

Press Release

## Germany: Creative Lateral Thinkers Meet at World Innovation Conference

28 June 2012

Potsdam/Palo Alto. Several hundred innovation experts from all over the world will be meeting in September with Design Thinking pioneers in Potsdam near Berlin to discuss future-oriented models and methods. Innovative solutions for the fields of management, research and education will be a further focus area. The event, called "d.confestival," is taking place from 20-22 September. In its form combining conference and festival, a unique working atmosphere is created synthesizing creativity and productivity. Online registration is now possible under [www.hpi.dconfestival.net](http://www.hpi.dconfestival.net)

The new event format will bring together for the first time managers, trainers and researchers who focus on innovation and innovative team work. Prominent participants will be, among others, the founder of SAP and Hasso Plattner Institute (HPI), Prof. Hasso Plattner, as well as Design Thinking pioneer David Kelley. Also present will be creative trailblazers, such as Oliviero Toscani, the mind behind the much-discussed Benetton campaign. Companies such as Metro, Deutsche Bank and Deutsche Telekom have already confirmed their participation as well. Interactive presentations and workshop formats, a global innovation task as well as an exhibition area provide an international atmosphere and multiple opportunities for networking.

Host of the first worldwide d.confestival is the HPI School of Design Thinking, at Hasso Plattner Institute (<http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de>) in Potsdam. This is the first innovation school in Europe for university students and is based on the model of the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University in Palo Alto (<http://dschool.stanford.edu>). Since 2007, the institute in Potsdam has offered additional academic training in Design Thinking, an opportunity unique in all of Germany.

The wishes and needs of the users and customers themselves are the focal point of Design Thinking. A fundamental distinction is therefore made in the process, setting it apart from traditional innovation methods in science and practice. Here, needs are usually defined from the point of view of technical feasibility or economic marketability. Design Thinking goes beyond this by synthesizing the interdisciplinary strengths of many problem solving strategies, thought patterns and communication cultures.

*"We are looking forward to this visit by creative lateral thinkers and innovators from all over the world and from completely different fields of activity. They will discuss, dispute and together create something new and exciting."*

**Prof. Christoph Meinel, Director of the Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam**

*"The connected working world of the future will become a reality for three days in Potsdam. The d.confestival is the beginning of a new, interactive and collaborative event format combining the seriousness of a scientific conference with the lightheartedness of a festival."*

**Prof. Ulrich Weinberg, Director of the HPI School of Design Thinking**

#### **Note to editors**

Please find the logo and pictures of the d.confestival here:

[www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/presse/fotos/school\\_of\\_design\\_thinking.html](http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/presse/fotos/school_of_design_thinking.html)

[www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/presse/fotos/logos\\_und\\_bildmarken.html](http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/presse/fotos/logos_und_bildmarken.html)

#### **A short profile of Hasso Plattner Institute**

Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Engineering GmbH (HPI) in Potsdam (<http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/willkommen.html>) is Germany's university excellence center for IT-Systems Engineering. It is the only university institution in Germany offering bachelor and master programs in „IT-Systems Engineering“ – a practical and engineering-oriented course of studies in computer science. Current enrollment is at about 460 students. The HPI School of Design Thinking, is Europe's first innovation school and based on the Stanford model of the d.school. It provides 120 places for a supplementary study. Altogether there are ten HPI professors and 50 other guest professors, lecturers and contract teachers at the Institute. HPI carries out research noted for its excellence in its nine topic areas, as well as at the HPI Research School for PhD candidates, with research branches in Cape Town, Haifa and Nanjing. HPI teaching and research focuses on the foundation and application of large-scale, highly complex and interconnected IT systems. The development and exploration of user-driven innovations for all areas of life is an additional area of importance. HPI continually attains top positions in the CHE university ranking.

#### **Background to the HPI School of Design Thinking**

Since 2007, the HPI School of Design Thinking at Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam, Babelsberg ([http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/d\\_school/home.html](http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/d_school/home.html)) has offered a supplementary study in "Design Thinking," which is unique European wide. Based on the model of its affiliated institute, "HPI d.school," at the elite American Stanford University in Silicon Valley (<http://dschool.stanford.edu>), the supplementary academic education in "Design Thinking" offers graduate students from all disciplines the possibility of developing user-friendly products and services for all areas of life in

small multidisciplinary teams. Projects are carried out in close collaboration with companies, public institutions and non-governmental organizations. Per semester up to 120 students are trained – 40 each in two basic courses and in one advanced course. Currently, participants from 22 countries are studying at the HPI School of Design Thinking. The duration of the training program lasts one or two semesters – with two on-site days in Potsdam per week. Successful completion is certified with an Institute certificate. The students are supported throughout their training by experienced professors and lecturers from different departments and disciplines.

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