

Important Information for participants of
Syntactic and Composite Foams V
An ECI Conference Series

(Final program and posters with additional details at www.engconf.org/17af)

March 26-31, 2-17
Grand Hotel Minareto
Siracusa, Sicily, Italy

On behalf of Engineering Conferences International and the conference chair, **Gary Gladysz** (Empyreus Solutions, LLC, USA) and his co-chairs, **Krishan Chawla** (University of Alabama at Birmingham, USA), **Manabu Fukushima** (National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, Japan) and **Aldo R. Boccaccini** (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany), we are looking forward to your participation in this conference. **Ram Darolia** will be the technical liaison from the ECI Conferences Committee and **Barbara Hickernell** (ECI Executive Director) will be the ECI on-site staff. This note conveys a few items for your attention.

Hotel information: Grand Hotel Minareto (http://www.grandhotelminareto.it/index_eng.html)
Via del Faro Massolivieri 26 - 96100 Siracusa, Italy
Tel: +39-0931-721-222 - Fax: +39-0931-721-555
Email: info@grandhotelminareto.it

Currency Exchange: There are ATM machines and currency exchange booths at the airport in Catania.

Transportation

The closest airport to the Grand Hotel Minareto is [Catania-Vincenzo Bellini Airport](#) (CTA). It is 65 km from the hotel (about a one-hour drive).

Driving Directions from Catania Airport as listed on the hotel website

From the Catania-Siracusa highway, take the "Siracusa" exit. (Do not take "Siracusa Nord".)

Make a right turn onto State Road 124.

Pass the traffic light and keep straight on, along the State Road 124 (SS124, Viale Ermocrate)

When you get to the roundabout (after about 2 km), take the exit road on the right for Via Colomba which has a median strip of palms, and on the left you will see McDonalds.

At the crossroads, keep right for Via Elorina (SS115) (on the left you will see a Bingo).

Pass the Agip and Q8 petrol stations on your right and about 500 meters pass the Q8, you will come to a small traffic circle where you will exit to Via Lido Sacramento.

(At the crossroads, you will see signs for Minareto and Nesos Restaurant.)

Keep straight on along Via Maddalena and Via del Faro Massolivieri until you come to the Grand Hotel Minareto in a few kilometers.

Driving Directions from Catania Airport as listed on www.gomapper.com

Head east on Via Fontanarossa (700 m)

Take the first left toward Via Santa Maria Goretti (200 m)

Turn left onto Via Santa Maria Goretti (550 m)

At the roundabout, take the first exit onto Via Fontanarossa (550 m)

Keep left at the fork and follow signs for Siracusa/Ragusa and merge onto Strade Provinciale 701 (4.2 km)

Turn left toward A18 (8 m)

Turn right onto the ramp to Tangenziale Ovest/Siracusa/Ragusa (230 m)

Merge onto A18 (Autostada Catania-Siracusa) (50.6 km)

Take exit Siracusa Sud to merge onto SS124 (4.6 km)

Then follow the hotel directions above.

By Train

From Catania station: (Taxis can transport you from the airport to the train station.) Take a train to Siracusa (Syracuse). A taxi can be hired at the Syracuse station for transfer to the hotel (about a ten-minute drive). For train schedules and fares, visit <http://www.trenitalia.com>

Private Transfers

Nadia Davi of Liberty Incentives and Congresses Italy has been arranging private transfers. Although the deadline has passed, we suggest that if you still need to request a private transfer, contact her at n.davi@liberty-int.it

Conference Check-in: Check-in for the conference will take place on Sunday 17:30 -18:30 in the hotel lobby. At 18:30 there will be a reception on the Terrace and that will be followed by dinner at 19:30. On Monday, breakfast begins at 07:30 and the technical sessions will begin at 09:00.

If you are substantially delayed, we would appreciate either emailing me at barbara@engconfintl.org or calling me at +1-914-484-7349 with your estimated time of arrival.

Weather: You can visit www.weather.com to check the weather in Siracusa. Right now we expect highs in the mid 60° F and lows in the mid-50s F. The forecast is for sun and “mostly” sun. We do not expect rain but do advise you to bring an umbrella and also a sweater or jacket for the meeting room – just in case.

Speakers: We expect that all presentations will use PowerPoint. Please bring your presentation on a memory stick for loading onto the ECI computer. **Lukas Gritsch** a graduate student from University of Erlangen-Nuremberg will be available to assist speakers in loading their presentations.

Be sure to bring a very *brief* biography for introductions by your session chair.

It is essential to the conference schedule that you keep to your given time - and be certain that you allow enough time for questions/discussion. Keeping in the tradition of these conferences, please be available during the conference for discussion and questions.

Mount Etna

Mount Etna has been putting on a show recently. The volcano is active and still erupts because of its position between the African and Eurasian tectonic plates, as well as the fault between the African and Ionian micoplate. The Ionian plate is tilted backward - allowing space for mantle magna to well up to the surface. For the latest information, Google “Mount Etna activity now”

Conference Excursion on Tuesday, March 28

A guided tour of Siracusa (once the most important city in the western world) will take place on Tuesday, March 28.

The itinerary is as follows:

- 13:50 – Meet in hotel lobby.
- 14:00 – Departure from the hotel and transfer to Siracusa.
- 15:00 - arrival at the archeological park of the **Neapolis** where we can see the monolithic Greek Theatre (its cavea is one of the largest ever built by the ancient Greeks and still in use today for classical representations), the sacrificial Altar of Hieron II, the Ear of Dionysius (an artificial limestone quarry named by the painter Caravaggio) and the Roman Amphitheatre.
- 16:30 - We will then continue on to the island of **Ortigia** to see the temple of Apollo, the oldest Doric style temple built in Sicily. The Cathedral is one of the most extraordinary buildings in the world due to the different architectural styles overlapping one another. The tour ends at the fresh water spring of Aretusa where papyrus still grows abundantly.
- 18.00 – optional stop for coffee in the **Piazza Duomo** of Ortigia.
- Leisure time, **dinner on your own.**

- A few recommended restaurants:
 - Spizzica Al Vecchio Lavatoio (good pizza)
 - Don Camillo (very well-known and well regarded)
 - Pepe Nero (combines authentic Italian cooking with a contemporary style)
 - Bistrot Bella Vita (seafood, Mediterranean)
 - Osteria del Vecchio Ponte
- 21:00 - transfer back to the hotel (Be certain to get back to the coaches by this time. If you plan to stay later in Siracusa, please let us know.)

A good website for information on Syracuse is www.italia.it/en/discover-italy/sicily/syracuse.html

Miscellaneous: The following are a few housekeeping items:

- * If you have special dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, allergies), please make sure that you have notified Kathy Chan (kathy@engconfintl.org) so that she can notify the hotel.
- * Dress: ECI conferences are informal and we discourage suits and ties. Casual dress is preferred.
- * If you are not coming from an EU member country, bring an electrical adapter for your laptop and other items that will require charging.
- * An electronic questionnaire/evaluation will be distributed prior to the end of the conference. Please complete and return it, as your comments are valuable to both the chairs and ECI.
- * Audiotaping, videotaping and photography of presentations are all prohibited.
- * Guests/Accompanying Persons: If you bring a guest at the last moment, you must first see the ECI staff at check-in, pay for your guest, and then give the ECI proof of payment to the hotel. Accompanying people are not permitted to attend the technical sessions.
- * If your arrival date should change, please contact the hotel and also send an email to barbara@engconfintl.org

Should you have questions, please contact the ECI office at 1-212-514-6760.

Have a safe trip and an intellectually stimulating, productive and enjoyable conference!

Barbara Hickernell, CAE
Executive Director
ECI
Cell phone: +1-914-484-7349