



## Press Release

February 11, 2026

Recognizing female scientists in the field of hair research

### **Henkel honors outstanding female scientists with the "Martha Schwarzkopf Award"**

- Henkel is presenting the "Martha Schwarzkopf Award for Women in Science" for the fourth time
- Award winners receive prize money and an offer of exclusive scientific exchange and support of their research from Henkel experts

Düsseldorf, Germany - For the fourth consecutive year, Henkel has honored international female scientists in the field of hair research. The winners were celebrated at an awards ceremony on February 11 in Düsseldorf and received prize money of up to 10,000 euros. With the Martha Schwarzkopf Award, Henkel aims to support women in science, particularly in the field of hair research.

Equal opportunities and gender equality are integral parts of Henkel's corporate culture. "Women are still underrepresented in the natural sciences and technical disciplines. With the Martha Schwarzkopf Award, we promote diversity in science and provide targeted support to talented female researchers. This includes especially female scientists who are working on the future of hair care and a healthy scalp," says Frank Meyer, Senior Vice President Global R&D Henkel Consumer Brands.

Researchers from all over the world focusing on hair research or related areas were invited to apply for the Martha Schwarzkopf Award. All applications were evaluated on scientific merit by an expert jury of R&D scientists from Henkel Consumer Brands. The winner in the "Lifetime Contribution" category received prize money of 10,000 euros. The "Distinguished Talent" category was awarded with 7,500 euros, and the "Emerging Talent" category with 5,000 euros. The three categories represent different career stages, ranging from the young "Emerging Talent" to the "Distinguished Talent" with three to five years of research experience, up to the "Lifetime Contribution" for an outstanding lifetime achievement. In addition, Henkel offers

**LOCTITE**

**TECHNOMELT**

**BONDERITE**

**Persil**



the winners opportunities for an intensive exchange with scientists from the company as well as with former winners within the “Martha Schwarzkopf Community.” This not only promotes the establishment of a valuable network but also serves to further develop their research projects. “Over the years, a strong international network has evolved around the award, characterized by intensive exchange and outstanding professional expertise. The high level of interest and the large number of qualified applications from around the world impressively reflect this development,” says Astrid Kleen, Corporate Vice President R&D Henkel Consumer Brands Professional.

### **About the winners**

This year's winners convinced the expert jury with their innovations, pioneering spirit, and the high relevance of their research.

Dr. Gabriela Daniels from the University of the Arts London, United Kingdom, was honored in the “Lifetime Contribution” category. She has taught research methodologies in cosmetic science to master’s students for more than 20 years and has helped drive innovative developments in this field. Her work combines expertise from several disciplines. She focuses on hair care, cosmetic product development, the use of artificial intelligence in hair research, and the evaluation of the social and sensory aspects of hair.

For her innovative approach to hair care research, Dr. Siyu Zhu from Tsinghua University in Beijing, China, received the “Distinguished Talent” award. Her research focuses on the biology of hair follicles and on advanced digital design methods. She uses computer-based techniques to develop new molecules that have strong potential to support hair growth and improve scalp health.

Meriem Kassar, who is currently pursuing her PhD at Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences in Germany, is recognized as an “Emerging Talent.” Her research combines molecular materials science, biotechnology, analytical chemistry and it is applied in polymer-based sensor surfaces, simulations, and the detection of disease markers. Applying these methods to hair research highlights her exceptional innovative potential.

### **About the Martha Schwarzkopf Award**

The Martha Schwarzkopf Award is a tribute to Martha Schwarzkopf, who was one of the first female entrepreneurs in Germany to recognize the importance of hair research and to actively support and drive its development at an early stage. Even today, all of the

Schwarzkopf brand's technical innovations are in the tradition of the Schwarzkopf Hair Research Institute, which was founded by Martha Schwarzkopf in the 1920s and whose scientists advanced research into human hair. Today, Schwarzkopf is the largest brand in the hair category at Henkel Consumer Brands and operates research and development laboratories, hair test salons and academies around the world.

#### **About Henkel**

With its brands, innovations and technologies, Henkel holds leading market positions worldwide in the industrial and consumer businesses. The business unit Adhesive Technologies is the global leader in the market for adhesives, sealants and coatings. With Consumer Brands, the company holds leading positions especially in laundry & home care and hair in many markets and categories around the world. The company's three strongest brands are Loctite, Persil and Schwarzkopf. In fiscal 2024, Henkel reported sales of more than 21.6 billion euros and adjusted operating profit of around 3.1 billion euros. Henkel's preferred shares are listed in the German stock index DAX. Sustainability has a long tradition at Henkel, and the company has a clear sustainability strategy with specific targets. Henkel was founded in 1876 and today employs a diverse team of about 47,000 people worldwide – united by a strong corporate culture, shared values and a common purpose: "Pioneers at heart for the good of generations." More information at [www.henkel.com](https://www.henkel.com)

**Photo material is available at [www.henkel.com/press](https://www.henkel.com/press)**

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