



## Press Release

September 12, 2019

Xathon: 2-day ideation hackathon for female entrepreneurs

### Henkel X hosts largest all-female ideation hackathon in Berlin

Düsseldorf – Henkel’s open innovation and collaboration platform, [Henkel X](#), will host its first Xathon, Europe’s biggest female ideation hackathon. The event aims to empower 150 female talents to develop and shape their entrepreneurial mindset and ideas. The Xathon will take place on November 15-17, 2019 at the Facebook offices in Berlin. The application period starts on September 12.

The Xathon, configured in partnership with [Grace - Female Accelerator](#) along with [Facebook](#), [Forbes DACH](#), [Goldman Sachs](#), [BestFit](#), [UN Women Deutschland](#), [ESCP Europe/U-School](#), and many more, aims to empower entrepreneurial-minded female talents, strengthen their entrepreneurial spirit and drive gender diversity. In total, 150 female tech talents, including 20 talents from Henkel, will participate.

#### Driving female empowerment

“As a company fostering diversity for many years, we believe that there is an increasing importance to drive female empowerment. We want to create a working environment that is as diverse and multi-faceted as possible to maximize impact and innovation and to bring together the best mix and talents without any biases,” said Sylvie Nicol, Executive Vice President Human Resources and Infrastructure Services.

Despite the growing diversity discussion and the positive impact of diversity on innovation, female-founded companies still only make up a small share of start-ups in Germany and worldwide. Due to a lack of role-models and the right ecosystem, many women don't have the confidence and willingness to take the risk to start their own company.

"One of our core missions, especially as a founding partner of [AccelerateHER](#) and me being a member of the [Male Champions of Change Tech group](#), is to address the under-representation of women in technology and encourage greater female entrepreneurship. Diversity is key to the successful development of products and services that better reflect our society. For me, there never was a different perspective looking at people. With the launch of the Xathon, we want to fuel an entrepreneurial mindset, creating a richness in perspective and bringing business innovation to the next level," said Dr. Rahmyn Kress, Chief Digital Officer at Henkel and founder of Henkel X.

"If society as a whole is to benefit from digitalization, the transformation must be equally driven both by female and male talents. The Xathon is an important format to support women in their entrepreneurial intentions. We need more entrepreneurial spirit in Germany, and we cannot and do not want to miss out the enormous potential of women," underlined Dorothee Bär, Minister of State to the Federal Chancellor Government Commissioner for Digital Affairs, Germany, who will hold an opening speech at the Xathon.

### **The Xathon event**

During the Xathon, the talents will work on challenges to develop business ideas in different fields, such as social impact, health or cyber security, while the Henkel participants will develop "intrapreneurial" ideas for the company. "The Xathon will give the participants the opportunity to test their limits and really dig into their innovative potential," said Kress.

The developed ideas will be presented in a pitch in front of a jury – the winners will be announced in an award ceremony. The prizes include spots at a female founders'

workshop held by [Grace - Female Accelerator](#) and a one-week innovation bootcamp at [H-Farm](#).

### **How to participate at the Xathon**

All female talents who are looking to make a difference and want to be founders are invited to apply. The participation is free. The application opens on September 12 and closes on September 30, with the selected participants being announced on October 18. Interested talents can apply [here](#). Participants will be selected based on the creativity and scalability of their idea, or on a meaningful explanation of why they have the skills and talent to be an entrepreneur.

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### **About Henkel X**

[Henkel X](#) is an open innovation platform and was designed not only to accelerate Henkel's entrepreneurial transformation, but to provide an open innovation platform to act as a catalyst for industrial change and to drive innovation and disruptive business models for the whole industry. Henkel X is based on three pillars: ecosystem, experience, and experimentation. The special value lies in creating an ecosystem that integrates a unique, diverse network of mentors, industrial partners and start-ups sharing knowledge, views, and ideas.

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### **About Henkel**

Henkel operates globally with a well-balanced and diversified portfolio. The company holds leading positions with its three business units in both industrial and consumer businesses thanks to strong brands, innovations and technologies. Henkel Adhesive Technologies is the global leader in the adhesives market – across all industry segments worldwide. In its Laundry & Home Care and Beauty Care businesses, Henkel holds leading positions in many markets and categories around the world. Founded in 1876, Henkel looks back on more than 140 years of success. In 2018, Henkel reported sales of around 20 billion euros and adjusted operating profit of around 3.5 billion euros. Henkel employs around 53,000 people globally – a passionate and highly diverse team, united by a strong company culture, a common purpose to create sustainable value, and shared values. As a recognized leader in sustainability, Henkel holds top positions in many international indices and rankings. Henkel's preferred shares are listed in the German stock index DAX. For more information, please visit [www.henkel.com](http://www.henkel.com)

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

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