RISEnergy

Research Infrastructure Services for Renewable Energy

Industry Workshop - Speakers

Date: 11 November 2026

Venue: EU Projects Zone Hub 3 (Hall C), VIECON – Vienna Congress & Convention Center, Messeplatz 1, 1020 Vienna, Austria.

Enlit Europe

INDUSTRY WORKSHOP

Speakers

RISEnergy
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Dr Venizelos Efthymiou
PHAETHON Centre of Excellence

Dr Venizelos Efthymiou worked for the Electricity Authority of Cyprus from March 1979 up to November 2013 and he left the Company from the post of Executive Manager Networks / Distribution System Operator of Cyprus. He is a member of the Steering Committee of the ETIP SNET, of ETIP PV and of the DSO committee of EURELECTRIC, of the Steering Committee of the SET Plan. Representative of PHAETHON CoE in the associations DERlab, EERA AISBL, EDDIE and EERA JP4SG as Management Board member.



Dr Gabriella Ferruzzi
ENEA Italy

Gabriella Ferruzzi, PhD is a senior researcher at ENEA (Italy). Gabriella Ferruzzi is an ENEA researcher specialising in mathematical modelling, multi-objective optimisation and energy systems management, with experience in European research projects. She earned her PhD in Science and Technology Management from the University of Naples Federico II in 2013, and taught Economics and Electrical Systems Management at University of Naples, Federico II, and the University of Roma. Her international experience includes postdoctoral research at Penn State University on microgrid optimisation and electricity markets, and research at NCAR Boulder on renewable integration. A former RES4CITY Advisory Board member, she leads RISEnergy stakeholder engagement, fostering collaboration between research infrastructures and industry.



Dr Kourosh Malek
Forschungszentrum Jülich

Dr Kourosh Malek is an applied AI scientist and technology commercialisation leader working at the intersection of AI, data infrastructure and energy technologies. He has served as Head of Artificial Material Intelligence, simulations and data labs for energy technologies at Forschungszentrum Jülich since 2021. He is also Founder and Managing Director of FZJ's spin off, ViMi Labs GmbH, a German AI lab, developing intelligent systems and domain-specific reasoning models for industrial R&D and energy sectors.

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Dr Randell Johnson
Acelerex

Dr Randell Johnson is Founder and CEO of Acelerex, with over 25 years of experience in power systems, renewable energy integration and energy storage across more than 40 countries. He has led grid-planning, storage-policy and investment assignments for utilities, governments and development banks. His expertise spans hybrid microgrid automation, battery commissioning, performance testing, and real-time monitoring and control through Acelerex's REX™ platform, connecting energy-system planning with practical implementation and operations. He holds a Ph.D. and a master's degree in Electric Power Engineering, and an M.Sc. in Mathematical Trading and Finance.



Dr Gofran Chowdhury
3E Belgium

Dr Gofran Chowdhury is Head of Innovation at 3E Belgium, where he leads a team of 12 scientists and engineers and a €15M R&D portfolio in AI and digital-twin analytics for solar, wind and battery storage. His tools support 50 GW of renewable assets across 40,000 sites. His background spans EU Horizon research projects and utility-scale solar delivery in Asia. He holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering from KU Leuven Belgium (with imec) and an MSc in Sustainable Energy Engineering from KTH Sweden.



Dr Ugwu Boniface Ifeanyi
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture

Dr Ugwu Boniface Ifeanyi is a faculty member of the Department of Chemical Engineering, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria. He holds B. Eng. and M.Sc. Degrees in Chemical Engineering and a Ph.D in Future Energies with a specialization in catalysis/electrocatalysis for electrochemical bioenergy conversion systems, biofuels, and water treatment. His research focuses on development of nanocomposite materials through designs, synthesis, characterization, and applications. He has published peer-reviewed journal articles on fuel cells, biofuels, and waste water remediation, and received scholarship awards and research grants from both local and international agencies.

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Dr Francisco G.Montoya
Zred

Dr Francisco Gil Montoya is a Full Professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Almería, Spain, where he specialises in electrical power systems, power quality and renewable energy integration. His research combines applied mathematics, signal processing and electrical measurement technologies. He is one of the researchers behind OpenZMeter, an open-source platform for energy monitoring and power-quality analysis. His work focuses on developing innovative methods for monitoring, fault detection and protection in modern electricity networks. He also collaborates internationally on smart grid research, including with SINTEF's Norwegian National Smart Grid Laboratory.



Dr Ulrich Hueck
Hueck Solar Energy

Dr Ulrich Hueck, born 1963 in Germany, joined Siemens in 1994 where he spent 4½ years at fossil power plant sites, worked in engineering and sales, negotiated and executed power plant services in Europe and Africa. He also implemented several technical and IT innovations at Siemens / Siemens Energy. Since 2010, Dr. Hueck has developed a solar thermal innovation, which obtained public funding from the German government and the EU and won two international competitions. Since 2025, he has been leading his own company for further development and implementation of that innovation. Ulrich Hueck began his career as a skilled central heating and ventilation craftsman. He obtained a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of New Mexico, USA, during his Fulbright scholarship, as well as a master's degree and a PhD on the Finite Element Method from the University of Darmstadt, Germany, with research at the University of Cape Town.



Dr Peter Holtappels
KIT

Dr Peter Holtappels is currently Group Leader for Continuous Electrosynthesis at the Institute of Micro Process Engineering at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). He obtained his doctoral degree in Natural Sciences (Dr. rer.Nat.) from the University in Bonn, Germany in 1997. He has continuously been involved in high temperature electrochemistry activities at various institutions and positions in Germany, Denmark and Switzerland up to professor in Electrochemical Processes and Head of Section for Low Temperature Electrochemistry at the Technical University of Denmark. He is currently coordinator of RISEnergy and his research focus is on so called power2X technologies, the conversion and storage of electrical energy into high value fuels and chemicals.

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Hannes Heigl
Fronius

Hannes Heigl, Dipl.-Ing. (FH), is Head of Predevelopment within the Solar Energy R&D division of Fronius International GmbH. Since joining the company in 2000, he has held roles in technical support, project management, product development, and research leadership. His expertise spans photovoltaics, energy storage systems, power electronics, and innovation management. Over the course of his career, he has coordinated numerous national and international research projects and has been closely involved in technology strategy and roadmap development. He is co-inventor of multiple patents in renewable energy technologies and actively contributes to industry and research networks.



Elena Rodriguez Gonzalez
Ormazabal

Elena Rodriguez Gonzalez holds an MSc in Electrical Engineering. Currently, she works as Institutional & Sectoral Relations Director in Ormazabal. She has developed her professional career in the international business area of the Spanish multinational Ormazabal, industrial company expert in customized and high tech electrical solutions. She spent approximately twelve years in international commercial roles across Asia-Pacific, India and the Mediterranean, before creating and leading the company's e-Mobility business. More recently, as Head of Marketing for the Western Europe & Africa region, she led the market launch of the company's innovative SF6-free range of MV switchgears.



Sarah Essam
EU-Solaris ERIC

Sarah Essam has over four years of experience in project management, working with and coordinating international teams. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Physics and a Master's degree in Renewable Energy Engineering, with a focus on energy policies and European standards. At EU-SOLARIS ERIC, her role focuses on managing European projects, innovation, technology transfer, and engagement with industrial stakeholders.