

Press Release:

The Diesel Medal 2019 for ‘Best Innovation Support’ goes to AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen

AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen was awarded the Diesel Medal, Germany’s longest-running innovation prize for ‘Best Innovation Support’.

Munich, 12 April 2019 - More than 200 invited VIPs from the German innovation scene attended the ceremony in the Hall of Fame at the Deutsches Museum Munich. The stage belonged to four award winners, who represented the basic idea of the Diesel Medal in a special way. AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen won the award for ‘Best Innovation Support’. Stefanie Herrmann (CFO) and Thorsten Rudolph (CEO) from AZO were presented with the Diesel Medal by the spokesman of the Diesel Curatorium, Prof. Dr. med. Alexander J. Wurzer, German Institute for Inventions e.V., together with Dr. jur. Heiner Pollert, chairman of the sponsoring association for the Diesel Medal.

Originating from the German Aerospace Center (DLR), AZO has supported more than 155 Bavarian startups in space and satellite technology since it was founded in 2004. At the same time, AZO operates the largest space innovation network in Europe. AZO focuses on the commercial use of satellite infrastructures such as satellite navigation and communication as well as Earth observation and space technologies by startups, SMEs and large companies.



Stefanie Herrmann, CFO, AZO (3rd f.r.) and Thorsten Rudolph, CEO, AZO (2nd f.r.)

“We are very honoured to receive this award for ‘Best Innovation Support’ from Germany’s oldest innovation prize for economically successful entrepreneurial invention,” explains Stefanie Herrmann, CFO, AZO. “This award confirms our mission. Nevertheless, such performance does not come from a single person. You always find a highly motivated team behind it. That’s why the Diesel Medal also goes to the ESA BIC Bavaria and AZO team,” adds Thorsten Rudolph, CEO, AZO.

For almost 15 years, AZO has established the leading European space cluster innovation network for the satellite downstream market, while providing the necessary marketing and promotion platform, incubation and expert network, and regional funding programmes with the aim of increasing the uptake of business cases. In doing so, AZO supports entrepreneurship with more than 500 companies founded in Europe to date.

With its ‘Innovation Masters Series’, AZO organises the most important space-related innovation competitions: Galileo Masters, Copernicus Masters, INNOspace Masters, Space Exploration Masters and the Copernicus Hackathons in close cooperation with space stakeholders such as the European Commission (EC), Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology Germany (BMVI), European Space Agency (ESA), German Aerospace Center (DLR), and a number of major industrial partners.

Alongside this, in cooperation with well-known partners from research (European Space Agency, German Aerospace Center, Fraunhofer), industry (Airbus) and on behalf of the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs (BMVI), AZO operates the most successful startup programme for space applications: The ESA BIC Bavaria supports 155 startup companies (80% survival rate after 5 years), which have created around 2,000 high-tech jobs at the three Bavarian locations in Oberpfaffenhofen, Ottobrunn and Nuremberg, producing an annual turnover of 150 million euros. The programme acquired around EUR 169 million of venture capital in 2017/18.

About AZO – Your Partner in Competition & Innovation

AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen is an international networking and branding company initiating the most important space-related innovation competitions with more than 15,000 participants, over 200 industrial & public - and 400 international stakeholders. The Masters Series, presented by AZO consists of the [Galileo Masters](#), [Copernicus Masters](#), [Space Exploration Masters](#), and [INNOspace Masters](#). Additionally, AZO organises the [Copernicus Hackathons](#) by the European Commission. AZO runs a very successful business angel network which invested more than EUR 50 million Venture Capital in 2018. Additionally, AZO manages it's [ESA Incubation Centre \(ESA BIC\) Bavaria](#). This incubation programme has supported more than 155 company foundations solely in Bavaria to date. For more information, please visit www.anwendungszentrum.de.

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