



# VAA — FROM THE START

YOUR PROFESSIONAL COMPANION

**VAA** *Chemistry Managers*

## **EDITORIAL**

The chemical and pharmaceutical industry in Germany has over 150 years of history. A constructive dialogue between the parties to collective agreements is an important part of this tradition: in other words, good industrial relations. Since 1919, the VAA has represented the particular interests of employed academics and executives. Good working relationships require fairness, stability and future prospects – we aim to provide these for our members. This is our main mission, especially with today's globalisation, fast pace of life and the uncertainty caused by crises in the economy, politics and society. We advocate decisively and firmly for the rights and interests of our members – in relation to pay and other employment conditions, on employment law and by shaping public and political opinion. Why not have a look at the services we provide, and see how they could benefit you? We'd love to have you as a member. The VAA has a single mission, with many different facets.

From our office in Cologne, experts with proven expertise in their particular domain provide services and advice. VAA members volunteer on over 170 works groups within companies in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, advocating for their colleagues' rights, requirements and interests. We highlight irregularities and work towards solutions, covering issues such as managing diversity and leadership culture. Our skilled lawyers will act for you in your individual case. In other words, we're here for you. We're here when you need us – locally with our works groups in your company, and centrally at our general office in Cologne or the office in Berlin. We are a strong community, and it's not only our members who benefit: we support one another. We provide a link between employee representatives and company management, working actively for a good corporate culture and for our members' career development. Why not have a look – it will be worth your while.

*» We represent the rights and interests of our members so they can work successfully and effectively for their companies as professionals and managers.«*

*1st Chairwoman of the VAA*



**» DR. BIRGIT  
SCHWAB**

*» We actively and concretely support you in shaping the change of the working world in your companies.«*

*Managing Director of VAA*



**» STEPHAN  
GILOW**



A close-up photograph of a woman with short brown hair and black-rimmed glasses, looking slightly to the right. She is wearing a white top. In the background, two other people are visible but out of focus: a man in a dark suit and a woman in a white top. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an indoor setting with large windows.

**VAA —**  
*WHO WE ARE*  
*WHAT WE DO*  
*YOUR INTERESTS*



# WHO WE ARE

The VAA is Germany's largest association for managers and executives. We represent the interests of employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements (non-tariff employees) and executive employees, as well as highly qualified specialists and young academics in the chemical and pharmaceuticals industry and related sectors. We are a lobby group and a trade union, and advocate on your behalf for

appropriate recognition for the work you do. We provide protection and advice through our comprehensive legal service. We use our networks in the economy, research community, politics and society to benefit all our members. We provide a link between employee representatives and company management, and will support you throughout your career. VAA — from the start.

## WHAT WE DO

*Provide information, legal consultancy, training and development.*

*Represent and implement the interests of employees, both within and outside the standard salary scale.*

*Advocate within your company, with representatives on the works council and executive committee.*

*Advise on development plans, job applications and salary discussions.*

*Network, make contacts and keep you in touch.*

*Represent your political and legal interests within the company.*

*Advocate for your interests in politics and wider society.*

*Cooperate on consultancy and service provision (about tax, pensions, careers, finance, coaching and much more), and secure exclusive offers for VAA members (cars, fashion, leisure, culture, home, travel, technology and much more).*

## WHO CAN JOIN?

➔ NON-TARIFF EMPLOYEES  
AND EXECUTIVES

➔ EARLY-CAREER EMPLOYEES  
WITH A DEGREE

➔ HIGHLY QUALIFIED  
SPECIALISTS

➔ STUDENTS AND PHD  
CANDIDATES IN ALL  
DISCIPLINES



## OUR SERVICES

There are two main points of contact for our members: the VAA offices in Cologne and Berlin. Within individual companies there are also local works groups run by VAA members. The VAA is a community which thrives on close cooperation between our offices and works groups.

Staff at our offices give members direct support with a range of consultancy and other services, and forge ahead with our association's work in society and politics.



### **TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

The VAA provides training at regular seminars, meetings and conferences so its members can keep up to date with their management knowledge and expertise. The VAA's own Institute of Management, FKI, also offers exclusive meetings for all members, as well as seminars and training for representatives on works councils and finance committees, executive committees and supervisory boards. This helps members explore the next steps for them, both personally and professionally.

### **LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

Legal claims and pitfalls can arise at any stage of our careers. The VAA advises and represents its members as they face these challenges. We check contracts, negotiate with employers, act in legal cases and provide extraordinarily comprehensive legal protection. From advice over the phone to representation in court, our experts provide independent, objective legal counsel – with a particular insight into the structures and characteristics of your company.

### **PROVIDING INFORMATION**

The VAA provides its members with a wide variety of specialist and industry knowledge, in the form of practical guides and informative documents. These cover not only detailed legal issues, but also career paths and statistics. The VAA regularly conducts its own surveys on issues such as pay progression, equality of opportunity and the prevailing mood in the sector. Its publications like the VAA magazine, newsletter and yearbook also provide members with industry information. We know what you need to know.

## OUR SERVICES

Our VAA volunteer representatives in the works groups and regional groups are experienced, close at hand, and can be contacted about any professional situation. They are deeply embedded in the company, know their way around it and are happy to share their experience with other VAA members. They will be your advocates on a variety of in-house committees such as the works council and executive committee. They

also help coordinate networking, keeping in touch and making contacts. On the subject of professional networks – right from the start, the VAA helps its members to develop and maintain contacts throughout their careers. This ranges from the VAA applications network to our exclusive events and travel for retirees – we make sure you're always in touch with people who will shape your future.



### **BENEFITS OF A COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

We are a recognised trade union, and as such we have concluded collective agreements on salary with the Federal Employers' Association for Chemistry (BAVC) in relation to employees with a higher education qualification in science or technology. These are the Framework Collective Agreement for University Graduates and the Collective Agreement on Minimum Annual Salaries for University Graduates in the Chemical Industry.

### **WORK ON CORPORATE COMMITTEES**

In many companies, VAA members work on official committees such as the executive committee and works council, representing the interests of their colleagues. They participate on the employee side in supervisory boards which have co-determination, monitoring and advising their company's board and senior management. These committees are where many of the ground rules are laid on local working conditions, in conjunction with the employer. Staff at the VAA offices in Cologne and Berlin provide support, advice and training for these members on all legal and company policy matters, help to organise plenary sessions of the executive committees, contribute to workforce meetings and facilitate exchanges of views throughout the company. This is one way in which we actively help to protect your interests within your company.



## YOUR BENEFITS

As your trade union and professional organisation, we're always exactly where you need us, whether you require the services of a VAA office, or backup from your local VAA works group. We make sure that you need never be alone, whatever challenge you're facing. Our members benefit from our representation many times over.



In doing so, we are not only safeguarding your own personal interests, we are also actively contributing to a pleasant and productive working climate throughout the company. Membership represents excellent value for money and is fully tax deductible in Germany. We are the ideal partner to protect and develop your professional career.



### PERSONAL BENEFITS

- › *Quick legal information, direct legal advice and legal protection*
- › *Information on all aspects of professional life, for example our salary check*
- › *Cross-company contacts*
- › *Access to the VAA applications network*
- › *Attractive cooperation opportunities*
- › *Tax and investment advice on favourable terms*



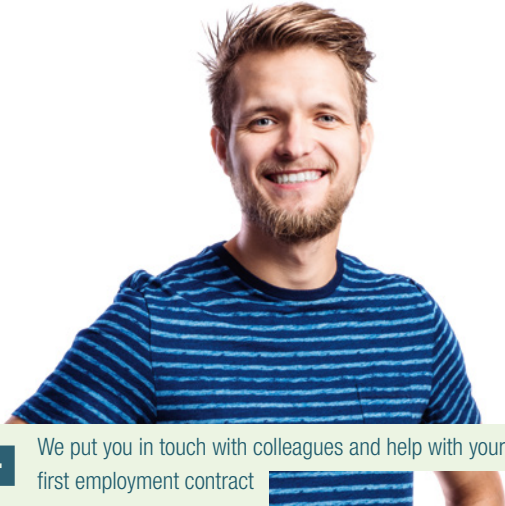
### COLLECTIVE BENEFITS

- › *Advocacy within your company, lobbying politics and wider society*
- › *Improved income through collective salary agreements*
- › *Better working conditions for all employees*
- › *Representation on the works council and executive committee can influence negotiations and company regulations*



## STUDY & CAREER ENTRY

**” I WAS ABLE TO ACCESS A BRILLIANT NETWORK THROUGH THE VAA, EVEN WHILE I WAS STILL A STUDENT. THE WAY THE UNION IS ORGANISED INTO WORKS GROUPS LETS ME COMMUNICATE WITH COLLEAGUES AND MADE IT EASIER FOR ME TO GET STARTED AND FIND MY FEET.**



We put you in touch with colleagues and help with your first employment contract



## NON-TARIFF CONTRACTS

**” THE VAA ALWAYS GIVES ME PROFESSIONAL LEGAL ADVICE WHEN I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT MY NON-TARIFF CONTRACT**



We support you on your way to a leadership role

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » Information about job profiles and prospects
- » Information events in conjunction with the Society of German Chemists (GDCh) with speakers from the profession and guided tours of companies in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries
- » Legal advice from your first employment contract
- » Negotiating minimum annual salaries from the 2nd year of employment (Collective Agreement on Minimum Annual Salaries) as a basis for future pay progression
- » Providing a VAA contact in every company

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » A first port of call for information within the company
- » Help finding contacts and forming a professional network
- » Reaching works agreements and agreements of the executive committee, for example on recruitment and salary systems

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » Legal advice on your new employment contract
- » Ensuring you progress quickly towards non-tariff status by reserving the right to this in your collective agreement
- » Establishing basic minimum working conditions and contractual conditions through collective agreements

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » Negotiating minimum margins above the pay scale
- » Advice on and help to shape the non-tariff salary system in your company
- » Help to shape working conditions for non-tariff employees in your company through works agreements, including on working time, performance management and rules on bonuses



## PROMOTION OR MOVING COMPANY

**” VAA ALWAYS GIVES ME QUICK, SOLID SUPPORT ON ALL ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT LAW.**



We will help develop your career prospects.

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » A salary check and advice on pay progression, thanks to the VAA income survey
- » Advice on references and new contracts
- » Training on current management topics
- » Advice on career prospects

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » Sourcing contacts to advise on long-term career planning and for different career stages
- » Advice on and help shaping company regulations on salary levels and bands, and factors in awarding bonuses
- » Advice on development plans, applications and salary discussions



## YOUR SPECIAL JOB SITUATION

**” THROUGHOUT MY PARENTAL LEAVE AND AFTERWARDS, THE VAA GAVE ME FRIENDLY ADVICE AND SUPPORT.**



We provide advice and represent you while you're on parental leave, working part time, posted abroad or on sick leave.

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » Personalised advice and representation – including in court – on employment and social law, for legal claims and for drafting contracts
- » Contacts in the company and abroad
- » Raising the political profile of issues (women in leadership positions, the debate around the rules governing the posting of workers abroad, and much more)

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » Exchanging information within your network and making contacts
- » Advice and support when you return to your work 'base' after parental leave, a post abroad or a long illness
- » Discussing and exchanging information within your network, making contacts to improve your career prospects when working part-time and during parental leave, and implementing equal pay





## APPOINTMENT AS EXECUTIVE

**” THE VAA PROVIDES ME WITH A VERY GOOD PLATFORM FOR ACTIVELY PROMOTING MY INTERESTS AS AN EXECUTIVE.**



We make your interests count.

### **SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES**

- » Legal advice and representation when drawing up contracts
- » Advice and support for the executives committees in companies
- » Addressing politically relevant issues for executives

### **SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY**

- » Maintaining your network and facilitating information sharing
- » Advice on agreements of the executive committee on salary levels and bands, bonuses and other additional benefits for executives
- » Representing your political interests within the company



## TERMINATION OR SEVERANCE AGREEMENT

**” THE VAA’S ADVICE AND REPRESENTATION MEANS THAT, IF THE WORST HAPPENS, I CAN RELY ON GETTING THE SEVERANCE PAY I AM DUE.**



We will help you smooth over bumps in your career path.

### **SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES**

- » Legal advice and representation in front of employment tribunals, for example in cases of warnings or notice of termination of employment, and drafting redundancy agreements and references (included in the membership fee)
- » Sourcing cooperation partners, including advisers on career prospects or optimising severance agreements from a tax perspective

### **SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY**

- » Negotiating with employers about socially responsible solutions, such as when restructuring and relocating parts of the company
- » Advising on and implementing internal redeployment instead of termination of employment or redundancy
- » Pointing out possible courses of action
- » Advice on negotiating individual solutions to avoid a legal dispute



## TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT

**” THE VAA WORKS TOWARDS A FLEXIBLE WORKING TIME MODEL, FROM EARLY CAREER TO RETIREMENT. THIS ALLOWED ME TO COMBINE MY JOB, CAREER AND FAMILY.**



We will help you shape your retirement from active employment.

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » Advice on drawing up contracts
- » An information network on the regulations as applicable to the chemical and pharmaceuticals industry

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » Negotiating early pension regulations which are beneficial and appropriate to your situation
- » Implementing attractive opportunities to shape long-term working time accounts, including for non-tariff and executive employees
- » Regulations on part-time working pre-retirement, as an alternative to official partial retirement



## RETIREMENT

**” THE VAA ALWAYS ADVOCATES FOR OCCUPATIONAL PENSIONS. THESE HAVE MANY ADVANTAGES OVER PURELY PRIVATELY FINANCED SYSTEMS.**



We help secure your pension rights and maintain the network.

### SERVICES OUR VAA OFFICE PROVIDES

- » Implementing patent claims and claims by retirees to develop their occupational pension
- » Advising works councils and executive committees on occupational pension regulations
- » Travel and events for retirees, so they can maintain their networks

### SERVICES OUR WORKS GROUPS AND COMPANY REPS PROVIDE LOCALLY

- » Establishing good occupational pension provision
- » A contact for information and maintaining your network
- » Participation in VAA works group meetings and events

## ***IN YOUR INTERESTS***

Effective advocacy for our members, and in the interests of all non-tariff employees, is at the heart of everything we do. The VAA excels at being represented within the company through its works groups, and exercises direct influence on co-determination throughout the company, through its representatives on works councils, executive committees and supervisory boards. Our office's expertise provides you with constant backup.

The VAA is a constant, trusted partner in the sector and among employers, be it with the German Federation of Chemical Employers' Associations (BAVC), the Mining, Chemicals and Energy Industry Union (IG BCE) or the Chemical Industry Association (VCI). The VAA office in Berlin is involved in developing major pieces of legislation. The VAA acts through its umbrella bodies (the ULA, FECCIA and CEC) to ensure its members' interests are pursued at national and European level.

Our partner association, the Association for Specialists and Managers (VFF), represents the interests of non-tariff and executive employees, as well as highly qualified specialists across all sectors outside the chemical industry. The VFF and VAA cooperate on a comprehensive, proven legal service which provides all VFF members with full access to skilled, experienced VAA lawyers.

In cooperation with the Society of German Chemists (GDCh), the VAA is involved in higher education and can thus help guarantee the quality of training our future managers receive. The VAA provides students, PhD candidates and graduates in scientific and technical disciplines with valuable information on employment opportunities and career paths in the chemical and pharmaceuticals industry and related sectors. It keeps in regular contact with other partners like the Marburger Bund and Vereinigung Cockpit.





# UMBRELLA BODIES – GOOD COVERAGE ACROSS EUROPE

The VAA works for its members even beyond the industry and outside national boundaries. Through the umbrella bodies ULA,

FECCIA and CEC we are represented at the table for all the major discussions of politics and society.



United Leaders  
Association



## ➤ ULA – UNITED LEADERS ASSOCIATION

ULA – United Leaders Association is a confederation of associations representing managers in the German economy. It represents its members' interests in employment, tax, social and educational policy. It lobbies government and parliament – both in Berlin and in Brussels. With 17 professional associations representing some 70,000 managers, ULA is the umbrella body representing the most managers in the German economy.

## ➤ FECCIA – THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF MANAGERIAL STAFF IN THE CHEMICAL AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES

The European Federation of Managerial Staff in the Chemical and Allied Industries, FECCIA, is the leading industrial relations organisation for managers in the chemical sector at European level. Through its national member organisations, FECCIA represents the interests of over 100,000 managerial staff in Europe and coordinates communication and cooperation with the European Chemical Employers' Group and the IndustriAll Europe trade union.

## ➤ CEC – EUROPEAN MANAGERS

CEC – European Managers is an umbrella body representing over a million managers in 17 different European countries. It is one of the six cross-industry social partner organisations recognised by the European Commission. CEC works with ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation, which works on the employee side to coordinate matters of the three social partners, and has close ties to employer associations within BusinessEurope.

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