

PRESS RELEASE

Tenth ManagEnergy Annual Conference rewards agencies in the UK and Croatia for outstanding energy-saving projects

European Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger presented today two local energy action awards during the tenth ManagEnergy Annual Conference in Brussels.

The London Development Agency was awarded for its initiative to retrofit buildings with energy-saving measures, while the North-West Croatia Regional Energy Agency won an award for its project encouraging households to install solar energy systems.

Commissioner Oettinger stated: "Strengthening our efforts on energy efficiency and promoting renewables is the best way forward to ensure our safe, sustainable, affordable low carbon energy future. These ManagEnergy Awards are playing a key role in this effort and I welcome the practical actions ManagEnergy is undertaking to promote energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies across Europe."

Commissioner Oettinger presented the awards to conclude the tenth ManagEnergy Annual Conference today in Brussels. This year's conference focused on "Local and regional action for sustainable energy", and presented the latest developments in EU policy and technical support at local and regional level, as well as examples of close collaboration between energy agencies and local authorities.

Rewarding outstanding local energy projects

From a wide range of high-quality case studies submitted for the 2011 ManagEnergy Local Energy Action Award, projects from all over Europe were nominated in two award categories. An expert jury, representing energy agencies, city networks and sustainable energy industry associations, met in Brussels on 9 March to select the best projects in each category, judging the London Development Agency's "RE:FIT" initiative as best "Technical Project" and the North-West Croatia Regional Energy Agency's solar energy scheme as best "Awareness and Information Project".

The annual award ceremony recognises the most outstanding, ambitious and innovative projects in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy that have been implemented by local or regional public authorities, energy agencies and other public and/or private actors.

Supporting grass roots actions for sustainable energy

ManagEnergy is an initiative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Energy. Launched in March 2002 with funding from the Intelligent Energy-Europe programme, the initiative supports actors working on sustainable energy at local and regional levels across Europe. Technical support includes capacity building workshops, partner searches and annual events, while information on case studies, good practice, European legislation and programmes is available on the ManagEnergy website at <http://www.managenergy.net>.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

Winners of the 2011 ManagEnergy Local Energy Action Awards:

Category: Technical Projects

Winner: RE:FIT (London Development Agency, England)

RE:FIT is a cost-neutral procurement initiative allowing the public sector in one of the EU's major cities to retrofit its existing buildings with energy-conservation measures that reduce carbon emissions and achieve substantial energy cost savings. Several leading organisations, including the London Metropolitan Police and London Fire Brigade, took part in a first phase that implemented energy-saving measures in 42 buildings, yielding **annual energy savings worth 1.16 million Euro and cutting 5,000 tonnes of its carbon emissions**. It is estimated that if all public-sector buildings in London used the model, they could save around 580 million Euro in energy costs. Several other UK cities are now replicating the RE:FIT project framework in their public buildings.

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Category: Awareness and Information Project

Winner: "I can have solar collectors too!" (REGEA: North-West Croatia Regional Energy Agency, Croatia)

The project encourages households to install solar energy systems while creating a sustainable financing model to support investment into the scheme. So far, more than 250 solar thermal systems have been installed in households with the support of the scheme. This has resulted in **estimated savings of up to 65% in the water heating costs for a typical household and in annual overall energy savings of circa 1 million kWh**. Around 1/5 of the solar panels are Croatian-made, so the project has also provided a boost to the local economy. The pilot project in Zagreb has proved so successful that several other regions in Croatia have already introduced similar schemes.

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