



Make Sense

FROM FOUNDERS WHO THOUGHT AHEAD.
PROJECTS THAT INSPIRE COURAGE.
AND PEOPLE WHO CREATE THE FUTURE.

Dear readers,

In a world that is changing rapidly, where efficiency and short-term success often take centre stage, the question of “why” is more relevant than ever. What makes our actions meaningful? What creates lasting impact? At Sedus Stoll AG, the answer lies in the company’s unique history and structure – shaped by two foundations that support it both ideologically and financially: the Stoll VITA Foundation and the Karl Bröcker Foundation.

These two foundations are the main owners of Sedus Stoll AG. This is not just a legal fact, but an expression of a special understanding. It means that all of the Group’s brands are committed to values rather than to the demands of anonymous capital markets. The profits generated by Sedus, S³ Advice and Klöber are channelled to a large extent into projects that serve the common good – in the areas of health, education, environmental protection, research, and youth development. This gives entrepreneurial activity a deeper meaning: economic power becomes creative power.

This booklet invites you to find out more about the activities, values and goals of the two foundations. It tells you about the founders who thought ahead. About projects that inspire courage. And about people who create the future.

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Funding means Leaving Foot- prints

Anyone who establishes a foundation thinks beyond the moment – and creates something that will endure long after their own lifetime. The stories of the founders of the Stoll VITA Foundation and the Karl Bröcker Foundation impressively demonstrate how personal convictions, entrepreneurial spirit and social responsibility can take root and continue to shape the future.

The Stolls

The Stoll VITA Foundation was established in 1985 as the result of a family history that has always had a passion for chairs. Founded in 1871 by Albert Stoll I., the chair factory developed over generations into a family business that, in addition to economic success, also anchored social responsibility in its identity. Christof Stoll, grandson of Albert Stoll I., took over the company in 1937 and, together with his wife Emma Stoll, established the foundation. By transferring their assets and the majority shareholding in what is now Sedus Stoll AG, the couple laid the cornerstone for the foundation's success story.



Christof Stoll
1912 – 2003

Pioneer of sustainable business

Christof Stoll was a pioneering entrepreneurial personality and an early advocate for ecological responsibility in business for decades. As Managing Director of “Christof Stoll KG” (Sedus Stoll AG since 1995), he made the company one of Europe’s leading office furniture manufacturers. In doing so, he set standards in environmental awareness and social responsibility early on – long before sustainability became a mainstream concern.

With innovation, vision and a clear stance, he combined economic success with ethical conduct. Christof Stoll introduced employee participation in the company back in the 1950s. In 1985, he and his wife Emma Stoll founded the Stoll VITA Foundation to permanently anchor his commitment to people, nature and society. His conviction that companies bear responsibility for the common good lives on in the foundation to this day.

In recognition of his achievements, Christof Stoll was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit in 1986 and was named “Eco Manager of the Year” by the business magazine “Capital” and the “World Wide Fund for Nature” (WWF) in 1993 – two further testaments to his tireless commitment to sustainable corporate management.



Emma Stoll
1919 – 2010

Pioneer for health and the common good

Emma Stoll, who grew up on a farm, showed an early interest in healthy nutrition. While her husband Christof Stoll was busy building what is now Sedus Stoll AG, she began growing biodynamic vegetables for the Sedus kitchen in the 1950s and introduced a lunch programme for employees. In the 1960s, Emma Stoll switched the staff’s diet to wholefoods, which employees still enjoy in the company restaurant today.

As a committed co-creator and wise advisor, Emma Stoll shaped the family business with great sensitivity, foresight and a strong connection to the employees. Her sense of social responsibility was not only reflected in the corporate culture, but also found expression in the work of the Stoll VITA Foundation. Her commitment to healthy eating remains a major part of the foundation’s work to this day.



Find out how the Stoll VITA Foundation is continuing the vision of Christof and Emma Stoll.

The Bröckers

The roots of the Bröcker family and their love of working with wood in their own furniture and carpentry workshop go back to 1864. With a spirit of innovation and a wealth of ideas, the family business developed into a market leader in the office furniture sector by 1998. The early death of Renate Bröcker was the impetus for establishing the Karl Bröcker Foundation – the beginning of a story that would positively impact many lives. Today, social responsibility, continuous commitment to employees and a big heart for promoting young talent are firmly anchored values in the foundation. They not only characterise the life of the foundation, but are also reflected in the attitude of Sedus Stoll AG towards its employees and society.



Karl Bröcker
1913 – 1987

Visionary with foresight

Karl Bröcker was a man with a vision. During a visit to an office trade exhibition in Düsseldorf in 1964, he spontaneously decided that the single-colour melamine resin panels produced in the family business would be just as suitable for office furniture as they would be for kitchen furniture. Just one year later, he presented the self-designed “Rigo-Norm” and “Rigo-Acta” office furniture series to the public.

The beginning was challenging, but Karl Bröcker remained persistent. Pioneering developments such as a high-density tabletop resistant to cigarette burns, a stepless height-adjustable typewriter desk and the introduction of the first versatile room partitioning system meant that within just ten years, the family business grew to become one of the “Top 10” companies in the German office furniture industry – and successfully held its own against European competitors.

But Karl Bröcker not only knew how to lead a company to success – he also understood that true success depends on strong collaboration within the company. With his great human and social understanding, his sharp sense of humour and his inner calm, he created an atmosphere where every employee – regardless of their role – felt part of the family. A talent that the man from the Sauerland region, in his characteristic modesty, would never have taken for granted.



Renate Bröcker
1965 – 1998

Supporter of children and young people

Renate Bröcker was a person who liked to think ahead. Even at a young age, she stipulated in her will that her assets should flow into a foundation after her death – including the “Gesika Büromöbelwerk” company, which she had taken over from her father in 1987.

Renate Bröcker died at the age of 33 as a result of a serious road accident. At the time, she was the sole Managing Director of the family business in Geseke. She was particularly committed to fostering young talent and training. Shortly before her death, the business administration graduate had initiated a model project to promote the independence and teamwork skills of trainees. In order to give as many school leavers as possible a chance, she increased the number of apprenticeships in the company to 20.

Renate Bröcker was known for her friendly and reserved manner. She did not want to be the centre of attention. This is why she stipulated in her will that the foundation, which was established in 1999, should bear her father’s name. Renate Bröcker’s personality continues to characterise the work of the Karl Bröcker Foundation to this day.



Find out how the Karl Bröcker Foundation is continuing the vision of Karl and Renate Bröcker.

Family Histories

A look at the history of a family not only reveals the milestones and successes of several generations. It also explains the deeply rooted values and sometimes already forgotten traditions that a family can look back on. The history of the Stoll family and the Bröcker family and their passion for the furniture industry goes back to the 19th century. Their paths bear witness to courage, ambition and social responsibility, which are still a source of inspiration for many today.

Family Stoll

1871

Albert Stoll I. founds the chair factory "Stoll & Klock" together with Max Klock in Waldshut (Baden-Wuerttemberg). They produce chairs from bent wood.

1879

Max Klock leaves the company. The company is renamed "Albert Stoll OHG".

1897

After the death of Albert Stoll I., his wife Bertha Stoll initially continues to run the company. She is nicknamed "the armchair maker". His son Albert Stoll II. then takes over the business.

1912

Albert Stoll II. starts producing spoke-back chairs. These models were strikingly different from the bentwood chairs and consist of only a few bent parts.

1926

At the Leipzig Trade Fair, Albert Stoll II. presents his innovation for the office: the globally patented "Federdreh", the first swivel chair with a swivelling column suspension. The Federdreh marks the company's entry into the office furniture market.

1937

Albert Stoll II. dies at the age of 54. Three of his four sons continue to run the company: Albert Stoll III. manages the business in Koblenz (Switzerland), Christof and Martin Stoll jointly manage the Waldshut-based company.

1958

Christof and Martin Stoll split the family business Albert Stoll OHG into two companies: "Christof Stoll KG" in Waldshut and the "Federdreh chair factory", run by Martin Stoll, in Tiengen.

Christof Stoll registers the brand name "Sedus".

1953

Christof Stoll introduces employee profit-sharing.

1864

"Theodor Bröcker furniture and carpentry company" is founded in Stromberg (North Rhine-Westphalia).

1902

The company specialises in furniture construction.

Johannes Bröcker, the 2nd generation to manage the company, successfully introduces series production.

1951

Karl Bröcker's brothers, Egon and Ludger Bröcker, join the family business.

1937

Karl Bröcker takes over the management of the company from his father. At that time, the company specialises in bedroom furniture.

1960

The company's own chip-board plant is built at the site in Stromberg to better supply its own furniture production and for quality assurance.

1962

The company, "Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG" is founded at the Geseke site.

1961

Karl Bröcker acquires an industrial site of around 100,000 m² in Geseke.

1958

The factory is converted from bedroom furniture to living room and kitchen furniture.

Family Bröcker

Family Stoll

1963

The first plant for refining chipboard into melamine resin-coated plastic panels and for manufacturing ready-to-assemble furniture parts is built. With the construction of the plant in Geseke, the largest plastic board format at the time, the “Rigonal” branded panel, is created.

1964

Karl Bröcker visits an office trade fair in Düsseldorf. This gives him the idea that melamine resin sheets would be perfect for the construction of hard-wearing office furniture.

1965

The “Gesika” trademark is registered.

The first office furniture series under the Gesika brand, “Rigo-Norm” and “Rigo-Acta”, designed by Karl Bröcker himself, are launched.

1967

Karl Bröcker presents Gesika organisational furniture for the first time at the industrial trade fair in Hanover.

1969

As a result of the growth of Christof Stoll KG, the production is gradually relocated to the new site in Dogern from 1969 onwards.

1970

Christof Stoll sets up his own development and testing department with the largest and most modern test laboratory in the industry.

1973

Karl Bröcker introduces the Bröcker Board of Directors as an advisory body for his personal support and relief.

1972

Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG is listed among the “Top 10” largest office furniture manufacturers in Germany after only ten years on the market.

1985

Christof and Emma Stoll establish the Stoll VITA Foundation in Waldshut and transfer their assets, which also include the majority shareholding in the family company, to the foundation.

1986

Christof Stoll receives the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his services as an entrepreneur.

1974

The company name is changed to “Gesika Büromöbelwerk Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG” in the interests of “corporate identity” and to emphasise the close connection with the Geseke site.

Family Bröcker

Family Stoll

1987

Christof Stoll founds a total of eight sales companies in Europe by 1987.

1993

Christof Stoll is voted "Eco-Manager of the Year" by the "WWF" and the magazine "Capital".

1995

The company Christof Stoll KG, under which the Sedus brand is managed, is transformed into "Sedus Stoll AG".

1999

Sedus Stoll AG acquires a majority shareholding in the office furniture manufacturer "Klöber" in Überlingen on Lake Constance.

1987

Renate Bröcker takes over the company Gesika Büromöbelwerk Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG after the death of her father. In the first few years, the company is managed by a managing director.

1997

Renate Bröcker takes over the sole management of the company as managing partner.

1998

Renate Bröcker dies at the age of 33 in a tragic road accident. Her assets are transferred to her foundation a year later.

1999

The Karl Bröcker Foundation in Lippstadt is established.

2002

Through the merger with Gesika Büromöbelwerk Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG, Sedus Stoll AG becomes a full-service provider of holistic office furnishings.

2018

The headquarters of Sedus Stoll AG is relocated from Waldshut to Dogern. As part of this move, the connecting road is also renamed "Christof-Stoll-Straße".

2002

The Karl Bröcker Foundation becomes the second main shareholder of Sedus Stoll AG alongside the Stoll VITA Foundation.

2008

Gesika Büromöbelwerk Bröcker GmbH & Co. KG is converted into "Sedus Systems GmbH".

2024

"S³ Advice GmbH" is founded.

Family Bröcker

Preserving Values, Shaping Change

If a founder wishes to support a charitable cause in the long term, they place their assets into a foundation. Susanne Brandherm, honorary member of the board of the Karl Bröcker Foundation, and Adelheid Kummle, board member of the Stoll VITA Foundation, explain in an interview how founders' visions can be brought to life over decades.



Susanne Brandherm

Honorary board member of the Karl Bröcker Foundation

For a better Future for Children

Children are the future! But there are still many children and young people without the chance of a happy, free life. Helping them is the aim of the Karl Bröcker Foundation. Susanne Brandherm, honorary board member of the foundation since 2002, and her team have made it their mission to make the eyes of children and young people shine again by consistently supporting regional, national and international education and therapy projects. In this interview with the interior designer, we learn how her voluntary work has had a lasting impact.

“Emotions are one of the biggest challenges in our foundation work – especially when we have to make decisions that affect us personally.”

Susanne Brandherm

Ms. Brandherm, what does foundation work mean to you personally?

Working at the foundation is a great personal enrichment for me – it is truly a matter of the heart. It is incredibly fulfilling to work with so many committed people who do great things on a voluntary basis and initiate real change with their ideas. It is particularly touching to witness the children's joy – their beaming faces, their gratitude. We often receive loving feedback, small letters or hand-made gifts – it is simply wonderful.

I deliberately use the word “us” because this work is teamwork. I am lucky enough to work with a great foundation team. We are all united by a deep personal commitment. We put our hearts and souls into giving a little hope and joy in difficult life situations – especially where children are in need.

What does the Karl Bröcker Foundation stand for today? Can the influence of the founder, Renate Bröcker, still be felt today?

We support a wide range of projects – primarily in kindergartens, schools and medical and therapeutic facilities. Our focus is clearly on educational and therapeutic projects. The Karl Bröcker Foundation is active where children and young people need special support.

It gives them self-confidence, new opportunities and unforgettable experiences – whether at imaginative events or engaging activities that bring joy and offer carefree moments.

What sets us apart is our close, personal connection to the projects. Many are created in collaboration with passionate volunteers – people with inspiring ideas with whom we not only support, but often develop something together. Whether large or small, each project is defined by one decisive factor: the direct benefit it has on the children.

Renate Bröcker's personality still characterises our work today. She was a very modest woman who never wanted to be the centre of attention. That is why the foundation bears the name of her father – Karl Bröcker – and not her own. We continue to live this attitude: we are present, but never loud. Our goal is not to seek attention, but to create meaningful change with genuine conviction and heart – in the interests of the children.

How do you select projects or funding areas?

It is not always the perfectly planned projects that we support. We often very quickly sense the emotional core, the spirit of a project – and that is precisely what touches us. This is why we seek personal dialogue with the initiators at an early stage in order to really understand their ideas and develop them further together.

Our focus is always on people – both the children we support through our projects and the dedicated adults who make it all possible. If a project fits thematically with our funding focus – i.e. education or therapy – that is already a good foundation. In discussions with those responsible for the project, we then examine the specific funding options, discuss the costs and look together to see where there may be potential for more effective implementation.

Is there a project that is particularly close to your heart? And if so, why?

It is incredibly difficult for me to single-out one project – simply because every project has a special meaning for us. Each one is close to our hearts and tells its very own story.

However, my trips to Eritrea – a country that was previously completely foreign to me and one of the poorest in the world – were particularly impressive for me. We set up a cardiac ward there, a small hospital where life-saving heart operations are still being performed today. I was able to attend an operation myself and see children recover. To see that we are saving lives there – that touched me deeply.

But I am equally fascinated by smaller projects that achieve a big impact with minimal resources. One great example is the

“Toyshop” at the “Don Bosco School”: children who have difficulties communicating learn everyday routines – such as shopping – in a mock supermarket and strengthen their independence through play. A simple but incredibly effective idea.

If you had to explain to a young person why foundations are needed, what would you say?

Foundations play a central role when it comes to not only developing projects, but also financing them sustainably. Cities, local authorities and other organisations often lack the necessary funds to turn good ideas into reality. This is precisely where foundations become important – they create opportunities where resources would otherwise be lacking.

The insights of the people who work in foundations is particularly valuable. They bring fresh perspectives, recognise potential and drive projects forward with great commitment and passion. And it has been shown time and again that effective changes can be initiated even with limited resources.

“Many people often underestimate just how much work is behind a foundation. It is far more than just funding – it involves listening, thoughtful evaluation, organisation, and genuine empathy. I am deeply grateful to our dedicated foundation team, who do all of this with great responsibility and heart.”

Susanne Brandherm

A Commitment with Foresight

How can a foundation remain vibrant when it is rooted in the legacy of a visionary founding couple? By translating their values into today's world without losing sight of the challenges of tomorrow. Adelheid Kummle, board member of the Stoll VITA Foundation, embodies this principle. As a native of Waldshut, she is deeply connected to the foundation – and puts her heart and soul, vision and organisational skills into her work every day. In this interview, she talks about her personal motivations, the diversity of the foundation's work, and the projects closest to her heart.



Adelheid Kummle

Board member of the Stoll VITA Foundation

Ms. Kummle, you have been a member of the Stoll VITA Foundation Board since 2011. What does foundation work mean to you personally?

The foundation's work is multifaceted and offers numerous organisational opportunities. Organising the day-to-day operations – the numerous events such as lectures, concerts, as well as exhibitions designed especially to engage young people educationally – is something I find very exciting. I have a lot to do with people, for example when I guide groups or school classes through exhibitions. Of course, that means I need to prepare thoroughly in advance.

I also find it very gratifying to see how actively our large garden and our premises are used by the public and by numerous school classes. The funding requests we receive in the fields of medicine/health, education, environment, and nutrition are usually very interesting; I often dive deep into topics I might otherwise never encounter.

What does the Stoll VITA Foundation stand for today – and what perhaps distinguishes it from other foundations?

The fact that the founder couple had already contributed their entire assets to the charitable foundation during their lifetime sets the Stoll VITA Foundation apart from most other foundations. The company-affiliated Stoll VITA Foundation is based just a few kilometres from Sedus Stoll AG. A significant proportion of the profits generated by Sedus Stoll AG goes to the foundation as dividends and therefore flows back into the region.

The residents of Waldshut-Tiengen have daily access to a large garden with play equipment, urban gardening, a fountain and chickens; it is looked after by a full-time master gardener and herb educator who gardens every week with numerous children and an inclusion group.

The region also benefits from events, exhibitions and the provision of free rooms, and we are also pleased that we are always able to approve sponsorship projects in the Waldshut district, such as the planting of thousands of trees, purchases for schools and support for healthy meals for schoolchildren. But we also support many projects nationwide in the areas defined in our statutes.

“As a charitable foundation, we have to be careful with our funding, but I also want to support meaningful projects. The foundation's work requires me to broaden my own horizons on a daily basis. It gives me the sense that I am doing something truly valuable.”

Adelheid Kummle

“I hope that we can provide effective solutions for a future worth living and help to overcome global challenges.”

Adelheid Kummle

Can the influence of the founders Christof and Emma Stoll, still be felt today? If so, how?

I can answer this question with a very clear “yes”. The aims of the foundation, which the founders laid down in 1985, still apply today. I always remember how Emma and Christof Stoll were ahead of their time in their commitment to healthy eating and environmental protection back in the 1970s. Their ideas and goals continue to have an impact, and we are still trying to realise them. To mark the 100th anniversary of Emma Stoll’s birth, her significant cookbook promoting healthy eating was reissued.

The foundation extensively renovated and converted Emma and Christof Stoll’s home and then rented it out to a non-profit daycare centre. We are convinced that the couple would have welcomed this with great joy. We have also created the right environment for a public kindergarten to be run on our foundation premises.

For me, the fact that the foundation premises are located on the site where Christof Stoll was born and where the company history of today’s Sedus Stoll AG began also plays a role. It may sound a little foolish, but I can confidently say: “The spirit of Emma and Christof Stoll is always present!”

Is there a project that is particularly close to your heart? And if so, why?

The “Bundesverband Kinderhospiz e. V.” in Lenzkirch and the “Kinderkrebszentrum Hamburg gGmbH” are particularly close to my heart. My two-year-old grandson was diagnosed with leukaemia shortly after the substantial funding for both organisations was approved. He has since recovered from the disease, but when you experience for yourself what a serious blow it is when a child suffers a life-threatening illness, you realise once again how sensible it is to support such projects.

If you had to explain to a young person why foundations are needed, what would you say?

Foundations existed in Egypt and Mesopotamia in the third millennium BC. Even then, foundation assets were private and did not come from the state budget. The strength of foundations to this day is that they are independent and can make decisions freely. They are an expression of civic engagement and democratic participation. Foundations can promote charitable causes in the long term. They can solve social problems for which the state does not consider itself responsible, or only to a limited extent, as this would overburden it both financially and in terms of personnel.

Committed to the Common Good

The purpose of the foundation is the manifestation of the founder's will. It sets the direction and binds the foundation's bodies in all their decisions. We present three projects that exemplify the work of the Karl Bröcker Foundation and Stoll VITA Foundation – regionally, nationally and internationally.

#dranbleiben

Together out of the Crisis

When young people end up on the street, they are often not only without shelter – they are also without support, without trust, without hope. The “#dranbleiben” project of the “Straßenkinder e.V.” association meets these young people exactly where they are: in the middle of a crisis, caught in a downward spiral, often stuck in seemingly hopeless situations. What makes this project special is its approach: persistent, patient, relationship-orientated. It is not about quick solutions, but about long-term support. It is about really sticking with it.

Straßenkinder e.V. was founded in Berlin in 2000 and has made it its primary task to support children, who are in need of help, in various ways. A large part of this mission is to get street children off the streets as quickly as possible and reintegrate them into society.

However, this also includes prevention measures, support through educational programmes and the integration of refugees. The Karl Bröcker Foundation supports the #dranbleiben project because it exemplifies the foundation’s purpose: to open up life prospects for young people where systems often fail. The experiences of the employees in the project show how vulnerable, but also how powerful, these phases of life can be. When trust grows again, when hope germinates, when young people find the courage to face difficult paths, then this is not just an individual success – it is a signal of the effectiveness of humanity and persistence.

In an interview with Markus Kütter, board member of Straßenkinder e.V., we find out more about the #dranbleiben project and how crises can be turned into opportunities.



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What does your daily work with young people look like in concrete terms – where does the project start?

The project focuses directly on the reality of young people's lives. We pick them up where they are and help them to take the next steps. At the beginning, many just want a warm meal or a sleeping bag. Eventually, they realise that we genuinely care and are there for them. For many, this is the starting point of the project.

1/2 One focus of the work of Straßenkinder e.V. is street social work. The great and real danger for young people is that they will not be able to make their way back from the streets.

3 The organisation estimates that there are at least 6,500 underage street children nationwide.



Markus Kütter, board member of Straßenkinder e. V., devotes much of his time to supporting young people. He is passionate and fully committed to the cause.



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1 The coworking space offers young people the chance to write job applications, find a flat and gradually become more independent.

2 The team at Straßenkinder e.V. provides intensive care for minors. They take the children's problems seriously and listen attentively in order to build a trusting relationship with them.

3 Many of the children and young people looked after by the organisation have never received a home-cooked, warm meal from their parents.

What distinguishes #dranbleiben from other projects in the field of youth welfare or crisis intervention?

We take a holistic and relationship-orientated approach. Many have had bad experiences with the help system, starting with their parents and experiencing numerous relationship breakdowns. They have to learn to trust again. We give them time to do this and provide them with what they need in the meantime until they open up and find the strength to go through the help process with us.

Crisis interventions tend to be short-term measures to avert (life-) threatening situations, but they cannot have a lasting effect and are simply one-off measures. With us, the individual building blocks work together like gears, which should ultimately enable them to live a self-determined and self-financed life.

How do you experience the change in the young people over the course of their care?

Many have lost faith in themselves and a hope for a better future. They have also often given up on their dreams. We offer them hope. At some point, they begin to believe in themselves again, in a better future and find the courage to face painful processes. They develop a zest for life and regain the



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belief that their lives can succeed again. They celebrate successes that motivate them to carry on.

Straßenkinder e.V. is supported by project sponsors such as the Karl Bröcker Foundation. How important is cooperation with foundations for your organisation?

We are 95% funded by donations and cooperation with foundations is vital to our survival. Without this financial support, we would not be able to do much of our valuable work. These funds enable us to get children off the streets and provide them with long-

term support. We are also grateful for the collaborative partnership and the input that comes with it. Only together can we turn around the plight of many children and for this we thank the Karl Bröcker Foundation from the bottom of our hearts.

Was there a special experience or a success story that you particularly remember?

Many of the young people we accompany have had to live through terrible things in their early childhood. One example is Nina. She is 15 years old and has been living on the streets for over a year. Her arms are marked by what



she had already experienced in her early years. She told us about times when she stayed awake all night to avoid having to sleep outside. Her story is a reflection of what drives young people to live on the streets. It often leads to a cycle of further trauma, self-harming behaviour and substance abuse. Together with Nina, we managed to arrange an appointment with the youth welfare office to look for a suitable form of accommodation for her. Even the thought of such appointments made Nina feel very uneasy. But after the appointment, she actually said to us: "I was looking forward to an appointment for the first time today! And now I have even managed to go." A first step had been taken together.

The second step was to visit a therapeutic residential group. Nina was very nervous on the way there. She talked again about disturbing experiences and her desire to finally have a

home. In a conversation with the psychologist on site, Nina was asked whether it was difficult for her to never have a place to retreat to. She replied: "Yes. I only had a place to shelter again when I went to Straßenkinder e.V. for the first time. I was able to come down and relax here."

We stay on the ball with Nina and accompany her through all the next steps she has to take to get a place in the residential group.



Do you want to find out more about the project? Follow the QR code.

Multi-talented Red Beetroot

Just beet it

Vegetable consumption is widely linked to improved human health, thanks to its many beneficial effects, including a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. One vegetable that has gained increasing attention and research in recent years is red beetroot.

Red beetroot is rich in vitamins B, C, potassium, magnesium, zinc, selenium and iron. It has a blood-purifying effect, deacidifies the organism and has a positive influence on the metabolism. The secondary plant substances in red beetroot support the immune system and have an anti-inflammatory effect. Red beetroot is a real all-rounder.

But what effects do the different cultivation methods have on the compounds and nutrients of the vegetables? And what about

the fertiliser? Does it have an influence on the nutritionally relevant nutrients? These questions were among those investigated in the research project "Multi-talented red beetroot" at the "University of Hohenheim", which was financed by the Stoll VITA Foundation. The funding enabled research to be carried out into relevant issues relating to the organic cultivation and utilisation of red beetroot in various food products. We spoke to Prof. Dr. agr. Simone Graeff-Hönninger about her work, the various effects of red beetroot and how important it is to democratise research.

Not all beetroot is the same? What differences did you look at more closely in your research project?

In the project, we looked at different varieties and new breeds of red beetroot and tested them for their agronomic properties such as yield, shape, appearance, colour and susceptibility to disease, as well as for key compounds, such as total sugars, colouring agents, nitrate and phenols.



Red beetroot is a biennial herbaceous plant. The red beetroot and a rosette of leaves are formed in the first year.

What influence does the cultivation method have on the beet's ingredients?

Various studies have shown that there are significant differences between varieties in terms of the composition and content of health-promoting ingredients. The potential of red beetroot breeding lines and varieties in terms of their nutritional content is currently unexplored or unutilised. In addition, there is little knowledge about the extent to which the ingredients can be specifically influenced by the cultivation system (e.g. fertiliser level and form), particularly under organic farming conditions. The aim of the project was therefore to investigate how a) variety, b) level of N (Nitrogen) fertilisation and c) N fertiliser form in organic farming affects health-promoting ingredients in red beetroot.

The project showed that the choice of variety plays a crucial role, as different varieties vary significantly in their composition and are also strongly influenced by environmental conditions and the year of cultivation. The tested fertilisers and fertiliser levels primarily affected the nitrate content in the red beetroot, less so the other compounds. For example, in products where a high nitrate content is desirable (sports drinks or the use of red beetroot as a food supplement), the application of the plant-based fertiliser Maltaflor, at a level of 100 kg N ha⁻¹, achieved the highest levels.



Red beetroot comes in a variety of shapes, mostly round to pear-shaped, and can reach a weight of up to 600g. In addition to the well-known beetroot with its purple-red flesh, there are also colourless white beetroot and pale yellow beetroot.



Prof. Dr agr. Simone Graeff-Hönninger is head of the "Institute of Crop Sciences" at the University of Hohenheim. She holds the Chair of Crop Production.



1

In your research work, you focused on organic cultivation. One challenge was the topic of fertilisers. What observations did you make with regard to differences in yield and flavour?

The results of the research project have shown that the nitrate content of red beetroot can be steered in the desired direction with different amounts of the growth granulate Maltaflor, a fertiliser that is completely free of plastics and animal components, with adapted fertilisation.

The result is important. Why? A high nitrate content is desirable in sports drinks, for example, as it has been proven that ni-

trate can improve the contractility of skeletal muscles, power generation and sprint and repeated sprint performance. However, a low nitrate content is important for baby food. Nitrite can be formed from nitrate during the processing and preparation of food. Too much of this can impair the oxygen supply to the blood in infants. The results of our research show that a targeted selection of varieties for the desired end products is therefore highly recommended.

1 In the “Agricultural Sciences” course, the development of crop production systems (regional, global) is studied under different aspects (ecological-conventional, integration of new crops, digitalisation, intercropping, etc.) as well as the bioeconomy.

2/3 The central methodological element is the use of 2D or 3D plant growth models at different levels (organ, individual plant, field) for a holistic view of the soil-plant-environment system.



2



3

The breeding process for new varieties is very complex. Can you explain the respective steps for us?

In order to produce organic varieties suitable for organic production, organic breeding must be carried out under organic farming conditions and must focus on improving genetic diversity, confidence in the ability to reproduce naturally, agronomic performance, disease resistance and adaptation to different local soil and climatic conditions. All propagation methods must be carried out under certified organic management.

In detail, the breeding process therefore consists of many sub-steps that take many years until final variety approval. Our research is based on landraces and old varieties. In addition to selection under organic conditions, natural crossing and propagation as well as maintaining seed vigour, the variety testing and approval, which can take two to three years, were decisive in the end. If these steps are taken into account, it can take between seven and ten years before a new vegetable variety can be offered to farmers for cultivation.



Red beetroot requires a lot of water to grow. However, if the plants receive too much, the foliage develops more strongly, while the tubers lag behind. If it is too dry for the plants, the tubers can become woody.

The Stoll VITA Foundation has financed your research work. Thanks to this support, your research results were made freely accessible to farmers and not just made available to a breeder who ultimately commercialises them. How important are freely accessible research results for organic farming?

Organic farming favours genetic diversity and regional adaptation. Open research enables breeders, growers or associations, for

example, to access a broad knowledge base and develop varieties that are adapted to the location and resilient to stress factors such as drought or disease. In organic farming in particular, many projects work in a participatory manner, i.e. together with farmers. Freely accessible data and findings provide these groups with a sound basis for decision-making and equal access to knowledge.



Do you want to find out more about the Stoll VITA Foundation's research projects? Follow the QR code.

Pro Uganda

Step by Step towards a Dignified Life

What most of us take for granted is an unattainable wish for many people in developing countries: the ability to walk. Due to illness, war injuries and accidents, many people in countries such as Uganda are affected by amputations and can no longer walk independently. Children lose their access to education and adults become unable to work. In many cases, this leads to social exclusion.

This is where the non-profit organisation “Pro Uganda e. V.” comes in: Since it was founded in 2013, the aim has been to give amputees in Uganda a new quality of life through a prosthesis and to enable children to walk

again by customising orthoses. The work of the organisation leads people on a path out of isolation and back into social normality.

The Karl Bröcker Foundation provides financial support to Pro Uganda e. V. in supplying orthoses to children and young people. It firmly believes that children deserve to run, play, and enjoy a carefree childhood with their peers.

In this interview with Karsten Schulz, founder and chairman of Pro Uganda e. V., we gain deeper insights into the organisation’s work and learn how even relatively simple measures can make a valuable contribution to inclusion.



1

Orthopaedic technology is needed all over the world. Why does your association focus specifically on Uganda?

I have sponsored children with various aid organisations in Uganda and was invited to visit them. On site, I got to know the situation of people with disabilities personally – that moved me deeply. There are projects in Uganda where schools are being built and wells drilled. But for people with disabilities, hardly anything was being done. They are often excluded and pushed to the margins of society, as no one wants to associate with them. This fate made me very sad – that is why I founded Pro Uganda e.V. in 2013.

There are many reasons for the high amputation rate in developing countries like Uganda. What are the most common causes?

One of the main causes of amputations are accidents involving small mopeds – also known as “boda boda”. After these accidents, there is often a lack of proper medical care, which leads to infections. Diabetes has also become a real problem.

Unfortunately, patients often have no money to undergo treatment or surgery. So, instead of performing costly and complex operations, amputation is usually carried out immediately. After such a serious operation, patients have to leave the hospital after just three days, which makes appropriate wound care very difficult.



2

1 Thanks to the work of Pro Uganda e.V., Ivan received his first prosthesis, enabling him to walk and go to school again.

2 An orthosis is a medical device that influences the structural and functional properties of the neuromuscular and skeletal system. The team at Pro Uganda e.V. customises each orthosis to the needs of the young patients.



1



2

Children with physical disabilities in Uganda rarely have access to prostheses and orthoses. The costs are high and usually unaffordable for families. How does your organisation help locally?

Children with physical disabilities are particularly close to our hearts. They are innocent and are not responsible for their handicap. We use the donations we collect to finance operations and corrections. We build customised prostheses and orthoses for them. In 2017, we opened our own orthopaedic workshop in Uganda, where we can ensure patient care with modern resources and machines. Since opening, we have already been able to help many young patients locally. With new limbs or the support of an orthosis, they can take part in life again, play and go to school.

One case that has stuck with me to this day is a young boy who was overjoyed to be able to walk again – because he could now carry his food tray on his own, just like his friends. His face lit up with pride when he carried it by himself for the first time. For us, carrying a tray is normal – an action that happens incidentally, completely automatically. For him, it was an incredibly important step in regaining his independence.



3

1 Foot deformities are a common problem in Uganda.

2 If they are not corrected in time with orthoses, the deformities can lead to people no longer being able to walk in the long term.

3 Support with orthoses enables young patients to take an active part in life again and go to school.

Sulaimani heard about the Pro Uganda organisation from friends in 2015. He introduced himself to the team and received a new prosthesis from Karsten Schulz, founder of Pro Uganda e. V., during Easter 2016. At that time, the team was still working on a mobile basis and built the prostheses on site. They only had a suitcase for tools and materials.



The Karl Bröcker Foundation has supported Pro Uganda e. V. financially in providing children and young people with orthoses. What measures were you able to finance with the money?

With the donation from the Karl Bröcker Foundation, we were able to build orthoses for up to 100 children. Some of these children were first operated on using money from our medical fund. Among other things, they suffered from what is known as clubfoot. If the development of the foot is not corrected early on, they might no longer be able to walk in adulthood. This is why early orthopaedic treatment is so vital. For this financial support, we say from the bottom of our hearts: "Thank you!"

And a personal question to close: Is there an experience or a story that has made a lasting impression on you and motivates you to continue with your work every day?

Yes, there was an experience that changed my perspective permanently. In the beginning, we were building prosthetics in the bush, straight out of a suitcase. Our first patient,

Stella, was pushed into a fire and her lower leg was burnt. We built her a standing prosthetic – designed only for standing. But she started walking with it. That experience motivated all of us.

In the end, Stella still had to have an amputation. Despite her limitations, she completed vocational training and now runs her own hair-dressing salon in eastern Uganda.

Even today, after more than ten years, every visit to Uganda is of great importance. Seeing what is achieved locally through all the work done in Germany – watching people leave the workshop with a prosthesis, seeing children with prosthetics or orthoses playing football in the courtyard – those are the happiest moments imaginable. That is when we know what we are doing it all for.



Do you want to find out more about the project? Follow the QR code.



Briefly Noted

In addition to long-term collaboration with associations, universities and educational organisations, the Stoll VITA Foundation and the Karl Bröcker Foundation also launch their own projects that bring people together, inspire and support them. In “Briefly Noted”, we show which new projects the two foundations have planned for 2025/2026.



Repairing with heart and hand – at the Repair Café, people come together to tinker, fix, and sew – giving new life and shine to many a forgotten gem.



The exhibitions at the Stoll VITA Foundation often encourage people to join in, as here at the “Planet Health” exhibition.

Repairing instead of throwing away

The Stoll VITA Foundation regularly organises so-called “Repair Cafés”. These are meetings where visitors can have their broken items repaired by volunteer experts. Whether electrical appliances, clothing, furniture, bicycles or toys – everything gets a second chance at the Repair Café. In addition to free repairs, there is also coffee and cake.

Exhibitions that inspire

The Foundation’s premises in Waldshut regularly host exhibitions to which the public is cordially invited. The topics are diverse – from environmental protection to nutrition and health to artificial intelligence. From October 2025, the interactive travelling exhibition, “Astronomy for everyone!” invites visitors to explore basic astronomical concepts.

Kindergarten children, schoolchildren and inclusive groups come to the Stoll VITA Garden every week to garden together and experience nature up close.



A green oasis to join in

The “Stoll VITA Garden” is located on the former Sedus Stoll AG factory site and is the result of a recultivation programme. An extensive children’s playground and several raised beds for urban gardening make it Waldshut’s publicly accessible “green lung”. Children are also regularly taught gardening skills in the greenhouse and the school garden.



The mentors accompany the young people in their everyday lives, help them learn German and enable them to develop a social life.

A mentorship for a new beginning

Building trust, forgetting everyday worries and experiencing community – this is what the “IKJA e.V.” association is committed to and arranges mentorships for unaccompanied young refugees who are facing the challenge of finding their way in a new culture. The Karl Bröcker Foundation has been supporting the project for a long time, making an important contribution to an open society based on solidarity.



The first successes of reading promotion can be seen after just a few weeks – and reading is finally fun!

From reading frustration to reading pleasure

Around ten per cent of primary school children in Germany are unable to read properly by the end of fourth grade. This is often due to an incorrect reading strategy. The Karl Bröcker Foundation supports initiatives at two primary schools in Lippstadt to individually remedy reading weaknesses. Experienced experts recognise the incorrect approach to reading and develop a suitable training plan for each child.



In response to the growing need to support children in managing everyday challenges, the Starkmacher project places a strong emphasis on promoting mental health.

Strengthening for more resilience

Resilience means that children learn to develop inner strength, deal with crises and overcome challenges. Gaining self-confidence, solving problems and building emotional strength are just three parameters of the “Starkmacher” project. The Karl Bröcker Foundation’s first specially initiated project will be introduced into various kindergartens and primary schools from 2026.

40^{Years} Stoll VITA Foundation

— 5 —

In 2025, the Stoll VITA Foundation will celebrate its 40th anniversary. What began with a clear vision on the part of the founders is now an institution that provides sustainable impetus for the common good through a wide range of projects in the fields of health, education, research, and environmental protection and nature conservation. We take a look back at four decades of effective charitable work.

1985 – 1995

A beginning with far-reaching implications

On 8 March 1985, Christof and Emma Stoll set up the Stoll VITA Foundation in Waldshut. Their aim: to promote scientific research, public healthcare, education, environmental protection and nature conservation. In the years that followed, the foundation's aims were furthered through regular lecture series, projects and seminars. A cookery book titled "Healthy Wholefoods from the Sedus Kitchen" was published by the foundation, gained great popularity and was reprinted several times.

In 1989, the Stoll VITA Foundation acquired the "Flachshof" farm in Jestetten and had it managed by a tenant as the foundation's most extensive project to date. Its main purpose was to promote and research organic farming methods. The experimental cultivation of medicinal herbs, oil and protein plants, and heritage grain varieties was also supported, making the work on the Flachshof the basis for many dissertations and doctoral theses in the field of agroecology.

"Keeping nature healthy also keeps us humans healthy."

Christof Stoll

"It was always important to him that the company ran well thanks to the work of happy people. One of his key phrases was: 'If you are ill, you do not like working and you do not work well.'"

Emma Stoll

The sphere of activity expands

A core focus of the foundation's work continued to be guided tours and events at the Flachshof on the practice of organic farming. Thanks to the strong financial performance of Sedus Stoll AG, the foundation's sponsorship and initiatives were no longer limited to the Waldshut district, but increasingly extended to the whole of Germany. This also included longer-term project-related collaborations with state and university institutions as well as nationwide associations.

1995 – 2005



Changes for the common good

In 2005, the foundation decided to sell the Flachshof because, with an area of 34 hectares and partly unfavourable natural conditions, it was too small to be managed sustainably and successfully by a tenant.

“Ecology and economy are not opposites, but indispensable parts of a whole.”

Christof Stoll

In 2008, the Stoll VITA Foundation purchased the headquarters of Christof Stoll KG in Waldshut from Sedus Stoll AG. Following the demolition of buildings and the renaturalisation of the open spaces, the site continued to make a lasting contribution to improving the urban climate in Waldshut. The garden area was open to the public and offered nature and recreation for the population to experience daily. At its new location, the foundation organised a wide range of events related to the foundation's objectives, such as exhibitions, lectures and cultural events. It also made the premises available to associations and non-profit organisations.

2005 –
2015

2015 –
2025

Commitment to the youngest

The conversion of the former home of the founders, Christof and Emma Stoll, in Waldshut, into the “Kinder Villa Stoll” represents another milestone in the history of the Stoll VITA Foundation. A private day-care centre was painstakingly built here in 2019 and is now run by a non-profit organisation. It fills the time-honoured building with new life. The foundation's commitment to children is also reflected in the “Kinder-Lebens-Lauf”, a run organised by the Bundesverband Kinderhospiz e. V., which stops off in Waldshut in 2022.

“The most effective way to ensure life-long health is to show children from an early age: Healthy food tastes good.”

Emma Stoll

Foundation Ownership as a Compass

The special ownership structure of Sedus Stoll AG – supported by the Stoll VITA Foundation and the Karl Bröcker Foundation – gives the company and its brands, Sedus, S³ Advice and Klöber, a clear set of values. Foundation ownership enables sustainable management, promotes long-term stability and ensures that entrepreneurial success benefits the common good.

Stoll VITA Stiftung

– Waldshut-Tiengen –



KARL BRÖCKER STIFTUNG
ZUKUNFT FÜR KINDER

– Lippstadt –

Sedus Stoll Group

– Dogern –

sedus

– Dogern/Geseke –



– Dogern –

KLÖBER
the art of sitting

– Owingen –

Sedus designs holistic working environments that enable people to grow, find meaning, and experience fulfilment. As a full-service provider for office and work café solutions, Sedus stands for quality, design and sustainability – backed by a genuine sense of responsibility.

S³ Advice offers smart, data-based workspace solutions that help companies to design their working environments in a future-proof, efficient and user-orientated way. With strategic consulting, sensor technology and analyses, S³ Advice creates measurable added value in the design of hybrid working environments.

Since 1935, Klöber – founded by Margarete Klöber – has focused on high-quality seating furniture. Under the motto “the art of sitting”, ergonomic and aesthetic chairs and armchairs for work, living and public areas have been created on Lake Constance.

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