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## At CeBIT 2017: Transparent Factory launches start-up incubator program in Dresden

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- Support for up to 10 start-ups in the mobility services field
  - Start of four-week applications phase: website launched
  - USPs: testing the start-up idea in and around the car; implementation together with City of Dresden
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Hanover/Dresden – Volkswagen’s Transparent Factory in Dresden is supporting innovative business ideas connected with the future of mobility. Together with the Economic Development Department of the City of Dresden, start-ups in future-oriented fields such as fleet management, car sharing, concierge and navigation/parking services as well as smart home services are to be supported. For this purpose, the Transparent Factory launched a start-up incubator program at CeBIT 2017 in Hanover today. This program is being implemented together with the Volkswagen Group IT Ideation Hub. In the presence of Dr. Martin Hofmann, CIO Volkswagen Group, Kai Siedlatzek, Managing Director of Volkswagen Sachsen responsible for Finance & Controlling, Dr. Robert Franke, Head of the Economic Development Department of the City of Dresden, and Dr. Jennifer Sarah Geffers, Head of Ideation Hub, launched the website (<https://ideationhub.de>) on which young start-ups can submit their applications by symbolically touching a button. The objective is that the start-ups should develop their ideas right through to market maturity at the Transparent Factory.

Young start-ups now have four weeks to submit their ideas connected with the mobility of the future. The incubator is addressed to company founders throughout the world. End of April, selected entrepreneurs will have an opportunity to present their ideas on mobility during a 10-minute pitch in Dresden. A selection committee will choose the best five ideas and teams for the spring group. The entrepreneurs will then spend six months in the Transparent Factory. Their teams will have to present initial results after three months. If these results are convincing, the start-ups will be able to develop their ideas to market maturity in Dresden. In the fall, five further companies will move to the Transparent Factory. “The start-up incubator will heighten Dresden’s profile as a start-up location in the high-tech sector and will act as a magnet. We are sending a strong signal from Dresden to company founders and investors throughout the world,” said Dirk Hilbert, Mayor of Dresden.

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To house the start-ups, parts of the new production facility for the e-Golf<sup>1</sup> in Dresden have been specially modified. The redesigned rooms provide space for up to 30 people – right at the heart of the Transparent Factory. “We see our unique selling proposition in providing direct access to vehicles. We will open the relevant software interfaces of our electric models to allow the start-ups to try out their ideas on, in or with a car or together with visitors to the Transparent Factory,” Kai Siedlatzek said.

Dr. Jennifer Sarah Geffers, Head of the Volkswagen Group IT Ideation Hub, said: “We are looking forward to trying out and continuing the development of good ideas and products with start-ups at the Transparent Factory. The Ideation Hub and the Transparent Factory will be co-operating closely. Together we offer a wide variety of possibilities for networking start-ups and their ideas with partners throughout the company.” The start-ups will also benefit from a vibrant environment. Dresden is among the strongest ICT start-ups centers in Germany. “The high-tech start-ups in Dresden will be the perfect interface between science and industry and will give a significant boost to the development of this industrial location,” said Dr. Robert Franke, Head of the Economic Development Department of the City of Dresden.

The incubator is also intended for students or scientists who wish to start new companies. Important: the incubation program includes financial support of up to €15,000 per start-up. In connection with the program, the Transparent Factory also offers the assistance of mentors and coaches, an attractive working environment at the facility, high-quality IT infrastructure, contacts with Volkswagen research and development employees and decision-makers, professional advice by Sächsische Aufbaubank (SAB), close proximity to the start-up scene and both financial and personnel support from the City of Dresden. “Our policy is that the start-up team should focus on its idea and its core competence. We take care of the rest,” Siedlatzek explained.

*1) e-Golf (100 kW/136 PS) Electrical consumption in kWh/100 km: combined 12.7, CO2 emissions combined in g/km: 0, efficiency class: A+.*

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**About the Volkswagen brand: “We make the future real”**

The Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand is present in more than 150 markets throughout the world and produces vehicles at over 50 locations in 14 countries. In 2016, Volkswagen produced about 5.99 million vehicles including bestselling models such as the Golf, Tiguan, Jetta or Passat. Currently, 218,000 people work for Volkswagen across the globe. The brand also has 7,700 dealerships with 74,000 employees. Volkswagen is forging ahead consistently with the further development of automobile production. E-mobility, Smart mobility and the digital transformation of the brand are the key strategic topics for the future.

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