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## CALL FOR SOLUTIONS

### Challenge description – OSTROBOTHNIA

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#### Call title

Energy solutions connecting local resources to local solutions

#### Full description of the energy innovation need

##### **More citizen-led energy initiatives and local energy communities in the region of Ostrobothnia**

In the context of Ostrobothnia, the challenge of bringing in society to accelerate decentralized and local energy solutions set up by 2030 has been recognised as critical for the regional energy transition.

We need innovative solutions connecting local resources to local solutions in energy production and/or energy consumption, e.g. heating, central or distributed energy production or storage, diminishing the use of energy. The journey towards carbon neutrality in Ostrobothnia, getting rid of the use of fossil fuels and basing the energy systems on green renewable energy, is connected to a need to work in new ways to engage different societal group in finding energy solutions based on local resources.

##### **Urgency of the need**

We are standing in front of a fast transition towards renewable energy raising the need for different types of solutions and requiring fundamental social changes to patterns of both consumption and production.

The journey towards basing the energy systems on green renewable energy, will cause, especially during the period of building up the new systems worldwide, a situation where the energy availability in the grid is more intermittent and insecure than it has been. This will be a particular risk in the more sparsely-populated regions at the outer edges of the grid. Thus, actions and solutions that either improve the self-sufficiency of such areas in energy production, or resiliency solutions for energy shortages organised by the users (municipalities, villages, other types of end-user associations) themselves independently of the central actors, are needed more than ever.

##### **Target groups most affected by the need**

The target group most affected by the need is anticipated to be civil society including individual energy consumers, associations, and other citizens organisations.

Depending on the solution suggested and developed, there will be related impact to varying extent on the following target groups:

- Cities and municipalities in the region
- Policy makers
- Politicians
- Industry/private sector
- Researchers/academia



## Functional scope of the pilot

The proposed solution should take into account the following aspects:

- Importance of keeping the citizens at the centre of the energy transition process
- Importance of connecting local resources to local solutions
- Importance of increasing organisational models supporting citizen led energy initiatives, energy communities
- importance of creating connections between stakeholders at different levels (local, municipal, regional, national), representing different sectors (civil society, academia, government, industry).
- Importance of linking the proposed solutions to the regional development challenges “Developing a sustainable energy system” and/or “Developing climate-smart innovations and business models” outlined in the [Regional Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#)

*In addition:*

- The pilot must include a co-creation process carried out in the local languages. The applicants will need to be able to communicate with stakeholder groups in Swedish and Finnish in addition to English.
- Actors must be able to offer their solution in the region of Ostrobothnia

## Expected impact

The granted solutions should succeed in enhancing citizen led energy initiatives as well as increasing connections between stakeholders in order to develop the regional preconditions for implementing and scaling up local energy solutions based on local resources.

## Ethics and Data Protection

For all data collected during any of the phases of the project all activities will be based upon informed consent and informants will be made aware of any possible privacy issue. Under no circumstance will RIPEET include private information, pictures etc. in publications without the explicit and written permission of the respective persons. RIPEET will comply fully with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which will replace the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC (a directive adopted by the European Union designed to protect the privacy and protection of all personal data collected for or about citizens of the EU, especially as it relates to processing, using, or exchanging such data) and EC 2002/58 (confidentiality of information, treatment of traffic data, spam and cookies) when collecting mailing lists of operational personnel and under no circumstance will share this information with 3rd parties.

All activities are conducted applying fundamental ethical principles and relevant national, EU and international legislation, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols. Social scientific research in

this project will be designed and conducted in accordance with the procedures defined by the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the Code of Ethics of the International Sociological Association (ISA) and RESPECT Code of Practice for Socio-Economic Research. Data collection with human subjects will comply with the ethical standards and guidelines of Horizon 2020 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which will be rigorously applied, regardless of the country in which the research is carried out. All research is conducted ensuring respect for the participants and their dignity, protecting their values, rights and interests and fair distribution of research benefits and burden.

The basic and common principles valid for all methods and all subjects involved will be providing participants with full protection for their personal data unless they agree otherwise. Moreover, participants are informed that researchers shall protect them when desired. Personal data will be anonymised and not be shared with third parties. Data will be collected and stored securely

All data collected within this project are carefully protected in compliance with relevant national data protection legislation of the EU member states implementing the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which replaces the European directive 95/46/EC. All research is designed and undertaken to ensure *"the right to privacy, the right to protection of personal data, the right to the physical and mental integrity of a person, the right to non-discrimination"*, following article 19 of the Regulation 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Personal data will be of qualitative and quantitative nature encompassing also audio-visual formats. Personal data will be stored in a way to not allow the identification of the subjects. The beneficiary will not publish any personal data unless participants have explicitly given their permission. Publications based on personal data will only report aggregated data and shall not contain information that may permit the identification of individual participants unless otherwise agreed.

In compliance with EU and national legislation, collected data are stored in computers, laptops, intranets or hard-drives of the consortium partners accessible through institutional password modified periodically (every 6 months in case of storage of personal data), and protected by regularly updated antiviruses. None of the project data will be left inadvertently available by being left on desks or in unlocked premises. All the materials stored in computers are subjected to back up regularly in order to safeguard them from accidental losses. As a general principle, all materials that could lead to an identification of the person (e.g., informed consent, names/codes list of participants to the audit procedure) are stored separately from actual data (questionnaires, transcripts, data files, etc.) and handled by different members of the team.

All the files containing confidential information and personal details of the participants will be password protected, accessible only to the coordinator and concerned work package and task leaders. When they are no more necessary for the project, they are immediately destroyed. Files containing "sensitive" data will be stored encrypted.

## CONTACTS

RIPEET Team in Ostrobothnia (Merinova, University of Vaasa, Regional Council of Ostrobothnia),  
[ripeet@merinova.fi](mailto:ripeet@merinova.fi)

Document contact: Tauno Kekäle, Merinova

