

New Member of the Management Board Research and Development at Technology Leader Festo

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Tomas Smetana (51) will be appointed to the Management Board as of May 1, 2026.

The Supervisory Board has appointed Prof. Dr.-Ing. Tomas Smetana (51) to the Management Board of Festo Management SE. He will join the family-owned company as the new Board Member for Research and Development as of May 1, 2026.

With Professor Smetana, the family-owned company Festo has been able to recruit a highly recognized and internationally well-connected leader for the position of Chief Technology Officer (CTO).

As the new Board Member for Research and Development, Professor Smetana will be responsible for Corporate Research and Innovation, Corporate Product Development, Corporate Software Development as well as the Business Units Electric Automation, Process Automation and LifeTech.

Professor Smetana studied mechanical engineering at the Technical University of Prague, earned his doctorate in mechanical engineering at Chemnitz University of Technology, and has a professorship at Shanghai University since 2022. He began his career in 2001 at Schaeffler, where he has held various management positions for 22 years, including Head of Development for eMobility, CTO Asia Pacific, Global CTO of the Industrial Division, and Senior Vice President of Innovation at the Schaeffler Group. From 2023, he was CTO at the ebm-papst Group, where he was responsible for global research and development at the innovation leader in air and heat technology.

Professor Smetana will further increase Festo's competitiveness thanks to his professional expertise in technology and innovation management, in the design of international R&D organizations and efficient development processes. With his in-depth experience in digital transformation, his pronounced customer proximity and his in-depth knowledge of the Asian growth markets, he will make a decisive contribution to the necessary further development of our family-owned company.

Thomas Böck, Chairman of the Management Board of Festo: "On behalf of the company, I am very pleased to welcome Professor Smetana as our new CTO. We look forward to a trusting and successful collaboration and wish him good luck and lasting success in his new role."

Press Images

04. March 2026

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Tomas Smetana, Member of the Management Board Research and Development, Festo SE & Co. KG

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Tomas Smetana will become the new Member of the Management Board for Research and Development at Festo from 1 May 2026.

About Festo

Festo is a global player and an independent family-owned company with headquarters in Esslingen am Neckar, Germany. Festo has set standards in industrial automation technology and technical education ever since its establishment, thereby making a contribution to sustainable development of the environment, the economy and society. The company supplies pneumatic and electrical automation technology to 300,000 customers of factory and process automation in over 35 industries. Digitalization, AI and the LifeTech sector with medical technology and laboratory automation are becoming increasingly important. The products and services are available in 176 countries. With about 20,600 employees in over 250 branch offices in around 60 countries worldwide, Festo achieved a turnover of around €3.45 billion in 2024. More than 8% of this turnover is invested in research and development. In this learning company, 1.5 % of turnover is invested in basic and further training. Festo Didactic SE is a leading provider of technical education and training and offers its customers worldwide comprehensive digital and physical learning solutions in the industrial environment.