

# PRESS RELEASE

## **‘Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung’: 20 years of widespread support in education, culture and research**

**Berlin, September 27, 2019 – With ownership comes responsibility. This principle of social market economy is laid down not only in the German Constitution but also on the website of ‘Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung’. On September 26, this Berlin-based foundation, set up by the husband-and-wife entrepreneurs, celebrated its 20th anniversary. Heinz and Heide Dürr believe that “those who have achieved a certain level of wealth should give something back to society.” This is why, 20 years ago, they transferred 3.5 % of the Dürr AG shares – equivalent to 2.4 million shares – into the foundation. The dividend income helps to fund projects in three areas: science and research, early-years education, and theater. Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung remains one of Dürr AG’s key shareholders.**

“Private commitment is a question of responsibility toward society”. This statement by Heide Dürr is the basis of the foundation’s work. Heinz Dürr’s entrepreneurial philosophy is also characterized by his focus on the common good. According to the principle of the family entrepreneur and former head of AEG and Deutsche Bahn, “a company is a social affair”.

### **Equal education opportunities**

In early-years education, the commitment of Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung is based on the early excellence approach. This is founded on the notion that every child is unique and has special potential, and this should be promoted as early as nursery school, in cooperation with parents. “Every child must have the same education opportunities from the very outset”, says Heide Dürr, explaining her commitment to the British early excellence approach. Funds are provided for further education,

Dürr Aktiengesellschaft  
Corporate Communications & Investor Relations  
Carl-Benz-Str. 34  
74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen  
Germany

Phone +49 7142 78-1785  
Fax +49 7142 78-1716

corpcom@durr.com  
www.durr-group.com

staffing, grants and networking meetings, among other things. In addition, the foundation supports reading mentoring programs and the German day nursery award, 'Deutscher Kita-Preis'.

## **Science in the service of health, society and the environment**

The foundation's contribution to science is spread over three main areas. The first one is research into rare genetic disorders such as research programs on tinnitus and metabolic biochemistry. The second focus is on energy efficiency. The foundation supported the formation of the Institute for Energy Efficiency in Production at Stuttgart University. This institute promotes fundamental research and advises politicians on energy transition. Finally, the foundation's latest science focus is on digitization. This includes the use of artificial intelligence as well as resulting ethical questions.

## **Staging new plays**

When it comes to culture, Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung reserves a special place for German theater. It can look back at more than 200 grants for stage projects. In cooperation with Deutsches Theater (German Theater) in Berlin and the Berliner Ensemble theater company, it supports authors in developing new plays. The foundation also focuses on smaller playhouses in the German capital, and on introducing children to theater and opera. In addition, it supports Berliner Dokumentartheater (Berlin Documentary Theater) in imparting historical contexts.

Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung employs eight staff throughout Germany, with CEO Isa Baumgarten at the helm. Aside from current projects, the focus is on the contemporary development of the foundation's activities: "Our support aims will remain the same, but our focal points may change. What is certain is that we will continue to be flexible and monitor changes with a critical eye. It is important that our projects are effective and future-oriented, based on what we have learned from the past", said Heinz Dürr on the foundation's 20th anniversary.

Pictures for this press release can be found [here](#).

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74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen  
Germany

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corpcom@durr.com  
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*The Dürr Group is one of the world's leading mechanical and plant engineering firms with extensive expertise in automation and digitization/Industry 4.0. Its products, systems and services enable highly efficient manufacturing processes in different industries. The Dürr Group supplies sectors like the automotive industry, mechanical engineering, chemical, pharmaceutical and woodworking industries. It generated sales of € 3.87 billion in 2018. In October 2018, the Dürr Group acquired the industrial environmental technology business of US-based company Babcock & Wilcox, comprising the Megtec and Universal brands. Since then, it has around 16,400 employees and 108 business locations in 32 countries. The Group operates in the market with five divisions:*

- **Paint and Final Assembly Systems:** *paint shops and final assembly systems for the automotive industry*
- **Application Technology:** *robot technologies for the automated application of paint, sealants and adhesives*
- **Clean Technology Systems:** *air pollution control, noise abatement systems and battery coating lines*
- **Measuring and Process Systems:** *balancing equipment as well as assembly, testing and filling technology*
- **Woodworking Machinery and Systems:** *machinery and equipment for the woodworking industry*

Contact:

Dürr AG

Günter Dielmann / Mathias Christen

Corporate Communications & Investor Relations

Phone +49 7142 78-1785 / -1381

Fax +49 7142 78-1716

E-Mail [corpcom@durr.com](mailto:corpcom@durr.com)

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Dürr Aktiengesellschaft  
Corporate Communications & Investor Relations  
Carl-Benz-Str. 34  
74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen  
Germany

Phone +49 7142 78-1785  
Fax +49 7142 78-1716

[corpcom@durr.com](mailto:corpcom@durr.com)  
[www.durr-group.com](http://www.durr-group.com)

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**Corporate Communica-**  
**tions & Investor Relations**  
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