

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Bertelsmann Supports Jewish Museum Berlin in Large-Scale Digitization Project**

- **€120,000 donated for digitization of publishing bequests**
- **Valuable sources on the history of Jewish families in and from Germany to be made accessible online worldwide.**

Berlin, September 9, 2024 – Bertelsmann is providing support to the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB) in digitizing its archives so that they can be made available online to an interested global audience. Over three years, from 2024 to 2026, the international media, services, and education company will donate €40,000 each year to the JMB to enable the digitization of publishing and publisher estates. This is part of a comprehensive initiative by the JMB to digitize a total of around 1,800 family estates in their archives. They were preserved through times of persecution and emigration and donated by descendants from all over the world. These valuable sources provide unique insights into more than 250 years of the history of Jewish families in and from Germany. Some of them extend into the present day. Other German companies and foundations are also supporting this large-scale digitization project by the renowned JMB as it strives to fulfill its aspiration to be a central platform for Jewish life in Germany in the digital space as well.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe commented: “Bertelsmann is very pleased to support the important work of the Jewish Museum Berlin. The JMB is one of the most outstanding and most-visited institutions in the German and European museum landscape. And it is invaluable for research, archiving, and presenting Jewish life in our country. Bertelsmann is more than happy to contribute to this endeavor with its donation, especially since our company, its history, and its successes over almost 200 years are closely linked to publishers and authors. We can appreciate the creative and historical value of the publisher and publishing estates that the JMB will soon make available worldwide in digital form, and we look forward to seeing them online.”

JMB Director Hetty Berg is pleased with the progress and support: “The digitization of archival materials and collection objects is one of the focal points of the transformation to digital at the JMB. In the present digitization project of the family estates, we expect to have about 500,000 digital items which we will then legally review for publication and make available online in 2026. The digitization of the photographs, artworks, documents and other objects will not only make them more accessible, it also means that we will have back-up copies in the future. We are preserving the collections and their contexts for future generations. The family collections bear witness to Jewish life – and at the same time to life in society as a whole, including exclusion, persecution, destruction, exile, and new beginnings. Without the generous support of a number of donors, this milestone would not have been possible. I am delighted that Bertelsmann is helping us to make primary sources on the history of Jewish authors and publishers available online in the form of digitized material.”

## **About Bertelsmann**

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company with more than 80,000 employees that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company generated revenues of €20.2 billion in the 2023 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

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## **Bertelsmann online**



## Enquiries:

### **Bertelsmann SE & Co. KGaA**

Markus Harbaum

Head of Communications Content Team

Press Spokesperson

Phone: +49 5241 80-24 66

[markus.harbaum@bertelsmann.de](mailto:markus.harbaum@bertelsmann.de)