

PRESS RELEASE

Who will follow Jürgen Klopp?

High-calibre jury seeks next German-British #Freundship Award Prizewinner

Berlin, 9 November 2022 – A high-calibre jury composed of luminaries from business, politics and the media met for the first time today to discuss potential nominees for the German-British #Freundship Award. The jury members, including *Let's Dance* judge **Motsi Mabuse**, TV presenter **Mareile Hoepfner**, journalist **Theo Koll** and **Bibiana Steinhaus-Webb**, Germany's first female referee in the DFB as well as women's select group director at the English referees' association PGMOL, together with Her Majesty's Ambassador to Germany, **H.E. Jill Gallard**, Foreign Office Secretary **Andreas Michaelis**, **John Kampfner** from the think tank Chatham House, **Dr Ingrid Hengster**, Germany CEO Barclays Bank, BMW board member **Ilka Horstmeier** as well as **Prof. Klaus Josef Lutz**, CEO BayWa and President of IHK Munich/Upper Bavaria, **Wera Hobhouse**, MP, **Kristina Lunz**, Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy and **Dr Katarina Barley**, MEP and Vice-President of the European Parliament, discussed at length the personalities who might be suitable.

The prize offered by the **British Chamber of Commerce in Germany (BCCG)** and the **British Embassy** in Berlin honours and strengthens the special relationship between Germany and Great Britain. The prize is awarded to public figures whose commitment has made a significant contribution to strengthening relations between the two countries.

The first winner of the **German-British #Freundship Award** last year was **Jürgen Klopp**, who unites both countries, boundless team spirit and a shared passion for football. The gala award ceremony with more than 200 guests of honour at BVB's SIGNAL IDUNA PARK attracted widespread public interest with more than two billion contacts in print, TV, radio, online and social media.

"We had a lively and fun discussion today and now have a number of interesting personalities to choose from, which we will be voting on soon," says BCCG President, Michael Schmidt. A decision will be made at the end of this year.

H.E. Jill Gallard, British Ambassador to Germany remarked, "Citizens play an important role in the deep friendship between our two countries. The personal commitment of individuals in Britain and Germany, coming from fields as diverse as sport, culture, politics, business and science, unites us. We want to celebrate and honour them with this award."

TV presenter Mareile Hoepfner commented on what motivates all jury members to get involved: "Europe has changed. We are experiencing war and displacement and the relationship between Germany and the UK is also facing new challenges. There could be no better time to stand up for friendship."

Foreign Office State Secretary Andreas Michaelis added, "We have to ensure, that Great Britain and Germany carry on standing side by side in these trying times. The #Freundship Award recognises the people who hold us together and are role models for us."

For more than 100 years, the **British Chamber of Commerce in Germany (BCCG)** has been committed to British-German business relations. And although the United Kingdom left the European Union at the beginning of 2021, the BCCG stands not for severing ties between the countries, but "building bridges" and strengthening and consolidating mutual relations.

BCCG Award Website: <https://freundshipaward.de/en/jury/>

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About the BCCG

The British Chamber of Commerce in Germany e.V. (BCCG) is a privately-funded business network with around 600 members and 5,500 personal contacts engaged in bilateral trade and business. The British Ambassador to Germany is patron of the BCCG, which was originally founded in 1919. In 2019, the BCCG celebrated its 100th anniversary as one of the most powerful international business networking forums in Germany and the largest British-German business network in Europe.

The aim of the BCCG is to promote mutual understanding as well as economic relations between Germany and the United Kingdom. The BCCG therefore sees itself as a network platform and interest broker proactively helping to shape German-British relations after the UK's departure from the EU, and recognising and defining common future issues. At the same time, the aim is to support the establishment and development of businesses in each other's countries.

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