

AUTOMOTIVE

## Audi Environmental Foundation funds ecoconscious research project

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*The announcement fits Audi's track record of implementing innovative approaches to philanthropic pursuits. Image credit: Audi AG*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

German automaker Audi is interested in finding fresh ways to recover raw materials.

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As a result, the company's Environmental Foundation is funding research into recycling solutions for high-tech metals. Working with the Freiberg University of Mining and Technology to save electronic waste from landfills, the collaborative project aims to keep valuable materials circulating, boosting Audi's innovative approach to philanthropic pursuits.

"Raw materials are limited," said Dr. Rüdiger Recknagel, director of the [Audi Environmental Foundation](#), in a statement.

"That is why methods of conserving them are all the more important especially in large quantities that are useful to industry," Dr. Recknagel said. "This process is not only a further scientific contribution to establishing resource cycles, [but] it also links traditional environmentalism with innovative technologies, in keeping with our Greenovation approach."

Substantive saves

Audi's philanthropic unit will fund the research initiative through 2024, furthering the brand's efforts to raise awareness for how raw materials are wasted while making lab advancements that encourage conservation.

As part of the arrangement, experts at the Freiberg University of Mining and Technology are developing a selective extraction technique to pick out elements from incinerated waste, such as gallium, indium and tin, all of which are commonly used in photovoltaics, fiber optics, semiconductors, electronic devices, cables, chargers, vehicles and other metal-based essentials.

As demand for these items continues to climb, the finite, resource-intensive nature of extraction that accompanies these materials stay stagnant, exacerbating environmental impact.



*The project is running for three years, with the Audi Environmental Foundation funding it until 2024. Image credit: Audi AG*

Seeking to get involved, Audi's funding focuses on responsible recycling tactics as, currently, electronic waste are rarely repurposed after purchase.

The university's research is aimed at extending the life cycle of these devices, implementing circular systems to ease reliance on mining in the process.

Custom-made tweezers for metal ions are being created at the Freiberg University of Mining and Technology's laboratory, for instance. The apparatus will be able to pick out gallium, tin and indium from fly ash, and recover what would have been waste.

The helpful introductions are set to continue with Audi's support.

The automaker is not shy about platforming visions of a sustainable tomorrow, running a digital narrative ahead of an electric vehicle reveal in November 2022 ([see story](#)), matching outreach with an augmented reality push launched thereafter ([see story](#)).

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