

Essen, 13 February 2019

## **BeyondConventions 2019: Tradition meets future - Ruhr companies solve challenges with start-ups**

How can global and complex supply chains be managed with chatbots? How can we optimise energy use, mobility and urban planning to improve the quality of life in cities? How can I manage rainwater in such a way that flooding does not occur even during heavy rainfall? How can digital assistants and services make shopping in supermarkets easier for customers? How can self-learning algorithms automatically integrate product data from suppliers into existing systems? These were five of the many questions seven companies from the region challenged various start-ups with at the first day of the Beyond Conventions.

Following the great success of the first Beyond Conventions 2018, numerous visitors and around 40 start-ups from all over the world made their way to the thyssenkrupp Quarter on 12 February 2019 under the motto "Develop digital solutions for real challenges" to compete against the so-called challenges of the companies ALDI SÜD, Emschergenossenschaft/Lippeverband, Haniel, innogy, Open Grid Europe, Siemens and thyssenkrupp. Over 400 participants were welcomed on the first day by Dr. Donatus Kaufmann, member of the thyssenkrupp Executive Board and responsible for technology and innovation.

"As a company, we must learn and be open. Only those who are able to collaborate can successfully shape the digital transformation. That's why we're working with start-ups that have different solutions for the digital challenges facing our businesses. We therefore see BeyondConventions as a platform for cooperation between start-ups and corporations. We are convinced that we can learn a lot from each other," said Kaufmann.

Andrew Goldstein, Managing Partner of Deloitte Digital Ventures, gave an introductory talk on how to hug a start-up without crushing it, where he discussed the stumbling blocks of cooperation between start-ups and corporations. Frederik G. Pferdt, chief innovator at Google and Adjunct Professor at Stanford University in Silicon Valley, took up this theme and showed in his keynote how to promote a culture of innovation: "You can't invent the future on your own. You have to try things out, make room for failures and change perspectives in order to learn from each other - all with a large portion of openness, optimism and empathy. You can't do so unless you're on a team. Innovation only works together. Innovation always happens

when the boundaries of different disciplines tickle each other. BeyondConventions enables just that. That's why I'm so happy to be here in Essen," says Pferdt.

In a series of short [videos](#), the companies introduced themselves and their challenges in the afternoon and answered the last questions before things get serious today. The start-ups will present their solutions at the seven company stands in just seven minutes each. The bandwidth it is all about is enormous: from production processes, through knowledge management, product and service design to the shopping experience, the spectrum ranged from B2B and B2C.

Haniel CEO Stephan Gemkow explains: "BeyondConventions offers our companies an outstanding opportunity to find creative solutions for topics. The start-ups offer us a fresh, unbiased view on supposed problems and allow us to think outside the box."

With beer, burgers and TED Talks from exciting founders from the region, the evening of the first day was mainly about the exchange and discussion of participants.

Today, day 2 continues to be exciting: Not only the start-ups are in high demand. In addition to a conversation with trivago co-founder Peter Vinnemeier, the programme also includes a review of the first event. Did the cooperation work and if not, why not? This is shown by participants from last year.

For more Information see [beyondconventions.de](https://beyondconventions.de) or #beyondconventions

