

## News Release

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## **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Opens €20 million Metrology and Inspection Site in France for Global Chip Industry**

- **Investment in Saint-Ismier increases capacity to support manufacturing yields of AI chips**
- **4,500 m<sup>2</sup> site will create around 100 advanced engineering jobs**
- **Strengthens Europe's semiconductor ecosystem and the company's role as a key supplier to the global semiconductor industry**

Darmstadt, Germany, May 5, 2026 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today opened its new Metrology & Inspection site in Saint-Ismier, France. The €20 million, 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> site strengthens the company's capacity to develop and manufacture precise metrology and inspection tools to address the growing demands of the semiconductor industry for high-performance chips. This demand is driven by the rapid growth of AI applications. Strategically located in the Grenoble area, one of Europe's most established semiconductor clusters, the site reinforces the company's role in building a more resilient and competitive European semiconductor ecosystem.

“Advancing chip performance increasingly relies on the intricate architecture of chip systems rather than solely on miniaturization. With chip designs becoming increasingly complex, even the smallest inconsistencies can jeopardize entire systems. This makes quality assurance and reliability more challenging than ever,” said Ben Hein, Member of the Executive Board of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and CEO Electronics. “Our expertise in metrology and inspection provides chip



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manufacturers with the precise tools and solutions they need to realize the next wave of technological advancements.”

### **Enabling next-generation semiconductor innovations**

The new facility expands Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany’s production capacity for Metrology & Inspection tools fivefold. These solutions are becoming increasingly critical for ensuring accuracy and defect detection in chip production, supporting chip manufacturers in advanced packaging and heterogeneous integration. These 3D technologies for next-generation chip architectures bring memory and logic chips closer together through vertical stacking, enhancing performance while reducing energy consumption.

Metrology tools measure critical parameters in chip manufacturing such as depths, step heights, and thicknesses, enabling real-time adjustments that improve process control. Inspection tools detect a wide range of defect types, ensuring the highest quality standards. Together, these technologies enhance manufacturing yields, reduce production costs, and accelerate time-to-market for next-generation semiconductor innovations.

### **Driving Growth Sustainably**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany’s Electronics business is a key enabler of technology roadmaps, offering one of the broadest portfolios of materials and equipment for the semiconductor industry. The [acquisition of Unity-SC, based in Montbonnot-Saint-Martin near Grenoble, France, in October 2024](#), further complemented the company’s optical expertise. With more than 100 employees now operating at the new site — spanning production as well as research and development — and plans to create approximately 100 additional advanced engineering jobs over the next four years, the company is driving the convergence of optics and semiconductors to meet the demands of next-generation technologies. This enables advanced chip systems for AI, High-Performance Computing (HPC), and High-Bandwidth Memory (HBM) applications, further reinforcing Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany’s Electronics' trajectory of profitable growth.

The Saint-Ismier facility exemplifies the company’s commitment to sustainability. It features a straw-insulated wooden structure, hermetic concrete base, and photovoltaic panels on the roof and parking canopies for renewable energy,

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generating around 40% of the site's energy consumption. Inside, bright patios, adjustable sunshades, and a cooling underfloor heating system create an energy-efficient and comfortable workspace.

### **About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, operates across life science, healthcare and electronics. More than 62,000 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 providing products and services that accelerate drug development and manufacturing as well as discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2025, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 21.1 billion in 65 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 MilliporeSigma in life science, EMD Serono in healthcare and EMD Electronics in 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.

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