

Auto Union GmbH founded in Ingolstadt on September 3, 1949: A new beginning 75 years ago

- **Audi Tradition commemorates the early days of Audi and invites all interested parties to a celebration in downtown Ingolstadt on September 8**
- **Marking the anniversary with two events at the Audi museum mobile: a lecture on the history of Auto Union GmbH on September 3 and the Night of the Museums on September 7**

Ingolstadt, August 27, 2024 – Audi has been building cars at the Ingolstadt site for over 75 years. Audi Tradition will commemorate this anniversary with a lecture at the Audi museum mobile and a celebration on Josef-Strobl-Platz in downtown Ingolstadt, the historic site of the company’s former headquarters. Visitors to the anniversary celebration on Sunday, September 8, can look forward to a collection of the first vehicle models produced in Ingolstadt and other enjoyable activities. The evening before, the Night of the Museums at the Audi mobile museum will offer wide-ranging entertainment. The Audi Big Band will perform a colorful mix of Latin, soul, funk, and pop, and visitors will also be treated to numerous highlight tours, including the current special exhibition “Form vollendet”.

September 3, 1949, is an important date in the history of Audi. The establishment of Auto Union GmbH in Ingolstadt marked the beginning of a new chapter in West Germany for the car manufacturer, which had previously been based in Saxony. The company resumed production in buildings that once belonged to the Ingolstadt Fort, laying the foundation for the brand’s rebirth with the four rings in Ingolstadt.

A new beginning after World War II: The first step is the hardest...

Audi’s presence in Ingolstadt began shortly after the war ended: Former employees of the Saxony-based company Auto Union AG set up a central spare parts warehouse at Schrankenstrasse 3 in 1945 after it became impossible to secure parts from the Soviet-occupied zone. The mission was to keep Auto Union cars from the pre-war period on the road by supplying and producing spare parts. The decision to resume building cars came a few years later. Having met the formal requirements, Auto Union GmbH was incorporated in Ingolstadt on September 3, 1949. The new company began making a car that responded to the needs of a country under reconstruction. The DKW F 89 Schnellaster, a reliable and uncomplicated van, was offered in various body styles. Its design was based on proven pre-war technology, with front-wheel drive and a transverse two-cylinder two-stroke engine.

In November 1949, a second vehicle followed: the DKW RT 125. The motorcycle made a significant contribution to affordable mobility in post-war Germany. But the RT 125 was also an “old friend”, having been developed in 1939 at the DKW factory in Zschopau and built during the war for export and the German Wehrmacht.

After World War II, production of the model resumed at the now state-owned motorcycle factory in Zschopau, Saxony, in East Germany, under the name IFA (Industrieverwaltung Fahrzeugbau) RT 125. A “W” was added to the Ingolstadt model to identify it as a West German product. Apart from the slightly rounded tank, the RT 125 was almost identical to the pre-war model, with its trapezoidal fork, rubber-band suspension, 4.75 PS two-stroke engine, and foot-operated three-speed transmission.

For around ten years, the production facilities in downtown Ingolstadt and the Düsseldorf plant were the hub of the new Auto Union GmbH until a new plant was built on Ettinger Strasse for capacity reasons. On August 21, 1959, production began at the Ettinger Strasse plant of the affordable DKW Junior compact car, which, following the discontinuation of the DKW RT 125W in 1957, marked Auto Union GmbH’s permanent focus on the production of passenger cars.

Lecture, Night of the Museums, and anniversary celebration in downtown Ingolstadt

Seventy-five years to the day after the historic founding of the company, a lecture at the Audi museum mobile will commence the 75th-anniversary celebrations. Ralf Friese, company historian at Audi Tradition, will discuss the company’s difficult new beginning, the early years in downtown Ingolstadt, and Auto Union’s move to the new plant on Ettinger Strasse. Interested parties are asked to register for the lecture titled “75 years of the Ingolstadt site – the founding of Auto Union GmbH” by email at veranstaltungen.museum@audi.de or by phone at +49 841 89-34433. Registration closes on Monday, September 2. Doors open for the **lecture on Tuesday, September 3**, at 5:30 PM, which starts at 6 PM. The lecture is free to attend.

A few days later, visitors to the Audi museum mobile can enjoy further wide-ranging entertainment. On **Saturday, September 7, the Night of the Museums** will offer a varied program from 6 PM until midnight. Together with the Audi Big Band, whose diverse repertoire ranges from Latin, soul, and funk to pop, the Circus of Fantasy will take everyone on a journey of music and breathtaking acrobatics. Visitors can also look forward to special guided tours of the Auto Union Silver Arrows and the [special exhibition “Form vollendet”](#) (German for “perfect form”) on aerodynamics in automotive manufacturing from 1945 to the present day. There is also much to look forward to for our young guests at the Night of Museums. Weather permitting, a special go-kart course will be set up on the Audi Piazza; in case of inclement weather, a creative alternative program will take place.

On **Sunday, September 8**, an **anniversary celebration** will be held at Josef-Strobl-Platz in Ingolstadt. Under the motto “Auto Union GmbH founded 75 years ago in Ingolstadt”, visitors can enjoy an entertaining program from 10 AM to 5 PM. Among other activities, there will be Schnelllaster rides through downtown Ingolstadt, city tours to discover the traces of Auto Union in Ingolstadt, and a vehicle exhibition with models from the early years of Auto Union GmbH in Ingolstadt. The Bavarian Ensemble of the Audi Philharmonic Wind Orchestra, which itself has a 60-year tradition, will also perform a diverse concert ranging from Bavarian-Bohemian music to modern brass band music and pop. Food and drink will be provided.

Notice for media professionals:

You are cordially invited to attend the entire range of anniversary activities – please register in advance by emailing daniela.henger@audi.de.

Audi Tradition Communications

Daniela Henger

Spokesperson Audi Tradition

Phone: +49 841 89-44491

Email: daniela.henger@audi.de

www.audi-mediacyenter.com



The Audi logo consisting of four rings symbolizes the Audi, DKW, Horch, and Wanderer brands, which were merged into Auto Union in 1932. Auto Union and NSU merged in 1969 and played a major role in shaping the development of the automobile. Finally, in 1985, Audi NSU Auto Union AG became AUDI AG. Since 1998, Audi Tradition/Auto Union GmbH, together with NSU GmbH, has been maintaining and presenting Audi's extensive and wide-ranging history. The Audi museum mobile at the Audi Forum Ingolstadt is open Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays. The August Horch Museum Zwickau is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. AUDI AG and the city of Zwickau each hold a 50 percent stake in August Horch Museum Zwickau GmbH. www.audi.com/en/tradition

Audi Tradition supports the work of Audi Club International e. V. (ACI). The umbrella organization officially recognized by AUDI AG represents all of the Audi brand clubs as well as the clubs of the predecessor brands of today's AUDI AG. For more information, please visit www.audi-club-international.de

The Audi Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium and luxury segments. The Audi, Bentley, Lamborghini, and Ducati brands operate manufacturing facilities at 21 locations in 12 countries. Audi and its partners maintain a presence in more than 100 markets worldwide.

In 2023, the Audi Group delivered 1.9 million cars from the Audi brand, 13,560 cars from the Bentley brand, 10,112 cars from the Lamborghini brand, and 58,224 motorcycles from the Ducati brand to customers. In fiscal 2022, the Audi Group generated earnings of 6.3 billion euros on revenues of 69,9 billion euros. The Audi Group currently has more than 87,000 employees worldwide, some 53,000 of whom work at AUDI AG in Germany. With its attractive brands and new models, innovative mobility offerings and pioneering services, the company is systematically continuing on its path to becoming a provider of sustainable, individual premium mobility.
