

## PRESS RELEASE

# Artificial intelligence for the textiles industry: APEX Ventures, Bayern Kapital and HTGF invest in robotics start-up sewts

**Munich / Bonn, Germany; Vienna, Austria; May 4, 2021 – The German robotics start-up sewts successfully completed a seven-figure financing round. sewts develops a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution, which enables industrial businesses to automate processes, during which easily deformable materials are processed, for example textiles or foils. Initially, the technology is to be used in industrial laundry lines, but in the long term, cross-sector applications for the textile industry and the high-tech sector are planned as well. APEX Ventures, Bayern Kapital and High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF) participated in the financing round, while the existing investor Initiative for Industrial Innovators along with a consortium of experienced business angels will also reinvest.**

A range of robotics- and AI-based solutions for the handling of solid, shape-retaining raw materials such as metals already exist to support processes in the producing and processing industries. The automation of processes, during which easily deformable materials are processed, still poses enormous challenges for computers and image processing programs however, because the demands on required computing resources are often too high. Consequently, available robots and gripping systems can currently perform processes such as gripping a towel or a piece of clothing, which are simple tasks for humans, only inadequately.

Munich-based sewts GmbH, founded in 2019, with a staff of 20 as of now, has developed an innovative controlling and image processing software that enables robots to predict the behavior of easily deformable materials during gripping processes in real time, based on smart algorithms developed in-house at sewts. At the core of the technology lies a unique approach to generating artificial training data for AI, which is based on high-precision “finite elements method” (FEM) simulations. This novel approach allows sewts to automate a wide range of industrial processes that were previously impossible from a technical standpoint – such as the handling of textiles or carbon fiber products and semi-finished products.

### **A wide range of possible fields of application**

This technology benefits, for example, industrial laundry lines: Individual steps, such as sorting dirty laundry or putting it into folding machines, still have to be performed manually. Many laundries struggle to find staff for these tasks. With the sewts technology, these steps can be automated via robot, increasing laundry line productivity by up to 100 percent in the long term and enabling laundries to allocate their staff more efficiently.

Potential areas of application for the innovative technology are being expanded constantly as well, opening up new production possibilities in the textile industry, for example in clothing production. In the long term, sewts founders Alexander Bley, Tim Doerks and Till Rickert also aim to include other production sectors, for example, foil and foam processing. The funds raised with the financing round are to be invested in the further development of their software into a series product, the expansion of the development team as well as the acquisition of medium- and long-term integration and distribution partners.

“We are very pleased to have several financially strong and technologically savvy investors on board for our disruptive technology. Their cross-industry market expertise will be a great help to us on our way to series production”, says sewts Co-Founder and Co-Managing Director Alexander Bley.

“In particular, the sewts team’s combination of high professional expertise, technical creativity, ability to quickly devise fields of application in industrial production sectors and derive their economic impact have convinced us from the start”, says Dr. Wolfgang Neubert, Partner at APEX Ventures.

“sewts has the potential to significantly simplify previously non-automatable processes in a wide range of industries – a scalable technology from which many companies could benefit, especially in Germany as an industrial hotspot, but also beyond. sewts is an exciting innovation project in the field of robotics that we are happy to support during its future growth journey”, says Dr. Georg Ried, Managing Director at Bayern Kapital.

“With deep learning algorithms, sewts enables the effective handling of textiles via industrial robots for the first time. Due to the company’s scalable SaaS business model, we see high potential for addressing a wide range of users and look forward to supporting them in the future”, says Johannes Weber, Investment Manager at HTGF.

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#### About sewts:

Founded in 2019 and based in Munich, sewts GmbH provides cutting-edge perception software, pushing the boundaries of robotics in processing of easily deformable materials. sewts has developed and demonstrated a unique technology that uses high-precision finite element method (FEM) simulations to efficiently train machine learning algorithms. The intelligent software solution enables countless applications in industrial automation like the handling of textiles in industrial laundries or the manufacturing of garment. sewts is backed by APEX Ventures, Bayern Kapital, High-Tech Gründerfonds, UnternehmerTUM Initiative for Industrial Innovators and a couple of highly experienced business angels.

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#### About APEX Ventures:

APEX Ventures is a Europe based Venture Capital Firm investing into deep-tech start-ups with a focus on unique and defensible intellectual property and above-average market potential. APEX funds have completed numerous investments in Europe and in the U.S., among others in the fields of A.I. for medical applications, quantum and laser technologies, autonomous mobility, computer vision, as well as digital forensics. APEX Ventures closely supports the founding teams in their go-to-market approaches to help accelerate international growth. To identify talented teams and support their ideas at an early stage, APEX Ventures closely works with academic institutions, entrepreneurship programs and other international VC partners.

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#### About Bayern Kapital:

Bayern Kapital GmbH, based in Landshut, Germany, was founded as an initiative of the Bavarian government in 1995. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bavarian LfA Förderbank. As the venture capital organisation of the Free State of Bavaria, Bayern Kapital provides equity capital financing for the founders of young innovative technology companies in Bavaria. Presently, Bayern Kapital manages twelve investment funds with a total volume of around EUR 500 million. So far, it has invested roughly EUR 350 million in about 290 innovative technology companies in various sectors including life sciences, software & IT, medical technology, materials and new materials, nanotechnology and environmental technology. In this way, more than 8,000 long-term jobs in sustainable companies have been created in Bavaria.

For further information, please visit [www.bayernkapital.de/en/](http://www.bayernkapital.de/en/).

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#### About High-Tech Gründerfonds:

High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF) is a seed investor that finances high-potential, tech-driven start-ups. With around EUR 900 million in total investment volume across three funds and an international network of partners, HTGF has already helped forge more than 600 start-ups since 2005. Driven by their expertise, entrepreneurial spirit and passion, its team of experienced investment managers and startup experts help guide the development of young companies. HTGF's focus is on high-tech start-ups in the fields of digital tech, industrial technology, life sciences, chemistry and related business areas. To date, external investors have injected almost EUR 3 billion into the HTGF portfolio via more than 1,700 follow-on financing rounds. HTGF has also successfully sold interests in more than 120 companies.

Investors in the public-private partnership include the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy, KfW Capital, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and 32 companies: The Fund Investors.

[www.htgf.de/en](http://www.htgf.de/en)

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#### About Initiative for Industrial Innovators:

The Initiative for Industrial Innovators is a cross-border financing initiative that funds disruptive, deep-tech teams and early-stage startups via fast funding instruments. It is backed by – amongst others – the European Investment Fund/ InnovFinEquity, with the financial backing of the European Union under Horizon 2020 Financial Instruments and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) set up under the Investment Plan for Europe. The purpose of EFSI is to help support financing and implementing productive investments in the European Union and to ensure increased access to finance for startups and other SMEs.



[www.industrialinnovators.eu](http://www.industrialinnovators.eu)

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