

PRESS RELEASE

WINTERSHALL DEA FOUNDATION SUPPORTS HEPHATA DIAKONIE PROJECT WITH 20,000 EUROS

- Preserve old craftsmanship and enable participation in working life
- Hersfeld district: Joinery for 60 people with disabilities saved through takeover of a family business in Nuremberg
- Open day on 25/26 March at the inclusion workshop in Breitenbach

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Kassel / Nuremberg. Preserving old handicraft and at the same time enabling people with disabilities to be part of the labour market: that is the goal of the joinery in Breitenbach am Herzberg (Hersfeld-Rotenburg district) in the German state of Hesse, a workshop for people with disabilities run by the Hephata Diakonie.

The Hephata Diakonie has been running the joinery with integrated turnery for more than 30 years as a workshop for people with disabilities. Hephata thus enables occupational participation qualification for up to 60 people with a mental handicap and/or addictions. To not only safeguard and keep these jobs permanently, but to also expand the range of services offered by the joinery, it will now take over the customer base and machines of the family business Anton Graf based near Nuremberg. This family-run turnery has specialised in producing high-quality wooden file handles.

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The owner wants to now hand over the family business that has existed since 1900 for reasons of age and at the same time support social work. To be able to raise the costs for the takeover, the joinery in Breitenbach and the Hephata Diakonie will now receive support from the Wintershall Dea Foundation. Wintershall Dea's company foundation will provide the financing for the 20,000 euros still needed to buy the machines from Bavaria.

"In our turnery, we mainly produce products in small batches for industry and trade on traditional lathes and modern CNC milling machines," as Monika Ben-Hassine, facility manager in Breitenbach, explains: "The takeover of the business from Franconia will allow us to win more customers and hence safeguard our workshop for people with disabilities. We will lay the foundation for new tasks and areas of activity. We will then be able in future to produce technically challenging tools not only as a part but as finished file handles." Since these are handcrafted in a workshop, they are notable for their special quality and stability, able to withstand high levels of strain, for example – high-quality products that can perfectly serve a market niche.

"When we told everyone at work about the funding and explained that the project can go ahead as a result, everyone was overjoyed," says Monika Ben-Hassine: "The cheering could probably have been heard as far as Franconia. Our sincere thanks go to the Wintershall Dea Foundation for helping us to preserve an old handicraft tradition through our work, while at the same time supporting our workshop in its social and professional development."



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For Michael Sasse, member of the Wintershall Dea Foundation for Democracy and Diversity board, the Hephata Diakonie joinery is living proof of integration into the working world put into practice: "The joinery with attached turnery allows people with mental or additive disorders to do meaningful work, produce sought-after products and hence experience a lot of self-efficacy. As a result, the joinery makes an important contribution both for its 60 employees personally and for our diverse society as a whole. We gladly support that."

Note for media: The donation will be presented on **Saturday, 25 March, at 2 p.m.** during the open day. The joinery will be hosting an open day on 25 and 26 March with tours, hands-on activities, homemade cake, a garden furniture exhibition and a tasty barbecue. The Bad Hersfeld shanty choir will also be performing on the Saturday at 1 and 2.30 p.m. Saturday, 25 March: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, 26 March: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.(Hephata Diakonie, Schreinerei und Drechslerei zum Herzberg (joinery and turnery), Zum Herzberg 14, 36287 Breitenbach am Herzberg).