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Ambassadors for sustainable technologies

FOUNDATION The Sponsoring Society for Lichtenfels Center of Next Generation Digital Technologies (Förderverein des Forschungs- und Anwendungszentrums für digitale Zukunftstechnologien e. V.) was founded.

BY OUR EMPLOYEE **MARION NIKOL**



The sponsoring society was met with wide approval, so the queue of the guests behind Mayor Andreas Hügerich wishing to officially join the sponsoring society was respectively long.
Photo: Marion Nikol

Lichtenfels – Great opportunities for the successful future of a region do not come out of the blue. They require far-sightedness, creativity, the right timing, and, above all, commitment from people who want to move things forward together. These people include the initiators of the Lichtenfels Center of Next Generation Digital Technologies (Forschungs- und Anwendungszentrum für digitale Zukunftstechnologien, FADZ), above all entrepreneur Frank Herzog, as well as representatives of the city and district of Lichtenfels and the Coburg University of Applied Sciences. They all had a great cause for

celebration on Monday evening when the Sponsoring Society for Lichtenfels Center of Next Generation Digital Technologies was founded in the city palace, thus setting an important milestone for the further development of the prestigious project. The fact that FADZ as an ambassador for sustainable technologies radiates throughout Upper Franconia and beyond was also emphasized by the invited mandate holders on this evening.

"Digital technologies offer tremendous opportunities which we should use to the advantage of the region.", Frank Herzog, FADZ Chairman

Emmi Zeulner, Member of the Bundestag, made it clear that she would support the lighthouse project on the government level and "open more doors in Berlin". Jürgen Baumgärtner, Member of the Landtag, spoke of "a great day for Lichtenfels" and also emphasized the importance of the innovation triangle of Coburg-Kronach-Lichtenfels whose strength lies above all in joint action.

Founded with 60 members

His Landtag colleague Martin Mittag expressed a similar opinion: "We should use this unique opportunity – let's do this together." It was exactly this request that the bidden guests finally followed by signing a membership agreement for the sponsoring society, which was founded shortly afterwards by the unanimous acceptance of the statutes and membership fee regulations by a total of 60 members. The purpose of the society is to promote the foundation, development, and operation of FADZ as a joint research and transfer center for regional companies and the Coburg University of Applied Sciences. Support is provided both financially and non-materially. In return, members gain access to a broad network of entrepreneurs and benefit from a reduced price for services and offers of the center. The election of the board members, who were elected unanimously and will manage the current business and be responsible for all matters of the society for a period of three years starting in January 2020, went just as smoothly as the official foundation. Frank Herzog, founder and shareholder of Concept Laser, acts as the First Chairman, supported by Eva Bittmann, Managing Director of the werkstoff & struktur

expert office, as the Vice Chairman, and Roland Vogel, Deputy CEO of Sparkasse Coburg-Lichtenfels, as treasurer. Birgit Partheymüller, Managing Director of INNOCEPT Engineering, André Baumann, CEO of Verpa Folie Weidhausen, Gisela Raab, Managing Director of Raab Baugesellschaft, and Mathias Söllner, Master Craftsman of the District of Coburg-Lichtenfels, were appointed as assessors. Emmi Zeulner, Member of the German Bundestag and Jürgen Baumgärtner, Member of the Bavarian parliament, will act as natural members of the board, as will Christiane Fritze, President of the Coburg University of Applied Sciences. The first board meeting will already take place in January in order to consult, sort, and pave the way for the further progress of FADZ.

The importance of making the right decisions against the background of increasing digitisation was emphasised once again by Frank Herzog in conclusion: "Digital technologies offer tremendous opportunities which we should use to the advantage of the region. In this regard, FADZ will provide answers to complex issues, ensure training and further education opportunities, and inspire young people. We can create future prospects for rural areas above all if we face the important issues and also bring about change in people's minds."

Innovation for all

For precisely these reasons, FADZ should also be a place of innovation for everyone – from schoolchildren to top researchers, from small craft businesses to large industrial groups. Until the renovation of the Kirschbaumühle mill as the headquarters of the research and transfer center will be completed in 2023, interested parties can already look forward to a series of exciting events next year.