systems
- NextEnergy
- Niroo Research Institute
- Nissan North America
- Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC)
- NV Energy
- Omaha Public Power District
- Ondevan Campervan
- Own Engineering
- Pacific Gas & Electric
- Peyser Associates LLC
- Phoenix Mecano
- Pieper Electric
- Plugged in Strategies
- Port of Seattle
- Powering Chicago
- Promise, Inc.
- Prism Energy Services
- Puget Sound Energy
- PureB2B
- Purolator
- Quality Logic
- R3
- Resilient Power
- Rivian Automotive
- S&C Electric Company
- Salt River Project
- Schneider Electric
- SenKox Technologies
- Shared-Use Mobility Center
- Sicame North America
- Siemens
- Siemens Mobility
- SIR Capital Management
- Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative
- Southern California Edison
- Spinetic
- Stanford University
- Sternberg Lighting
- Sustainable Power Solutions
- Syracuse University
- The Brattle Group
- The Harbinger Group
- Touchstone Energy
- Tundra Process Solutions
- United Airlines
- U.S. Gain
- Ugesi Energy
- University of Illinois - Chicago
- UK Department for International Trade
- United Power
- Universal Air Filter
- University of Queensland
- University of San Diego
- University of Wisconsin
- Vellore Institute of Technology
- Vincere
- Volta Charging
- Washington CORE, L.L.C
- WeaveGrid
- WEC Energy Group
- WEL Networks
- West Monroe Partners
- Weston Solutions, Inc.
- Wieland Electric
- WiTricity
- Wood Mackenzie
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Sponsorship Packages

- Tabletop exhibit space
 - 3 complimentary Standard passes
 - Top-level logo visibility in on-site signage, on event website and in all marketing communications
 - Top-level logo recognition throughout the conference, during breaks and session introductions
 - White paper or executive interview published on event website
 - Attendee list and copy of presentation PDFs
 - Corporate description with link on "Sponsors" page
 - Post-conference communication with attendees
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Gold - \$4,500

- Tabletop exhibit space
 - 2 complimentary Standard passes
 - Attendee list and copy of presentation PDFs
 - White paper or executive interview published on event website
 - Prominent logo visibility in on-site signage, on event website and in all marketing communications
 - Prominent logo visibility throughout the conference, during breaks and session introductions
 - Corporate description with link on "Sponsors" page
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Silver - \$3,500

- 1 complimentary Standard pass
 - Attendee list and copy of presentation PDFs
 - Prominent logo visibility in on-site signage, on event website and in all marketing communications
 - Prominent logo recognition throughout the conference, during breaks and session introductions
 - Corporate description with link on "Sponsors" page
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Bronze - \$2,500

Lanyard Sponsor (one available)
Same deliverables as Gold above, plus logo on attendee lanyards

Platinum - \$5,500

Reception Sponsor (one available)
Same deliverables as Gold above, plus logo acknowledgement (e.g., tent cards and signage) as sponsor of drink reception on March 10

Platinum - \$5,500

To arrange your participation, contact:
Daniel Coran, Program Manager, dcoran@smartgridobserver.com

Event Partners



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Organizations that have sponsored SGO Forums include:



Registration

<https://nextgenbattery.com/register>

Standard -- Equipment and software providers, auto OEMs, consultants, and services providers. \$795.00
Early bird registration rate (available until February 6, 2026 - \$895.00 thereafter)
Includes access to all conference sessions, networking breaks and lunches, drink reception, attendee list, and presentation PDFs

Non-Profit – Government, Academic, Military and Non-Profit organizations. \$695.00
Early bird registration rate (available until February 6 - \$795.00 thereafter)
Note: .edu, .org, .mil or .gov email address required.

Event Venue



Chicago Conference Center 205 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois

Located in downtown Chicago's Loop, the Conference Center is steps away from the city's magnificent lakefront with world-renowned Millennium and Grant Parks, marvelous museums, restaurants and retail shopping.

[>> Directions in Google Maps](#)

[>> Nearby Hotels](#)



About the Organizer



The Smart Grid Observer is an online information portal and weekly e-newsletter serving the global smart energy industry. SGO delivers the latest news and information on a daily basis concerning key technology developments, deployment updates, standards work, business issues, and market trends driving the smart grid industry worldwide.

SGO organizes a number of conferences each year on topics such as EV charging, V2G, industrial control systems cybersecurity, EV batteries, and next-gen smart grid technologies.

For a full list of upcoming and recent Forums, visit <https://smartgridobserver.com/events>

Sample Feedback on Recent SGO Forums on EV Charging:



I enjoyed this conference - it exceeded my expectations! I liked best the mix of utility and vendor participants
- Eric Lambert, EV Charging Product Manager, Hubbell

Great diversity of companies and good speech topics. Nice variety.
*- Benjamin Spiro, Business Development
American Wire Group*



Excellent and informative
*- Jack McElligott, Emergency Fuel Management,
Macro Logistics*

Great presentations and variety of topics covered
- great mix of thought leaders
*- Pat McGinnis, Chief Strategy Officer,
Tweddle Group*



The Summit was great – informative and productive. The participants are deeply involved and fit the topic
- Palina Leibinskaya, CEO & Founder, TimeTick

I thought the conference was overall great due to the structure of the event and the diversity of presentations. *- Jack van Schoonenberg,
Account Manager, Keysight Technologies*



Very good conference -- the format kept things moving.
*- Rex Peckens, Director of Trades Technology,
Lansing Community College*

This has truly been an excellent experience in every way - well organized, well-rounded agenda, excellent speakers and good exhibits. There really wasn't anything that was not high quality at this conference. This was not only extremely informative but truly an exciting forum experience.
*- Larisa Dobriansky, Chief Business & Policy Innovation
Officer, General Microgrids*