



Ferry Porsche Foundation endows first professorship for corporate history in Germany

University of Stuttgart and Ferry Porsche Foundation sign ten-year sponsorship agreement

The Ferry Porsche Foundation is funding the first professorship in Germany which is dedicated specifically to the topic of corporate history. An agreement between the University of Stuttgart and the non-profit Ferry Porsche Foundation has now been signed in Stuttgart. The Faculty of Humanities at the university will advertise the professorship with immediate effect and will fill the position this year. The endowed professorship is intended to help companies to analyze their history in a way which is scientifically independent, and to better understand their economic and industrial achievements in a historical and social context. The individual achievements of business personalities will also be examined.

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Dr. Josef Arweck, Chairman of the Ferry Porsche Foundation, and Prof. Wolfram Ressel, Rector of the University of Stuttgart, after signing the deed of donation for the professorship for corporate history. Photo: Max Kovalenko



“We are filling a gap in the scientific examination of how corporate culture has developed in the course of history,” says Prof. Wolfram Ressel, Rector of the University of Stuttgart. The professor will work closely together with existing professors at the university for the “History of Technology” and “History of the Impact of Technology”, as well as with the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences. Also, the new professor should be involved in the ‘International Centre of Studies in Culture and Technology’.

The Ferry Porsche Foundation finances the project to the tune of a six-figure amount every year. This sponsorship is scheduled to last for a period of ten years. The extension of the professorship is assured using follow-up financing from the university. The endowed professorship is administered by the Stifterverband for the Promotion of Sciences and Humanities.

The initiative for this professorship has its origin in the sports car manufacturer’s close examination of its own history: The Stuttgart historian Prof. Wolfram Pyta, Head of the Department for Modern History at the Institute of History of the University of Stuttgart, had produced a comprehensive study of the first few years of the company’s history – from the origins of the Volkswagen to the role played by the vehicle manufacturer Prof. Ferdinand Porsche during the Nazi era and wartime production up until Prof. Porsche’s death in 1951. During the course of publishing the results of the study, Porsche expanded the permanent exhibition in the company’s museum to include more content about this period, and unveiled a plaque at the main factory commemorating the forced laborers who worked for the company. The company also decided to endow a professorship.

“Dealing with one’s own history is a full-time commitment. This applies as much to the Porsche AG as to other companies,” says Dr. Josef Arweck, Chairman of the Management Board at the Ferry Porsche Foundation, and adds: “It is precisely this critical reflection that the Ferry Porsche Foundation wants to encourage, because: to know where you’re going, you have to know where you’ve come from.” The



endowed professorship is a “sign of the significance of a corporate culture which promotes a sense of identity”, and an invitation to family companies in particular “to engage with their history even more intensively and candidly, and the results and possible consequences of it”.

About the Ferry Porsche Foundation

The Foundation was named after Ferry Porsche, who founded the sports car brand in 1948. His social management philosophy still shapes the company to this day. The Ferry Porsche Foundation is predominantly active at the factory sites in Stuttgart, Weissach and Leipzig, though also promotes projects at the international sales offices. The Foundation supports projects in the fields of science, research and training as well as parenting and education, promotes cultural and conservation initiatives, and helps people who are socially disadvantaged. The focus is on young people in particular. In future, the Foundation is also planning on strengthening its own programs.