



NEXTGEN KICKOFF CONFERENCE

Young leaders look behind the curtain of transatlantic relations

About the NextGen Initiative

AmCham Germany launched its NextGen Initiative in 2017 to connect young professionals who have a strong interest in the transatlantic partnership and to foster the significant bond between the US and Germany among the aspiring next generation of leaders and influencers. By bringing together peers from a variety of sectors, AmCham Germany aims to support tomorrow's decision makers and business leaders in developing their networks and leadership skills as well as in establishing their roles as transatlantic ambassadors within their companies. This unique program will not only enhance each participant's skill set, but also create a young, up-and-coming community within AmCham Germany. Each year's participants are chosen from a pool of promising employees, nominated by our corporate members. The Board of Directors and the NextGen Steering Committee take part in the selection process.



“*The transatlantic partnership is alive and well — despite the current discord.*”

Thirtyfive up-and-coming business leaders from all sectors were chosen to participate in AmCham Germany's newly launched NextGen Program. The program was kicked off with a four-day conference at the Lufthansa Conference Center near Frankfurt am Main. Each day featured a different topic, providing the participants with sound knowledge and insights into AmCham Germany, the digital transformation of society and economy, and recent developments in transatlantic relations in terms of foreign and security policy, economic cooperation and the media.

Roland Koch, Chairman of the Board, UBS Europe is on the NextGen selection committee and opened the conference with a discussion on the future of transatlantic relations and globalization with the NextGen participants. He made a special point to address the importance of good leadership. Donatus Kaufmann, Member of the Executive Board of thyssenkrupp, and Matthias Machnig, former State Secretary at the Ministry of Economic Affairs also came to talk about transatlantic trade. They both stressed that only free trade will bring long-term competitiveness. In a conversation, Danyal Bayaz, Member of the German *Bundestag* ((Alliance '90/ The Greens), and Sabine Bendiek, Managing Director of Microsoft Germany and Member of the

AmCham Germany Executive Committee underscored that digital transformation won't succeed if it doesn't include people. A site visit at SAP, Germany's largest and most cutting-edge tech company, offered insights into both innovation and leadership. Other high-level experts from think tanks, the military and the media also attended and engaged with NextGen participants.

A design thinking workshop and an Oxford-style debate took the NextGen participants out of discussion mode and into a setting where participants could work on topics with each other. In these and other sessions, they proved their creativity, broad interest and enthusiasm.

“The NextGen Conference demonstrated that the transatlantic partnership is still strong because it is strengthened by personal ties.” Eveline Metzen, General Manager, AmCham Germany stated at the conclusion of the conference: “This is why we have to ensure we keep the next generations interested and actively involved in the German-American partnership. The NextGen Initiative is our contribution to this goal, and I encourage all AmCham Germany members to nominate the high-potentials in their companies for the NextGen Program, 2019/20.”

