

Media information

13 December 2024.

German Federal President recognises South Africa's tech potential at the BMW IT Hub.

+++ German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier visits the BMW IT Hub in South Africa +++ The visit marks the strong partnership between South Africa and Germany, and potential for future collaborations +++ The BMW IT Hub is at the forefront of technological innovation +++

Menlyn, Pretoria. On 13 December, BMW Group South Africa hosted the German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the BMW IT Hub. The visit underscores the growing importance of South Africa as a global technology hub and highlights the impact of the BMW IT Hub on local youth empowerment and skills development.

The German Federal President's visit to the BMW IT Hub, during his official visit to South Africa, symbolises the close partnership between Germany and South Africa. As both nations celebrate significant milestones – Germany's 35 years of reunification and South Africa's 30 years of democracy – the BMW IT Hub stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and innovation.

A shared vision for the future.

Walter Mertl, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, Finance and Peter van Binsbergen, CEO of BMW Group South Africa, welcomed Federal President Steinmeier and Parks Tau, Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, to the BMW IT Hub.

"We are honoured to welcome Federal President Steinmeier and Minister Tau to the BMW IT Hub," said Peter van Binsbergen, CEO of BMW Group South Africa. "This visit reaffirms the hub's role in driving digital

transformation and fostering a skilled workforce in South Africa. By investing in young talent and leveraging advanced technologies, we are contributing to the country's economic growth and global competitiveness."

Federal President Steinmeier had the opportunity to meet young IT professionals who develop cutting-edge technologies, including eye-tracking – a sophisticated technology that analyses eye movements to better understand user preferences and thus improve software usability. The hub's work on developing data-driven digital twin for high-voltage batteries represents a significant step forward in the automotive industry, ensuring quality and efficiency.

Thorsten Achenbach, Director of the BMW IT Hub, commented: "The hub is more than just an IT centre; it is a platform for innovation and social impact. We are committed to empowering the next generation of IT professionals and driving sustainable growth in South Africa."

BMW Group South Africa also hosted a high-level business delegation including executives based in Germany and South Africa who were given a tour of the hub. The meeting recognised South Africa's thriving tech ecosystem, and the importance of the BMW IT Hub in providing IT solutions for the BMW Group globally.

Empowering South Africa's youth.

The BMW IT Hub, a strategic pillar of BMW Group South Africa, is committed to nurturing young South African talent. Through initiatives such as the Graduate Tech Academy and partnerships with organisations such as Harambee, the hub empowers young people with critical IT skills, to enable them to contribute to the nation's growing digital economy.

As one of the fastest-growing business units within the BMW Group, the BMW IT Hub has emerged as a global centre of excellence for IT services, expanding greatly since 2014. With a workforce of over 2,500 talented individuals, the hub is shaping the future of South Africa's digital landscape.

A bright future for South Africa's tech industry.

As South Africa and Germany continue to strengthen their bilateral relations, the German Federal President's visit reaffirms the nation's potential to address global challenges by leveraging technology. Both countries share a commitment to innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility. The BMW IT Hub is a symbol of this shared vision, continuously demonstrating its ability to shape the future of the automotive industry and beyond.

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If you have any questions, please contact:

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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 over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2023, the BMW Group sold over 2.55 million passenger vehicles and more than 209,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2023 was € 17.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 155.5 billion. As of 31 December 2023, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,950 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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