

North East
Energy Catalyst



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Development Fund



Energy for Growth

Case study: Energy Innovation Challenge

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Energy for Growth

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)'s [Energy for Growth](#) strategy sets out areas of opportunity where the North East can contribute towards national energy and net zero goals at scale, while driving economic growth and delivering more and better jobs in the region.

The Energy for Growth programme is focussed across three key workstreams, led by the LEP's energy for growth team: supporting growth in energy sectors such as electrification, batteries, offshore energy and low carbon heat; uniting the region's energy innovation and demonstration assets via the North East Energy Catalyst; and accelerating delivery of regional energy projects at scale, such as heat networks.



Supporting regional energy projects

Through the Local Growth Fund, the North East LEP's Energy for Growth programme was able to support cross-sector partners to develop and deliver a pipeline of projects in these areas of opportunity via grant funding.

In 2019, funding was made available via an open call for projects which aligned to the Energy for Growth strategy, particularly focussed on offshore energy, innovation and demonstration, and low carbon heat.

Over £1.2m was ultimately made available via:

- **Energy for Growth grants:** Grants of up to £150,000 to support capital projects, or revenue support of detailed project development and feasibility studies.
- **Energy Innovation Challenge:** Run by the North East Energy Catalyst, a series of three challenges for SMEs aimed to identify solutions to energy issues which can be scaled up nationally or globally, leveraging the strengths of North East businesses. The programme supported 35 SMEs to bring forward new products or services which have the potential to help solve energy challenges on a global scale.

The total value of the Energy for Growth LGF programme has reached over £6m, including public and private match to the LGF grant funding. The programme is expected to support the creation of more than 200 jobs, provide over 100 enterprises with non-financial support, catalyse nearly 50 engagements between enterprises and research institutions, and over 3,500 SME engagements.

Case study: Energy Innovation Challenge

Jumping Rivers, Otaski Energy Solutions and TRL9 are three of the SMEs that entered the North East Energy Catalyst's Energy Innovation Challenge, putting forward solutions to global energy challenges. Those who engaged with the challenge programme have since developed new partnerships with other businesses applying into the programme, collaborated in national funding bids, and gained access to board level Energy Catalyst partners.

Otaski Energy Solutions

Otaski Energy Solutions took part in the Energy Innovation Challenge programme, putting forward their AI software which can be used to dim streetlights when not in use, resulting in savings in energy which can then be used to power the EV network.



The Energy Innovation Challenge
Otaski Energy Solutions

"It's been an interesting journey for us because we have literally unlocked an entire market opportunity that would have taken us years to access, and that's largely because we are standing on the shoulders of giants.

I would recommend the Energy Innovation Challenge programme to any and every SME in this space,"

Philip Ingebodion, Otaski Energy Solutions

Jumping Rivers

Esther Gillespie, Director of data science consultancy Jumping Rivers, explained how taking part in the Energy Innovation Challenge has opened up opportunities and funding for the business.



The Energy Innovation Challenge
Jumping Rivers

"I would totally recommend getting in contact with the North East Energy Catalyst, and certainly the Innovation Challenge has really been an exciting development for our company,"

Esther Gillespie, Director of data science consultancy
Jumping Rivers

TRL9

Research and development specialist TRL9 made new connections within the energy sector through the Energy Innovation Challenge. A refreshed Energy Innovation Challenge programme is in development for launch in April 2022.



The Energy Innovation Challenge
TRL9

"Overall we've had a great experience with the programme and we're really excited to get to our second level prototype with the solar fluidics project"

Dr Bryan Allcock, TRL9

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