



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
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GREBE

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Generating Renewable Energy
Business Enterprise

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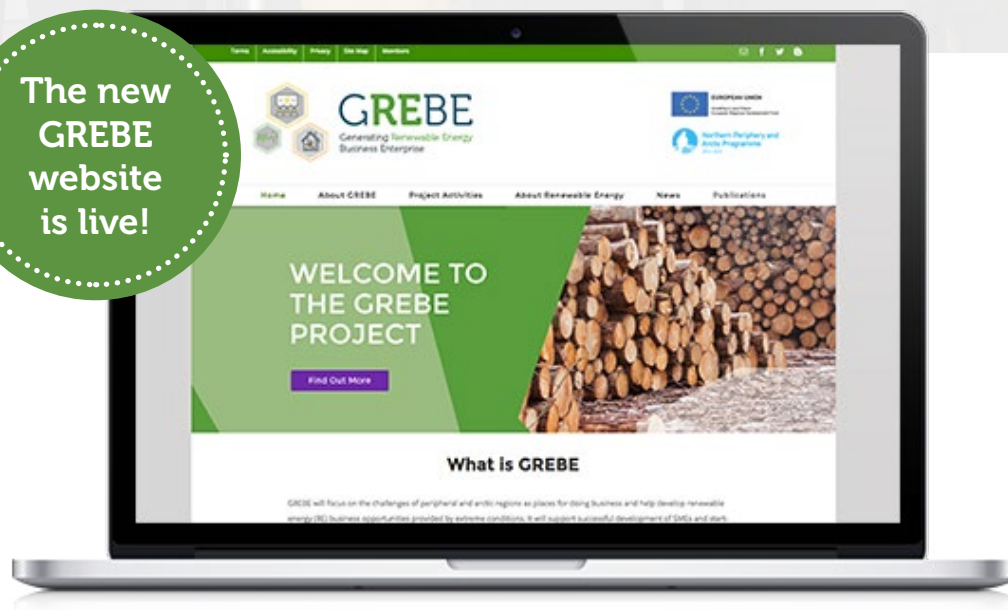
www.grebeproject.eu





Welcome to the second e-zine for the GREBE Project. Since our e-zine in May, we have been working on implementing some of our project activities and this e-zine will highlight details of our new website, our Industry Advisory Group meetings, Policy Workshops, partner meetings in Inverness and Iceland, and the launch of the Northern Ireland pilot of our Entrepreneur Enabler Scheme.

The new
GREBE
website
is live!

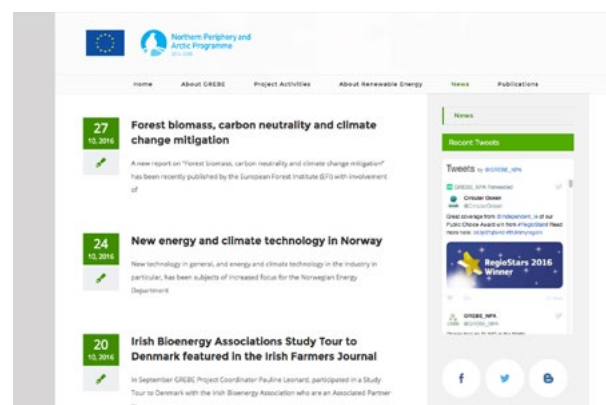
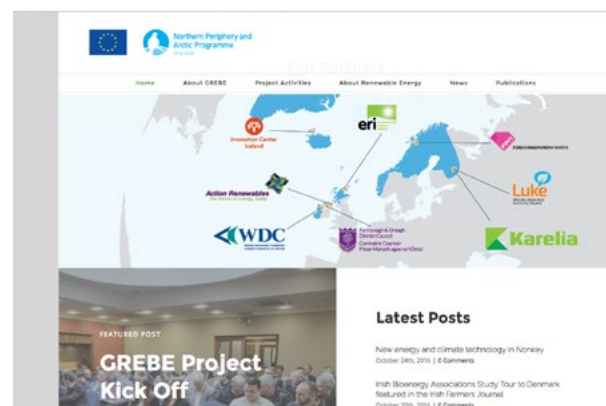


The new GREBE project website www.grebeproject.eu has been created by Future Analytics Consulting Ltd. (www.futureanalytics.ie). The website builds on the branding theme created with the logo, which takes inspiration from the NPA programme and the priority (entrepreneurship) under which GREBE is funded. The three hexagons in our logo reflect the entrepreneurs networking and sharing ideas, the renewable energy technologies, and the importance of renewable energy in everyday life.

Our website has information about the GREBE project, its aims and objectives, project deliverables, project partners and the NPA Programme. We also have a section on our project activities and some information about renewable energy. As the GREBE project progresses, we will add more areas to the website and upload reports and guidelines to our 'Publications' page.

Visit the site to register your interest in the GREBE project. If you would like more information on the GREBE project, please contact us at info@grebeproject.eu

Register Now





GREBE Project meets in Inverness and Iceland

The GREBE Project met in Scotland in June for our third project meeting. As part of the meeting, we met with another NPA funded project 'FREED' on Monday 5th June to discuss synergies between the two projects. We then had two days for meetings to discuss the project activities and the reports on policy initiatives, funding mechanisms and climatic challenges of the NPA region which were published in September. On the fourth day of our meeting, our Scottish partner, the Environmental Research Institute (ERI) organised site visits to look at renewable energy technologies in use in different areas. We visited four different sites to look at different renewable energy technologies and how they are used by co-operatives, farmers and industry.

- Dingwall Wind Co-Op
- John McKenzie at Scroggie Farm
- Black Isle Brewery
- Tomatin Distillery

Full details of our site visits can be found on our website.

[Read Now](#)

In September, the project met in Iceland for the project meeting in Ísafjörður Iceland. Before the actual meeting we had a successful policy workshop in Reykjavik and have plans for similar meetings in Scotland, Norway and Finland. One of the key objectives is to identify and promote opportunities for policy to provide an effective supporting framework for sustainable renewable energy business. The current policy framework has been reviewed in each partner region. Michael Doran of Action Renewables presented the summary report on the meeting in Reykjavik. The report is available on GREBE's Publications page <http://grebeproject.eu/publication/>.

After the policy meeting we had several site visits on the way to Ísafjörður. These included visits to:

- Innovation Center Iceland
- HS Orka
- A meeting with Einar Hreinsson specialist at Marine Research Institute which introduced us to prototype of a new fishing gear where light is used as a herding stimulus.

Further information on these site visits can be found on the website.

[Read Now](#)





GREBEs Entrepreneur Enabler Scheme



The rather grand title of Entrepreneur Enabler Scheme (EES) refers to the intervention undertaken by Fermanagh & Omagh District Council within the GREBE project. It refers to the provision delivered over the initial 18 months of the project within the area, targeting support to businesses operating across the Renewable Energy sectors.

We officially launched the EES on 4th March at Balcas in Enniskillen. The event was attended by an invited audience and served to explain what the project was about and how it would work for those companies who would become involved. The EES will be rolled out across the NPA region through the partner organisations in 2017 and will provide a road map of how entrepreneurs can be assisted within the sector to achieve business growth and increase their efficiency/effectiveness in areas that they will define.



As with all mentoring, the key to success is the relationship between the mentor and the mentee. It is important that the match between the two is a good fit. Consequently, we put a great deal of effort into ensuring that we can attract mentors who have a good understanding of both the sector and the business environment.

Una Porteous undertook a selection of mentors. In Northern Ireland there is a network of mentors who are consultants with a vast range of experience of mentoring through a large number of LED promoted mentoring programmes. Fourteen mentors / applicants were successful, who brought a range of expertise including general business growth; financial expertise; Human Resources; Renewable Energy; and technical expertise. The mentors were assessed in line with FODC normal procurement procedures, and evaluated by a procurement expert, FODC Economic Development Manager and two economic development staff.

The next step was the selection of businesses to participate in the EES. The EES was officially launched on 4th March at Balcas, Enniskillen, and was promoted widely through local media and social media. 16 businesses from across the RE sector applied for the scheme until the selection closed on 6th May, with a selection process taking place at the end of May. Each applicant was evaluated by Funded Programme Manager and Project Officer through summary information available, one-to-one meetings and business diagnostic assessments. This resulted in the final selection of 12 businesses to support under the EES, with the others offered some limited support through other Economic Development channels available from FODC if they opted to do so.

We have focussed on a number of these businesses to tell something of their story and how they came to be involved in the project.

Entrepreneur Enable Scheme

– Devine & Associates and Ecohog

Devine Associates are small business, based in Enniskillen, is currently engaged in Biogas Renewable Energy through its work with Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and were keen to examine how they could extend their involvement in this sector. They identified two possible routes that they were keen to explore further and felt that bringing in some technical expertise would enable them to examine their options more fully and make an informed decision.

From a strong engineering background, the business owners had identified the use of anaerobic digestion to generate renewable energy from the waste and becoming involved in sustainable housing development as two areas of growth.

Internally the company believed they had a range of skills that would be useful in this area, but required additional external expertise to focus them on reaching a decision about their future direction.

After initial consultation, a mentor was appointed with a view to assisting the company to make some choices based on sound business information and judgement. This mentor undertook some research into passive housing and its commercial viability. This involved meeting with another expert and feeding back to the client. Jointly the mentor and the client decided to invite the support of a mentor whose background is as an expert in AD. This has been facilitated and the work is ongoing. The two mentors will work with the client as they move forward with a view to bringing the client to a position where they can make decisions about the viability of their proposed scheme and how the scheme can be financed. It is interesting that often a client company requires input from more than one mentor, as the needs of businesses are often diverse.

EES Participant



Devine Associates



EES Participant



Ecohog

Ecohog is family based engineering business based in Carrickmore, Co Tyrone which specialises in large scale equipment to the waste and recycling sectors. Their mobile and static installations are custom built to meet the needs of the client in terms of location and processes. They came to the GREBE project with the stated aim of trying to identify what possibilities existed for their product in the Renewable Energy sector. They felt certain that there were applications within the RE sector that could be met by their engineering solutions but needed assistance to identify the possible market opportunities.

Following discussion with the business, a mentor was appointed whose area of expertise is in manufacturing solutions and in market research. Together with the client, the mentor discussed the current and potential applications of their products and what research was required. The mentor undertook research into the market opportunities available with the various sectors of the waste industry. Following this intervention, the client company has identified new market opportunities for the business to follow up, and complementary marketing strategies to develop supporting these opportunities. The mentor is reviewing this information and may well be assigned for further action with the client – should this be what they decide is needed.



Entrepreneur Enable Scheme

– Irvinestown Trustee Enterprise Company Ltd. and Easyglow Ltd.

Based in Irvinestown, Co Fermanagh, Irvinestown Trustee Enterprise Company Ltd (ITEC) and founded as a non-profit company in 1992, this social economy business was established to increase economic development' and employment opportunities for its catchment area. It has established a range of community led regeneration initiatives which have led to some 200 jobs being created across 25 businesses ranging through manufacturing, retail and service activities. ITEC has relied heavily on a voluntary board of directors, representing a pool of 'voluntary expertise' and whilst they have leveraged significant external funding, they remain strongly rooted in the need to be sustainable beyond the limitations of the funding.

Prior to engaging with GREBE, they had been investigating the possibility of delivering a project designed to bring biogas to the area for the benefit of the neighbourhood in which they operate. The company has already had a feasibility study undertaken and were preparing to take the process to funders. They expressed an interest in accessing assistance to move the project forward. After discussion with the project lead, it was agreed that they needed assistance with preparing for a major meeting with funders. A mentor was duly appointed and provided assistance to the project lead in preparing a presentation for the funders – including coaching the client a little in how to make the presentation and how to field potential questions that might follow the presentation. The meeting with the funders went ahead, although it happened after the UK had voted to leave the EU. This tempered the meeting and the outcomes a little and a decision has been delayed until the some decisions have been taken regarding how the impact of the vote will be felt within the programmes affected. Mentoring will however continue with this client in order to try to keep things on course.

EES Participant



ITEC



EES Participant

Easyglow Ltd



Easyglow Ltd. was established in 2012 and has developed a biomass ovoid nugget which burns as a smokeless fuel. The plant has been developed to the point where they have a 4,000 tonne capacity per annum. Having made a high level of investment in the plant and in research and development, the business now seeks to take advantage of new legislation pending in ROI banning the use of smoke producing fuels which comes into force in January 2017. As a small business, their efforts have been focussed on the development of the product and they came to GREBE to get help with the next stage of the business development which will centre on identifying a customer base for the wholesale market.

The owner had been in communication with one potential customer and was initially nervous of signing away too much of his new product and his right to deal with other customers. A mentor was assigned to the company, whose expertise is in the area of sales and identifying leads for the business. Following initial meetings with the client and the some desk based research, the mentor and client agreed an approach which involved additional work for them both. The company needed to focus on the material which they need in order to launch a professional marketing campaign – development of professional brochure and a web presence and the mentor to focus on establishing a marketing plan with which to target potential clients. The mentor also undertook a competitor analysis in order to identify the market and where the client's product would sit within it. In addition the mentor undertook to look at funding sources.



GREBEs Industry Advisory Group meetings

For a project to be successful, industry input is required from a broad range of stakeholders. The GREBE project is establishing Industry Advisory Groups in each partner region to provide input and advice on the implementation of the GREBE project. GREBE Industry Advisory Groups provide their insights on how project activities can most effectively be implemented in the region, how project can link and work together with other activities and results be disseminated to various beneficiaries

The GREBE Regional Industry Advisory Group will:

- Provide their insights on how GREBE activities can most effectively be implemented in the region, based on their own experience of working in or supporting the renewable energy sector in the region, nationally and internationally.
- Provide their views on alternative options being considered for the delivery of certain GREBE activities in the region.
- Help to identify possible opportunities GREBE to link and work together with other activities, projects and supports for the renewable energy sector in the region, nationally and transnationally.
- Share information about GREBE among their wider networks.
- Contribute towards dissemination of GREBE outputs and learnings among their wider networks, including at local, regional and national policy level where possible.

So far this year, IAG meetings have been held in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Finland..



GREBEs Industry Advisory Group meetings in Ireland

GREBE Industry Advisory Group meeting for Ireland was held in Sligo on 4th April 2016, chaired by GREBE Project Co-ordinator Pauline Leonard of the Western Development Commission. Those present included representatives from Associated Partners, Mayo Energy Agency, the Irish Bioenergy Association and Sligo IT, as well as representatives from the SEAI, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Donegal LEO, Leitrim LEO, Letterkenny IT and Claremorris Energy Co-op.

Pauline Leonard outlined details of the project, project partners, its objectives, project activities across all regions, with a focus on the Western Region of Ireland and the valuable input the IAG can make to the project. A discussion followed on alternatives options for delivery of GREBEs outputs, opportunities to link with other organisations, project and supports, and the development of a network of RE SMEs and dissemination of the project deliverables.



GREBEs Industry Advisory Group meetings

in Finland

The IAG in Finland includes representatives from the renewable energy SMEs, research and education, business development companies, regional authority and agricultural producers and forest owners union. The first meeting was organized at LUKE, Joensuu office in Tuesday 15th of March. Robert Prinz from LUKE introduced the project and Lasse Okkonen from Karelia UAS outlined its contribution to the business mentoring through the Entrepreneurship Enabler Scheme.

The group discussion provided many valuable insights for the GREBE activities. For instance, the networks of companies and of research and development could be linked better with each other. Recommendations were given for the development of the Entrepreneurship Enabler Scheme. Currently mentoring is not a common practice in the region, but it was considered to have good potential. As a positive trend, the RE enterprises are increasingly cooperating and sharing information with each other. The IAG also discussed how to share the information about GREBE among their wider networks and contribute to the policy development activities of the project.



GREBEs Industry Advisory Group meetings

in Northern Ireland

Action Renewables held the Northern Ireland Industry Advisory Group which took place on Tuesday 5th April in the South West College campus Dungannon. This meeting was chaired by Michael Doran of Action Renewables, which involved members from across Northern Ireland. This was the first meeting in Northern Ireland so the purpose of this, was to inform everyone what the Industry Advisory Group would be achieving and the participation of each individual within the group.

Participants at the IAG meeting included representative from GREBEs other Northern Ireland partner, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Associate Partner South West College, and representatives from other organisations including Invest NI, Fermanagh Enterprise, South East Regional College, North West Regional College, and the Department of Environment.





Policy Workshops

Following the Industry Advisory Group meeting for Ireland, a policy workshop took place in Sligo on Monday 4th April. Action Renewables in Northern Ireland are leading the Policy related activities in the GREBE project, and Michael Doran chaired the workshop. The main objective of this workshop was to discuss all of the policy initiatives within the Republic of Ireland and how they promote opportunities to provide an effective supporting framework for sustainable renewable energy businesses. The workshop was a brilliant opportunity for everyone to give their opinions and views on why they believe a policy was successful or was not successful.

Before the partner meeting in Iceland on 20th September, we had a successful policy meeting in Reykjavik chaired by Michael Doran, with several informative presentations delivered on Iceland's policy in renewable energy from Ingvi Már Pálsson, Director of the Department of Energy and industry in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Baldur Pétursson from the National Energy Authority and from Jón Björn Skúlason, general manager for Nýorka.

More details of our policy workshops will feature in our next e-zine.





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About GREBE

GREBE is a €1.77m, 3-year (2015-2018) transnational project to support the renewable energy sector. It is co-funded by the EU's Northern Periphery & Arctic (NPA) Programme. It will focus on the challenges of peripheral and arctic regions as places for doing business, and help develop renewable energy business opportunities provided by extreme conditions.

Project Partners

GREBE will be operated by eight partner organisations across six regions:

