

**DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Director

6 December 2023

Welcome address given by Government Councillor Dieter Egli at the opening of the dsm-firmenich campus in Kaiseraugst, 6 December 2023

Dear Mr De Vreeze, dear Mr Gebhard, dear Mrs Reisinger, dear Mayor of Kaiseraugst Mrs Moser, dsm-firmenich employees, guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to be celebrating the opening of the new science & research hub here in Kaiseraugst with you today and to have the pleasure of welcoming you on behalf of the Cantonal Government of Aargau.

This occasion marks a reunion for me. I have already stood here once before. At that time, I had the honour of attending the ground-breaking ceremony in March 2021, with a spade in my hand and a helmet on my head. We had to keep our distance because we were still in the clutches of the pandemic. Today, two-and-a-half years later, we are able to exchange ideas freely once again. And you have transformed what was once a construction pit into an attractive headquarter site.

Very close by, the Romans inhabited the important settlement of Augusta Raurica. They used to say that you want for nothing if you have a beautiful garden and a library. I believe that you are living up to this dictum in the design of your science & research hub. Because in the renderings, it looks very much like a garden. And when spring returns, the trees and plants outside will sprout and blossom again. It's unlikely that you will have an actual library here. Yet you are in fact a library – thanks to all the knowledge from the most diverse minds brought together here.

In any case, today's inauguration ceremony will not only light up the new hub, but also put a smile on the faces of everyone involved. Some of you will be relieved that the construction project has been successfully completed. Others among you will be looking forward to your new workplace.

I'm afraid the move will also be very stressful for the 200 employees – but I'm sure it will all be worth it. Their new workplace is not only very attractive, but above all functional. Kaiseraugst is also a highly desirable location. It's a place with a history. But you are also at the centre of a future-oriented life science cluster. Not far from here, a new area is currently being developed: the Sisslerfeld. The Canton and its four municipalities are developing an important workplace location where more innovative companies will be able to settle in the future. Companies that will be researching the topics of the future: nutrition, health and sustainability.

These are the very themes on which dsm-firmenich concentrates. The issues on which your company focuses are important to people all over the world. Nutrition is one of the most basic needs – for humans and animals. It therefore goes without saying that research in this area is vital. In today's world, responsible, sustainable behaviour is also essential. This is becoming increasingly important in view of climate change and the scarcity of resources, which is manifesting itself in many ways.

I know that sustainability is part of dsm-firmenich's corporate philosophy and that the company always adopts an innovative approach in this respect.

It is also fitting that as a company, you have taken a bold step by merging DSM and Firmenich.

Bringing two companies together is not an easy task. Different cultures combine and have to familiarise themselves with each other. New structures, new line managers – there will be many changes afoot.

And even if things don't always go as well as you would like and the environment is difficult: I am convinced that this step will increase your appeal; with 30,000 employees worldwide in almost 60 countries, you are and will stay one of the top players in the life sciences sector.

As Minister of Economic Affairs, I am of course delighted that dsm-firmenich has committed itself to establishing its Swiss headquarters in Kaiseraugst. The fact that you are extending your presence in Aargau sends a strong signal and is a commitment to our canton as a location. I would like to thank you very much for the confidence you have placed in us. I also see this as a sign that our location offers attractive conditions. We are proud that you recognise and appreciate the advantages that Aargau offers as a business location.

Our canton invests a great deal in providing good conditions for innovative companies such as yours. All our employees are focused on this, and we invest all our resources in achieving it.

That means:

We'll be with you every step of the way. Just as you have made a commitment to Aargau, you can also count on us – on our government, which will continue to promote this location, and of course on the municipality.

I'm sure you will also have experienced this while the hub was being built.

At the end, let me refer to our shared objective in the language used by the Romans, who worked here 2,000 years ago and had a positive influence on the region: *per aspera ad astra* – reach for the stars in adversity. Just as we overcame the pandemic together, we are trying to help you to remove any obstacles – not Roman, of course, but those of our times. And of course, not all of them – after all, corporate responsibility involves bringing ground-breaking innovations to market and operating in an economically viable manner. That is what you must do. And I'm convinced that you are capable of doing so.

I wish you all the best and every success. Many thanks for the pleasant cooperation. Let's reach for the stars in the next years – together.

Thank you very much!