

EUR 100,000 for the development of sustainability projects in Slovenia

At an event marking the completion of the public call for sustainability projects drawn up by GEN-I as part of its celebration of 15 years of supplying electricity to households and small businesses, Slovenia's leading electricity supplier awarded a total of EUR 100,000 to the three most promising applications. These projects could become a reality and represent an important step forward towards the green transition.

Ljubljana, 18 October 2024 – In spring this year, with the aim of helping to create a green future, GEN-I published a call for applications for the co-financing of the development of new sustainability projects. The call was targeted at non-commercial organisations, NGOs, private institutes and start-ups. Fifty-seven organisations applied to the call, which was held between 22 May and 10 July this year. The three best applications received EUR 100,000 between them at the gala ceremony, which took place at the GEN-I offices in Ljubljana. The winners will use the money to develop and deliver their project ideas.

The following winners were chosen by the committee tasked with assessing the applications, which was made up of staff from the GEN-I Group with expertise in product and service development, retail sales, energy and sustainability regulations, compliance and strategic communication:

- **Zavod YouSea institute** – Project title: V spomin velikim (To the memory of the greats), EUR 40,000 awarded: This initiative, which involves an innovative below-surface marine installation, will help preserve marine ecosystems and increase biodiversity.
- **Passivus, d.o.o.** – Project title: Pametni pasivni rastlinjak (Smart passive greenhouse), EUR 30,000 awarded: This project combines modern technology and natural materials to create an energy-saving greenhouse that will enable plants to be grown in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- **Center zelenih tehnologij, d.o.o. (Green Technology Centre)** – Project title: Mobilen avtonomen vir energije za ustvarjalne skupnosti (Mobile autonomous energy source for creative communities), EUR 30,000 awarded: This solution will provide energy independence at different locations with the help of renewable energy, making life easier in more remote areas.

The GEN-I Group, which organised the call for sustainability applications to mark 15 years of energy supply to households and small businesses, is one of the leading green transition companies in the Slovenian energy sector. Since 2021 it has supplied its customers exclusively with electricity that does not produce CO₂ emissions. It is committed to the green transition in all areas of operation. *'Our sustainability projects initiative is part of wider efforts to promote innovations that help fulfil the responsibility we all have to future generations,'* explained **GEN-I management board president Maks Helbl**. *'We are delighted at the great interest shown by enterprises in our call for applications, which has stimulated the development of projects with the potential to have a positive impact on wider society and the environment. On behalf of GEN-I, I would like to thank all the organisations that spent time and effort on applying to our call. Of course, sincere congratulations go to the winning organisations for their highly promising projects. With the help of the prize money, they might just be able to put them into practice.'*

'When assessing the applications, we also focused on how feasible the project was, including in terms of the funds available and the time frame, and how well it had been designed,' said **Majda Volk, GEN-I's retail sales director**. *'We gave precedence to projects that have the ability to bring long-term benefits to the wider community. One important criterion was therefore whether it complied with ESG (environmental, social and governance) principles. We also looked at the sustainability of the business model and assessed*

whether the project had long-term prospects of success after co-financing comes to an end. Our aim was therefore to support financially sustainable and promising solutions.'

*'Taking part in the GEN-I call for sustainable projects was a great experience for us. During the application process itself, we became so excited in our project idea that we decided we would go ahead with it even if we weren't one of the winners,' explained the **Zavod YouSea** institute. 'We received the news that "V spomin velikim" would be co-financed by GEN-I with great pleasure and pride. This will enable us to carry out this project, which we believe in, to the very best of our ability. This support gives a positive boost and new impetus to our mission to preserve marine biodiversity and create sustainable solutions for the future of our seas. We are delighted to be able to take a further step forward towards protecting the environment and raising public awareness.'*

*'For us, participation in this call for applications gave us the chance to test our idea and our vision of a mobile autonomous energy unit,' said the **Green Technology Centre**. 'It will enable public events to be held in areas that are more difficult to get to and where connection to the electricity grid is impossible. We believe that creative communities will be delighted with our project, which will open up new fields of creativity to them. We are happy that our sustainability project connects science, technology and art with a whole range of social activities, and offers a new platform on which creativity can flourish.'*

The **Passivus** organisation were also more than happy to offer their project up for evaluation: *'When we looked at the call, we felt it was tailor-made for us, as our team is all about sustainability. The news that we were one of the three winners was, for us, important recognition of our work. It makes us more visible, not least because the recognition comes from a highly reputable company like GEN-I. The prize will help us speed up development so that we are able to create our Passivus passive wooden greenhouse, which is our outdoor sustainability showroom, with greater speed in the coming year.'*

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