



Press release

Antwerp achieves revolution in diamond polishing process

Antwerp, June 18 2018 - The Scientific and Technological Research Center for Diamonds (WTOCD) is the collective research center of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC), the umbrella organization for the Antwerp diamond industry. The WTOCD has developed a revolutionary technology that fully automates the diamond polishing process. This technology fundamentally transforms that process, which has not changed since the 15th century.

In 1456, Lodewijck Van Bercken, a 15th-century jeweler and diamond cutter in Antwerp, discovered that diamond could be polished with diamond. Since then, all diamonds - regardless how small - have largely been polished by hand. This is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process, which has taken place in Antwerp with declining frequency due to the comparatively high wages paid to laborers.

After more than ten years of research, the WTOCD has succeeded in developing a technology that fully automates the polishing process. As a result, diamond can be polished 10 to 20 times faster than by hand. Thanks to this technology, a stone that would typically consume an entire day can now be polished in one and a half hours.

Ari Epstein, CEO of the AWDC: "This discovery fundamentally changes the diamond polishing process. Today's wages simply make it too expensive to conduct this labor-intensive job in our country. FENIX puts an end to this, and can therefore be a real game-changer for the Antwerp diamond industry."

In addition to being fast, FENIX is also extremely accurate and revolutionary in the way it polishes diamond. Yves Kerremans, CEO of the WTOCD: "Each diamond has a specific grain, a crystal orientation that has to be taken into account during the polishing process. This grain is in part the reason that diamond polishing is such a labor-intensive process. FENIX is the first technology that makes grain independent polishing possible, and which furthermore increases the speed of the polishing process by a factor of 10 to 20."

FENIX is currently undergoing thorough testing by Antwerp diamond companies. Starting in September, the first machines utilizing this technology invented in Antwerp will become operational.

Download a sneak preview of the Fenix using this [link](#).

The **Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC)**, coordinates and officially represents the Antwerp diamond industry, the global leader in the diamond trade. In this role, AWDC promotes the entire diamond industry at home and abroad. AWDC is also recognized internationally as the point of contact, spokesperson and intermediary for the entire Belgian diamond community.

Diamonds love Antwerp

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84% of all rough diamonds and 50% of all polished diamonds pass through Antwerp. Diamonds represent 5% of the total Belgian exports and 15% of all Belgian exports outside the EU, making diamonds the most important export product outside the EU.

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