

New impetus from BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt at  
Bits & Pretzels

“We are part of the solution  
for a sustainable future.”



- As the strategic partner of **Bits & Pretzels**, BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt will introduce the participants for its **RESPOND** startup accelerator at Europe’s biggest founders’ festival on 28 September.
- RESPOND enables the foundation to support young impact-tech entrepreneurs and help them scale their sustainable business models internationally. The programme is implemented in cooperation with **UnternehmerTUM**.
- The business models of the ten selected RESPOND participants contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda, actively supported by BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt since 2016.

**Munich, 25 September 2020** – BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt will present the ten participants that have been selected for its **RESPOND** accelerator programme at Europe’s biggest founder festival, Bits & Pretzels. The startups from five different countries prove that economic success and a commitment to positive social and ecological change do not have to rule each other out.

The selected startups have one thing in common: they all use innovative technologies – which is precisely what the foundation views as a major lever for change.

“Technological progress and long-term solutions to key social challenges are still always considered in isolation from one another. We will only come closer to achieving the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, once “high tech” and “social well-being” are implemented as complementary parameters,” says Dr Frank Niederländer, member of the Board of Management of BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt.

BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt founded the **RESPOND** startup accelerator specifically to bridge this gap.

The aim of the five-month programme is to promote impact-tech entrepreneurs and their sustainable business models as positive examples and scale them internationally. They

are supported by high-profile mentors and investors from the foundation's global Responsible Leaders Network, as well as UnternehmerTUM, one of Europe's largest centres for business creation and innovation.

The range of nominated startups includes innovative solutions for a more sustainable urban life, for example from **Hawa Dawa** and **Meersens**, as well as for promoting inclusive mobility (for example **Amparo**). Innovations in the area of resource efficiency in production and consumption, like those from **Goodbag**, **Bosaq**, **Brickify**, **Gotbag**, **Kraftblock** and **Made of Air**, or for reducing carbon emissions from industrial processes, as devised by **Plan A**, are also part of the portfolio.

BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt contributes towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations' Agenda 2030, which the foundation has actively supported since 2016, through RESPOND. The business models of the selected RESPOND participants each focus on one of the following goals.

- Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9)
- Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11).

### **BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt considered a driving force for social innovation.**

Dr Frank Niederländer: "As a link between different elements of society – policymakers, administration, business, academia and civil society – we at BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt want to be part of the solution for a sustainable future. We can achieve this by initiating global dialogue and shaping social change with concrete projects like the RESPOND accelerator."

In addition to RESPOND, the BMW Foundation will also curate the **Impact in Business** programme at Bits & Pretzels, which allows international changemakers to examine transformation from the perspective of founders, innovators and players in disruptive technologies.

Further information on BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt can be found at <https://bmw-foundation.org/>.

If you have any questions, please contact:  
Anna Schäffer, BFHQ Communication  
Telephone: +49 30 33962913  
Email: [Anna.Schaeffer@bmw-foundation.org](mailto:Anna.Schaeffer@bmw-foundation.org)

Milena Pighi, BMW Group Government and External Affairs  
Spokesperson Corporate Social Responsibility  
Telephone: +49 89 38266563  
Email: [Milena.PA.Pighi@bmw.de](mailto:Milena.PA.Pighi@bmw.de)