

Helsinki Energy Challenge

One of the leading cities in Finland in terms of combating climate change is Helsinki. The city's main goal is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. One of the Helsinki's ideas for achieving the aforementioned goal is a year-long international competition called the '[Helsinki Energy Challenge](#)'. This is a global competition with a prize pool of one million euros.

The [Helsinki Energy Challenge](#) is a public competition to which anyone can apply, regardless of nationality. The competition is open to start-ups, larger, smaller companies, research institutions, universities and even individual experts. The team has to consist of at least two members. Teams develop projects of ventures to answer the question: „How can we decarbonise the heating of Helsinki, using as little biomass as possible?”

The 2021 competition attracted 252 entries from 35 countries. An international jury of six specialists selected 10 finalists, consisting of more than 100 people from over 40 organisations in 12 countries. Eventually, four of the ten projects were rewarded in the competition. As the mayor of Helsinki, Jan Vapaavuori, remarked: „...the biggest winner of the competition is the city of Helsinki itself, as well as other cities around the world who will be able to benefit from the knowledge, experiences, ideas and insights gathered here.”

The organisation of this competition expresses the desire to involve the international community in developing solutions in Helsinki. Such an idea allows the city authorities to initiate innovations and also provides an opportunity to implement interesting ideas within Finland.

The award-winning ideas were:

- [Helsinki's Hot Heart](#), - a flexible system of 10 floating reservoirs in the sea, using different energy sources, containing 10 million cubic metres of hot seawater.
- [HIVE](#), - a flexible plan based on proven green technologies and solutions, such as the use of seawater heat pumps, electric boilers, solar panels and demand management strategies.
- [Beyond fossils](#), - The energy transition model based on open and technology-neutral auctions that promote clean energy sources for heating. This model aims to achieve carbon neutrality in Helsinki in a flexible and innovative way, opening up new opportunities and ways of working.
- [Smart Salt City](#), - this solution combines innovative thermochemical energy storage methods and artificial intelligence with energy technologies already available on the market.

The Helsinki Energy Challenge competition is an excellent example of engaging authorities, citizens and people from all over the world to create solutions for the green transition. The idea of the competition can be used on a smaller and larger scale in other countries.

With its intensive efforts to combat climate change and its search for new, innovative solutions, Helsinki can be a model for other cities around the world.



Co-funded by
the European Union



GREEN
INDUSTRY
FOUNDATION

Sources:

- <https://energychallenge.hel.fi/news/press-release-helsinki-energy-challenge-results-announced-city-equipped-future-energy>
- <https://energychallenge.hel.fi/>
- <https://www.hel.fi/static/kanslia/energy-challenge/helsinki-energy-challenge-competition-program-updated-31032020.pdf>
- <https://www.hel.fi/static/kanslia/energy-challenge/the-hot-heart-final-entry-public.pdf>
- <https://www.dezeen.com/2021/03/26/carlo-ratti-associati-winners-helsinki-energy-challenge/>



Co-funded by
the European Union



GREEN
INDUSTRY
FOUNDATION