

Rudolf Diesel Medal posthumously awarded to Heinz Dürr

Augsburg / Bietigheim-Bissingen, July 5, 2024 — Heinz Dürr has been posthumously awarded one of Germany's most prestigious innovation prizes. By awarding the Rudolf Diesel Medal, the German Institute for Inventions (D.I.E.) honors the innovation achievements of the Honorary Chairman of Dürr AG's Supervisory Board, who passed away in November at the age of 90. Heinz Dürr's daughter Karoline and his grandson Camilo accepted the award on his behalf on Thursday evening in Augsburg.

The D.I.E. Board of Trustees selected Heinz Dürr as the winner in the "Most successful innovation achievement" category. It placed particular emphasis on the development of electrophoretic dip coating for the automotive industry, which was advanced in the 1960s. In addition, the Board of Trustees recognized the passionate spirit of innovation, which Heinz Dürr has embedded in his company's culture. It stated: "Heinz Dürr made significant contributions to the development of technologies and processes that not only increased efficiency in manufacturing, but also promoted environmental protection. His company plays a key role in the development and implementation of automated manufacturing processes in various industries."

The laudatory speech for Heinz Dürr was given by the entrepreneur and founder of the software company GFT Technologies, Ulrich Dietz. At the ceremony, Camilo Dürr recalled Heinz Dürr's first patent from 1960 and said: "My grandfather would have been very pleased with this honor. Unfortunately, he is not with us today. Innovation was important to him because it is the basis for a company's technological leadership." Camilo Dürr quoted Heinz Dürr with the words: "A company has the task of manufacturing products that society needs. Innovation must focus on that. A lot is technically possible, but not everything is relevant. Practical innovation must therefore have priority."

Heinz Dürr used to encourage his employees in their quest for innovation by saying three legendary words: "Folks, stay curious!" Being an entrepreneur, he knew that he had to give technicians and engineers freedom and support. In 2020, he said in an interview: "Innovation doesn't happen at the touch of a button, nor can it be prescribed. You need employees with good ideas. And these employees must be nurtured and supported." For this reason, he also

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launched the Heinz Dürr Award in 2001, with which the Dürr Group honors special ideas from employees every year.

For 70 years, Heinz Dürr was committed to the family business, which was founded by his grandfather. His most recent role was as Honorary Chairman of Dürr AG's Supervisory Board. The entrepreneur became known throughout Germany from the 1970s onward, initially as the chief negotiator for metal industry employers in Baden-Württemberg and later as the head of AEG and Deutsche Bahn. His family is the anchor shareholder of the mechanical and plant engineering firm Dürr and holds 29.7% of the voting rights.

The Rudolf Diesel Medal was first awarded in 1953 and is the oldest innovation prize in Europe. The nomination of candidates is the responsibility of a technical and scientific advisory board. Unlike other innovation prizes, which are usually subject to a fee, this award does not allow applications. The award winners are selected by the Rudolf Diesel Board of Trustees, which is made up of around 60 technology directors and managing directors from leading global companies in Germany.

Images for this press release can be found [here](#).

The Dürr Group is one of the world's leading mechanical and plant engineering firms with particular expertise in the technology fields of automation, digitalization, and energy efficiency. Its products, systems, and services enable highly efficient and sustainable manufacturing processes – mainly in the automotive industry and for producers of furniture and timber houses, but also in sectors such as the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, medical devices, electrical engineering, and battery production. In 2023, the company generated sales of €4.6 billion. The Dürr Group has around 20,500 employees and 142 business locations in 32 countries, and it operates in the market with five divisions:

- **Paint and Final Assembly Systems:** paint shops as well as final assembly, testing, and filling technology for the automotive industry
- **Application Technology:** robots and products for the automated application of paint, sealants, and adhesives
- **Clean Technology Systems:** air pollution control, coating systems for battery electrodes, and noise abatement systems
- **Industrial Automation Systems:** automated assembly and test systems for automotive components, medical devices, and consumer goods as well as balancing and diagnostic technology
- **Woodworking Machinery and Systems:** machinery and equipment for the woodworking industry

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