Press Release: International symposium "Crafting New Partnerships for Research & Development" at the Steinfurt Technology Campus

On Friday, June 21, 2024, Prof. Felix Hardmood Beck hosted the symposium “Crafting New Partnerships for Research & Development” at the Steinfurt Technology Campus of Münster University of Applied Sciences. The focus was on current research results from the project “The Green Weave”, which were developed in collaboration with the partner organization Dharma Life Labs. Dharma Life Labs (co-created by Dharma Life Foundation, the Wheeler Institute at London Business School, Siriti and Accenture DACH) is an innovation laboratory that focuses on inclusive progress in rural areas of India. The team identifies key challenges, develops solutions, tests them, scales them up and shares the knowledge for the benefit of all.

The symposium served as a platform for the international and interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge and ideas and laid the foundation for further cooperation at the Steinfurt Technology Campus. It emphasized sustainable development, social enterprise, research-led design and new technology.

Among the program highlights was the presentation by Gaurav Mehta, founder of Dharma Life Foundation, who outlined the challenges in rural India and explained how Dharma Life Labs is addressing them. He emphasized the importance of innovation and the rapid scaling of successful solutions to improve the quality of life in rural areas. Similarly, Kim Coiffier, Creative Director, Fashion Designer and Artist, presented “A Dialogue of Craftsmanship with Design” and walked participants through the development and results of the Ananta Fashion Line. Coiffier demonstrated how traditional craftsmanship and modern design can harmonize to create sustainable and socially responsible fashion. Hannah Hegenberg, a student at the Münster School of Design, shared her perspectives and experiences from her internship at Ananta in India. Under the title “Learning Beyond Borders” Hegenberg also showed how international internships can promote professional and personal development and at the same time make a valuable contribution to projects such as The Green Weave. Prof. Dr. Kulkānti Barboza from Münster University of Applied Sciences for Creative Language Education/Promotion and International Perspectives in Social Work gave insights into the international opportunities offered by Münster University of Applied Sciences. Barboza emphasized the importance of global cooperation and intercultural exchange for the training of specialists. Árni Rúnar Hrólfsson, filmmaker and specialist in 360° experiences, presented examples of virtual reality media productions documenting world cultural heritage, particularly in Iceland. Two live demonstrations rounded off the symposium. Yuni Nguyen presented the Stamp Pattern Generator, an innovative tool for creating unique patterns and Nishant from Dharma Life in Lucknow, India, demonstrated the use of a specially developed filter system for removing chemicals from washing water. The Jaya Green Weave project for rural job creation, circular economy/waste and preservation of rural art forms was supported by the IKEA Foundation, the DOEN Foundation and SumUp.

The symposium was an inspiring day full of insights and new partnerships, highlighting the importance of international collaboration in the research and development of sustainable solutions.

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