
Media information

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“A Matter of Trust“: Volkswagen supports 4th Kultursymposium of Goethe-Institut in Weimar

- International platform for debates and innovations centered around the theme “A Matter of Trust” from May 10 – 12 in Weimar
- Volkswagen’s AI expert Professor Patrick van der Smagt discusses trust in technology on a panel with international experts
- Hauke Stars, Volkswagen Board Member for IT: “Kultursymposium Weimar strengthens the dialogue between the business world and the people. Especially when it comes to AI, sharing knowledge and initiating constructive debates is of central importance when we want to enable people to actively participate in the development and to benefit from it.”

Wolfsburg/Weimar, May 10, 2023 – The Volkswagen Group continues its partnership with the Kultursymposium Weimar, a biennial event organised by the Goethe-Institut. Among the international speakers and guests is Professor Patrick van der Smagt, Director of the Machine Learning Research Lab at Volkswagen Group. Volkswagen also supports the work of the Goethe-Institut as a founding member of the Business and Industry Advisory Board, represented by Volkswagen’s Board Member Hauke Stars.



Volkswagen AI-expert Patrick van der Smagt speaking on the panel discussion „In Tech We Trust?“

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In its fourth edition, the Kultursymposium Weimar focuses on trust in social, cultural and technological contexts. The three-day-program features an array of creative performances and interventions, panel discussions and networking formats, so that participants have multiple options to explore the 2023 theme from different angles. The Goethe-Institut enriches the event with ideas and thoughts arising from a network of 157 Goethe-Institutes throughout the world. Furthermore, several locations on different continents organize local events to reflect the 2023 theme of Kultursymposium Weimar.

Hauke Stars, member of the Board of Management of Volkswagen AG with functional responsibility for IT and organizational development, comments on the start of Kultursymposium Weimar:

”Kultursymposium Weimar strengthens the dialogue between the business world and the people. Digital technologies have an overwhelming effect on our life, and they create many new innovation fields for industry, culture and arts alike. Especially when it comes to AI, sharing knowledge and initiating constructive debates is of central importance when we want to enable people to actively participate in the development and to benefit from it.”

Volkswagen belongs to the leading partners of the Kultursymposium Weimar, which offers a wide-ranging festival program fusing cultural experience and conference elements. From May 10 until 12, 2023, guests are going to have the chance to engage with different aspects of trust by taking part in art performances, film screenings, panel talks, concerts, workshops and interactive games. Volkswagen also supports the festival team with three full-electric ID. Buzz¹. In the discussion format “In Tech We Trust? - Confidence and Innovation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence”, Rasika Bhalerao, Assistant Teaching Professor at the Northeastern University Khoury College of Computer Sciences, and Ramak Molavi Vasse'i, internationally working AI research specialist and digital rights lawyer, share their findings referring trust in AI systems with Professor Patrick van der Smagt, technology expert and Director of the Munich-based Machine Learning Research Lab of Volkswagen Group IT. The lab hosts fundamental research work focusing on functionalities and applications of AI technology.

Professor Patrick von der Smagt, Director of the Machine Learning Research Lab at Volkswagen AG and Head of the European etami project which develops guidelines for ethical and trustworthy development and implementation of AI technologies: “The advancing AI technology leads to high expectations but also strong skepticism. With technological excellence, we can build trust which is an essential element when we want to differentiate between the potential and the risks of AI technology. Kultursymposium Weimar allows us to exchange views and findings on an international level and that is an important step on our way.”

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Volkswagen Group partners with Kultursymposium Weimar for the fourth time. Underlining the support for the global initiatives and projects of the Goethe-Institut, the continuous collaboration is headed by Volkswagen Board Member Hauke Stars who represents Volkswagen in the Business and Industry Advisory Board of Goethe-Institut. Volkswagen Group partners with different institutions and cultural players when it comes to platforms that stir encounters between the world of art and culture and the public or boost cultural education with innovative formats. These engagements are led by the belief that the widest possible audience should have the chance to engage with creative ideas and works. This leads to new perspectives which ultimately open the road to progress, innovation, respect and tolerance within our society.

More details about the Kultursymposium Weimar at <https://www.goethe.de/prj/ksw/de/index.html>

¹⁾ ID. Buzz Pro - power consumption in kWh/100 km: combined 21.7-20.6; CO₂ emissions in g/km: 0; only consumption and emission values in accordance with WLTP and not in accordance with NEDC are available for the vehicles. Information on consumption and CO₂ emissions, shown in ranges, depends on the selected vehicle equipment



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About the Volkswagen Group:

The Volkswagen Group, with its headquarters in Wolfsburg, is one of the world's leading automobile manufacturers and the largest carmaker in Europe. The Group comprises ten core brands from seven European countries: Volkswagen Passenger Cars, Audi, SEAT, CUPRA, ŠKODA, Bentley, Lamborghini, Porsche, Ducati and Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles. The passenger car portfolio ranges from small cars all the way to luxury-class vehicles. Ducati offers motorcycles. In the light and heavy commercial vehicles sector, the products range from pick-ups to buses and heavy trucks. Around 675,800 employees around the globe are involved in vehicle-related services or work in other areas of business. With its brands, the Volkswagen Group is present in all relevant markets around the world.

In 2022, the total number of vehicles delivered to customers by the Group globally was 8.3 million (2021: 8.9 million). Group sales revenue in 2022 totaled EUR 279.2 billion (2021: EUR 250.2 billion). The operating result before special items in 2022 amounted to EUR 22.5 billion (2021: EUR 20.0 billion).
