



## Press Release

**20th regional competition of 'Jugend forscht' from February 22<sup>nd</sup> to February 24<sup>th</sup> 2018**

### **127 Participants in the Anniversary Year**

This year, the regional competition of 'Jugend forscht' in Heilbronn-Franken is celebrating its 20th anniversary. ebm-papst has been sponsoring Germany's best-known competition for young researchers since 1999. 'Jugend forscht' (German for 'Youth researches') offers children and young people the opportunity to realize their own projects and compete with other inventors of the same age.

127 participants in 69 projects will take part in the 20th regional competition in Heilbronn-Franconia from February 22<sup>nd</sup> to February 24<sup>th</sup> 2018 in Kuenzelsau, Baden-Wuerttemberg. This is twice as many projects as in the first edition of the regional competition, which started in 1999 with 35 projects and 74 participants.

Bernd Ludwig, Head of Vocational Training at ebm-papst Mulfingen and mentor of 'Jugend forscht', still remembers the beginnings well: "At that time, the 'Jugend forscht' foundation was looking for a sponsoring company in the Heilbronn-Franconia region, because there was no regional competition of its own at that time," he says. The promotion of the competition went well with an innovative company like ebm-papst, which has always been committed to getting young people interested in science and technology," Ludwig continues.

The number of participants grew steadily and only one year later the town hall in Kuenzelsau had become too small. The Campus Kuenzelsau of the Heilbronn University of Applied Sciences was chosen as the new venue. "As a place of learning, the university is not only thematically very suitable for 'Jugend forscht'. We are happy to be able to use the infrastructure and enjoy the full support of the university staff," says Bernd Ludwig. There are more reasons to celebrate at the university location in Kuenzelsau this year: The Kuenzelsau campus has been in existence for exactly 30 years, and the 'Technology Initiative Campus Kuenzelsau' (short: TICK), sponsored by ebm-papst, is now entering its next round after five years.

How has the competition changed in recent years? "On the one hand, it has become much more regional, as interest in the region has grown and we therefore have more participants from here," explains Simone Germann from training department of ebm-papst Mulfingen, who was already involved in organizing the regional competition as an apprentice herself, in the first year. "In addition, 'Jugend forscht' is becoming more and more digital. There used to be more crafting for projects, but today there is a trend towards apps and software applications." And there's

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something else that strikes her: The children and young people are much more independent and even more punctual than 20 years ago. Often the participants wait a few minutes before departure at the hostel, where they are accommodated during the three-day regional competition.

Through 'Jugend forscht' the participants gain self-confidence, recognize their potential and learn to work independently and to present and defend their own ideas in front of a jury of experts. These are characteristics of trainees that are highly valued by training companies, which is why many trainees of the regional companies participate in the 'Jugend forscht' competition in Kuenzelsau with their own projects. Only last year, Jan-Hendrik Egly and Jonas Baumann from Burkert in Ingelfingen, close to Mulfingen, achieved third place in the Federal 'Jugend forscht' Contest in the area of expertise 'working world'. A total of seven projects from the regional competition in Kuenzelsau have so far made it through to the federal state competition.

The number of participants in the competition has remained stable in recent years. Bernd Ludwig is therefore not worried that in the future it could become more difficult to find enthusiastic participants for the junior talent competition: "There will always be a target group of young people with an affinity for technology who would like to fiddle around and compete with others. It is important to provide them with support and to animate them, to try themselves out and realize their own ideas."

More information about 'Jugend forscht': [www.jugend-forscht.de](http://www.jugend-forscht.de)

#### Image caption

Picture 1: Jugend forscht regional competition Heilbronn-Franconia (Picture: Jens Oswald for ebm-papst)

Picture 2: Trainees from ebm-papst regularly take part in the regional competition, e.g. Tristan Eberle, here during his 'Jugend forscht' preparations in 2016 (Picture: Jens Oswald for ebm-papst)

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#### **About ebm-papst**

The ebm-papst Group is the world's leading manufacturer of fans and motors. Since it was founded, the technology company has continuously set global industry standards: from the digital interconnection of electronically controlled EC fans to aerodynamic improvements for fan blades to the use of eco-friendly materials.



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In fiscal year 2016/17, the company achieved sales of almost €1.9 billion. ebm-papst employs over 14,000 people at 26 production sites (e.g. in Germany, China and the US) and in 49 sales offices worldwide. Fans and motors from the world market leader are used in many industries, including ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration, household appliances, heating, automotive and drive engineering.

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