

Press release

Linde partners with the world's largest start-up platform

- Technology group joins the Plug and Play network
- Wider access to start-ups to accelerate the development of innovative solutions
- Partnership is a key building block in Linde's digitalisation strategy

Munich, 27 February 2018 – The Linde Group has partnered with the “STARTUP AUTOBAHN” innovation platform powered by Plug and Play at the Stuttgart and Singapore hubs, and with Plug and Play's energy cluster in Sunnyvale in the US. Based in Stuttgart, “STARTUP AUTOBAHN” connects over 30 start-ups with a host of partners from industry and from the research and scientific community to create Europe's largest innovation network.

Collaboration with Plug and Play's global network will give Linde much wider access to the extremely dynamic start-up scene, especially in the field of digitalisation. Working with young entrepreneurs, Linde will thus be able to rapidly resolve concrete problems during the development of new products and services for its customers and also identify and tap into new growth fields. Just recently, for example, Linde teamed up with a start-up specialised in artificial intelligence to develop a digital solution that can help reliably predict and avoid risks that could arise during the transport of gases to customers by truck. The algorithm was programmed from a huge pool of in-house and external data, enabling it to calculate the safest possible transport routes. The system is already being used in the UK. Linde is also currently working with start-ups on a number of other projects in areas such as augmented reality and virtual reality.

“Driving digitalisation to re-define our business, technology and culture is key for Linde. Building on our digital accelerators in Munich, and in Singapore, which bundle our Group-wide digitalisation activities, the new Plug and Play partnership is an important building block in Linde's far-reaching digitalisation strategy – designed to maintain our competitive edge moving forward,” states Dr Christian Bruch, COO and Member of the Executive Board of Linde AG.

“We are eager to enhance our successful track record of working with different start-ups, accelerator platforms and networks. This new collaboration enables us to systematically expand our digitalisation



engagement, elevating it to the global stage,” explains Philipp Karmires, Head of Digitalisation at The Linde Group. “

STARTUP AUTOBAHN is a neutral open innovation platform moderating an in-depth and curated collaboration between core partners from industry, investment firms and mentors to help the growth of startup companies. STARTUP AUTOBAHN runs two three-month programs per year each followed by an EXPO Day. The program is stage-agnostic with a later-stage focus, designed to accelerate startups. STARTUP AUTOBAHN is providing all the support startups need to realize their vision faster: Space, tools, people, resources and access to a valuable network of corporations, investors, mentors, universities and government representatives. Plug and Play, the Silicon Valley accelerator and investor, is facilitating this joint project together with Plug and Play Germany GmbH, Daimler AG, ARENA2036, University of Stuttgart, Hewlett Packard Enterprise/DXC Technology, ZF Friedrichshafen, BASF, Porsche, Deutsche Post DHL Group and Webasto. Along with the ecosystem partners like Murata, HELLA, as well as, BENTELER. Startups from all over the world are invited to submit their applications for the accelerator program on the future of mobility and Industry 4.0.

Headquartered in Silicon Valley in the US, Plug and Play is the leading global innovation platform and world’s largest startup accelerator. The aim of their network is to connect established industrial companies, investors and mentors with agile startups, specifically in the technology space. The ecosystem thrives on the power of people networking, connecting, and collaborating. Plug and Play runs over 20 stage-agnostic accelerator programs a year, invests in over 100 companies per year, and matches over 200 multinational corporate partners to world-class startups disrupting and incrementally improving their industry.

In the 2016 financial year, The Linde Group generated revenue of EUR 16.948 bn, making it one of the leading gases and engineering companies in the world, with approximately 60,000 employees working in more than 100 countries worldwide. The strategy of The Linde Group is geared towards long-term profitable growth and focuses on the expansion of its international business, with forward-looking products and services. Linde acts responsibly towards its shareholders, business partners, employees, society and the environment in every one of its business areas, regions and locations across the globe. The company is committed to technologies and products that unite the goals of customer value and sustainable development.

For more information, see The Linde Group online at www.linde.com

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