

Press Release

BeyondGenderAgenda places diversity and inclusion on the agenda of leading companies

Düsseldorf, January 15, 2020 – BeyondGenderAgenda has set itself the goal to promote equal opportunities for senior executives of all gender, ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity to bring about a cultural change involving politics, society and economy. Supported by a top-class advisory board with 16 members, founder Victoria Wagner wants to place the topics of diversity and inclusion in a publicly effective manner and thus make it a broad movement.

The lack of diversity in German management has been discussed for years. However, little has changed, although studies show that highly diverse leadership teams are a significant success factor for economic growth and greater profitability. Diversity without inclusive organizational structure and culture does not have a positive impact. Against this backdrop, BeyondGenderAgenda (BGA) is launching an initiative that intends to secure long-term international competitiveness by integrating diversity and inclusion into the DNA of leading listed and medium-sized companies. Founded by entrepreneur Victoria Wagner, BGA seeks to ensure equal opportunities for senior executives of all gender, ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity in staffing executive and supervisory board mandates through sustainable agenda setting, social media campaigning, studies, and active ambassador communication. In this way, a fundamental cultural change involving politics, society and economy should be brought about in a timely manner.

“Germany will only remain economically strong in the 1920s if we exploit our full potential. If you want to get involved, you shouldn’t have a disadvantage based on gender, age, origin or sexual orientation. That’s why I support BeyondGenderAgenda’s concern to overcome such categories,” remarked Federal Health Minister Jens Spahn.

The initiative, which initially focuses on the chapters: Gender, Generation, Ethnicity, and LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, plus), shall be established as a brand for diversity and inclusion over the following months.

“Germany occupies lower ranks in international diversity and inclusion studies. This puts the long-term international competitiveness of our economy at risk. In addition, without an inclusive, appreciative work environment, it will become more and more difficult for companies to attract top talent from the market and, above all, to retain it. Diversity without real inclusion is nothing but PR and will not bring the positive results that diversified leadership teams can actually achieve”, commented Victoria Wagner, CEO BeyondGenderAgenda.

The founder and CEO of BeyondGenderAgenda Victoria Wagner is a passionate entrepreneur and communications expert. After leading positions in the international consumer goods industry, she founded Brandzeichen in 2004, Germany’s first public relations agency for brand communication, which she sold to the listed US network Omnicom in 2013. Wagner became the first female CEO of the leading German PR agency Ketchum Pleon. Omnicom also named her Ketchum’s Global Partner and she was the first German member of the agency’s Global Leadership Council. During this time, she co-initiated Omniwomen, an initiative to promote female leaders, in Germany.

In 2019, Victoria Wagner founded the strategy consultancy Alternativlos, advising companies on digital transformation as well as advising C-level executives on personal branding, and assisting in taking-over of supervisory board mandates and board positions. These advisory mandates and personal experiences prompted Wagner to found BeyondGenderAgenda.

BEYOND GENDER AGENDA

BeyondGenderAgenda Advisory Board:

- **Sabine U. Dietrich**, Member Supervisory Board and Chair Digitalization & Technology Committee, **Commerzbank**
- **Kristina Faßler**, General Manager Marketing and Commercial Sales, **WELT**
- **Cindy Groenke**, Managing Director, **Miele X**
- **Curt Simon Harlinghausen**, Global Client Partner Data, **Publicis.Sapient**
- **Elke Heitmüller**, Head – Group Diversity Management, **Volkswagen AG**
- **Manuela Kampp-Wirtz**, CEO, **BurdaStyle**
- **Claudia Oeking**, Director External Affairs, Member of the Management Team, **Philip Morris GmbH**
- **Gabriela Rauffer**, Director Device Marketing EMEA, **Microsoft**
- **Aida Rizvo**, International C-Suite Executive – on creative break
- **Ilana Rolef-Heberling**, Chief Marketing Officer, **PwC**
- **Dr. Wigan Salazar**, CEO Germany, **MSL**
- **Tobias Schönberg**, Senior partner, Co-director of the Berlin office, **Roland Berger**
- **Thorsten Sperlich**, Head of Communications, **LIXIL EMENA / CCO, GROHE**
- **Martin Spilker**, Personal assistant to Mrs. L. Mohn, Director Competence Center Management and Corporate Culture, **Bertelsmann Stiftung**
- **Matthias Weber**, Chairman of the Executive Board, **Völklinger Kreis – Bundesverband schwuler Führungskräfte und Selbstständiger**
- **Kathrin Werner**, Chief Editor, **Süddeutsche Zeitung – Plan W**

About BeyondGenderAgenda

BeyondGenderAgenda has set itself the goal of securing and expanding the international competitiveness of the German economy in the long term by integrating Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) into the DNA of listed and medium-sized companies. Based on the clear connection between D&I and business performance, equal opportunities of managers of different gender, age, cultural background, sexual orientation and gender identity in the composition of board positions and supervisory board mandates should be ensured and thus a change of culture involving politics, society and economy be brought about.

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