

PRESS RELEASE

THE INTERNATIONAL MARTIN LUTHER FOUNDATION

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Niels Due Jensen receives LutherRose 2016

The International Martin Luther Foundation honours Danish businessman

On 12th November 2016 **Niels Due Jensen**, chairman of the Poul Due Jensen Foundation, was awarded the **LutherRose 2016 for social responsibility and Entrepreneurial Courage** in the Prinzenpalais of the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen.

Directly following the 9th LutherConference the International Martin Luther Foundation (IMLS) honoured **Niels Due Jensen** as *“an impressive personality and successful businessman, who in his professional and private life embodies the reforming qualities of Martin Luther”* During his long-term tenure as chairman of Grundfos he developed this pump-manufacturing company into a global actor in the struggle to provide clean drinking water for everyone in the world.

His wife **Minna Due Jensen** accepted the award on behalf of her husband. She and her son **Poul Due Jensen**, the Group Executive Vice President of Grundfos, spoke clear and moving words of thanks.

At the moment **Niels Due Jensen** is on the road to recovery following an operation. For this reason he was not able to participate personally in the LutherConference 2016. For him Luther’s message is still relevant today, he stated *“Luther’s message to us is to make a positive difference to each other every day – in private life as well as in business. For me, personally, it has been an important task in life to ensure that the Grundfos values and business ethics, founded in a Christian worldview, are not lost in the global fight for market share. Being selected to receive the LutherRose 2016 is therefore a great honour, which I really appreciate.”*

In his laudation **Karsten Dybvad**, the CEO of the Confederation of Danish Industry, praised the awardee: *“He has certainly played a key role in making CSR mainstream in the Danish business community and been a pioneer when it comes to corporate societal thinking.”*

In her commemorative speech on the theme “Luther, Marx and the Consequences. The Reformation and the modern welfare state” the EU commissioner for competition, **Margrethe Vestager** said about Luther and his influence on present day Europe: *“Our belief in fairness and equality, in respect for diversity and for the individual, can help us to get through even the darkest times (...). But that will only happen if we’re willing to stand up and be counted. Not just to hold these values, but to live them. To nail our theses to the church door, and say: we stand for a Europe that is for everyone.”*

This year the theme for the panel discussion was “Luther State Socialism? Chances and risks of present day social politics in Denmark and Europe” and it was hosted by **Michael J. Inacker**, the chairman of the IMLS executive board. The panel included the economic journalist of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, **Heike Göbel**, the ethicist **Prof. Dr. Svend Andersen** from the University of Aarhus, the economist **Prof. Dr. Niels Kærgaard** from the University of Copenhagen and **Jakob Funk Kirkegaard** from the Peterson Institute for International Economics, Washington (DC).



Niels Due Jensen, born 1943, completed his apprenticeship as a skilled machinist in 1964. Following his graduation with a degree in mechanical engineering from Aarhus Technical College in 1971, he worked for Grundfos and joined the company's management in 1977. From 1980 to 2003 he served as Group CEO of Grundfos and from 2003 to 2011 as Group Chairman of Grundfos, followed by 5 years as an ordinary board member until he retired from the holding board this April, after almost four decades of activity in senior management. Niels Due Jensen, however, continues as

Chairman of the majority owner of Grundfos – the Poul Due Jensen Foundation – giving full attention to the active ownership of Grundfos.

Niels Due Jensen is considered a keen debater, who goes his own way and is not afraid to speak his own mind, even in public.

Grundfos was established in 1945 in Bjerringbro by Poul Due Jensen, the father of Niels Due Jensen. Initially the business was called Bjerringbro Pressestøberi og Maskinfabrik but in 1967 the name was changed to Grundfos. The company is one of the leading manufacturers of pumps and pumping systems worldwide. Grundfos currently employs over 18,000 people in 55 countries and is one of the ten largest companies in Denmark by turnover. The ideals of Grundfos include *responsible actions, in business as well as in society*.

In order to secure the future of the company the **Poul Due Jensen Foundation** was established in 1975. The foundation is the majority shareholder and holds 88 % of the shares in Grundfos Holding A/S.

The German **Niels Due Jensen Foundation** was created in 2010 to mark the occasion of the 50th jubilee of the founding of the two German subsidiaries. The aim of this non-profit-making organisation is to support projects that assist people through training to become self-sufficient.

Photo: thepoulduejensenfoundation.com

The *LutherRose* was presented on 12th November 2016 directly following on from the 9th LutherConference on the future of business and society organised by the IMLS. This year marked the ninth time that the prize had been awarded. The previous prize holders are Dr. Heinz Horst Deichmann (2008), Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr.-Ing. h. c. Hans Peter Keitel (2009), Gabriela Grillo (2010), Dr. Dirk Ippen (2011) Jon Baumhauer (2012), Dr. Peter Gauweiler (2013) Dietrich Pestalozzi (2014) and last year Ulla Unseld-Berkéwicz (2015).



The prize itself is a quality reproduction based on a pane from the medieval stained glass windows (from about 1310) of St Augustine's church in Erfurt. Martin Luther lived as a monk at St Augustine's monastery in Erfurt from 17th July 1505 until autumn 1511. He would have had this window in front of him each time he prayed, which would have been at least seven times every day and was the inspiration for his coat-of-arms. It portrays a rose between two lions. On 8th July 1530 Martin Luther described this rose as "a sign of my theology" and provided it with an impressive, meditative explanation. Henceforth he used it as his seal for documents. Since then the Luther-Rose has become one of the important symbols of international Evangelical-Lutheran Christianity.

The IMLS is grateful to the German Savings Banks Association (DSGV), which has sponsored this year's conference and award ceremony.

The *Internationale Martin Luther Stiftung* is registered in Eisenach and was founded on 10th November 2007 in Wittenberg. Its aims are to develop the basic impulses of the Reformation into a topic-related and outcome-oriented dialogue between Church, business, academia and politics, in order to contribute to the development of a responsible and efficient business and civil society. It supports people, groups, ideas and initiatives that promote Christian values and ethical business practices based on the Reforming tradition and that use their talents for the general good.

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