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Dr. h. c. Kurt Stoll and Dr. Wilfried Stoll  
Festo Holding GmbH  
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## Letter of appreciation – 30 years of partnership

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Dear Dr h. c. Kurt Stoll, Dr Wilfried Stoll and families

On behalf of the WorldSkills Organization globally we extend our heartfelt thank you to you both and your families for supporting WorldSkills. 2021 celebrates 30 years of partnership between Festo and WorldSkills (the WorldSkills Competition and its organizers)! An amazing achievement worth celebrating and one that also deserves some reflection on the reasons for the longevity and continued strengthening.

We have no doubt that we are drawn together by our respective visions for skills development and promotion and its importance and significance to personal, company, community, and country development and success.

It is important to acknowledge and thank your wonderful staff, especially those who work very closely with us on the international competitions and projects. You can be very proud of them as they carry the values, principles, quality, and work ethic that makes Festo a global and respected company.

Interestingly, it was in a conversation between Kurt and Tjerk (Jack) Dusseldorp at the Leaders Forum (that Festo sponsored) at WorldSkills St Gallen 2003 when Kurt threw the challenge out that WorldSkills will be truly global when Russia, India, and China are Members. Jack was standing for election as President in St Gallen, and once elected, the new Board set a path to implement the professionalization of WorldSkills. Festo was one of our first Global Partners (supporting the organization's development and not just the Competition). A new professional Secretariat was engaged at the end of 2004 and so the new era began. At that time WorldSkills had 37 Members and today we have 85 Member countries/regions, of course, including Russia, India, and China. Professionalizing the organization was critical to the development and sustainability of the WorldSkills Competition. It meant we could provide a much stronger value proposition to our Members, Partners, and stakeholders.

We have grown from 3 Global Partners to 26 – all large global companies who are leaders in their respective technologies and industries. For the WorldSkills Competition we have between 130-180 companies who support the event.

We have Members who have already expressed interest in hosting the 2026, 2028, and 2030 Competitions.

We have grown from no-one knowing who we were to today being recognized as a global player in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and skills development ecosystem. Not only are we recognized by international organizations, but we have relationships and/or done projects with the OECD, UNESCO, UNIDO, ILO, World Bank, GIZ, and British Council. We are now regularly asked to contribute as subject matter experts and/or speakers, which is a great opportunity to promote and showcase what we do.

Our Conference Coalition partners are the ILO, UNIDO, OECD, World Bank, UNESCO-UNEVOC, GAN Global, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the European Commission, the British Council, and the African Union.

Linked to WorldSkills Shanghai 2022, and in partnership with the Municipality of Shanghai, we are currently designing and building the first ever WorldSkills Museum in the world – situated in a prime location on the Huangpu River in Shanghai. The WorldSkills Museum will share the unique story of our organization and the movement that has changed the lives of people and societies around the world. This is an incredible recognition and opportunity to showcase our organization and brand, as well as our key partners. Your contribution is significant and much appreciated, and it shows your understanding of the value of this opportunity for Festo also.

We have recently approved our strategy for regional development with the formal recognition and relationship with WorldSkills Europe, WorldSkills Americas, WorldSkills Asia, and WorldSkills Africa.

We share the above not to boast of our achievements – but to share with you what we have been able to do due to your support and the support of other similar companies that you have helped inspire to join us. Festo is an exemplary partner with excellent staff. “Success breeds success” and our challenges and opportunities today are very different to what they were around 2003-2005. But we would not be where we are today without individuals like you who could see the potential, and invested in and supported it.

We hope you are both in great health and are looking forward to some relaxing family time as this year ends. We wish a very happy Festive Season and best wishes for a healthy, safe, and prosperous new year as we collectively take on the challenges of a post-pandemic world.

Once again, thank you for all you have done and will do in the future as we continue to improve our world with the power of skills.

Yours sincerely



Chris Humphries  
Chair of the Board



David Hoey  
CEO