

Smart Innovation Norway receives top ranking and wins 10th EU Horizon 2020 project

The Norwegian innovation company's latest Horizon 2020 project proposal, E-LAND, was ranked 1st among 24 competing applications and will receive a budget of 6 M€.

Halden-based Smart Innovation Norway and its partners have been evaluated as the most successful bidder for the prestigious and biggest EU Research and Innovation program, Horizon 2020, for its proposal on the call topic "Integrated local energy systems (Energy islands)".

Ranked number one

"I want to congratulate Smart Innovation Norway and its partners with their latest EU success. It is very positive with several Norwegian partners in the project, and I am impressed with the leading position Smart Innovation Norway has taken in this collaboration. My impression is that the cluster collaboration in Halden contributes with highly relevant competence in both national and international projects. I will follow the progress of this project with great excitement, comments Norwegian Minister of Research and Higher Education, Iselin Nybø.

The project proposal, named E-LAND, was ranked 1st among 24 competing applications. The high quality of the proposal led the project to achieve an impressively high evaluation score of 14.5 out of maximum 15.

"The research team of Smart Innovation Norway is proud of the Horizon 2020 proposal E-LAND and the evaluation result shows that our research team is among the best in European energy research," says Dieter Hirdes, Head of Research & Innovation at Smart Innovation Norway.

Energy cooperation with India

The 6 M€ Horizon 2020 project involves a total of 12 European participants from Norway, Finland, Spain, Greece, Germany, Switzerland and Romania, with Schneider Electric Norge AS, IFE and Borg Havn AS from Norway lending support to Smart Innovation Norway.

In addition, through a separate collaboration agreement, two partners from India, TATA POWER and BSES YAMUNA POWER, are included. The project will establish pilots in three European countries, Norway, Spain and Romania and in India.

"For several years, Smart Innovation Norway has been working dedicated and strategically towards Horizon 2020, and is today one of the most successful Norwegian actors in energy research. We congratulate with the successful E-LAND proposal, which will be an important contribution to Norwegian and European energy cooperation with India", comments Tor Ivar



Eikaas, Head of the Research Council of Norway's Brussels Office and member of the Programme Committee for Horizon 2020 Energy.

Re-thinking the exploitation of energy

The E-LAND project targets to develop and demonstrate tools for energy systems to overcome the technical, business and societal challenges associated with creation of low carbon, climate resilient energy supply in challenging ecosystem of isolated, remote or rural areas.

“With increasing penetration of renewable energy resources (RES) and high expectations from end-users for energy reliability, we need to re-think how we connect and exploit our available energy resources, to fully take advantages of the synergies between them,” explains Heidi Tuiskula, International Project Coordinator at Smart Innovation Norway and Scientific Coordinator of the E-LAND project. She continues:

“As the transition to a low-carbon, energy-efficient and climate-resilient economy will require a more decentralised, open system to be developed, it is also obvious that the role of the consumer as a much more active player needs to be understood.”

E-LAND addresses this issue by turning the traditionally technically-driven focus upside down and begins the development work by analysing the dynamics of the communities, where the actions are to take place, to assure that the needs of the citizens are addressed, instead of focusing only on the needs of the electricity companies.

End-users as active participants

“In addition, end-users will be involved as active members of the project to participate in the development of the different tools,” says Tuiskula.

The project intends to deliver a high performance multi-vector toolbox consisting of multiple novel technological, business and community engagement tools competent to support and decarbonise isolated communities. The tools will be tested in three regions of Europe and two regions in India after suitable customisation based on the local ecosystem.

“For Smart Innovation Norway, the E-LAND project provides an amazing opportunity to extend our European collaboration with the top European organisations from industry and research as well as with some interesting emerging ones. In addition, through the E-LAND idea, we have been able to establish a concrete collaboration with high-level energy industry actors in India,” notes Tuiskula.

A result of close collaboration

“We want to say a big thank you to the Research Council of Norway's support over several years, especially the support from the Research Council of Norway's Brussels Office and the RCN's National Contact Point on Energy,” says Hirdes. He adds:



“We would also like to thank the clean energy team of Innovation Norway, New Delhi for engaging with us and providing valuable insights in making the proposal comprehensive and making it possible for us to partner with some of the largest and most important Indian energy companies, like Reliance Energy, Tata Power, Rural electrification corporation and Tata Steel.”

Innovation Norway, India, has been working closely with Smart Innovation Norway and helping to make inroads in Indian power sector since last year. During the course of this project for next 3.5 years, Innovation Norway will continue to remain involved as observer and subject matter expert for providing valuable insights on Indian Power sector.

The project reiterates Innovation Norway’s strong commitment towards Norwegian companies and their efforts in creating cleaner energy ecosystems.

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