

PRESS RELEASE

Düsseldorf, November 17, 2020

SMS group wins “Economy in Transition” award presented by German Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia



Prof. Dr. Hans Ferkel, CTO and Member of the Managing Board of SMS group, accepted the “Economy in Transition” award.

SMS group has come out as one of the three winners in the category “groups & medium-sized businesses” of the competition “Economy in Transition” organized by the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry for Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy. Minister Prof. Dr. Andreas Pinkwart held the laudatory speech in an online ceremony on November 17, 2020. Prof. Dr. Hans Ferkel, Member of the Managing Board of SMS group, accepted the award for SMS group in the virtual ceremony.

SMS group was recognized for its commitment and activities as a company playing a key role in promoting structural change in the German Federal State of North

Rhine-Westphalia, and making it a future-oriented and future-proof location for business. In total, eleven companies came out as winners in three categories: “start-ups”, “small businesses & trade” and “groups & medium-sized businesses”.

SMS group is world market leader in plant and mechanical engineering for the metals industry. In family-ownership since its foundation, SMS group is going to celebrate its 150th anniversary next year.

Even today, metals have not lost any of their importance as a backbone for the development and safeguarding of modern infrastructures. Yet, environmental awareness has been moving more and more into the focus of the metals producing and processing sector. Climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions are challenges that call upon the designers of production equipment to think new.

“For us, making a contribution to the production and reliable supply of eco-compliant steel is a social-political responsibility. Conventional steel production releases considerable amounts of CO₂. Therefore, we have been channeling our development activities increasingly into the design of eco-friendly and resource-saving plant technologies. Hydrogen plays a pivotal role here. The production of green steel via a hydrogen-supported direct reduction process is one of our key focal areas,” explains Prof. Dr. Hans Ferkel.

SMS group has also been opening up growth opportunities outside its traditional industry focus, last but not least thanks to its New Horizon initiative. Special about this program is that it focuses not only on the development of innovative solutions for the metals industry, but also investigates possibilities of transferring proven SMS group technology from the metals field to other sectors which are faced with similar technological challenges. Thanks to this approach, SMS group has become an increasingly important player in many different sectors – including energy and even port logistics.

SMS group has been active in the recovery and recycling of metals long since. At its German location in

Hilchenbach, SMS group is building a pilot plant for the recycling of lithium ion batteries. The new plant will be able to recover – in an ecologically responsible way – valuable and costly raw materials that can be reused in the material cycle.

A highlight project of the New Horizon initiative is the BOXBAY Joint Venture with global port operator DP World (www.box-bay.com). In Dubai, the JV is constructing the first ever pilot plant of an innovative storage system for seagoing shipping containers – a truly disruptive technology. With the new system, containers are no longer stacked directly on top of one another, which has been common practice for decades, but stored in separate compartments in an eleven-story high-bay store. The new technology provides three times more capacity and a host of other benefits, including faster container handling, higher energy efficiency and safety, and considerably reduced costs.

With the development of new business areas, its product innovations and a second-to-none digitalization offensive, SMS group pursues a growth strategy that will consolidate its leading market position even further in the long run. SMS group supplies innovative services, including in the field of digitalization, and patented plant technologies entirely from a single source. Thanks to its integrated inhouse manufacturing facilities and its know-how of a system supplier, SMS group is able to cover complete process chains for its customers.

In order to continue designing the future with innovations, SMS group broke ground in Mönchengladbach on October 15, 2020 for a new central technology hub – the SMS Campus. Built on the premises of SMS group GmbH, this new technology, service and digitalization center will provide 1,500 modern work places. As from 2023, the new Campus will become home to – according to current plans – five locations in the area.

SMS group is a group of companies internationally active in plant construction and mechanical engineering for the steel and nonferrous metals industry. It has some 14,000 employees who generate worldwide sales of more than EUR 2.9 billion. The sole owner of the holding company SMS GmbH is the Familie Weiss Foundation.