

Mindshift

Impulses for change – TUM Campus Heilbronn



Company portrait: Judith Noerpel-Schneider, member of the management

Network

New ways to exchange ideas celebrate their premiere at the TUM Campus Heilbronn

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“Our main tasks: research, teaching, lifelong learning, and networking.”

Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar, founding dean and representative of the president for the TUM Campus Heilbronn

The TUM Campus Heilbronn: link between research and practice

Dear Readers,

The companies in our region know how economic success works. They have proven this sufficiently, as Heilbronn-Franconia quite rightly calls itself “the region of world market leaders.” But to ensure that this remains the case in the future, we have to work hard to achieve this success. Four aspects are particularly important: research, teaching, lifelong learning, and networking.

This is where we, as the TUM Campus Heilbronn, also see our main tasks. The scientific work – as well as the academic education and training – focuses primarily on three areas: digital transformation, family businesses, and the new addition computer science. We present our special research and training concepts in the area of family businesses in detail in this issue of Mindshift magazine.

As far as the all-important networking is concerned, we rely above all on direct exchange. This naturally includes joint research projects with companies and practical experience for our students. To strengthen collaboration in the region and knowledge transfer even more, we have also launched two new event formats that work very well even under the restrictive COVID-19 conditions: TUM Talk and TUM Connect.

Twice a year, TUM Talk brings together scientists, entrepreneurs, and top managers. For the premiere, we brought high-ranking representatives from Google, the Schwarz Group, the Würth Group, and BayWa – as well as renowned economists – to Heilbronn to exchange ideas about opportunities for digital transformation and leadership in a transformed working world. The event – a combination of in-person classroom and online – was moderated by our own Prof. Dr. Thomas F. Hofmann, president of the TU Munich.

In the TUM Connect format, the focus is even more on the direct link between our university and local SMEs. Companies are given the opportunity to bring their concrete practical requirements to the education campus and thereby help shape the research work. The event is designed as an interactive exchange with renowned experts from research and practice. You can find out more on the following pages.

If you are interested in getting more closely involved with the TUM, feel free to contact me at helmut.krcmar.hn@tum.de. You are also welcome to join us at our upcoming events.

I am very much looking forward to the exchange. Because that’s what makes us tick here at the TUM Campus Heilbronn: we see ourselves as part of this region and want to help ensure that its success story continues.

Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar

Founding dean and representative of the president for the TUM Campus Heilbronn



“Think, understand, manage”: TUM Talk celebrates its premiere at the Heilbronn education campus

From Google to Würth, from Heilbronn to Silicon Valley: the premiere of our TUM Talk discussion forum at the education campus in Heilbronn focused on two mega-topics: digital transformation and modern leadership. Business representatives and academics emphasized the strengths of the economic region and called for more collaboration on digitalization

The economic foundation is solid – but now it’s time to take the next big step: in the Heilbronn-Franconia region in particular, numerous family-owned businesses and corporations have proven that they can reinvent themselves time and again over the years and decades. Today, this ability to change is more in demand than ever. After all, the digital transformation is already fundamentally changing value chains and business models, while innovation cycles are becoming shorter and shorter – a development that is being accelerated by the global coronavirus pandemic.

“The young talent we train through our programs is crucial to bringing new creativity and inspiration to the hidden champions of this economically strong region.”

Prof. Dr. Thomas F. Hofmann, President of the TU Munich

The task now is to use the crisis as a catalyst, and the drastic upheaval as an opportunity. “Exchanging ideas and thinking outside the box is crucial for both the scientific and economic development of the region. Business

“In Germany, we have the potential to refine quite a few of our industries thanks to digitalization.”

Dr. Wieland Holfelder, Vice President Engineering for Google in Germany

and science must come together to master the digital challenges of the future,” affirmed TUM President Thomas F. Hofmann, who traveled from Munich to moderate the kick-off event.



“We are trying to delegate more decisions to our teams. Because leadership is not power – it’s responsibility.”

Thessa von Hülsen (responsible for HR strategy at Deutsche Börse)



The panelists emphasized this as well. In the process of the increasingly close cooperation, the importance of regional networks is growing: established companies, startups, and research together form ecosystems in which innovations can be implemented quickly.

In order to create ideal structures for cooperation, a critical look at one’s own products and business models is required, as well as an examining look into the inner workings of the companies. After all, strict hierarchies and extensive reporting channels often slow down the speed of decision-making too much. Trust is becoming a central value in management culture, especially since the demands of many employees on their managers are also evolving. The consensus among the participants was that it is important to encourage curiosity and delegate decision-making.

Curiosity about new impulses came from both panelists and audience members – on site and virtually – at the first TUM Talk. Board members and executives – from companies such as Google, Deutsche Börse, the Schwarz Group, the agricultural and energy group BayWa, the IT service provider Bechtle AG, the inspection and certification group TÜV Süd, and the development service provider CSI – openly discussed the opportunities of digital transformation and a new understanding of modern leadership with researchers from the TUM. ●

“In discussions with our customers, it is becoming clear that the challenges of digitalization are less about the technological aspects and more about the question of how to shape the digital transformation in one’s own company.”

Dr. Thomas Olemotz, Chairman of the Executive Board of Bechtle AG



In the future, the TUM Talk will take place twice a year at the Heilbronn education campus. The next event is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11, 2021. More on page 7



At TUM Connect:
Dr. Christoph Geier
(left) and Prof. Dr.
Claudia Peus (above)

TUM Connect: let's have it all!

Anyone who wants to master a digital transformation needs sensitivity and perseverance. After all, you have to deal with the complexity of digital transformation and also take all the stakeholders with you on a journey into the unknown

How can this work? This question brought together around 30 participants at the education campus in Heilbronn – for the premiere of our new networking format TUM Connect. Just the name of the event series suggests its purpose: we need an interactive exchange with renowned experts from research and practice, and a direct link between our university and the medium-sized businesses in the region. The goal: bring concrete requirements from industry onto the education campus to make the research work of the TUM School of Management more practice-oriented.

Case studies from both worlds made it clear that anyone – for example, the owner-managed technology group Kurtz Ersa, headquartered in Kreuzwertheim in Lower Franconia – who accepts the challenge of digital transformation can exploit undreamed-of potential.

Those who fail to act, on the other hand, run the risk of falling by the wayside. “The short formula for a digital transformation? Let’s have it all,” commented Dr. Christoph Geier, Director Digital Transformation at TUM Campus Heilbronn, on the aspiration of many digitalization initiatives. However, wanting everything at once can be overwhelming. “You have to ask yourself this question: how do you bet on the right horse, especially as a medium-sized company?” says Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar, Professor of Business Informatics and Founding Dean of TUM Campus Heilbronn. The answer to this question requires the illumination of a wide variety of facets and will also be the subject of our new format in the future.

“Working a lot to get ahead is no longer enough. The young generation in particular is concerned with purpose, with the ‘why’ of it all.”

Prof. Dr. Claudia Peus, Founding Director of the TUM Institute for LifeLong Learning

After all, technical innovations and methodological knowledge are only half the battle. “Digital transformation affects people and thus directly affects corporate culture,” argued Prof. Dr. Claudia Peus, founding director of the TUM Institute for LifeLong Learning. Lifelong continuing education, especially for older employees, is an essential element in readiness for change. And here, first and foremost, the management level has to lead by example. ●

TUM Talk: family businesses in transition – courage for the future!

Family-run SMEs are currently facing the greatest entrepreneurial challenges of our time. Those who do not position themselves digitally now and use the challenges of transformation as an opportunity for growth could soon be overtaken in the race for ever-shorter innovation cycles



But that’s not all: topics such as climate-oriented sustainability and cross-generational succession are also pushing their way onto the agenda. The good news is that we are not leaving the numerous hidden champions of our economically strong region to go it alone. At the Global Center for Family Enterprise at our education campus in Heilbronn, we are fine-tuning approaches to solutions and sustainable business models under the leadership of the director, Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird, in a close cooperation between science and business. A massive rethinking and a break with the usual processes and strategies of previous years is inevitable.

In order to initiate the necessary change in the SME sector, the focus is on various questions: how can the need for innovation be reconciled with traditional corpo-

rate management? Which success factors are crucial for a family business to survive successfully in the long term and across generations? And which steps are important with regard to a climate-responsible entrepreneurial orientation? As part of our discussion forum TUM Talk on **May 11, 2021**, we would like to initiate discourse among our speakers, panel guests, and virtual participants.

Divided into three thematic blocks – intergenerational thinking, tradition and innovation, and climate-oriented sustainability – our TUM Talk links impulses from science with the experiences of business. Viewers who tune in virtually can expect a challenging round of talks in a TV studio atmosphere, in which the opportunities and risks for family businesses are highlighted and openly discussed in equal measure. ●

Company portrait

Succession in the best hands: (left to right) Judith, Stefan, and Lucas Noerpel-Schneider lead as a team



The issue of succession is a cause for concern in German family businesses. More and more offspring are striving for self-fulfillment away from the dynasty. But there are counterexamples, not least in our economically strong region. The Noerpel Group, headquartered in Ulm and today one of the most successful logistics companies in southern Germany, is now writing its own history – in the fifth generation

The company? It's like a sibling!

T

Freight forwarding with tradition: 140 years ago, the company started operations under the name C.E. NOERPEL

The company was founded in 1881, and descendants of the family have passed on the baton practically without a break since then. And Stefan Noerpel-Schneider, Managing Director since 1998, should be more pleased than worried about the future: his children, Judith and Lucas – two promising young professionals – are already waiting in the wings. For these two, innovative thinking is a tradition, detours are part of the game, and constraint is a foreign concept.

“We just grew into it,” says 29-year-old Judith Noerpel-Schneider, reflecting on her path into the family business. “Our dad always liked to talk enthusiastically about his work, never put pressure on us, encouraged our passions, and rather subtly sparked our interest in the industry.” Close family ties, ambitious goals, and a strong academic résumé eventually brought her to her current position: as corporate marketing manager of the company group, which now has 16 locations and around 2,500 employees. For more than two years now, all marcom decisions have crossed her desk. “My job is strongly driven by the respective project and brings an incredible amount of variety to everyday life. What’s particularly nice is that I can tackle the challenges of succession together with my brother and father. That provides support, even in difficult situations.”

Women at the top: “Outdated role models are no longer an obstacle”

Judith Noerpel-Schneider denies that women still have to battle gender stereotypes in industries heavily dominated by men, such as the logistics sector. “You just have to put in the time and earn your stripes,” she says. “In my experience, outdated role models in executive suites are no longer a real obstacle in 2021. Nevertheless, there are of course demanding settings and the enduring challenge of being able to combine family and career. As the only young woman in executive meetings with 15 men over 50, you think twice about how you want to place things. But the respect for new knowledge is now there.”

Female or male leadership? It's all about the right combination!

When asked whether there were fundamental differences in leadership behavior between the sexes, the marketing boss also had a clear stance: “In many cases, women lead differently than men do – sometimes more empathetically, sometimes more consistently, and often more self-critically. But in any case, gender diversity at the



top levels opens up new perspectives in management.” It is precisely the differences, she says, from which modern companies can draw the greatest potential. That’s another reason why she appeals to young women not to conform too much, even in male-dominated industries: “I believe that we don’t have to act male to be successful. On the contrary, consider your femininity a strength and an asset to the company.”

Innovative strength through networking

In the end, it is all about thinking together toward the future in order to remain competitive in the long term. The Noerpel Group is obviously succeeding in this: last year, the company was selected as one of the 19 finalists for the prestigious “EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Germany” award for commitment, entrepreneurship, and innovative strength.

The management also wants to promote such impulses beyond the family’s own succession. As part of its master’s semester projects, the Noerpel Group now works with the Global Center for Family Enterprise at the TUM School of Management at Campus Heilbronn and awards project studies to students at the university. The goal: better networking between science and business. At the same time, the cooperation brings young talent with a lot of technological know-how into the company. An opportunity for early recruiting? Judith Noerpel-Schneider doesn’t rule it out: “Well-trained managers who bring tech expertise, management know-how, and an understanding of working in family businesses are needed today more than ever.” ●

What makes us special?

Our values shape the work of the TUM at the Heilbronn campus.
They are the basis for success and ethical action

Top marks for digital teaching in CHE rankings

--- From one day to the next, everything was different at our TUM Campus Heilbronn: due to the coronavirus pandemic, all face-to-face events had to be cancelled and switched to digital, online operations. And apparently we succeeded quite well: in a special evaluation of its survey of master's students, the internationally renowned Centre for Higher Education (CHE) gave us top marks for the study conditions under coronavirus-related restrictions – 100 percent of our students were satisfied with the crisis management.

In particular, the variety of digital teaching formats – featuring online lectures, lecture recordings, webinars, interactive seminars, exercises, and tutorials – received outstanding ratings from the students. Equally convincing was the transparency in terms of performance requirements and learning objectives – in other words, information management. Even internships and research projects together with companies could partly take place virtually.

But we still don't want a complete switch to digital learning. Joint learning and direct interaction between students and teachers are irreplaceable. That's why we want to return to face-to-face lectures as soon as possible.

At a safe distance thanks to high tech

--- Keeping your distance is considered one of the most important behaviors in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. That is why we are also devoting special attention to this topic on the TUM campus. As a technical university, it was clear to us that there must be a better solution than placing strips of tape on the floor.

In fact, the company KINEXON, co-founded by Dr. Oliver Trinchera, an alumnus of the TUM School of Management, has the appropriate high-tech solution at the ready: small, portable sensors that measure the distance to the nearest sensor carriers with centimeter precision, and also measure the duration of contact in real time.

The sensors were actually developed for professional team sports to provide training managers with insight into the movement behavior of players with the help of artificial intelligence.

Adapted to the coronavirus situation, the device warns visually and acoustically if users get too close to each other for too long. In addition, possible chains of infection can be traced very easily – while complying with German data-protection regulations.

This convinced our founding dean Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar. "We want to support every single student in keeping the appropriate distance to their fellow students," he says. A corresponding project with students has therefore been launched, starting with the 2020 winter semester.

Sustainable TUM masks from South Africa

--- The many disposable masks that are currently needed are an important protective measure in the fight against the coronavirus, but as disposable items they also cause major environmental problems. That's why we at TUM are focusing very strongly on reusable masks.

At the TUM School of Management, we have teamed up with Township, a company based in South Africa. There, 50 women sew high-quality masks (which are still used in public spaces) made of cotton and recycled PET, with our logo on each mask. As an entrepreneurial university, we are very happy to support companies that share our values of responsibility and sustainability. ●



The transparent university



Networking and openness define our identity. Even in times of a pandemic. For the exchange between students and researchers as well as business players from the Heilbronn-Franconia region, we have – together with our partners – created new formats that also connect digitally



Corporate Campus Challenge

Entrepreneurial thinking is one of the most important educational goals at the TUM School of Management, alongside scientific excellence and our students' personality development. That is why we support the Corporate Campus Challenge together with other institutions on the education campus in Heilbronn. Here, participants can combine theory and practice and work on real challenges from the business world. The first step is to comprehensively understand the problem, then look for solutions to it, and then finally to organize the actual implementation. Experienced coaches and mentors from the Campus Founders organization accompany the students during the three-month innovative learning experience.

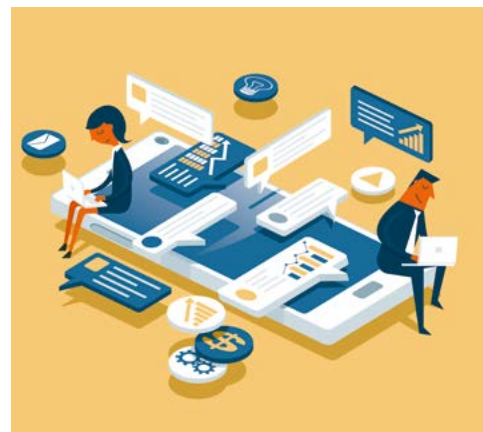


TUM supports the StartupCity Heilbronn

Company founders face huge challenges. That's why StartupCity Heilbronn organizes a digital event series all about startups and professional self-employment. Our expert for family businesses, Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird, contributed with a lecture on the criteria for selecting a functioning startup team. The manager of our TUM Global Center for Family Enterprise, Christina Kößmeier, dedicated herself to the topic "Distraction: how do I manage to strengthen my focus?"

Platform economy – something only for tech giants?

Google and Amazon are leading the way: with their digital platforms, they are making unbelievable profits. But the platform economy is not something only for tech giants – it's also for SMEs right here in Germany. Together with the German association of small and medium-sized businesses, we are therefore organizing a conference in Waldenburg with representatives of interested companies. The presentation by our founding dean Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar will address questions such as: what does the platform economy mean in concrete terms for medium-sized companies that are not active in the consumer-goods industry? What changes in value creation will result, and what opportunities and risks can be expected? Because it's only with the necessary knowledge that smart business decisions can be made.



Supply Chain Finance Hub: expert conference at TUM Heilbronn

The coronavirus crisis has highlighted the vulnerability of the globalized economy, with its interdependent supply chains. As soon as even one supplier gets into trouble, the entire process can stall or even collapse. Prof. Dr. David Wuttke of the TUM School of Management is researching solutions at the Heilbronn campus. "We need new, proactive strategies for risk management," emphasizes the economist, who is relying on ideas from a wide range of industries. At the Supply Chain Finance Hub online conference he organized, seven experts presented their strategies. More than a hundred interested people joined them live. "It's about learning first-hand and benefiting from the exchange," says Wuttke. "The goal is to show companies what they can do to strengthen their supply chains in these changing times." On May 19, 2021, the 2nd Supply Chain Finance Hub will focus on sustainability in supply chain finance.





Effective continuing education: academic excellence and practical expertise for the region

Teaching content based on the latest research and innovative methodological knowledge – this and more is exactly what TUM's part-time continuing education programs at the TUM Campus Heilbronn provide. You can find an overview of our offerings [here](#)

For designers of the digital transformation:

Digitalization opens up solutions for the most pressing business challenges of our time. Many global corporations, but especially medium-sized and family-owned companies, are now faced with the task of harnessing the promise of digital transformation for themselves. But where – and how – do you start?

In our **Mastering Digital Transformation** seminar series, we provide clarification and give our participants the right tools and skills to lead the way, at the intersection of management and technology. Each of our eight seminars, which can also be booked individually, focuses on a different topic. Together, they create a concrete, practicable roadmap that gives direction to your personal digital transformation process.

Whom is our offering tailored to?

Our offer is aimed at directors, executives, managers, and employees, from all areas of a company, who play a key role in shaping and implementing specific transformation phases and the change processes in their company.

For innovation drivers:

The ever-changing business world increases the pressure on companies to continuously improve products, expand their portfolio, and respond to new markets.

Our **Business Design & Innovation** course teaches the entire business design process in a practical and implementation-oriented manner – from the initial idea to market entry. The course is divided into two sections: methodology and perspective. This means that participants benefit not only from validated implementation experience from the private sector, but also from the entire range of scientific research expertise from one of the best universities in the world.

Whom is our offering tailored to?

Our offer is aimed at project experts and employees of a company who want to qualify as innovation managers or who want to establish a structured innovation-management system in their company. This course takes place in cooperation with our partner Orange Hills GmbH.

For founders – and those who want to become one:

For some time now, founding one's own startup has been a career goal and lifelong dream for many. On the way to a successful business, however, there are numerous hurdles that can only be overcome with targeted preparation, sound basic knowledge, and the right mindset.

As part of our **Design Your Business** course series, participants develop their own business ideas and go through all aspects of the startup process under professional guidance – from customer analysis to storytelling to pitch training. Methods such as design thinking and lean startup are explained, analyzed, and tried out, as are crowdfunding and other financing strategies. The use of digital tools is also part of the program, to ultimately create the perfect basis for a successful startup. Afterwards, an individual coaching package can be booked. This additional offer takes place in cooperation with Campus Founders.

Whom is our offering tailored to?

Our series of courses is aimed at all entrepreneurs and future founders who have already gained professional experience and are now looking for a sound basic course that conveys not only theoretical knowledge, but also practical experience.

For investors who are looking ahead:

The global sustainability trend is booming – and it's now also playing an increasingly important role in the financial sector. Both institutional and private investors are increasingly making their investment decisions based on environmentally friendly and socially conscious business strategies. But how do you choose the right strategy?

To provide an overview in the opaque jungle of equity and debt instruments, to highlight opportunities and risks, and to convey an understanding of how to evaluate operational sustainability structures in companies, we have launched our **Sustainable Investing** program, together with our partner DVFA. As part of the certificate course, we present the special features, opportunities, and risks of sustainable investments in a comprehensive and practice-oriented manner – taking into account all strategic, product-specific, and regulatory aspects.

Whom is our offering tailored to?

Our offer is aimed at institutional investors such as asset managers, investment advisors, and CSR managers, as well as private investors who want to dive deeper into the world of sustainable investing. ●



Contact

All courses can be booked through Continuing Education, effective immediately. For more information on dates, costs, and procedures, please contact us by e-mail:

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TUM Institute for LifeLong Learning
TUM Campus Heilbronn gGmbH



Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird gets to the bottom of succession, innovation, and strategy in family businesses

But if, contrary to expectations, a daughter does take over the helm – what hurdles should she expect?

First of all, there is the double burden: after all, women in management positions also start their own families and are then faced with the task of balancing business and raising children. This is hardly feasible without appropriate family support. On the corporate side, there are completely different challenges. Particularly in industries based on technology or logistics, for example, which are heavily dominated by men, women often have a hard time in management positions. So we need a change in thinking and a new level of legitimacy for women at the top, which must first be exemplified in our society, but also and above all must be exemplified by upper-level male employees.

Why is such a rethink so important right now?

If we look at corporate structures in the DACH region, we see that around 20 percent of all companies will have to be handed over in the next five years. But there are nowhere near enough potential male successors. And if only because today many of these men want to realize their own potential and build their own careers outside the family tradition. For this reason alone, it is absolutely essential that female heirs are also taken into consideration, because otherwise a great deal of potential is lost – and even the continued existence of the German SME sector is at risk.

Do women lead in a fundamentally different way than men do?

There are basically two main opinions on this: while some attribute significantly more empathy and a “softer” communication structure to female managers, others believe that we only underline our stereotypical thinking with such assumptions. That is, we project attributes onto female bosses that we associate with women anyway. There are several research studies that contrast male and female leadership behaviors and find no significant differences at all. Not even when the women analyzed considered themselves to be more empathetic or communicative. So you see: there is no clear answer here. And probably the truth lies somewhere in the middle. ●

Family businesses in transition

Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird, Director of our Global Center for Family Enterprise, talks in an interview with Dr. Bernhard Stumpfhaus of Heilbronn’s “HANIX” magazine about the major topic of female succession in family businesses

Has it now become common practice for female heirs of founding fathers to succeed in the family business?

Let’s put it circumspectly: female succession is slowly becoming more common, at least in liberal, progressive societies. But in conservative countries and cultures, there is still no real trend here.

How do daughters get on board as successors?

Typically, succession in family businesses is planned specifically and drawn on for many years, as soon as the founder or patron recognizes appropriate motivation and skills in members of the younger generation. However, especially when analyzing the careers of female heirs, we observe that coincidence often plays a decisive role. In most cases, they are not initially earmarked for succession and only reach management positions in a roundabout way. Only when the brothers are unwilling – or unable – does this pave the way for the daughters. Bettina Würth, today Chairwoman of the Advisory Board of the Würth Group, is a prominent example of this.

“We need a change in thinking and a new level of legitimacy for women at the top, which must first be exemplified in our society, but also and above all must be exemplified by upper-level male employees.”

Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird, Professor and Director of the Global Center for Family Enterprise at the TUM School of Management

Imprint: Mindshift is a publication of the TUM School of Management at the Heilbronn Campus **Publisher:** TUM School of Management, Bildungscampus 9, 74076 Heilbronn **V.i.S.d.P.:** Prof. Dr. Gunther Friedl **Editorial office:** Kerstin Besemer (kerstin.besemer@tumheilbronn-ggmbh.de), Kerstin Arnold-Kapp (kerstin.arnold-kapp@tumheilbronn-ggmbh.de) **Authors of this issue:** Prof. Dr. Thomas F. Hofmann, Prof. Dr. Helmut Krcmar, Prof. Dr. Claudia Peus, Prof. Dr. Miriam Bird, Prof. Dr. David Wuttke, Dr. Christoph Geier, Wieland Holfelder, Dr. Thomas Olemotz, Thessa von Hülsen, Judith Noerpel-Schneider, Caroline Hoffmann **Design and production:** IAN In A Nutshell GmbH, Augustenstraße 52, 80333 Munich, e-mail: info@nutshell.de **Printing:** Eberl Print GmbH **Circulation:** 2,000 copies **Image sources:** Cover, back cover, p. 8, p. 9: C.E. Noerpel GmbH & Co. Projekt-Logistik KG; cover, back cover (illustration): Jan Steins; p. 2–p. 7, p. 14–p. 17: MATT STARK photography; p. 11: Kinexon/Getty Images; p. 12: Campus Founders gGmbH; p. 12 iStock/sorbetto; p. 13: City of Heilbronn, Marks GmbH; **Status:** March 2021





In 1881 Carl Ernst Noerpel
founded the company
C.E. NOERPEL. Today it is
run by his descendants in
the fifth generation