

Canberra distributed energy systems

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has today announced \$2.05 million in funding to Evoenergy to trial the integration of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) in an online marketplace to allow customers in Canberra to make the most of their "consumer energy".

In partnership with Schneider Electric and GreenSync, the \$4.12 million project will research and test the effect that the integration of DER is having on Canberra's energy grid, allowing the network to better support the connection of further consumer-owned rooftop solar, home batteries, smart appliances, home energy management systems and electric vehicles.

The trial will integrate Evoenergy's existing operating systems with GreenSync's Decentralised Energy Exchange (deX) platform and enrol DER assets into a simulated virtual power plant. This will allow Evoenergy to better manage DER within its network and in the future allow customers to be paid for providing services to the network through their DER assets.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said: "Evoenergy's trial will help to maximise the amount of distributed energy that the network can accommodate, while maintaining the stability of the system. This project will utilise two leading industry platforms to demonstrate a coordinated approach to DER management."

Evoenergy General Manager Fiona Wright said: "Over the past 10 years we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of DER in our network which has changed the way energy flows between homes and businesses. This project is exciting because it will give us a better understanding of how we can unlock the potential of DER in an increasingly decentralised grid."

Schneider Electric Vice President Simon Mouat said: "Managing how DER interacts with the grid will be a critical part of Australia's future energy system. As a global business we are excited to work with Evoenergy in one of the most advanced electricity networks in Australia to define the optimal management of DER and maximise the network's performance."

GreenSync CEO Dr Phil Blythe said: "With ACT's ambitious renewable energy targets driving the uptake of solar and electric vehicles, this is an ideal network environment for us to demonstrate the growing capabilities of smart energy technology, where customer-owned energy resources can actively participate in providing network services for commercial value."

The government announced this morning that Eku Energy will develop, build and operate the battery energy storage system (BESS), which at 250MW/500MWh would be one of the largest of its kind in the country.

First announced as part of the state's 2020-2021 budget with AU\$100 million (US\$67 million) in funding

pledged towards it, the government ran a procurement process for the grid-connected BESS which began in mid-2022.

Ahead of opening that solicitation, the government, together with the Australian National University's Battery Storage and Grid Integration Program (BSGIP) and input from industry stakeholders, held a co-design workshop. Some of the themes that emerged included a recognition that while transmission-connected BESS can be a valuable asset, finding financing remains challenging.

Winning bidder Eku Energy is an energy storage development platform that was launched through the Macquarie Asset Management-owned Green Investment Group (GIG) in late 2022, taking over GIG's development pipeline.

The BESS will store energy generated during times of surplus renewable generation and off-peak times, helping to manage Canberra's peak load by injecting power back to the grid when it is needed.

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