



# DRIVING THE PROXY

2025-2026 Automotive Color Trends  
BASF Coatings

Press Kit

# Content



**AUTOMOTIVE  
COLOR TRENDS**

A brand of BASF—  
We create chemistry

WHAT IS <b>AUTOMOTIVE COLOR TRENDS</b> <sup>®</sup> ?	<b>02</b>
GLOBAL NETWORK OF DESIGN STUDIOS	<b>03</b>
WHAT IS <b>DRIVING THE PROXY</b> ?	
GLOBAL COLLECTION OVERVIEW	<b>04</b>
KEY COLOR EMEA	<b>05</b>
KEY COLOR ASIA PACIFIC	<b>06</b>
KEY COLOR AMERICAS	<b>07</b>
Q&A	<b>08</b>
IMAGES & VIDEOS FOR DOWNLOAD	<b>09</b>
CONTACT	

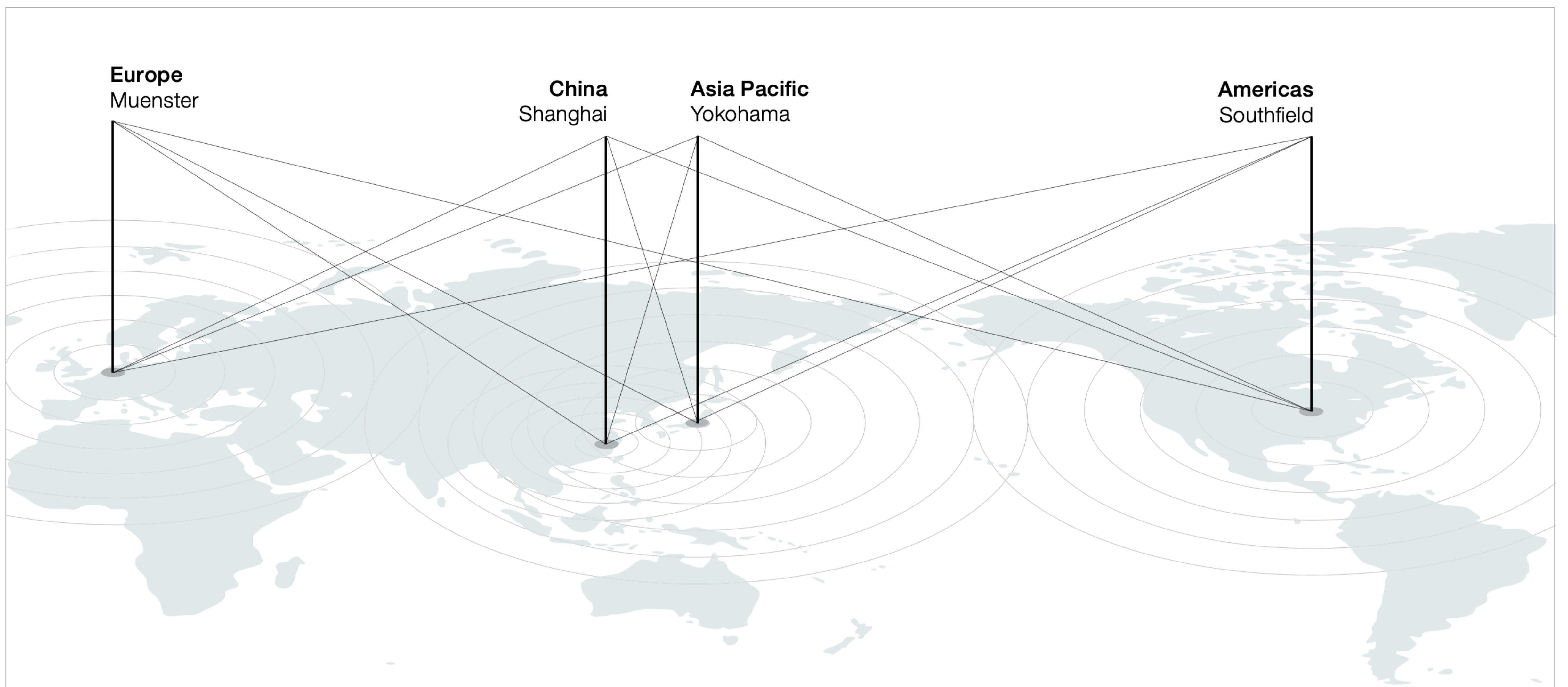
## WHAT IS **AUTOMOTIVE COLOR TRENDS**<sup>®</sup>?

Each year, designers from BASF's Coatings division explore global trends across industries — from fashion and consumer goods to nature and technology. These insights serve as the foundation for developing forward-thinking concepts in color, surface, and texture.

The result is the **Automotive Color Trends**<sup>®</sup> collection: a visionary palette created to inspire automotive OEMs as they shape the future of vehicle design and mass production.

The title of the 2025–2026 collection is “**DRIVING THE PROXY**”.

# GLOBAL NETWORK OF DESIGN STUDIOS



BASF Coatings is an industry leader in color design, with studios located in Asia Pacific (Yokohama and Shanghai), EMEA (Muenster), and Americas (Southfield). Intensive trend research ensures the creation of the most cutting-edge color designs for the annual trend collection. Let's get inspired!

## WHAT IS DRIVING THE PROXY?

At its core, a proxy — from the Latin *proximus* — is someone empowered to act on behalf of another, whether in decision-making, representation, or influence.

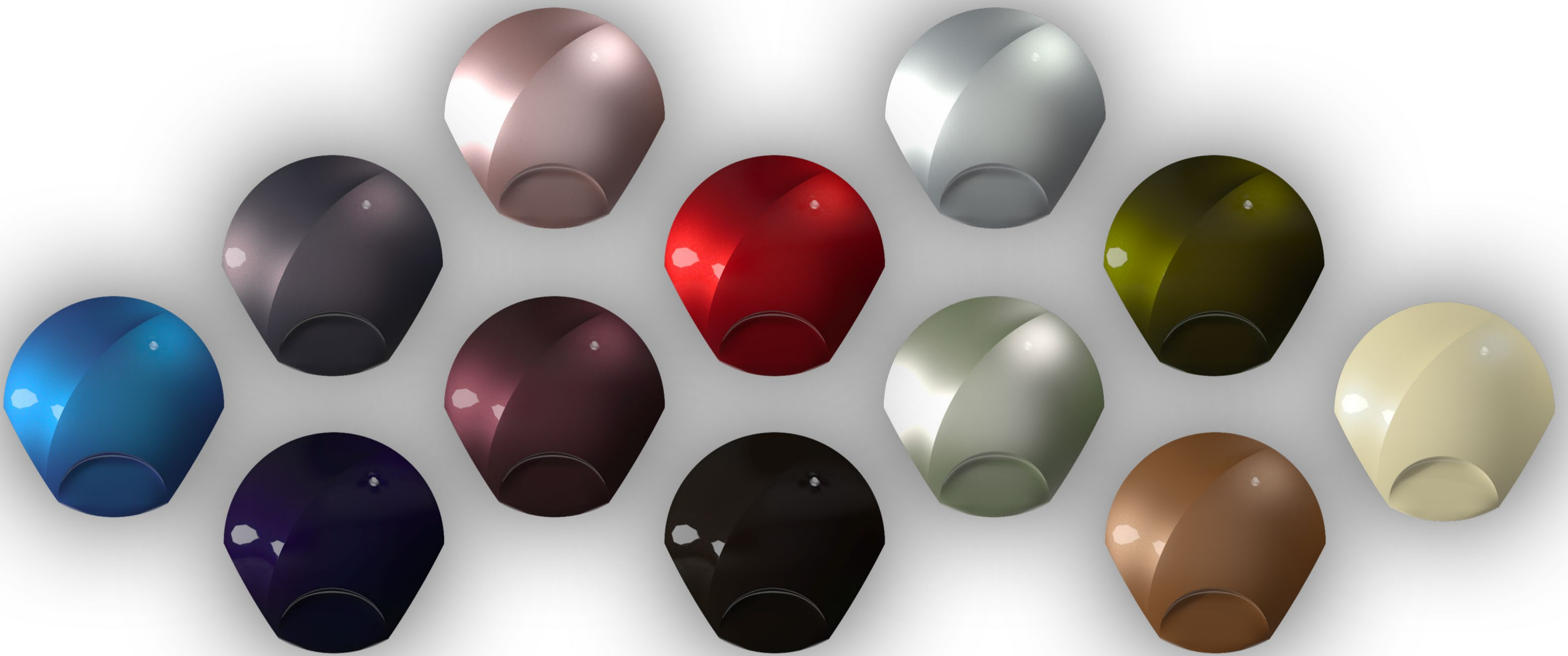
Proxies serve as bridges between emerging ideas and reality. They shape how we perceive the world — through digital platforms, social movements, or brands that reflect our values.

There are many forms of proxies: protectors of identity, filters of information, interpreters of complexity.

**DRIVING THE PROXY** explores how creative inspiration and influences can come from various sources, and serve as “proxies” or representatives to dynamically shape design decisions in the automotive industry.

# GLOBAL COLLECTION OVERVIEW

## About the collection



### ■ DRIVING THE PROXY: 2025-2026 AUTOMOTIVE COLOR TRENDS®

The latest collection presents a refined range of faux solids and solid-like designs, defined by smooth, fine surfaces and subtle sparkle effects. These finishes create a sophisticated interplay of texture and light, often enhanced by fine metallics that add depth without overpowering the color.

A clear shift in the color palette moves away from traditionally cool, technical tones toward warmer, more emotionally resonant hues — including reddish shades, mauves, and nuanced browns. This evolution reflects a broader cultural redefinition of innovation, now associated with warmth and human connection.

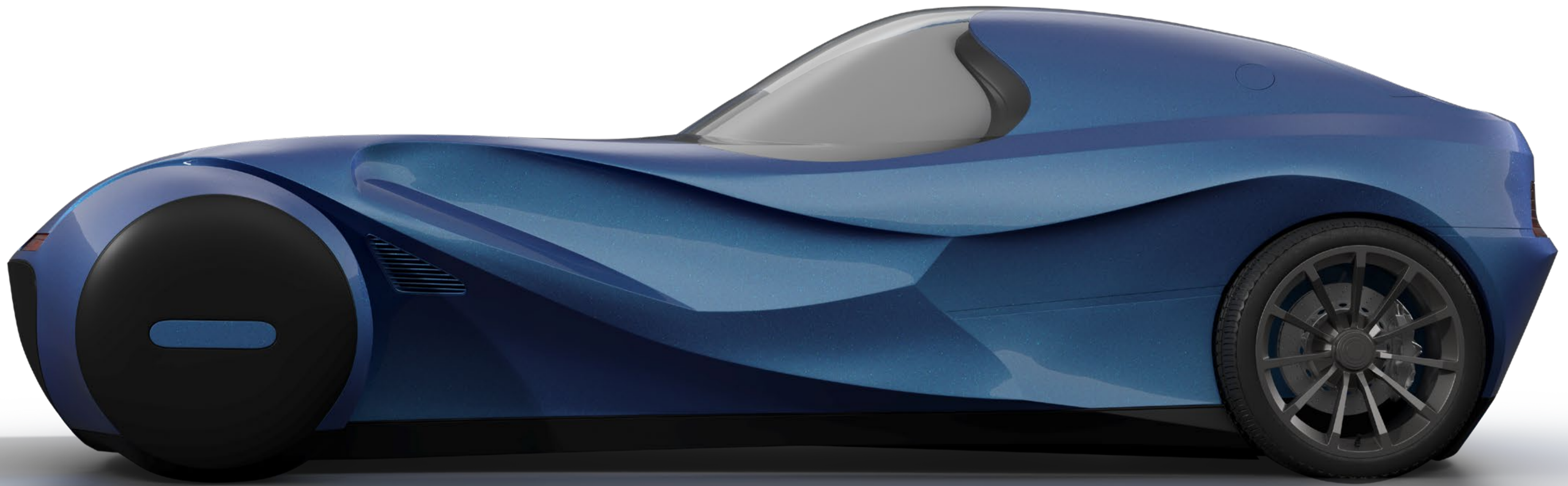
While pastels remain part of the range, they are increasingly replaced by richer, more saturated red-brown tones. The dark palette stands out with intense yet subtle effects, moving beyond solid black to explore layered depth.

Sustainability aspects have been considered in the development of the collection. Some colors incorporate renewable or recycled raw materials, while innovations such as multi-color pigments and liquid metal-like surfaces add visual complexity and narrative value.

Surface finishes span from high-gloss metallics to deep mattes, contributing to a tactile and visual diversity that enhances the collection's versatility.

To provide structure and clarity, the collection is divided into:

- **Essential Colors** — Focused on feasibility and long-term appeal.
- **Signature Colors** — Trend-driven, innovative, including colors with sustainable aspects.



## TESSERACT BLUE

Extended blue with a dimensional shift

TESSERACT BLUE opens a portal to a fourth dimension of color. Built on hybrid interference pigments, it expands blue into green and violet, creating a multidimensional surface experience. Inspired by geometric abstraction and advanced material design, this color challenges perception and redefines depth.

TESSERACT BLUE is a shift in perspective, offering a harmonious vision for automotive surfaces shaped by light and structure.



Inspired by:

### Filling the voids

Overlapping dynamics — political instability, climate change, health challenges, and social fragmentation — are creating visible and symbolic voids that reshape social norms.

By identifying what's missing, societies can find opportunities to rebuild with inclusive, forward-looking solutions.

# KEY COLOR ASIA PACIFIC

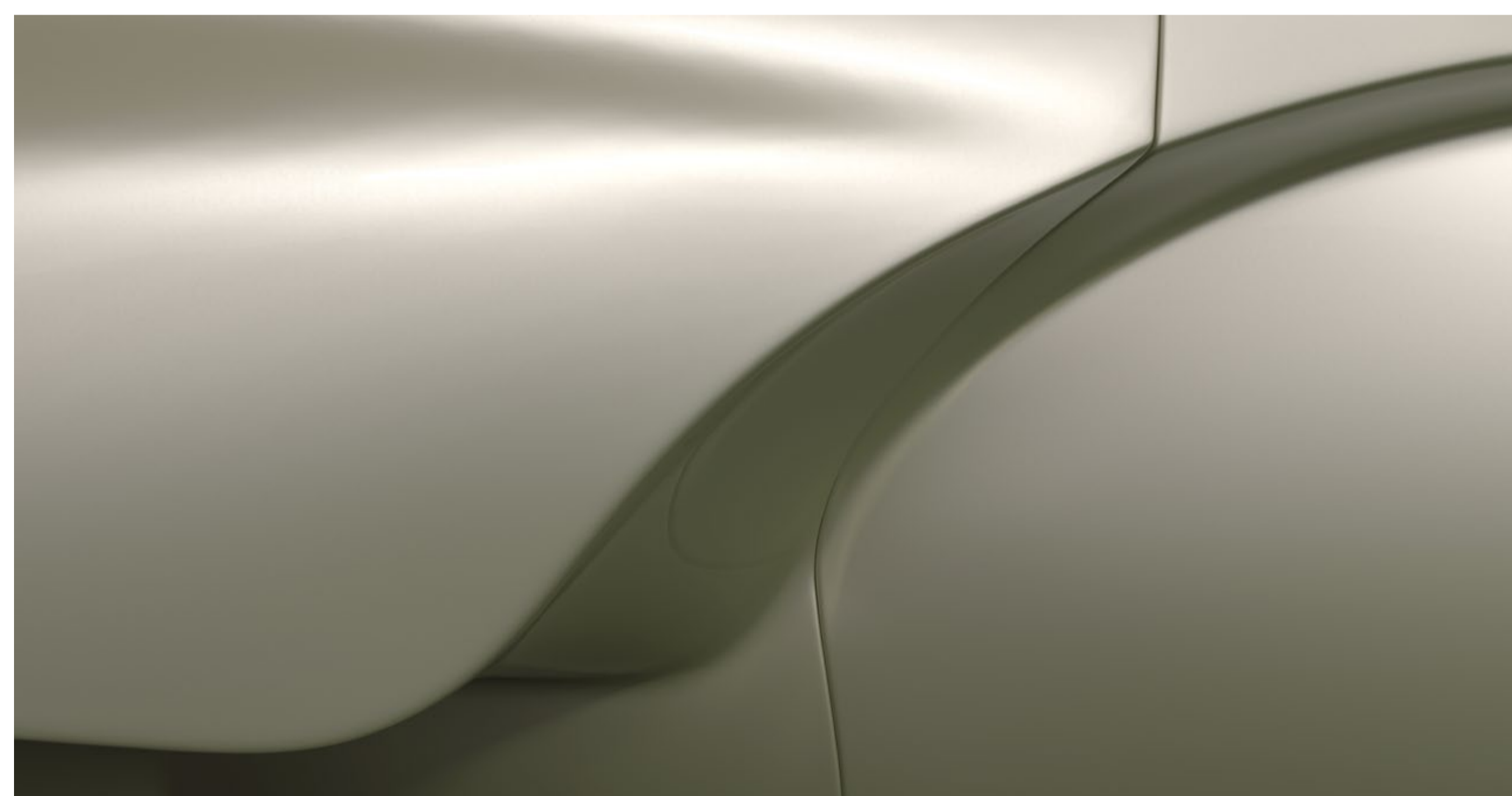


## PHYGITAL MAGNETAR

The still surface of accelerated progress

PHYGITAL MAGNETAR captures the essence of manmade nature through a warm, fluid hue with bright white highlights. While inspired by innovation fatigue, it's crafted using advanced two-coat technology that creates a liquid metal effect. This color reflects a world overwhelmed by progress yet still driven by creativity.

Bridging physical and digital realms, PHYGITAL MAGNETAR offers a calm, expressive surface. It captures the region's duality: relentless innovation on the one hand, and a strong desire for calm and clarity on the other.

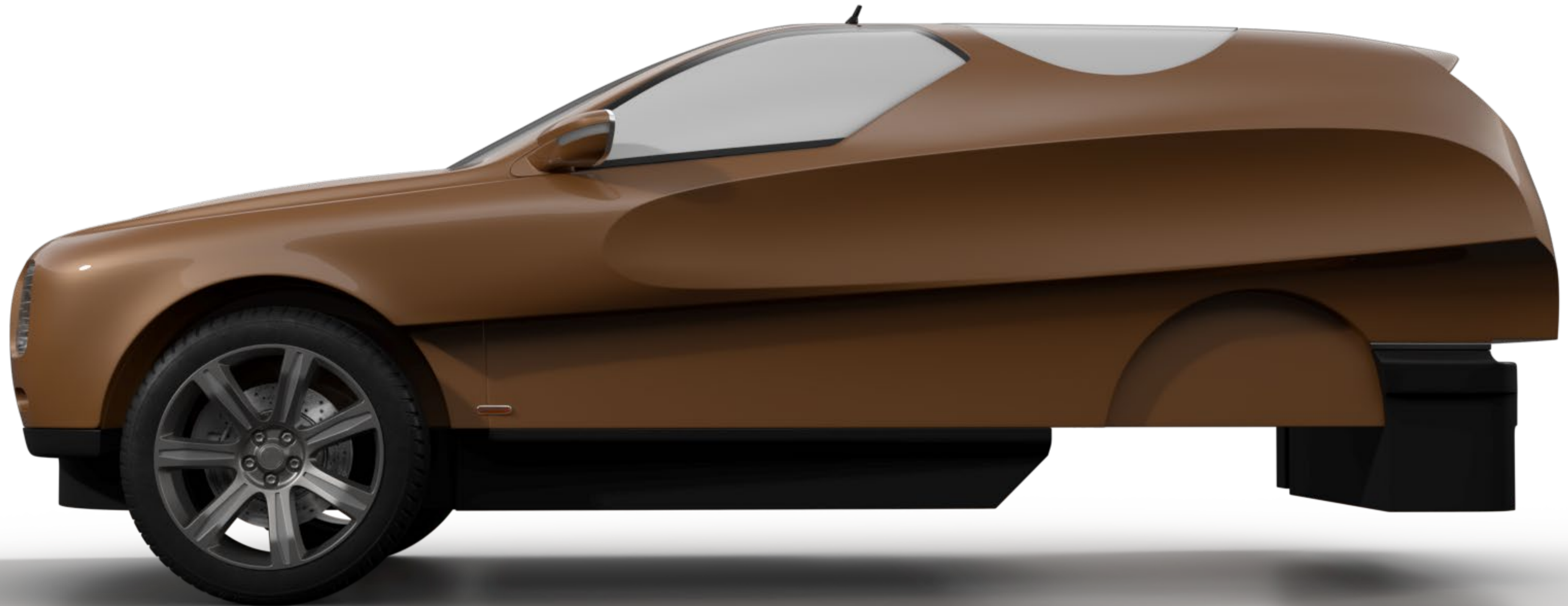


Inspired by:

### Innovation fatigue

Modern society is obsessed with innovation: companies chase breakthroughs, start-ups aim to disrupt, and governments fund the next big thing. But this pursuit risks becoming innovation for its own sake. Have we reached a point where we should pause and focus on practical implementation instead?

# KEY COLOR AMERICAS

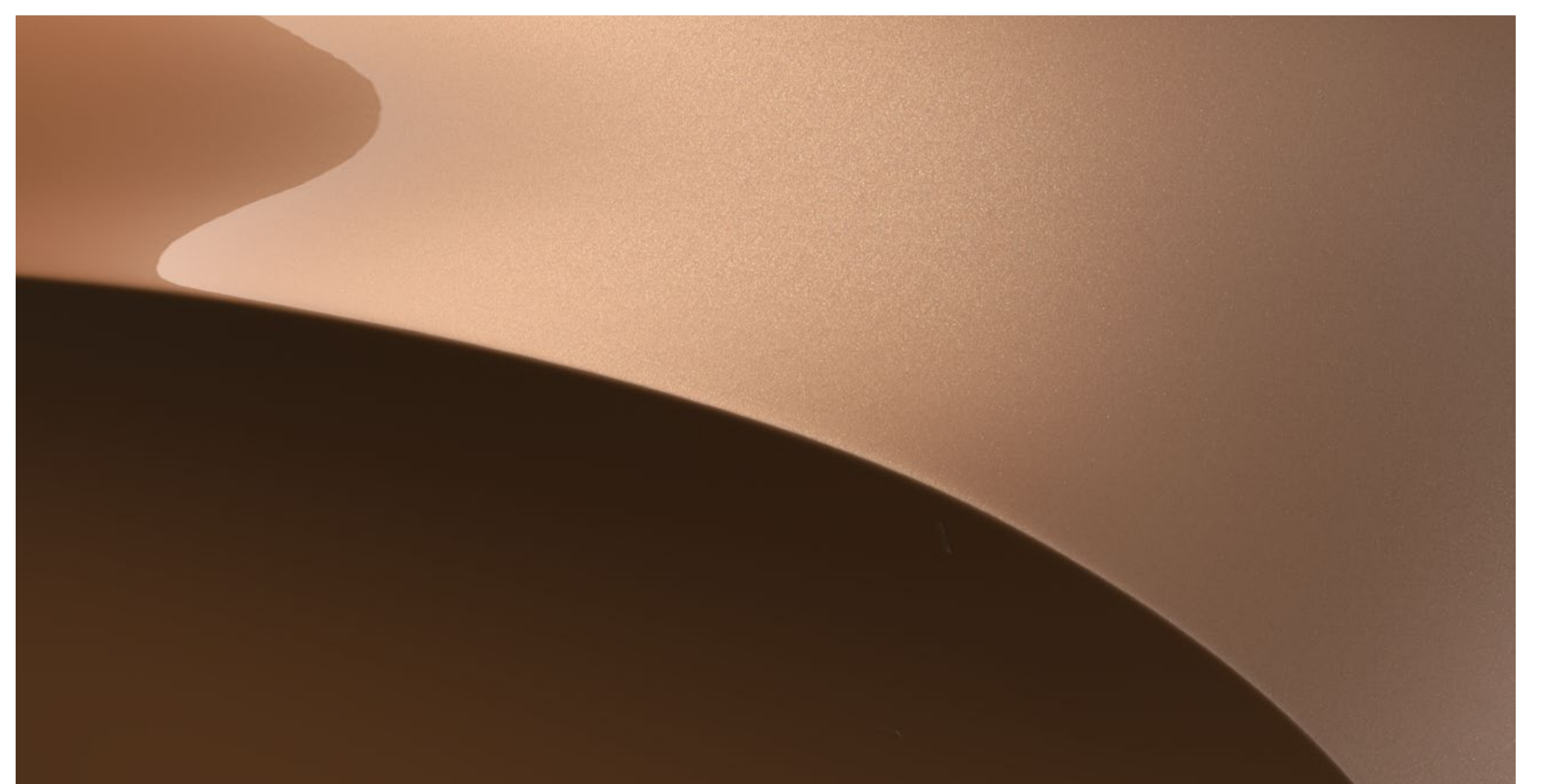


## **AUXETIC NEUTRAL**

Where neutrality becomes identity

AUXETIC NEUTRAL grounds identity through a rich, culturally inspired brown. Drawing from fashion and industrial design, this shade redefines neutrality as a statement. Its clean sparkle adds vibrancy and depth, transforming the surface into a tactile experience.

AUXETIC NEUTRAL reflects a shift toward more collective design over individual authorship, where neutrality becomes a space for shared expression.



**Inspired by:**

## **Anonymous authorship**

Many design brands are moving away from spotlighting individual visionaries, instead embracing diverse perspectives and even anonymity. Neutrality, once seen as passive, is now a strategic space for inclusivity, allowing multiple voices to coexist without dominance. This approach complicates authorship, especially as artificial intelligence blurs the line between human and machine-made design. The challenge for brands is to navigate this openness while maintaining a distinct and memorable identity.

# Q&A

## **What are the key automotive color trends for 2025–2026?**

The latest Automotive Color Trends® collection of BASF collection showcases refined faux solids with smooth textures and subtle sparkle effects. Blue is evolving beyond its traditional tech symbolism into expressive, multidimensional hues — such as TESSERACT BLUE. Meanwhile, red and violet tones are gaining emotional depth, reflecting the complexity and dynamic energy of today’s society.

The overall color direction leans toward warmer, more emotionally engaging shades — like mauves, rich browns, and nuanced reddish tones. This palette strikes a balance between visual depth, tactile variety, and sustainable innovation, offering a blend of timeless appeal and forward-looking design.

## **How does sustainability influence the development of this collection?**

Sustainability remains central to the collection. Some colors incorporate renewable or recycled raw materials, while innovation as multi-color pigments and liquid metal-like surfaces add visual sophistication.

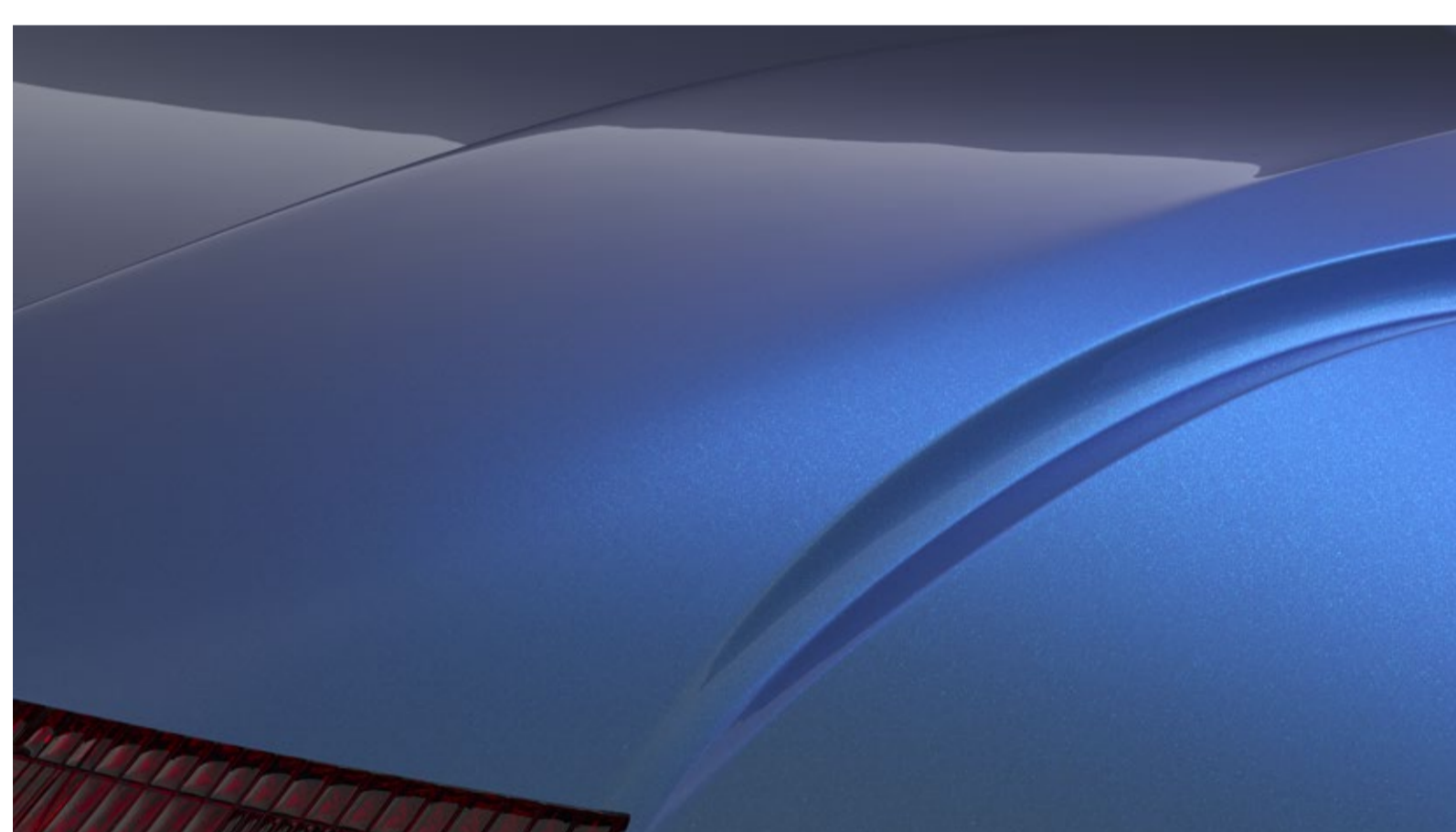
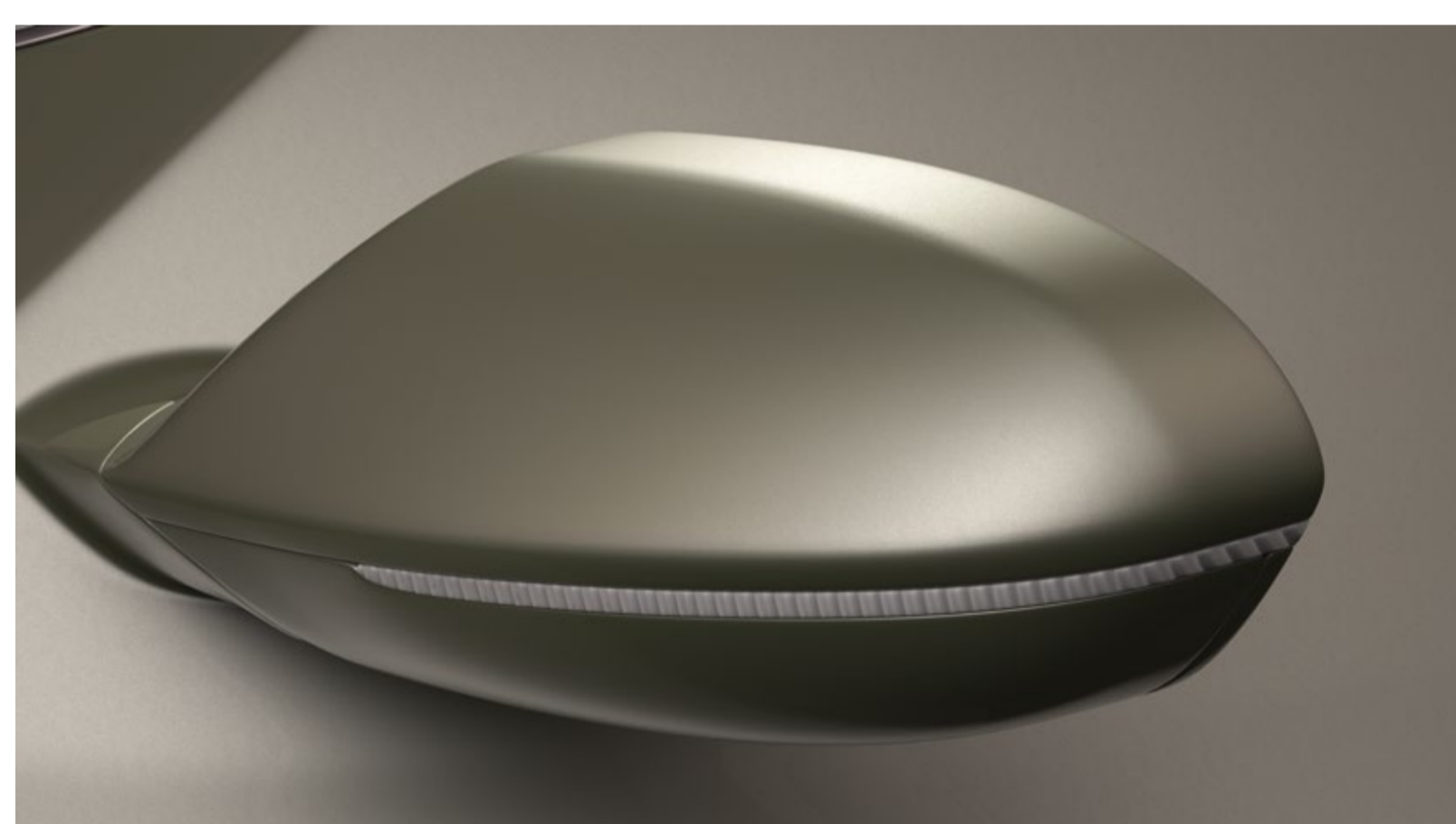
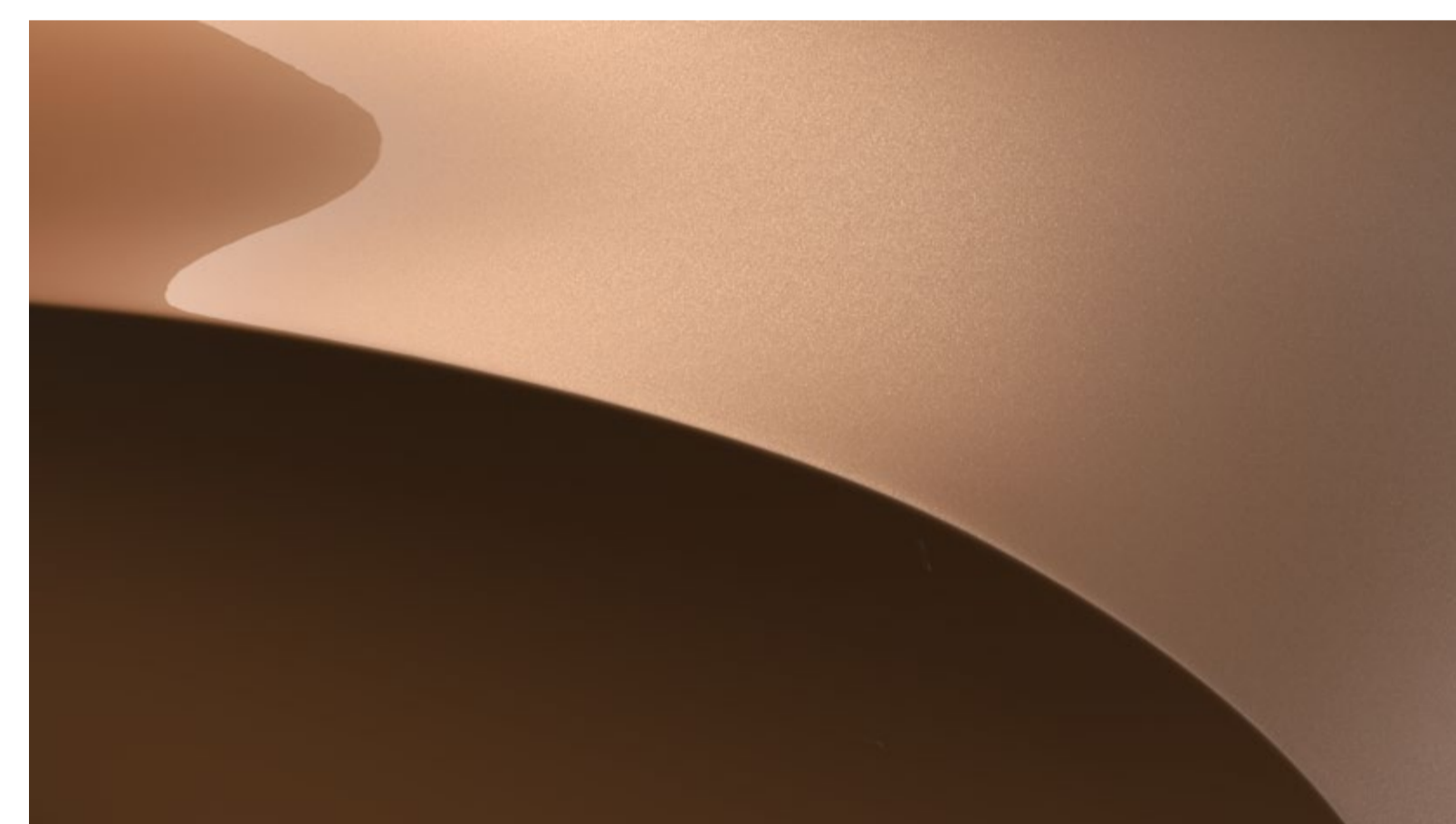
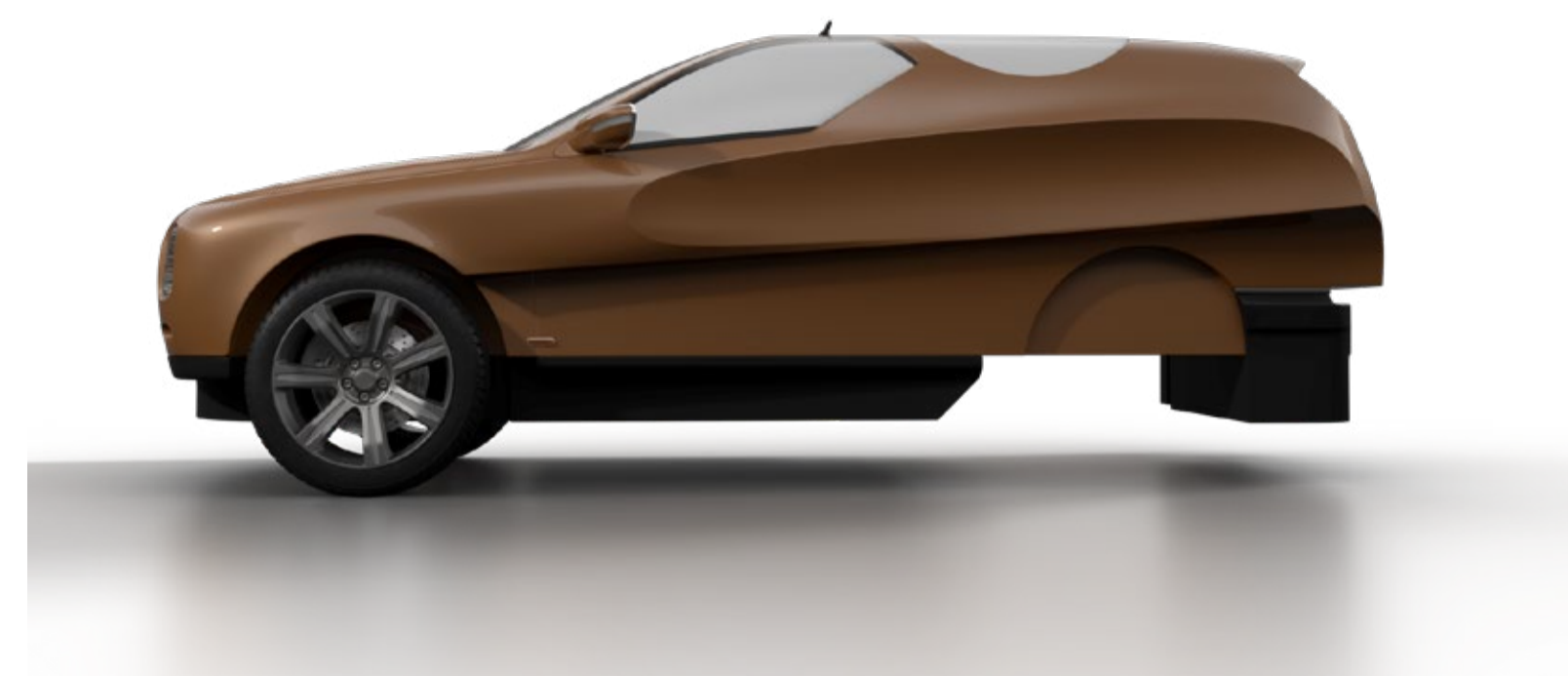
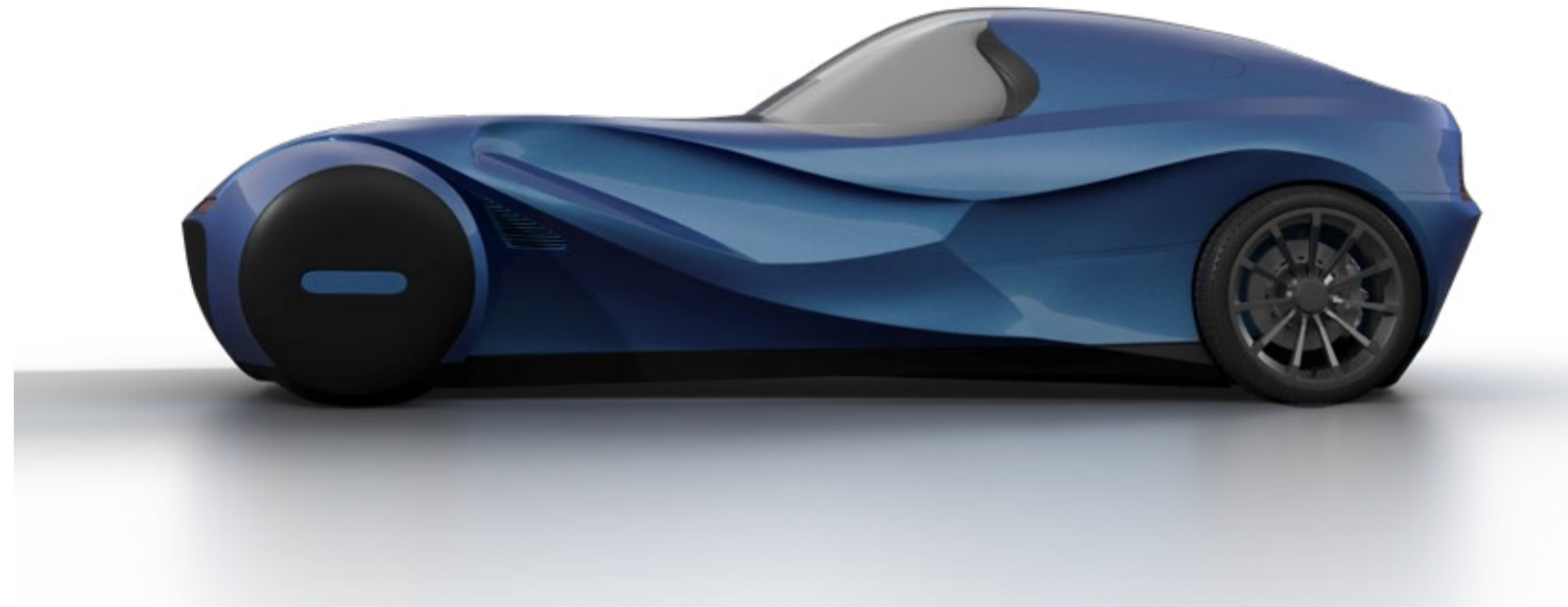
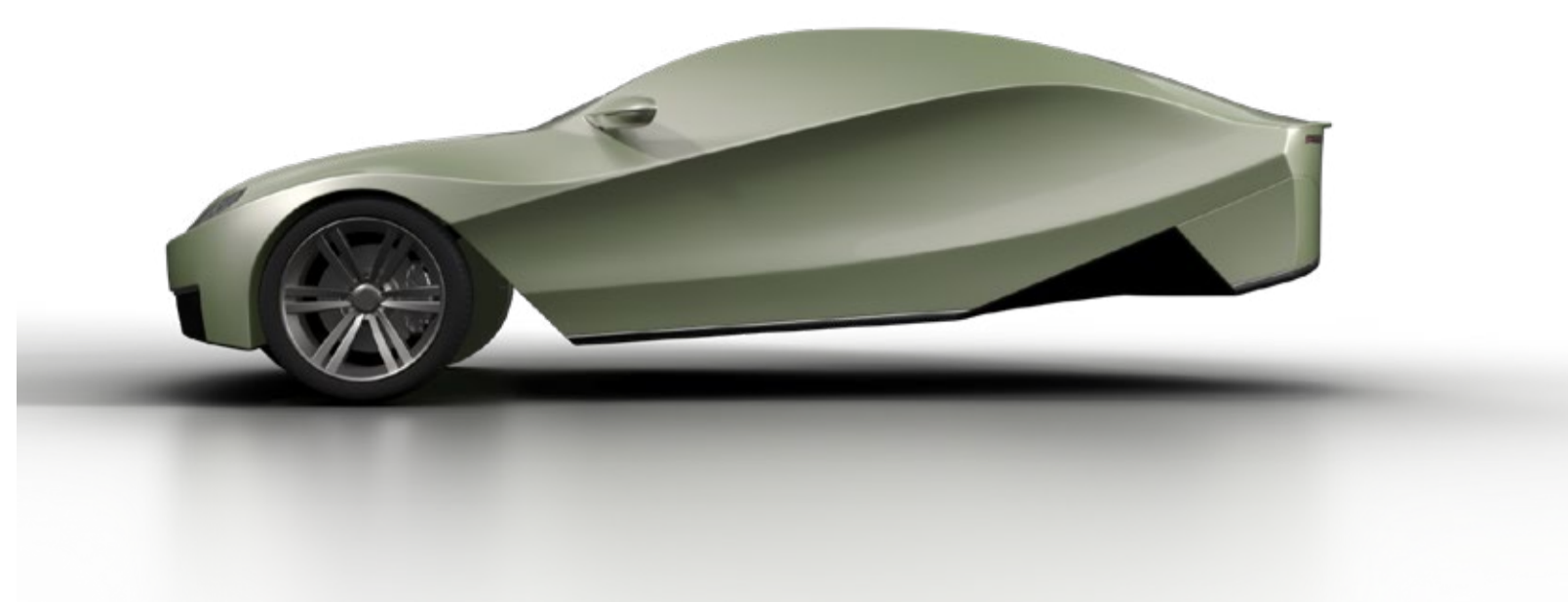
These elements contribute to the collection’s broader narrative of responsible innovation. Digital tools — such as AUROOM®, BASF’s digital color visualization platform — also help reduce environmental impact throughout the design and production journey.

## **How are BASF’s color trends developed? Who is involved in the process?**

BASF’s color trends are developed by its global design teams across Asia Pacific, EMEA, and the Americas. These experts collaborate annually to research emerging influences from fashion, technology, nature, culture, and more. Based on this, they create a forward-looking color collection that reflects both global trends and regional identities.

BASF’s technology experts then innovate in the lab, crafting new colors using sustainable materials. BASF also uses digital tools like AUROOM® to visualize how colors will appear on vehicles, helping automotive manufacturers plan future designs. Some colors are expected to appear on vehicles in as soon as two years.

# IMAGES & VIDEOS FOR DOWNLOAD



[Download images and videos](#) 

## Contact

---

### EMEA

**Joerg Zumkley**

joerg.zumkley@basf.com

BASF Coatings GmbH  
Glasuritstrasse 1, 48165  
Münster, Germany

---

### ASIA PACIFIC

**Charlene Boh**

charlene.boh@basf.com

Chemetall Asia Pte. Ltd.  
12 Loyang Crescent, 508980  
Singapore, Singapore

---

### AMERICAS

**Renee Rashid-Merem**

renee.rashid-merem@basf.com

BASF Coatings LLC  
Southfield, Michigan 48033-2442  
USA