The Kühne Foundation continues its long-standing partnership as a Main Sponsor of the Salzburg Festival and Project Sponsor of the Young Singers Project, extending its sponsorship through 2030



The participants of the 2026 Young Singers Project with Festival President Kristina Hammer, Executive Director Lukas Crepaz, the Manager of the Young Singers Project, Evamaria Wieser, and the YSP Production Manager Laura Nicorescu. The Kühne Foundation has supported the young artist programme since 2013 and has now extended its support through 2030. © SF/Günter Freund

(SF, 17 November 2026) The Kühne Foundation has made an early decision to extend its support of the Salzburg Festival for another three years, through 2030. The Foundation thereby confirms its long-term support for the Salzburg Festival as a Main Sponsor, while also pursuing its special focus of championing young artists through the Young Singers Project.

The Kühne Foundation and the Salzburg Festival have shared many years of partnership: since 2013, the Foundation has underwritten the Young Singers Project; in 2019, it joined the Salzburg Festival's Main Sponsors. The main focus of its sponsorship has remained the support for young vocalists on their way to an international career.

The Young Singers Project, for which more than 800 vocalists apply every year, offers selected young talents an intense artistic education during the Festival summer, along with immediate insights into the workings of a professional festival. In addition to vocal training, repertoire expansion, stage work

and song interpretation, the participants work with renowned Festival artists. Some also appear in the Salzburg Festival's opera productions. Their joint final concert at the Haus für Mozart toward the end of the Festival is often an important step on the path to a promising career.

"The Kühne Foundation has been a special partner to the Salzburg Festival for many years. This relationship was marked essentially by the personal interest the founder Klaus-Michael Kühne and his wife Christine Kühne took in the Festival's mission. The fact that the collaboration will continue after Klaus-Michael Kühne's death is a sign of particularly high esteem and a commitment to our joint future. As a Main Sponsor, the Kühne Foundation makes a major and lasting contribution to the Festival's artistic work, while also supporting the nurturing of young vocalists through the Young Singers Project," Festival President Dr. Kristina Hammer expresses the institution's gratitude.

"Our founder, Klaus-Michael Kühne, had a close personal relationship with the Salzburg Festival for many years, taking great personal interest in this partnership. He was particularly interested in supporting young artists. Continuing in our role as a Main Sponsor, therefore, is an extension of these many years of friendship. By underwriting the Young Singers Project, we want to give young vocalists important development opportunities on their way to international careers," says Dr. Thomas Staehelin, President of the Kühne Foundation.

The charitable Kühne Foundation is headquartered in Schindellegi, Switzerland, and was founded by the Kühne family in 1976. The Kühne Foundation focuses on logistics, medicine, culture and climate. Classical music projects are the mainstay of the Kühne Foundation's cultural philanthropy. It supports a number of renowned festivals and leading opera houses and concert halls in Europe, runs the "Kühne Academy – The Future of Musical Theatre" and plans to donate a new opera house to the City of Hamburg.

The continuation of the partnership is dedicated to the memory of Klaus-Michael Kühne, who died at the age of 89 in August 2026. For many years, he had a close personal relationship with the Salzburg Festival. Together with his wife, Christine Kühne, he followed the development of the Young Singers Project in particular, championing young artists. This friendship developed into a partnership that now goes far beyond support for one individual project. The Salzburg Festival is profoundly grateful to Klaus-Michael Kühne for his many years of trust, his personal affection and his lasting contributions to the arts and the next generation of artists.

Press photographs of the Young Singers Project can be found here:
https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/photos/young-singers-project-3