



## Press Release

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German Students present new solar racing car

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### Full speed with the power of the sun

- **Self-developed model for elite race in Australia**
- **Innovative materials from Covestro on board**

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Curtain up for a special kind of electric car: In Aachen, Germany a team of students presented the new model of a racing car that runs on solar energy alone. The 45 people from RWTH Aachen University and FH Aachen worked for two years on the refinement of the ultra-light speedster. The “Covestro Sonnenwagen” will take part in the “World Solar Challenge 2019” scheduled in October in Australia, probably the toughest solar race in the world. On board are numerous innovative materials from Covestro, which is also the main sponsor of the project.

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“We are going to back to Australia with high expectations and want to challenge the leading teams of the world from the USA, the Netherlands and Belgium”, said Markus Eckstein, First Chairman of the Sonnenwagen team. The students are well equipped: Last year, they took third place in the “European Solar Challenge” in Belgium with the predecessor model of their solar car and were voted “Best Newcomer” in Australia for the first time in 2017.

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The unveiling ceremony at RWTH Aachen was also attended by the Minister President of the German state of North-Rhine Westphalia, Armin Laschet, who remarked: “The solar racing car is another e-mobility product 'made in North Rhine-Westphalia' and at the same time convincing evidence of the strength of our location as a science and business hub. The fact that the 'Sonnenwagen Aachen' team is the only team from Germany competing with the very best in the world in the zero-emission race across Australia illustrates the inventive spirit of North Rhine-Westphalia region. We need this on the path to a shift in mobility and for our goal of becoming a pioneer in electromobility.”

## **Materials for the mobility of the future**

“The Sonnenwagen is an excellent demonstration of the potential of innovative and sustainable materials for the mobility of the future. On the road to achieving that, technological openness is of decisive importance, especially with regard to the drive train models,” said Dr. Markus Steilemann, CEO of Covestro. “It’s great how young people here in Aachen are working together to constructively create something,” he added.

Steilemann unveiled the Sonnenwagen together with Laschet and the rectors of RWTH and FH Aachen, Professor Ulrich Rüdiger and Professor Marcus Baumann. Rüdiger declared: “RWTH is proud of the expertise and passion with which our students contribute to this exciting project. They gain fantastic experience and demonstrate the innovative strength of our university.”

FH Rector Baumann emphasized: “I am extremely pleased with this team effort, in which students from different faculties of the university, as well as students from an Aachen team, are working together with the RWTH to put an abundance of sustainable and resource-saving innovative ideas on the road.”

## **Lightweight and fast**

The international team of students has succeeded in designing the Sonnenwagen in such a way that it weighs less than 200 kilograms and reaches top speeds of more than 140 kilometers per hour. The new model features high-quality plastics and coatings from Covestro in headlamps, steering wheel, engine and paintwork, among other things.

During the race car test, the World Solar Challenge, teams from all over the world will compete in homemade vehicles to overcome the 3,000 kilometer stretch from Darwin in the north of Australia to Adelaide in the south as the fastest – without a drop of petrol. The race has taken place every two years since 1987 and this year runs from 13 to 20 October.

## **About Sonnenwagen Aachen:**

Sonnenwagen Aachen has existed as a registered association since September 2015 and comprises committed students from the FH Aachen University of Applied Science and the RWTH Aachen University. The aim of the association is to design and manufacture a solar-powered electric vehicle and to take part in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge in October 2017 – an emission-free race

across the Australian outback. As the only German team in the Challenger class, Team Sonnenwagen Aachen will compete with other international teams on the 3,022 km-long track. The central objective underlying participation in the races is to raise society's awareness regarding the issue of sustainable mobility and to contribute to the development of appropriate technologies.

**About Covestro:**

With 2018 sales of EUR 14.6 billion, Covestro is among the world's largest polymer companies. Business activities are focused on the manufacture of high-tech polymer materials and the development of innovative solutions for products used in many areas of daily life. The main segments served are the automotive, construction, wood processing and furniture, and electrical and electronics industries. Other sectors include sports and leisure, cosmetics, health and the chemical industry itself. Covestro has 30 production sites worldwide and employs approximately 16,800 people (calculated as full-time equivalents) at the end of 2018.

**About RWTH Aachen University:**

With more than 45,000 students, the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen (RWTH Aachen for short) is the largest university for technical courses in Germany. With its application "The Integrated Interdisciplinary University of Science and Technology. Knowledge. Impact. Networks.", the RWTH has now successfully been established from the Excellence Strategy of the Federal and State Government and will be funded as an Excellence University for the next seven years. Previously, three of the university's cluster applications had already been successfully selected in the competition. The Technical University regularly takes top positions in various university rankings in all faculties.

**About FH Aachen:**

The FH Aachen - University of Applied Sciences is a university for applied sciences and has over 14,500 students, 230 professors, 700 lecturers and about 900 employees in teaching, research and administration. Its main locations are Aachen and Jülich and has other facilities in Cologne, Düren, Linnich, Euskirchen and Geilenkirchen. For years, this popular university has occupied top positions in the CHE university ranking, with the faculties of economics, mechanical engineering, computer science and electrical engineering being the most prominent.



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You can find more information at [www.sonnenwagen.org](http://www.sonnenwagen.org), [www.worldsolarchallenge.org](http://www.worldsolarchallenge.org) and [www.sonnenwagen.covestro.com](http://www.sonnenwagen.covestro.com).

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