

# DIRECTION

THE FUTURE OF WIND



Avangrid has gotten 18 letters of intent or support for Excelsior Connect. (Courtesy: Avangrid)

# Avangrid gains support for clean-energy superhighway proposal

Avangrid Inc. recently received 18 letters of intent or support for its clean energy superhighway proposal, Excelsior Connect.

The proposed project is an underground transmission method in response to a call for proposals from New York State's Energy Research and Development Authority.

"The Excelsior Connect project was developed alongside the communities that will surround it. This community-first approach is reflected in the diversity of support we have received—from labor and economic development groups to leading environmental justice organizations," said Catherine Stempien, Avangrid Networks' president and CEO.

The 18 letters of support came from community groups including A.L. Consulting, The 400 Foundation, and Center for NuLeadership on Human Justice and Healing. Community colleges that sent letters include Bronx Community College, SUNY Ulster, and Sustainable CUNY, and energy generators Baron Winds LLC and Northland Power Inc.

The project will use Avangrid's global expertise to transmit 1,200 MW of solar energy and renewable wind power that is generated in upstate New York to New York City using High-Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) line. The line would provide clean, renewable energy generation to Queens, which would improve air quality and help to retire higher-emitting generation.

Other supporters that sent letters are environmental groups Trust for Public Land, West Harlem Environmental Action, and One Tree Planted. Labor organizations also signed on including New York State's Building and Construction Trades Council and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers locals 3 and 1249.

"Greening our cities with mini-forests will help make summer days less hot and can help lower air conditioning," said Carter Strickland, New York's state director for The Trust for

Public Land.

"This new collaboration will bring a variety of benefits to increase access and possibilities for disadvantaged students by providing new skills, pre-apprenticeship opportunities and ongoing green jobs training," said Alan P. Roberts, Ulster County Community College president.

"The partnership will focus on planting trees for environmental impact," said One Tree Planted founder Matt Hill.

Christopher Erikson, IBEW Local 3's business manager, said that Avangrid recognizes the Local's commitment to making sure that renewable energy jobs are also well-paying union jobs.

**MORE INFO** [www.avangrid.com](http://www.avangrid.com)

## SPE Offshore Europe 2021 to showcase energy transition

Energy transition will be the focus of the Society for Petroleum Engineers'

SPE Offshore Europe 2021, a virtual conference that takes place from September 7 to September 10, 2021.

Ten keynote sessions and 14 technical sessions will be on the program, incorporating more than 50 technical papers. Energy transition will be the subject of seven out of 10 keynotes and 50 percent of the technical program.

The opening plenary will include a panel discussion with the theme "Oil and Gas: Working Together for a Net Zero Future." Panelists will include Chris Stark, CEO of the Committee on Climate Change; Gordon Birrell, BP executive vice president, production and operations; Al Cook, Equinor's vice-president of development and production international; and Phil Kirk, Harbour Energy CEO.

Keynote sessions include topics such as delivering carbon capture, utilization, and storage; CCUs and hydrogen at scale; energy islands; facilities of the future, breaking the silo paralysis, ramping up digital to enable a low-carbon industry, and roadmaps to net zero.

Because of the coronavirus pan-



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Energy transition is the focus of SPE Offshore Europe 2021.



The Generation Storage Consumption Supply Energy Centre represents a step-change in the decentralized distribution of low carbon and renewable energy. (Courtesy: Infinite Renewables Group)

democratic, the conference and the exhibition have been divided: An in-person exhibition will happen from February 1 to 4, 2022, and will include new keynote content that will be developed after COP26, The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November 2021.

“The conference program at SPE Offshore Europe has always been a ‘must-attend’ event for those wanting to keep in touch with industry-leading thinking strategically and at a technical level. The industry’s path to decarbonization and role in supporting net zero is top of the agenda this year, and with COP26 just seven weeks later, the program promises to be a real curtain-opener,” said Neil Saunders, SPE Offshore Europe 2021’s conference chair.

“The future of oil and gas in the energy mix is in our hands and SPE Offshore Europe gives us the chance to work together, before and after COP26, to secure our place in a net zero future,” Saunders added.

“The timing of the conference, prior to COP26, and content of the technical program are both opportune and

highly relevant as we experience an acceleration of the energy transition and the industry response,” said Kevin Gallagher, SPE Offshore Europe 2021’s technical committee chair. “We look forward to informative and inspiring technical sessions which prompt numerous important discussions at this pivotal time for our industry.”

**MORE INFO** [www.offshore-europe.co.uk](http://www.offshore-europe.co.uk)

## Infinite launches Wales’ first multi-tech energy center

Infinite Renewables Group Ltd. is launching its first energy center at the Rassau industrial estate in south Wales. The center will include wind turbines, solar photovoltaics, and battery storage, which will provide reliable, cost-efficient, and greener power directly to customers.

“The GSCS (Generation Storage Consumption Supply) Energy Centre represents a step-change in the decentralized distribution of low carbon and renewable energy. The Rassau

scheme aims to share the benefits of multi-technology generation within the immediate community, providing discounted renewable power and reducing the CO2 emissions in the area,” said Andrew Crossman, Infinite’s director.

Shaun Gardner, the managing director of GS Yuasa Manufacturing UK Ltd., said the project will help the company’s Ebbw Vale factory as well as the rest of the Rassau estate.

“The unique combination of our lithium and lead-acid batteries, the latter of which are produced on site in South Wales, allows for the storage of greener energy, generated by either solar or wind, to be used at a later date,” Gardner said.

“Climate change is at the heart of our decision making and we are committed to accelerating the transition to a low carbon energy system in Wales,” said Julie James, Welsh government minister for climate change.

Albion Community Power’s investment director, Marco Yu, praised the project.

“We backed the Infinite team in the early stages of its growth and we are thrilled to be part of its latest pioneering, multi-technology projects that are leading the way in helping local businesses to decarbonize and reduce energy cost while alleviating the electricity load of the electricity grid network,” Yu said.

Work is ongoing on the energy center’s construction. The installation of a 1 MWh rooftop solar panel system is already finished, and approval has already been granted for a wind turbine to directly supply energy to the location.

**MORE INFO** [www.infiniterenewables.com](http://www.infiniterenewables.com)

## WRISE launches Speakers Bureau to support diversity

Women of Renewable Industries and Sustainability (WRISE) recently launched its new Speakers Bureau. The Speakers Bureau is a public, searchable



WRISE's Speakers Bureau has more than 150 qualified individuals representing different technologies, markets, companies, and professional expertise and will be regularly updated with new speakers. (Courtesy: WRISE)

database of qualified speakers willing to speak, present, and engage on renewable-energy topics. The database will be an invaluable resource for conference and event organizers seeking to bring more diverse perspectives into the public discourse on renewable energy.

“For over a decade, WRISE has received requests for speaker recommendations,” said Kristen Graf, WRISE executive director. “Recently, conversations around conference diversity have picked up, and those requests have increased exponentially. In order to continue to innovate and evolve, it remains critical that we hear different ideas and perspectives. Renewable-energy conference organizers need to lead by example and showcase all of the amazing thinkers across our community. There are no excuses for having an all-male or all-white lineup — we know better and we can do better. Representation matters in every aspect of our industry, and I

hope the Speakers Bureau becomes a go-to resource for conference organizers looking for talented speakers to elevate their programs.”

The Speakers Bureau is launching with more than 150 qualified individuals representing different technologies, markets, companies, and professional expertise and will be regularly updated with new speakers. The database is searchable by expertise including technical and non-technical topics related to solar and wind energy, renewable-energy policy, and sustainability.

As part of this initiative, WRISE is expanding the pool of qualified speakers on renewable energy and sustainability topics through a speaker training program. Those who wish to advance and practice their public speaking skills can sign up through the Speakers Bureau platform. ✈

**MORE INFO** [wrisenergy.org/programs/speakers-bureau](http://wrisenergy.org/programs/speakers-bureau)

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