

Press release  
09.05.2019

## **BMW Startup Garage secures early access to pioneering innovations.**

Initial exchange with over 1,500 startups from around 30 countries every year. 'Venture client' model gives all business units direct access to startup innovations. BMW Group Technology Offices located at tech hotspots around the world scout for startups.

Red Dot Award: Product Design 2019 for interior architecture and interior design.

**Munich.** The BMW Startup Garage – part of the company's Research, New Technologies and Innovations unit – has been tracking down the most innovative startups in the business for four years now, allowing the BMW Group to tap into their potential quickly and directly. So far, more than 50 up-and-coming technology companies have completed its startup programme. "Startups help us to gain an even better understanding of what personal, connected and sustainable mobility will look like in tomorrow's world, to come up with the necessary solutions and so continue to lead the way in innovation and technology going forward," says Bernhard Schambeck, Head of the BMW Startup Garage. The BMW Startup Garage talks with over 1,500 startups from all over the world every year. If first impressions indicate that a particular startup innovation is of potential interest for the BMW Group, it is examined in greater detail. Between 600 and 800 startups are assessed every year and a decision taken on their suitability for inclusion in the BMW Startup Garage's programme.

"We strive to bring the world's best startups into our programme," explained Melanie Rösler, responsible for the BMW Startup Garage programme. "We look for startup innovations that will be of substantial benefit for our products, services, systems or processes." Instead of pursuing a venture capital approach, the BMW Startup Garage settled on a 'venture client' model. In their early days, many startups still don't have a marketable product. It is precisely during this very high-risk phase that the fledgling companies are commissioned by the BMW Startup Garage, hence the term 'venture client'. The programme's core aim is to develop a working prototype as part of a pilot project. The BMW Group reaps the benefits of early access to the innovations and the opportunity to customise the technology before it is launch-ready. The startups, meanwhile, gain valuable insights into automotive processes, are able to build up a

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network of contacts within the company and are given advice on how to refine their business plan to help them gain a foothold in the automotive industry.

### **The worldwide search for startups: thinking outside the box**

The BMW Group's technology scouting network has a global reach. The BMW Startup Garage runs small, agile teams stationed at international technology hotspots. It now has representatives working at the BMW Group Technology Offices in Silicon Valley, Shanghai, Seoul and Tokyo. And these will be joined by a presence in Tel Aviv in the third quarter of 2019.

Whereas the BMW Startup Garage initially focused primarily on innovations for the BMW Group's products and services, since 2018 its programme has been extended to startup innovations for all business units. "The sheer range of topics we deal with makes our job in the Garage a very exciting and challenging one," enthused Alexandra Renner, Startup Lead for Research and Development. "A normal working day can quite easily mean creating the interior of the future with startups in the morning, before turning our attention to innovations for autonomous driving in the afternoon." A total of 26 startups completed the BMW Startup Garage programme in 2018.

### **Long-term benefits for both startups and the BMW Group**

The support given to the startups over the course of the programme is underpinned by four pillars: Build, Sell, Learn and Network. Build and Sell involve executing the pilot project and devising a business plan. One of the elements of the Network and Learn pillars is the Deep Drive Days event, where workshops and keynote speeches give startups the opportunity to share ideas and network with employees from various BMW Group departments at length. All four of the programme's pillars are designed to help cement long-lasting business relations with the BMW Group.

"Our venture client approach really pays off, as we can see from former startups who continue to contribute their cutting-edge technologies to subsequent projects as BMW Group suppliers," summed up Bernhard Schambeck. Lunewave and QC Ware are just

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two of the many startups who have worked on further projects as BMW Group partners following their participation in the programme.

In its pilot project initiated as part of the BMW Startup Garage 2018 programme, Lunewave stood out with its revolutionary new sensor technology. Engineers at the Autonomous Driving Campus are now working together with Lunewave on a pre-development project to further improve the pioneering sensor concept.

Quantum computers can be used to work out the type of complex problems that today's supercomputers would need years to tackle. [The BMW Group was quick to recognise the potential of this technology.](#) The BMW Startup Garage teamed up with QC Ware to conduct various feasibility studies focusing on the application of quantum computing for specific problems, such as optimising the jobs performed by robots on the production line. Follow-up projects are already in the pipeline for 2019.

"Many of the startup innovations in our pilot projects are so exciting and visionary that it's a tough task for us not to talk about them more. We are looking forward to the innovations that will find their way into series production and our processes in the coming years," added Schambeck.

### **Red Dot Award for inventive interior design**

Agile collaboration with startups requires innovative and inspirational working environments. Careful consideration was given to this aspect from the outset in the design of the BMW Startup Garage's premises at the BMW Group Research and Technology House in Garching, near Munich. And now its excellent use of space has earned it the coveted Red Dot Award: Product Design 2019 in the interior architecture and interior design category. The BMW Startup Garage features an elevated room-in-room concept with a spacious atrium that doubles as a presentation area, plus additional co-working spaces for brainstorming and a large meeting area. The workspaces are located at different levels within the rooms, enabling employees and visitors to enjoy visual and acoustic privacy in an open-plan space.

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**BMW Startup Garage @ Bits & Pretzels 2019**

The Bits & Pretzels Conference is one of the foremost platforms for business founders, investors and innovators from all over the world. This year, the BMW Startup Garage will once again be holding its own event in Munich as part of the Bits & Pretzels Startup Night. The aim of the event is to encourage networking between the participants on the one hand and with the BMW Startup Garage team and experts from various BMW Group departments on the other. Last year, there were nearly 300 attendees, including around 100 startups. Information on how to register will be posted on the BMW Startup Garage website in due course.

**Links:**Website: [www.bmwstartupgarage.com](http://www.bmwstartupgarage.com)LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/bmw-startup-garage>Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BMWStartupGarage>Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BMWStartups>**In the event of enquiries please contact:**

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Internet: [www.press.bmwgroup.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com)E-mail: [presse@bmw.de](mailto:presse@bmw.de)**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 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles and more than 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2018 was € 9.815 billion on revenues amounting to € 97.480 billion. As of 31 December 2018, the BMW Group had a workforce of 134,682 employees.



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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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