

Media Information
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BMW Group supports young scholars and honours their visions for sustainable premium mobility.

The worldwide ideas contest #NEXTGen Moving Tomorrow Pitch has a winner: The “FLOT” team from the elite Tsinghua University in China impressed the judges with its concept for sustainable premium mobility in 2040.

The BMW Group’s #NEXTGen Moving Tomorrow Pitch encourages young scholars to develop and present their visions and ideas for sustainable premium mobility. The main focus is on gaining insights into the mobility of tomorrow and promoting innovations – fully in the spirit of #NEXTGen.

Munich. For now, it is just a vision: A vehicle glides smoothly over the ground, untethered from any infrastructure and powered by bioenergy obtained from algae. Yet this vision has already won awards: The “FLOT” team from the elite Tsinghua University in China persuaded the critical judges with their pitch, winning the #NEXTGen Moving Tomorrow contest in an exciting final (watch from 11 Nov. here while using Chrome: <https://www.bmw.com/en/events/nextgen/moving-tomorrow-pitch.html>). And rightly so: The flying car impresses with its strong focus on sustainability, state-of-the-art technology and innovative design. The concept does not only exceed the judges’ expectations for sustainable premium mobility, but also fully embodies the BMW Group’s pioneering spirit.

The idea from the winning team from Beijing is as simple as it is ground-breaking: Air cushion technology allows the cockpit to glide smoothly over the ground – no longer requiring any transport infrastructure at all. The vehicle is powered by bioenergy obtained from algae and can adapt flexibly to conditions in future megacities. Cars can be linked one behind the other to transport several people at once or, if needed, even rotated to go in a vertical direction – driving along the planted exterior walls of gigantic skyscrapers and thereby avoiding traffic or having to change modes of transport. In addition to receiving a financial award of 15,000 euros, the “FLOT” team will also have the opportunity to discuss their vision at international level with the Board of Management of the BMW Group.

To spark joy – that was the goal. “The #NEXTGen Moving Tomorrow Pitch encouraged the next generation of scholars to combine their technological know-how with their vision of sustainable premium mobility in 2040,” said a delighted Ilka Horstmeier, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG responsible for Human Resources, at the award ceremony. She is enthusiastic about solutions like “FLOT’s” that are compelling not only because of their originality, but because they also take a holistic approach that factors in sustainability, luxurious design and the needs of the next generation. This was also the opinion of the judges, who included DLD founder Steffi Czerny and Phineo CEO Dr. Andreas Rickert, alongside Ilka Horstmeier.

The judges were also impressed by the two other finalists: a second team from Tsinghua University and a team from a total of six Fraunhofer-Institutes. “It wasn’t just the ideas they presented that impressed us, but also the way in which they were developed. We have seen outstanding examples of cooperation between interdisciplinary teams – in some cases, even across borders,” Horstmeier summed up. “We believe this is precisely what will drive innovation in the future.”

Knowledge transfer and exchange of ideas through university cooperation

The BMW Group is looking to the future. It specifically targets interdisciplinary knowledge transfer involving various international universities to develop forward-looking innovations for the long term with talented young people. The main focus is on research topics such as battery research, data analytics, artificial intelligence, automated driving and additive manufacturing. That sparks joy – for tomorrow.

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The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.



In 2019, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million passenger vehicles and more than 175,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2019 was € 7.118 billion on revenues amounting to € 104.210 billion. As of 31 December 2019, the BMW Group had a workforce of 133,778 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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