

German Innovation Awards 2020: the winners have been announced

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For the third time now, the German Design Council is presenting the German Innovation Awards. They honour pioneering examples of innovation that demonstrate a lasting impact and offer added value for the user. The roughly 700 submissions in total show the strong innovation that German SMEs in particular are applying to take charge of the journey to a digital future. This current global transformation is forcing companies to think differently when it comes to digital tools and processes. The German Innovation Awards support companies on their journey by giving visibility to successful innovations.

Among the selected innovations were machine-learning software for IoT applications, an air taxi, swimming goggles with an integrated augmented-reality display, a biometric border control system with integrated fever screening, a biodegradable toilet with disinfectant set and a driverless transport system that finds the most efficient route itself.

“With the German Innovation Awards, we see how innovation is currently being created in the high-speed world of digital transformation for all areas of life. Some of this innovation will change entire industries on a lasting basis. At the same time, the clear focus of the awards is on user centricity,” explains Lutz Dietzold, Managing Director of the German Design Council. “Innovations that involve the future user in their product and design development have a clear competitive advantage that is also reflected over the long term in their commercial success. The award-winning projects are excellent examples of this.”

Information about all the winners can be found at: <https://www.german-innovation-award.de/en/winners/>.

The German Innovation Awards are presented in the competition’s two classes: “Excellence in Business to Consumer” and “Excellence in Business to Business”. In addition to these, winners are selected for the extra category of “Design Thinking”. There are 40 categories in total as well as the special category of “Design Thinking”, with the jury able to award “Gold”, “Winner” and “Special Mention” distinctions in each of them.

The judging process

The judging criteria for the German Innovation Awards include attributes such as the extent of innovation, user benefit and economic viability. The innovation strategy should consider aspects such as social, environmental and economic sustainability and the use of energy and resources. Factors such as the potential offered for a location and for employment, product durability, market maturity, technical quality, technical functionality, materials and synergies also play a key role in the judgement

process.

A jury of high calibre decided on the winners, who comprise physicists, patent agents, computer scientists, finance specialists, product designers, historians of technology and marketers. “This ensures that we judge individually, neutrally and professionally,” Dietzold stresses.

German Design Council – the award giver

The German Innovation Awards are organised and presented by the German Design Council, which was established by the German federal parliament in 1953 and endowed by the Federation of German Industries. For 66 years now, the foundation has pursued a goal of promoting the competitiveness of German businesses.

With competitions, exhibitions, conferences, seminars and publications, the German Design Council makes a crucial contribution to knowledge transfer on the subjects of design, innovation and branding. The membership of the German Design Council Foundation currently includes more than 320 companies from Germany and abroad, employing over three million people.

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