

KICKSTART FOR A GREENER FUTURE: GREENTECH FESTIVAL 2020

LEADING THE WAY WITH INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AND A CORONA-COMPLIANT EVENT CONCEPT



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Marco Voigt, Ruby O. Fee, Franziska Knuppe and Alexia Osswald wear sustainable fashion from Dr. Hauschka x Felder Felder

After three inspiring days, GREENTECH FESTIVAL (GTF) came to an end last Friday in Berlin. As a result of the current situation, GTF 2020 was able to set a new benchmark for the event industry thanks to its hybrid event concept with both on-site and online content. The green event of the year brought together passionate thought leaders and advocates for sustainable technologies and lifestyles from all over the world, with an online audience as well as on-site visitors at the former power plant Kraftwerk Berlin. With innovative formats such as SWITCH GREEN, inspiring lectures, keynotes and panel talks at the GTF CONFERENCE, the GTF CONCERT, progressive business solutions and new product presentations at the GTF EXHIBITION and honoring groundbreaking ideas and projects at the GREEN AWARDS, the creators not only set an important signal in the fight against the global climate crisis, but provided the tools with which we can succeed.

Berlin, 21. September 2020 – After its successful premiere last year, GTF 2020 celebrated its second edition – with a new concept. Now, the innovative and completely CO₂-neutral hybrid event has come to an end. This year, all who were interested were able to follow the groundbreaking keynotes, panel talks and deep-dives not only on site in Berlin, but also online via livestream. German Minister of State Dorothee Bär also recognized the core of GTF: "Shaping tomorrow's world with technological innovations – that is the challenge we face. I am certain that Germany is a good location for contributing to this transformation."

The event kicked off with a real highlight: the new, hour-long SW!TCH GREEN format in which twelve thought leaders explained with striking video messages how we as a society can jointly turn the switch to a greener future – and why we must. The opening evening was then crowned by the GTF CONCERT powered by Telekom, featuring the British cult band Johnny Hates Jazz.

In addition, 49 speakers presented exciting keynotes, panel talks and masterclasses on future-forward topics at the GTF CONFERENCE powered by Salesforce, on both digital and analog stages. The GTF EXHIBITION was dedicated to sustainable business and products for a greener future: 70 exhibitors presented their latest innovations here - on site and in digital showrooms. The heart of the GTF was once again the GREEN AWARDS powered by Audi. At the gala with many prominent guests, green change-makers were awarded and celebrated for their trendsetting projects and ideas.

"The days here in Berlin have once again shown how enormously important the topic of sustainability is, and that here we are being met with more and more open arms and ears than ever before. We need advanced technologies to protect our planet and transform our economy and society to be more sustainable. I am enthusiastic about the spirit that was created here at Kraftwerk Berlin and that has radiated throughout the world via our online community. And that's why I would like to thank everyone who was part of this year's GREENTECH FESTIVAL – the support of 3,000 visitors on site and well over 1 million people using the digital GTF channels is really overwhelming and confirms our belief that together, we really can make a difference," sums up Marco Voigt, co-founder of the festival.

Sustainability pioneers appeal with passion: now flip the switch to green

The SW!TCH GREEN format celebrated its premiere this year and will be continued regularly in the future. GTF laid the foundation for a green inspiration series with the support of twelve renowned thought leaders. Among them were Ursula von der Leyen (President of the European Commission), Sundar Pichai (CEO of Google and Alphabet), Klaus Schwab (economist and founder of the World Economic Forum), Christiana Figueres (former Secretary General of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), Sting (musician, composer and actor), Melati Wijsen (Indonesian climate activist) and acting icon Robert Redford. All speakers united in their urgent appeal that it is high time to turn the switch to green together. To this end, they shared their personal motivations for a greener planet in exclusive video messages.

This is how the future works: GREEN AWARDS celebrate pioneering ideas in the fight against climate change

The last day of the festival culminated in the presentation of the GREEN AWARDS – which this year for the first time were supported by Audi as founding partner. Here, groundbreaking ideas that drive sustainable social change were honored in four different categories. 20-year-old South African scientist Kiara Nirghin won the “Youngster” award for her development of a polymer produced from plant waste that improves soil absorption and thus helps to combat hunger crises. She received her award from basketball star Dirk Nowitzki and Google Vice President Jacquelline Fuller. The award in the “Innovation” category went to the Finnish company Solar Foods for its protein powder production with CO₂ as the main raw material. The prize was presented by Prof. Sabina Jeschke, board member for digitalization and technology at Deutsche Bahn and rap icon Smudo. The winner in the category “Start-up” was, for the first time, selected during the award ceremony in a live voting via Instagram. The vote was won by Lebanese company Live Love Recycle with its app-based waste collection service, which connects citizens in crisis-ridden Beirut with recycling facilities. The award was presented by model and influencer couple Stefanie Giesinger and Marcus Butler. The award for “Impact” went to the German search engine provider Ecosia for its compensation for the greenhouse gases it generates through server operation and tree planting, presented by Dr. Andreas Jentzsch, Senior Partner and Managing Director at Boston Consulting Group (BCG), and singer Rea Garvey. A total of twelve innovators and projects were nominated, three per category. This year, the jury also awarded two special prizes: “Green Organization” and “Lifetime Achievement”. The “Green Organization” prize went to French luxury fashion group Kering, which introduced standards of sustainability, animal welfare and protection for underage models for its brands – including Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Gucci and Saint Laurent – and thus plays a pioneering role in the fashion industry. The award was presented by actress Ruby O. Fee and Marco Parroni, Marketing Director at Julius Baer. The “Lifetime Achievement” award, presented by Henrik Wenders, Senior Vice President Audi Brand and Formula E racing driver Lucas di Grassi, went to 86-year-old British behavioral scientist Dr. Jane Goodall – who was also part of the SW!TCH GREEN series – for her life's work as a pioneer in animal and environmental protection.



GTF co-founder and sustainability entrepreneur Nico Rosberg is enthusiastic about the outcome of the festival: “Those were three really great days here in Berlin! Our new concept has been an amazing success and we are extremely proud that we managed to organize an event of this size in the current times. Even in times of coronavirus, the climate crisis doesn’t take a break, and that’s why it was so important to us that this year we were able to highlight the urgency of switching green. Once again, we brought together many open, inquisitive, influential minds from all kinds of industries to work together with us to achieve a sustainable re-think of our industries.”

In light of the challenging situation, GTF proved that pioneering events are once again possible under the right conditions. For the organizers, the health of all participants was always of first priority whilst planning and carrying out the festival. The hygiene concept, which was also tested and approved by MEDITÜV in advance, proved to be consistently resilient. After this all-round success, the organizers are optimistic about the future. And the date for the third GTF has already been fixed: it is to take place again in Berlin from 17 to 19 June 2021, and an international edition is also planned in New York.

About GREENTECH FESTIVAL

With the motto #celebratechange, GREENTECH FESTIVAL brings entrepreneurs, neo-green idealists and visitors from all over the world together to be inspired by the most innovative technologies and ideas that facilitate a sustainable lifestyle. As the first festival of its kind, it combines an inspiring exhibition of green technologies, products and services, a conference powered by Salesforce featuring prominent forward-thinkers, a climate-neutral concert in cooperation with Telekom and the ceremony for the GREEN AWARDS powered by Audi. The three-day event is the center point of the festival and, at the same time, forms the core of the steadily growing platform of the same name for the green technologies and innovators making a contribution to quickly turning technological, economic and social change towards sustainability into a reality. With its second edition, the festival evolved into a digital-analog hybrid event. With multiple new online formats and comprehensive digital components of established modules, GREENTECH FESTIVAL 2020 returned with more adaptability and global visibility than ever before.

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