



## Press Release

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### *#FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge 2019: Douglas continues its contest for beauty brand and tech startups*

- Challenge aims at discovering the most innovative new beauty brands or retail technologies that drive the future of the beauty market
- The winning idea will either has the chance to be included in the Douglas assortment or to be implemented in Douglas' online efforts
- Tina Müller, Douglas Group CEO: "On the back of the tremendous success of last year's #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge we are excited to continue this format. This competition is part of Douglas' commitment to offer the most innovative beauty retail experience and to be a pioneer in shaping the future of beauty by investing in high-potential startups."

Düsseldorf, 9 October 2019. Douglas, one of Europe's leading premium beauty retailers, is launching a second edition of its #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge - a contest for budding beauty and retail technology entrepreneurs to pitch their idea to Douglas. The challenge offers a stage for untapped potential and allows Douglas to drive innovation in the beauty sector thus bringing the best beauty experience to its customers.

"On the back of the tremendous success of last year's #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge we are excited to continue this format. It has proven to open up new ways for us to get access to brilliant innovations. This competition is part of Douglas' commitment to offer the most innovative beauty retail experience and to be a pioneer in shaping the future of beauty by investing in high-potential startups", states Tina Müller, Douglas Group CEO.

As in 2018, this year's #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge calls for beauty and retail technology startups to enter the contest. A selection of 12 contestants will then be invited to pitch their idea to a panel of renowned judges including Tina Müller, Douglas Group CEO, Alexander Dibelius, Managing Partner of CVC Capital Partners, Frank Dopheide, former Managing Director of Handelsblatt Media Group, and Lea-Sophie Cramer, CEO and founder of AMORELIE.

"I am happy to be a member of the jury at the #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge 2019. Being a founder for a love brand myself, I am convinced that the format offers an outstanding

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opportunity to any aspiring beauty and beauty tech brand who desires to have a strong partner like Douglas. With its store network all over Europe and a vast online ecosystem, those ideas can be brought to their full potential”, comments Lea-Sophie Cramer.

The winning idea of the #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge 2019 will receive the chance to develop a long-term partnership with Douglas. Depending on the stage of the idea’s progress, this may include ongoing support and incubation, dedicated space on the Douglas Trend Table, the inclusion in Douglas’ assortment or - for tech ideas - the implementation in Douglas retail stores and/or the online shop and app.

At the 2018 event, Douglas received more than 100 applications from international beauty and retail tech entrepreneurs. The winning startups KLARSKIN, a beauty regimen focusing on a growing target group suffering from adult acne, and BEARS WITH BENEFITS, hair vitamins with biotin that come as gummy bears, successfully convinced Douglas with their compelling founder stories, as well as upbeat, customer-centric innovations. Both products have been successfully included in the Douglas online and offline assortment since. Moreover, BEARS WITH BENEFITS significantly contributed to the successful launch of the beauty food category at Douglas and became the No. 4 brand in this segment. Further final contestants convinced the jury as well: SLEEP.INK, the first natural sleep drink with melatonin, was added to the Douglas assortment while SKIN MATCH, a retail technology that connects product and customer data to offer excellent beauty product consultation online and in stores, will soon be implemented into the Douglas e-commerce business.

This year’s #FORWARDBEAUTYChallenge will take place at Douglas headquarters in Düsseldorf, Germany, on the 29 November 2019.

Interested startups can apply for the challenge at [www.forwardbeautychallenge.com](http://www.forwardbeautychallenge.com). Registration closes Sunday, 27 October 2019 GMT 12:00PM.

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## **ABOUT DOUGLAS:**

Douglas is one of the leading retailers in the European beauty industry with about 2,400 stores and fast-growing online shops in 26 European countries. In the financial year 2017/18, the company generated sales of 3.3 billion Euros. Every day, around 20,000 dedicated beauty experts strive to make their customers more beautiful and thus happier. Douglas has a portfolio of some 50,000 high-quality products of more than 650 brands in the areas of perfumery, decorative cosmetics and skincare as well as food supplements and accessories. With around 40 million Beauty Card holders, Douglas has one of the largest customer loyalty programs in Europe. Providing excellent consultation and a range of unique services, Douglas is one of the leading companies in the beauty market - both online and in stores.

#doitforyou

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