

Change in Ars Electronica management:

## Markus Jandl follows Diethard Schwarzmaier

(Linz, 31.8.2020) Just in time for the kick-off of Linz's Capital of Culture year "Linz09" and the ceremonial opening of the "Museum of the Future", which has been expanded to 6,500 square meters, Diethard Schwarzmaier was appointed Commercial Director of Ars Electronica on January 1, 2009. In the nearly twelve years that followed, the manager was to play a decisive role in the high-altitude flight of the Linz platform for art, technology and society that continues to this day. On August 31, 2020, Diethard Schwarzmaier will now retire and hand over to Markus Jandl, until now Head of Corporate Finance and authorized signatory of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH & Co KG.

"Ars Electronica is the internationally most important brand of the cultural city of Linz. Diethard Schwarzmaier has proactively promoted this development over the past decade as its financial director. With revenues of nearly 20 million Euro and a 71 percent coverage of its own costs, the previous year ended with a record balance sheet - also acknowledged by the Control Office. The worldwide project assignments are not only an essential part of Ars Electronica's competence, but also economically secure Linz's museum operations, the Festival and the Prix," says Advisory Board Chair Doris Lang-Mayerhofer, praising Diethard Schwarzmaier's outstanding performance and thanking him for his trustful cooperation.

## New structures and new processes - Diethard Schwarzmaier marks almost twelve years of Ars Electronica

The fact that Ars Electronica in 2020 no longer has much in common with Ars Electronica in 2008 is, of course, not only due to Diethard Schwarzmaier, but has a lot to do with him. "A non-profit enterprise in the art and cultural sector can work just as efficiently and effectively as a commercially oriented company." From day one, Diethard Schwarzmaier sought to put this credo into practice and set about anchoring results and performance orientation throughout the company. No sooner had he been in office in 2009 than he forced a new company agreement for Ars Electronica, and numerous freelancers\* had become salaried employees-a quantum leap not only in terms of labor law protection and remuneration for creative workers\* but also in terms of corporate culture and identity. Many more milestones followed: As late as 2009, decision-making authority and budgetary sovereignty were decentralized, giving the divisions more creative freedom but also more responsibility. In 2012, a new division was created in the form of "Ars Electronica Solutions" that has been successfully developing prototypes from the artistic cosmos into products and marketing them successfully to date, in the form of the Deep Space 8K, which will go into operation in 2015, and the new Ars Electronica Center, which will reopen in 2019, Diethard Schwarzmaier was as persistent as he was successful in his efforts to secure major investment packages and played his part in ensuring that these projects were implemented without cost overruns or

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delays. Step by step, Diethard Schwarzmaier implemented new structures and processes, thus creating the prerequisites for Ars Electronica to develop into a company that today collaborates with the world's leading players in the fields of art, science, business and industry.

### Economic success despite declining public funds

Despite a sometimes difficult economic environment and declining public funding, Ars Electronica has been very successful over the past eleven years, not only in terms of content and artistic quality but also economically. In 2019, this development culminated in a Festival of Art, Technology and Society that drew more than 100,000 visitors, an Ars Electronica Center now focused on AI that was visited more than 192,000 times, and an economic all-time high.

### Successful crisis manager in times of Corona

Diethard Schwarzmaier's fast decisions during the acute phase of the corona crisis ensured stability within the company. By availing himself of the German government's short-time work package, he ensured that Ars Electronica was spared a loss of economic substance that went beyond unavoidable revenue shortfalls and that numerous jobs could be retained by employees\*. Diethard Schwarzmaier will retire on August 31, 2020. Along with the management of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH & Co, he will also be stepping down from the management of Creativity, Culture & Events of the City of Linz Holding GmbH as well as various other management functions he has held over the past three years.

### Markus Jandl new CFO from September 2020

To a certain extent on the eve of this year's festival, Markus Jandl is taking over as Ars Electronica's new commercial director. Having worked at Ars Electronica for 15 years now, the 38-year-old knows the company very well. As an authorized signatory and head of the Corporate Finance Department, he has already played a central role in all major commercial decisions in the past. His first major project as Managing Director is already being implemented: the renewal and expansion of the company's commercial software systems, which are designed to further enhance the efficiency and professionalization of internal processes. Markus Jandl does, however, see the biggest challenge in the coming months and years in overcoming the Corona crisis, which is hitting Ars Electronica hard, precisely because the company has been so successful in generating income from project business, contract research and ticket sales. "But we wouldn't be Ars Electronica if we didn't see this crisis as a challenge that we want to master in the best possible way," Markus Jandl is confident. "That's why we're already in the midst of it all, developing and testing new strategies and tools with which we want to continue to successfully shape our public and commercial activities in the future.

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