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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and TU Darmstadt Extend Strategic Research Collaboration

- **Existing 15-year collaboration to run for another five years**
- **Joint research platform "Sustainability Hub" to be set up**
- **Future collaboration from the perspective of sustainability**

Darmstadt, Germany, March 6, 2021– Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, has extended its existing strategic joint research collaboration with the Technical University of Darmstadt (TU Darmstadt), Darmstadt, Germany, by another five years. As part of the realignment of this partnership, the topic of sustainability is at the heart of the collaboration. Both partners want to set up a joint research platform "Sustainability Hub", which will be open to all business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and all departments of the TU Darmstadt and enable the development of new, sustainable solutions. Four focus areas for joint research projects have been defined: circular economy, digital sustainability, responsible handling of raw materials and new alternatives, and innovative processes and procedures inspired by biology. Initial projects are to be started in the second half of the year.

"We are looking forward to this new, intensive collaboration with TU Darmstadt, which will also deliver important scientific impetus," said Kai Beckmann, member of the Executive Board of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and CEO Electronics. "This close strategic collaboration already contributed to an intensive science and technology transfer in the past and was the starting point for numerous further joint projects."



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“Developing responsible and sustainable future-oriented solutions for society and the economy is the joint objective of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and TU Darmstadt,” emphasized Professor Tanja Brühl, President of TU Darmstadt. “It is therefore important for us to jointly set up a long-term, trusting and very intensive collaboration for the future. There are outstanding connecting points to the new sustainability platform in all three research fields of our university – Energy and Environment, Information and Intelligence and Matter and Materials.”

The extended partnership – with scientific exchange and technology transfer as central aspects – fits perfectly into the [sustainability strategy](#) of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, announced in November 2020 that it intends to create value for society in all its businesses without creating additional costs for society. With the agreement that has now been signed, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is supporting research projects by scientists at TU Darmstadt and Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, who are coming to grips with technologies in the context of sustainability.

Moreover, for the five-year duration of the collaboration, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, will provide additional annual funding for national and international academic collaboration partners who are joining forces with TU Darmstadt. This should make the joint Sustainability Hub research platform broader and more international.

TU Darmstadt also considers the sustainability revolution as a fundamental change process in society, the economy, science, and politics. Shaping this transformation responsibly is at the heart of the identity of TU Darmstadt. Science applied in an interdisciplinary manner contributes to understanding and communication between the economy, society and science and is key to enabling sustainable development.

The four focus areas of the collaboration between Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and TU Darmstadt are:

Circular economy – linear models will become “round”

Suggestions for projects can revolve around the circular economy. This approach essentially involves converting a linear consumption model into a circular economy.

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This is inherently regenerative and has the objective of gradually decoupling growth from the consumption of finite resources.

Digital sustainability – integrating digital technologies into everyday work

Technological progress enables us to use a variety of digital solutions to make a sustainable contribution to our everyday work as well as to company processes. Identifying new fields of application and developing new digital solutions is a key challenge that must be overcome.

Responsible handling of raw materials – new alternatives to current ways of dealing with raw materials

Natural raw materials are the starting point of every value creation process and are thus essential in every respect. However, they are finite and growing need for and consumption of these resources combined with a constantly increasing global population means that they must be used responsibly and new resource-conserving alternatives must be developed and used.

Innovative processes and procedures inspired by biology

Nature provides a virtually unlimited repertoire of possibilities for overcoming the challenges of our everyday lives extremely efficiently – inspired by natural processes. Identifying suitable processes and making them usable is a major challenge. However, they have a great deal of potential when it comes to enabling new, sustainable approaches and solutions and making it possible to use the planet's resources more sparingly.

After 15 years of joint research, both partners are continuing individual projects in the business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and at TU Darmstadt. The scope of the existing collaboration is now being expanded with the Sustainability Hub. However, joint research activities are only part of the strategic collaboration between Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and TU Darmstadt. Joint projects, such as the [chemistry junior laboratory](#) and [the biology learning lab](#) for school students as well as the [Emanuel Merck Lectureship](#) are further elements of this intensive partnership.

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About TU Darmstadt

TU Darmstadt is one of Germany's leading technical universities. TU Darmstadt incorporates diverse science cultures to create its characteristic profile. The focus is set on engineering and natural sciences, which cooperate closely with outstanding humanities and social sciences. Three research fields characterize the profile of TU Darmstadt: E+E (Energy and Environment), I+I (Information and Intelligence) and M+M (Matter and Materials). We are dynamically developing our portfolio in research and teaching and innovation and transfer in order to continuously open up important future opportunities for society. Our 312 professors, approximately 4,500 scientific, administrative and technical staff and approximately 25,400 students are all working on this. As part of the Unite! network, which unites universities from seven European countries, TU Darmstadt is advancing the idea of a European university. Together with Goethe University Frankfurt and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, TU Darmstadt is forming a strategic alliance of universities in the Rhine-Main region.

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About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, operates across healthcare, life science and electronics. Around 58,000 employees work to make a positive difference to millions of people's lives every day by creating more joyful and sustainable ways to live. From advancing gene editing technologies and discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2020, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 17.5 billion in 66 countries.

The company holds the global rights to the name and trademark "Merck" internationally. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany operate as EMD Serono in healthcare, MilliporeSigma in life science, and EMD Electronics. Since its founding in 1668, scientific exploration and responsible entrepreneurship have been key to the company's technological and scientific advances. To this day, the founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed company.