

For immediate release

Koehler Group Invests in the Future: Willstätt Campus to Set New Benchmarks for Apprenticeship in 2024

- **Relocating the technical apprenticeship workshop from Oberkirch to Willstätt will increase the workshop space fivefold**
- **Koehler invests in machine pool for future-proof apprenticeship in electronics, mechatronics, and industrial mechanics for 30 junior employees per year**
- **Strategic regional position between Oberkirch and Kehl Koehler Paper production sites**

Oberkirch/Germany, 4/15/2024 – In 2022, the Koehler Group acquired the former Orsay site in Willstätt directly adjacent to Beaver Paper, a Koehler Group company. Around 170 jobs will be based at the new ‘Willstätt Campus’ in the medium term. Koehler will use the premises to develop a modern, attractive apprenticeship center for technical apprenticeship that meets Koehler’s high training quality standards and corroborates the Best Place to Learn quality seal.

73 Million Euro Investment in New Site

The Koehler Group is a long-established company with a history that spans more than 215 years. Kai Furler, CEO of the Koehler Group, emphasizes: “Our decisions are made with a long-term vision, rather than a focus on short-term gains.” The Willstätt Campus is one of the places the company is pursuing long-term plans, enabling future generations to profit from them too in years to come. Because of this foresight, the Koehler Group is investing extensively in the former Orsay site. “We’re currently looking at an investment volume of around 73 million euros at the new site,” added Mr. Furler. The strategic location between the two Koehler Group premises in Oberkirch and Kehl in Germany is a particular advantage. The growing, globally successful Group has numerous options to extend on the large campus. These kinds of expansion opportunities are few and far between due to structural constraints, particularly at the Oberkirch headquarters. The existing training workshop in Oberkirch has reached the limits of its capacity for the growing demand for junior maintenance employees.

State-of-the-art equipment elevates the quality of the already high standard of apprenticeship

The Koehler Group is currently training around 90 junior employees at different locations. Demand for qualified junior staff is much higher than that, however. The new technical apprenticeship center in Willstätt will significantly increase apprenticeship numbers. The apprenticeship center will offer 30 training places per year for electronics technicians, industrial mechanics technicians, and mechatronics technicians. The available training space is five times larger than the existing training workshop and will provide a range of training rooms and state-of-the-art learning workstations for basic skills in the various fields. When redesigning the building, the company wanted to create a lasting impression. An expansive glass

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facade and elegant gallery offering a view over the workshop floor are just some of the design elements that will make the new training center highly attractive.

New Machine Pool for Optimal Training

At the training center, apprentices will spend the first two years of training being prepared intensively for their work in maintenance at the Oberkirch and Kehl sites in the third year of their traineeship. Elke Renz, Corporate Director of HR and Legal at the Koehler Group, expressed her enthusiasm for the new opportunities: "During their apprenticeship, junior staff in technical professions at Koehler will benefit from a new machine pool, extensive equipment for exam preparation, and spacious training rooms. This major investment in a modern, attractive apprenticeship center shows the high value Koehler places on training internal staff."

The apprenticeships fundamental to paper production, such as paper technologists and machine and system operators in paper processing, which have around 20 new apprentices each year, require proximity to production and quality control. For that reason, these apprenticeships, along with commercial apprenticeship, will stay based at the Oberkirch and Kehl sites. Extensive investment in apprenticeship is also planned at the existing sites in the next few years. Paper technology apprenticeship at Koehler is among the best on offer in Germany, which was recently demonstrated by a Koehler Group apprenticeship graduate being awarded Best in Germany.



Figure: The new state-of-the-art apprenticeship center at the Willstätt site will have a range of training rooms and ultra-modern learning workstations

Source: Koehler Group

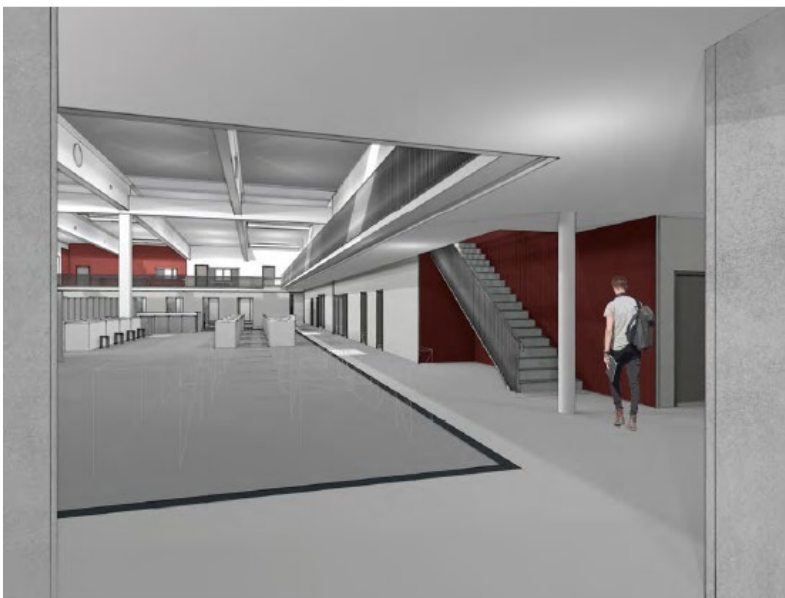


Figure: The space for the 30 junior employees per year in electronics, mechatronics, and industrial mechanics has increased more than fivefold

Source: Koehler Group

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*Figure: The Koehler Group is investing roughly 73 million euros in the new site in Willstätt.
Source: Koehler Group*



2030 Sustainability Strategy

With the new Willstätt Campus, the Koehler Group is helping achieve sustainable development goals in the area of ‘people as the key to success’.

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About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, beverage coasters, fine paper, carbon-less paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and also innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry since 2019. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of around 75% in 2022, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1.3 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

With its Koehler Innovative Solutions division, Koehler is collaborating with start-ups to promote innovations in the core business segments “paper” and “renewable energy”.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

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