

## **35<sup>th</sup> International Cotton Conference Bremen 2021 Premiere for the Hybrid Edition**

**Bremen, 17 December 2020: The 35<sup>th</sup> International Cotton Conference Bremen will take place on 17 and 18 March 2021 in a completely new, and at the same time innovative format. The organisers, the Bremen Cotton Exchange and the Fibre Institute Bremen (FIBRE), have opted for a future-oriented, virtual hybrid solution with a wide range of communication options.**

The motto of the conference, which was originally planned to take place in March 2020 before it was postponed, will be the same in 2021: Passion for Cotton. However, the meeting point for the international cotton value chain is not, as has been the case for many years, the historic Bremen Town Hall in the centre of the old Hanseatic city, but a virtual conference room characterised by interaction.

Digital technology will make it possible to follow the event's informative lectures on the internet anywhere in the world. In addition, an interactive conference platform will make it possible to organise meetings with any desired participant, or even with potential groups of participants, and to exchange ideas.

Depending on the travel situation, small individual meetings will take place on site in Bremen, which will also be integrated into virtual meetings. This is all about exchanges



on important future issues among key members of international industry associations, working groups and scientists. Viewed from this perspective, the conference will be organised as a 'hybrid edition', both virtually and with a face-to-face section.

According to Elke Hortmeyer, responsible for the conference at the Bremen Cotton Exchange, and Axel Drieling from the Bremen Fibre Institute, it is important to emphasize that “The 35<sup>th</sup> International Cotton Conference of March 2020 was postponed by a year very early, in order to respond to the Covid-19 problem in good time. As dramatic and uncertain as the current industry situation is today, our decision for a new format has many positive aspects. After around seventy years in which the International Cotton Conference has taken place regularly in Bremen, we are now being given the impetus to completely reposition ourselves, supported by progressive digital communication. We have the opportunity to show that the efficient exchange of information with a lot of added value for participants is possible, even with globally reduced travel activity.”

### **Potential und Added Value of the Interactive Conference Platform**

To highlight the potential and added value of the new conference format, the organisers are relying on intensive information work and a wide range of services for the participants at an early stage before the start of the event.

On the official homepage of the International Cotton Conference at [www.cotton-conference-bremen.de](http://www.cotton-conference-bremen.de) interested parties will find advance information about the course of the conference with the cornerstones of its programme, as well as a first guided tour through the digital world of the conference. Registration will be possible by mid-January.

From mid-January, the website will provide detailed information on the conference programme with brief descriptions of the presentations and their speakers, including their resumé. Participants will be provided with password-protected access to a clear, comprehensive conference platform – the virtual event room – in which they will find everything they need for thorough preparation and initial orientation. . Each visitor can save a personal profile with areas of interest on the platform. Based on the stored profile information, digital technology enables visitor groups with the same interests to be brought together for virtual conversations, for example during the conference breaks.

To put together a personal conference programme, each participant can register for selected presentations. These registrations will then be transferred to the individual conference calendar.

## **From Passive to Active Communication**

A contact menu will allow questions to be put to the speakers during a presentation. In addition, participants and speakers can arrange to meet in private video meetings after the presentations, to individually clarify further questions of interest.

Other dialogue formats will be offered as part of a digital matchmaking via audio and video calls. This includes 'business speed dating' at agreed times for the purpose of discussing selected topics or 'blind dating', which will help to easily get into conversation with other participants.

“It is important for us to make it clear that the conference is not just about passive information transfer. Instead, through active communication, in addition to information from presentations and discussion forums, it offers essential added value for every

conference participant, as can be expected from classic conferences and trade fairs all over the world,” said the organisers Elke Hortmeyer and Axel Drieling.

### **First Programme Highlights**

The conference programme itself consists of sessions that cover the latest industry topics. At the beginning of the conference, keynotes will address burning questions within the textile chain. A key issue is the “circular economy”. The lifecycle of the raw material cotton, which is important for the value chain, is described here in terms of a digitally controlled circular economy. Furthermore, the discussion about new and innovative processing options for cotton should set an example and increase the desire for the biodegradable and renewable raw material. The discussion forum on responsible cotton cultivation is also likely to be eagerly awaited, at which various interest groups will exchange their opinions on the development potential of this special method of cultivation.

In the weeks leading up to the conference, we will provide in-depth information on other key topics. At the same time, continuously updated conference information can be found on the conference website at [www.cotton-conference-bremen.de](http://www.cotton-conference-bremen.de). We look forward to all forms of reporting and invite you to the hybrid edition of the 35<sup>th</sup> International Cotton Conference.

We are available to answer any further questions and for interview requests.

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[www.cotton-conference-bremen.de](http://www.cotton-conference-bremen.de)

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## **About the Bremen Cotton Exchange**

- Founded in 1872 to strengthen the interests of the cotton trade and consumption in Germany, the Bremen Cotton Exchange has now been in the cotton business for more than 148 years. As an international court of arbitration, the Bremen Cotton Exchange always stands for neutrality.
- We offer various services to our members. Clear and neutral data and analyses are a part of this.
- As the ICA Bremen, together with the International Cotton Association in Liverpool and in cooperation with the Fibre Institute Bremen, we provide the International Quality Testing and Research Centre in Bremen. The Hanseatic city has now become the international centre for cotton testing and research, quality training and certification.
- We represent our members in all the important international bodies in the cotton world.

## **About the Fibre Institute Bremen e. V. (FIBRE)**

- In its 66-years history, the Institute has developed from a cotton testing laboratory into a successful research institute in the fields of future-oriented fibres, technical textiles and fibre composites at the University of Bremen. It deals with basic scientific and application-oriented questions along the entire process chain from fibre production to the manufacturing of fibre composite components and more for the aircraft industry.
- FIBRE's central international importance in cotton is shown by its work on the international harmonisation of cotton testing [e.g. round tests in cooperation with



the ICAC and USDA-AMS], its work in central committees [ICAC Committee on Standardised Instrument Testing of Cotton (CSITC), ITMF Cotton Testing.