

**UK's ETI doles out £20million to first tranche of renewable technology projects**

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The UK's Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) has decided to award its first tranche of funding to four maritime energy projects – three offshore wind and one tidal technology.

The £20million purse will be distributed between Project Nova, Project Helm Wind, Project Deepwater Turbine and Project ReDAPT. None appear to have any links into Aberdeen.

Project Nova is a UK-based consortium led by Guildford energy specialist OTM Consulting and including representatives from three universities – Cranfield, Strathclyde and Sheffield – the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture (CEFAS) and SME Wind Power.

Key sub-contractors include James Ingram Associates and QinetiQ. The project aims to assess the feasibility of a unique wind turbine with a pair of giant vertical wings, which has the benefit of ruggedness, stability and simpler maintenance access compared with the horizontal axis concept of conventional turbines.

Project Helm Wind comprises a UK-based consortium led by E.ON Engineering and including representatives from Rolls-Royce, BP Alternative Energy and the University of Strathclyde.

The project aims to deliver a concept design and feasibility study for a new offshore-specific windfarm and seeks to overcome the issues facing today's systems, including turbine reliability and accessing equipment for maintenance.

Project Deepwater Turbine is led by Dutch company Blue H Technologies, with representatives from UK groups including BAE Systems, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture, EDF Energy, Romax and SLP Energy. The project aims to design and determine the feasibility and potential of an integrated solution for a 5MW floating offshore wind turbine for deepwater deployment.

Blue H installed the world's first floating wind turbine prototype in the summer of 2008. The company is currently building the first operational 2MW unit in Brindisi, which it expects to deploy offshore Puglia (southern Italy) this year.

Project ReDAPT is fronted by Rolls-Royce and including Tidal Generation, Garrad Hassan, the University of Edinburgh, EDF Energy, E.ON, Plymouth Marine Laboratories and the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC). The project aims to instal and test a 1MW tidal turbine at the EMEC in Orkney, delivering detailed environmental and performance information never before achieved at this scale in real sea conditions.

While maritime energy is the focus of the first round of projects to be funded, the ETI is also addressing the areas of transport, distributed energy, carbon capture and storage and energy networks. It says the next set of offshore wind and marine projects will be announced soon.

The ETI is a Government-led initiative that could eventually achieve a capital clout of £1.1billion, contingent on more companies digging into their pockets and joining up.

There are currently six "private members" – BP, Caterpillar, EDF Energy, E.ON, Rolls-Royce and Shell. The Government has committed to match support for five further members.

The ETI's public funds are received from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) through the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), with

additional funding from the Department for Transport.

These organisations, together with the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), are engaged directly in the ETI's strategy and programme development.

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