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Elia and 50Hertz call for start-ups to compete for their third Open Innovation Challenge

- This year's theme is the improvement of day to day activities by using innovative technologies in asset management and maintenance
- The final takes place in Berlin on June 20th 2019

Brussels – Berlin – Copenhagen - With the third Open Innovation Challenge, Elia Group calls for ideas from start-ups across the world to improve the day-to-day operations of its two electricity transmission companies: Elia in Belgium and 50Hertz in Germany. More than ever, it is important to stay ahead in the rapidly changing energy business environment. This is why the third Open Innovation Challenge is focusing on the newest technologies like artificial intelligence, internet of things, augmented reality and virtual reality to help our employees in their day-to-day activities. Start-ups from all over the world can apply via the website <https://innovationchallenge.eliagroup.eu/> The final selection will take place in Berlin on June 20th 2019.

Our energy system is rapidly changing. Renewable energy integration and increased interconnection make the daily operation of the electricity system more complex. The introduction of new technologies allows Elia Group to improve the use and maintenance of its assets in many ways. However, to keep pace with these innovations it is important to create strong partnerships and collaborations.

Elia Group is organising the Open Innovation Challenge for the third consecutive year. This year, the competition aims to develop solutions for improving the day-to-day activities of work force in the scope of asset management and maintenance. Elia Group is already testing block chain, the use of drones for inspections, artificial intelligence, etc. However, in many other activities of the company, digitalization and innovation can contribute to the overall wellbeing of our employees and reduce safety risks. Examples include machine learning to detect wrong input data, connected clothes to monitor health of workers, etc. The possibilities are limitless.

Quote Johan Maricq, Innovation Project Leader at Elia Group

As a top-5 player in Europa, Elia Group is constantly on the look-out for new innovative ideas to improve our day-to-day business. To achieve this, we need to join forces and create strong common ecosystems. Companies from different sectors can help us with new solutions and different approaches to our daily challenges on the field. This is why we are reaching out to innovative start-ups and SMEs (Small to Medium enterprises). For them it is a great opportunity to have an incredible experience at the center of the European power system.

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Start-ups and SMEs from all over the world can apply for the competition, but only the best solutions will have the opportunity to pitch in front of the senior executives and jury of Elia Group during the final selection day in Berlin .

The winner of the competition will not only receive a 20.000 EUR prize, but will also bring, in collaboration with Elia Group, the idea out of the lab and into a solution that will be implemented within the company. To ensure the right fit between the winning company and Elia Group, the Danish accelerator and consultancy company Accelerace is contributing in the project.

Quote Jes Nordentoft, Business Accelerator and Investment Manager in Accelerace

“We have had the pleasure of working with forward-thinking Elia Group for a few years, and the Open Innovation Challenge is an excellent opportunity for start-ups to break through the doors of a large energy company.”

This is the third Open Innovation Challenge that Elia Group launches. In 2017, the focus was on how Elia could improve the public acceptance of the infrastructure. The winner, Swiss company Gilytics (former Ensiplan), made a successful proof-of-concept of their web-platform together with Elia, which now uses the application in its daily business. Last year’s challenge was on load and generation forecasting and was won by PowerMarket, a spin-out from Oxford University, that is currently running their proof-of-concept with Elia.

Interested companies can apply for the Open Innovation via the online platform: <https://innovationchallenge.eliagroup.eu/>



About the Elia Group



ONE OF EUROPE'S TOP FIVE PLAYERS

The Elia Group is active in electricity transmission. We ensure that generation and consumption are balanced around the clock, supplying 30 million end users with electricity. With subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and north-west Germany (50Hertz), we operate 18,600 km of high-voltage connections. As such, our group is one of Europe's top 5. With a reliability level of 99.999%, we give society a robust power grid, which is important for socio-economic prosperity. We also aspire to be a catalyst for a successful energy transition towards a reliable, sustainable and affordable energy system.

WE MAKE THE ENERGY TRANSITION HAPPEN

By expanding international high-voltage connections and integrating ever-increasing amounts of renewable energy generation, the Elia Group promotes both the integration of the European energy market and the decarbonisation of our society. The Elia Group is also innovating its operational systems and developing market products so that new technologies and market parties can access our grid, thus making the energy transition happen.

IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIETY

As a key player in the energy system, the Elia Group is committed to working in the interest of society. We respond to the rapidly changing energy mix, i.e. the increase in renewable energy, and constantly adapt our transmission grid. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget, with a maximum focus on safety. When we carry out our projects, we manage stakeholders proactively by establishing two-way communication with all affected parties very early on in the development process. We also offer our expertise to our sector and relevant authorities to build the energy system of the future.

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

In addition to its activities as a transmission system operator, the Elia Group provides various consulting services to international customers through its subsidiary Elia Grid International (EGI). Elia is also part of the Nemo Link consortium that is building the first subsea electrical interconnector between Belgium and Great Britain.

The Group operates under the legal entity Elia System Operator, a listed company whose core shareholder is the municipal holding company Publi-T.

www.elia.be/www.eliagroup.eu

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