

PRESS RELEASE

Spring 2019

Zollverein: Future location for culture and economy

New General Managers of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Zollverein present agenda

ESSEN. Mid 2018, Professor Dr. Hans-Peter Noll and Professor Heinrich Theodor Grütter were appointed to the Board of Zollverein Foundation. In February 2019, in a first press conference on the annual report and prospects, the General Managers informed about their agenda for Zollverein, the only industrial World Heritage Site in Germany to be developed into a future location for culture and business. The focus for 2019 and the coming years is on attracting further companies to Zollverein, strengthening connections to the surrounding urban districts, expanding the tourist infrastructure and offers, new impulses in communication, the qualification of cultural activities, and the event programme at Zollverein as part of the "Bauhaus 100" anniversary.

The disused Zollverein Coal Mine and Coking Plant, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2001, is today an icon of the industrial age and a tourist attraction, and at the same time a business location, educational campus, and a young, growing powerhouse of the creative industry. "We want to continue this success story in the first year following the final coal phase-out in Germany. Zollverein is to become the model for structural change and transformation in Europe," said Noll. Zollverein is secured as a monument according to the principle of 'preservation through conversion' and is nevertheless undergoing constant change. "This challenge must be met – on the one hand by paying respect to the coal mine that was closed down more than 30 years ago and represents an important chapter in European economic history, and on the other hand, by looking to the future and promoting at Zollverein the resources of the future: ideas, innovation, entrepreneurial spirit." The Zollverein World Heritage Site has already developed into a location which, in addition to its tourist and cultural appeal, has also gained increasing economic importance over the last ten years. A total of around 1,500 new jobs had already been created at Zollverein by 2018.

Tourist infrastructure

With around 260,000 paying visitors to the Ruhr Museum and around 155,000 paying guests to the Zollverein tours of the coal mine and coking plant, **2018 was the year with the largest number of visitors since RUHR.2010, the European Capital of Culture year.** 2,100 booked guided tours and 1,060 open guided tours in the Ruhr Museum as well as 5,400 booked and 4,560 open Zollverein tours make the World Heritage Site Zollverein a top-ranking tourist location in the premier league of historical museums in Germany. The 2019 season opening will take place on 31 March with free admission to the Ruhr Museum and Zollverein guided tours at reduced prices. On that Sunday, the

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extensively modernised Portal of Industrial Heritage in the Coal Washery will be reopened.

Zollverein celebrates "Bauhaus 100"

As part of the "Bauhaus 100" anniversary, which will be celebrated throughout Germany in 2019, the UNESCO World Heritage Site Zollverein with its coal mine and coking plant is the anchor point of 100 locations along the Route of Modernism. At the World Heritage Site, the world-famous architecture and design school is at the centre of guided tours and a festival with exhibitions, performances, concerts, guided tours, workshops, and lectures in the anniversary year.

The attractiveness of Zollverein is to increase further with the **expansion of the tourist offers and infrastructure**. Complementary offerings such as the **Ruhr Museum's show depot** in the Coking Plant Quarter will provide additional possibilities for visitors in the future. Moreover, the renovation of the coke oven battery in combination with the development of the "black side" of the coking plant into the **new Denkmalpfad Kokerei (Coking Plant Monument Path)** is an important museum addition for Zollverein. The first of altogether twelve stations of this new tour will be opened in the summer of 2019.

In order to meet the growing needs of visitors from near and far, a **new information centre** will commence operation in 2020 within sight of the striking Twin Pithead Frame as a central point of contact at the heart of the World Heritage Site. In the autumn of 2019, an important step for Zollverein will be taken in the Quarter 1/2/8 with the **opening of the newly built design hotel** of the #hotelfriends group – firstly as a tourist location and secondly as a conference and congress venue. The topping-out ceremony was celebrated on 7 March 2019.

The new hotel can also accommodate participants of the European **CulturInvest! Congress**, which will be held for the first time at the UNESCO World Heritage Site Zollverein from 7–8 November 2019. Thanks to the support of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and RAG Foundation, Zollverein Foundation has succeeded in bringing Europe's largest cultural congress with the presentation of the European Cultural Marks Award from Berlin to Essen. 100 renowned initiators from the fields of politics, business, culture, and the media will present the latest trends in the European cultural market in 12 themed forums and develop future visions for cultural brands with 750 expected participants from all over Europe.

In autumn 2019, the **new restaurant The Mine** will open in the as yet unused listed two-storey Hall 4 and will complement the existing catering services at the World Heritage Site. Regarding the pricing, the restaurant will address and professionally entertain visitors and tourists, especially families, travel groups, school classes, and locals as well as employees at Zollverein.

In order to optimise the parking situation, a new parking level was put into operation in the Coking Plant Quarter at the beginning of February 2019, which can be used by employees of neighbouring companies as well as guests of the Grand Hall Zollverein event hall and visitors to the site. Currently, car park P2 in the centre of the industrial monument is being repaired until mid-2019.

New target group: children, teenagers, and families

The very successful educational offers for children and adolescents – from children's tours to birthday parties for kids, and the annual "Türöffnertag" (door opener day) of the "Sendung mit der Maus" (TV series for children called Mouse TV outside of Germany) on 3 October with 10,000 participants from the surrounding districts and the whole of North Rhine-Westphalia – will also be expanded in the coming years to include a number of new activities. In the mining car circuit in Quarter 1/2/8, which has just been restored in line with monument preservation requirements, a total of 14 different stations will be set up on the so-called **new Denkmalpfad 1/2/8 (Monument Path 1/2/8)** starting in summer 2019. They will playfully familiarise children, young people, and families in particular with the subject of mining: among these stations are a **Coal Mine Course**, various miner's lamp stations, a repair workshop for mining cars – which was actually located in the mining car circuit at the time of operation – and a sheave hoisting facility. When standing in a pit cage, young and old visitors can experience up close what it's like to "go down" to the face. In addition, a tunnel is planned outside where coal can actually be mined.

The offer is rounded off by a large children's playground, which is being built with the support of Sparkasse Essen. The **PLUS Zollverein family support centre** of Deutscher Kinderschutzbund e.V. (German Child Protection Association) is also being set up in the immediate vicinity, offering a wide range of services for children and families from the surrounding districts of Katernberg, Schonnebeck, and Stoppenberg. These include traditional childcare services and educational projects for children and families, but the new centre will also provide counselling and support measures. Here, concrete future opportunities are opened up for children at Zollverein, the location of the future, and model offers are made available that are geared to the actual needs and resources of the citizens and will build bridges to the population in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Improved orientation

In 2018, first measures were taken to improve orientation on the 100-hectare site in order to successively establish a new orientation system at Zollverein. Due to structural changes, the expanded range of events with more than 500 events per year and a strongly growing stream of visitors, the analogue communication concept developed around ten years ago no longer meets today's requirements. The concept for the **new guidance system** is being developed together with partners from the fields of architecture, monument preservation, and behavioural economics, visitors and stakeholders on site. In addition to the optimisation of signage and lighting, the topics of logistics, mobility, and the connection of the area to the public transport system also pose challenges that the new location managers are tackling.

Location development: attraction of companies

For several years now, the focus of location development has been on the coking plant. While the monument-conform renovation of the historical building fabric in the area of the coke oven battery with its smokestacks, conveyor bridges, quenching track hall, quenching towers, and pre-coolers will continue until 2023, the new buildings of the RAG Foundation and RAG AG were completed and occupied at the beginning of 2018.

Since recently, the **Ruhr Conference** and the **Olympia Initiative Rhein Ruhr City 2032** have also been based there. The **Gründererallianz Ruhr** of the Initiativkreis Ruhr, which is committed to supporting entrepreneurs, has moved into its new premises in House 5 in the Coking Plant Quarter in 2018. The relocation of the **Folkwang University of the Arts** / Department of Design to Quarter 1/2/8 offers numerous networking opportunities, especially regarding the settlement of start-ups and spin-offs from the design sector. In addition to the **Schacht one** company, another think tank, Accenture, will move into Transformer House 2 at the coking plant by mid-2019.

Monument preservation

In the monument area of the Coking Plant Quarter, coking ovens are lined up next to one another in the **coke oven battery** over a length of more than 600 metres. Due to the missing roof and the unprotected exposure to the weather, the structure is already severely damaged in large areas. This applies both to the oven construction itself and, in particular, to the various technical facilities built of steel and small components that do not have anti-corrosion coating for operational reasons. As a consequence, the coke oven battery is to have a protective roof. As part of an architectural competition, a sophisticated architectural solution is to be found in a first step in 2019.

As a first measure, the former **high pressure plant** is currently undergoing roof restoration and specialist refurbishment, and utilisation concepts are being developed. This building could provide a floor area of around 1,300 square metres for studios, workshops, or offices.

Grand Hall Zollverein, the ultra-modern event hall in the former Extraction and Compressor Hall in the Coking Plant Quarter, can already look back on 2 years of successful operation; the private operators of the Grand Hall are currently renovating the neighbouring Transformer House 1. From 2020 on, further offices and storage rooms, among other things, are to be built there.

This year, Zollverein Foundation will also update the management plan for the Zollverein Coal Mine World Heritage Site, which was drawn up in 2001. On the one hand, the framework conditions for the inscription of World Heritage Sites have changed since that time, and on the other hand, the development of the site has progressed further.