

PUT ENERGY IN (Y)OUR FUTURE

2025-2026





Contents

Individual Assignments

- 4 Beyond Power Generation: Controllable PV Inverters in Action

Learning Community Future Heat Heroes

- 5 Van lokale PC naar de cloud: het digitaliseren van warmtepompdata in het HEAT House
- 6 Decentralised Thermal Energy Storage

Learning Community Hydrogen

- 7 Design and Validation of a Modular Battery Test Methodology for Flexible Energy System Applications
- 8 The Robot That Can Move in Every Direction
- 9 Wie mag er eigenlijk rijden op de waterstofsnelweg?
- 10 Van één vaste casus naar elk energiesysteem: hoe ik de EnHyCo tool modulair maakte

Learning Community REMO-lab

- 11 Smaller, Smarter, Greener: Decentralised Hydrogen and Methanol Production from Biogas
- 12 Electrocoagulation: waste to nutrients

Learning Community Urban Energy

- 13 Van brede verkenning naar concreet duurzaam advies
- 14 From Architecture to Energy System: Powering Sustainable Off-Grid Floating Homes through Roof Design
- 15 When an Idea Begins with an Image
- 16 How Renewable Energy Systems Influence Electricity Supply and Emissions in Dutch Greenhouses
- 17 Van wisselwoning naar starterswoning
- 18 Van de tekentafel naar het water: een nieuw thuis op pontons
- 19 Floating Futures: Designing for Human Needs
- 20 Learning Community, Floating Future: Amphibious housing in the province of Groningen
- 21 Transparant hout: een mooi materiaal, maar hoe komt het verder?

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

- 22 Step-by-step blogging Entrance
- 24 Citizen Participation in a Positive Energy District
- 25 How the circular plastic transition can strengthen the energy transition
- 26 Waarom context en multidisciplinair onderzoek echt het verschil maken
- 27 People don't just live in neighbourhoods, they define them and build emotional bonds with them. Through their homes, daily routines, familiar streets, and shared spaces, places become meaningful

Voorwoord

Beste lezer,

We hebben studenten gevraagd hun unieke leerervaring bij Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy van de van de Hanze, in de vorm van een toegankelijke blog, met je te delen. Voor je ligt de bundeling van deze blogs, waarin de studenten je een kijkje geven in hun leerervaring bij Entrance.

De uniciteit van de leerervaring bij Entrance ligt in de multidisciplinaire benadering. Entrance biedt studenten een rijke, inspirerende leer- en onderzoeksomgeving, waarin grote maatschappelijke vragen en opdrachten op het thema energietransitie, altijd vanuit verschillende perspectieven worden benaderd. De student werkt aan een opdracht vanuit het eigen vakgebied, maar niet zonder de vraag ook vanuit het perspectief van studenten, onderzoekers en werkveldvertegenwoordigers uit andere domeinen te hebben bekeken.

In de leeromgeving die Entrance biedt, ontwikkelen studenten ook competenties die nodig zijn om in complexe, multidisciplinaire contexten vorm te kunnen geven aan het versnellen van de energietransitie, zoals bijvoorbeeld transitievaardigheden.

De studenten nemen je mee in hun leerproces en de resultaten daarvan en vertellen over de

uitdagingen die ze zijn tegengekomen. Je krijgt een beeld van de diversiteit aan opdrachten én opleidingen en van de complexiteit van het vraagstuk energietransitie. Een vraagstuk waarin een enorme maatschappelijke opdracht voor ons allen ligt. Een vraagstuk dat vraagt om professionals die – vanuit politieke, economische, sociale, technologische, ecologische en juridische opleidingsachtergronden – elkaar leren verstaan en die leren begrijpen dat ze elkaar nodig hebben om (sneller) duurzame antwoorden te vinden op de complexe vragen waar we met elkaar voor staan.

We zijn als lerende kennissgemeenschap Entrance, erg trots op alle studenten die dit jaar met hun opdracht of onderzoek hebben bijgedragen aan het versnellen van de energietransitie en ik dank hen dan ook namens alle collega's, heel hartelijk voor hun inzet.

Ik wens je veel leesplezier.

Anke de Poorte

Kwartiermaker Leren & Innoveren in de Energietransitie, Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy

PUT ENERGY IN (Y)OUR FUTURE

Individual Assignments

Beyond Power Generation: Controllable PV Inverters in Action

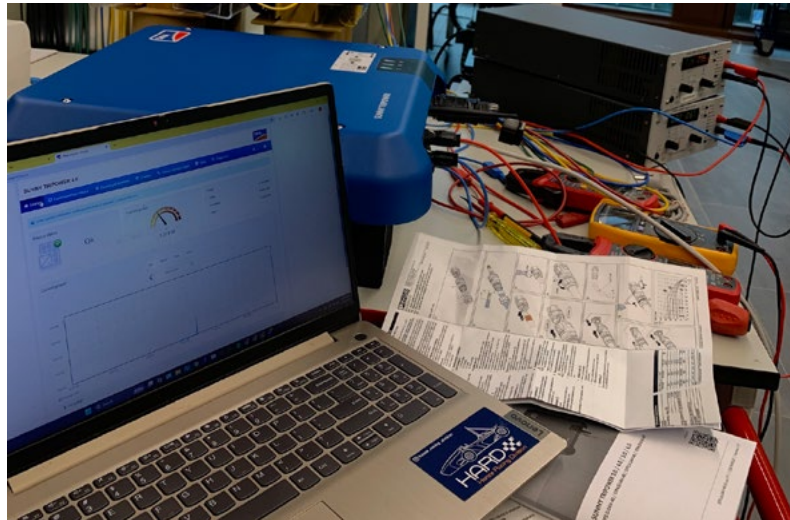
During my internship at Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy, working on the SolarNL project, the objective was not simply to make photovoltaic inverters operate, but to make them *controllable, observable, and usable for research*. A PV inverter that only converts DC to AC adds limited value to a *living lab*. The real challenge is enabling structured active power (P) and reactive power (Q) control, combined with reliable monitoring through Modbus based communication and a simple usable user interface.

The work focused on two living lab locations: the Entrance Carport (with an outdated, inoperable PV system and missing monitoring) and the Energy Lab's Microgrid (with no PV integration for grid and island-mode research). The internship scope ultimately concentrated on the Microgrid validation, while the Carport implementation was delivered as a proposed, documented design for future commissioning.

The core idea: grid following configuration

The inverters used in this project are grid-following SMA units: a three-phase Sunny Tri power (STP4.0) for the Microgrid, and

Sunny Boy (SB3.0) single-phase inverters intended for the Carport. Grid-following matters because these devices cannot form a grid on their own, rather they require a stable voltage/frequency reference and will disconnect if conditions move outside permitted ranges. In the Microgrid, that reference comes either from the public grid (grid-connected mode) or from a synchronous generator (islanded mode). This single detail shaped most design decisions: before talking about control, you must guarantee a stable reference and compatible protection behaviour.



Hardware reality: insulation faults and protection coordination challenges

Commissioning the STP4.0 in a lab environment triggered an insulation monitoring fault. The reason is painfully practical: transformer-less inverters continuously check DC insulation to ground, and lab DC rails can create leakage paths that look unsafe to the inverter. The reliable fix was to simulate PV input using **floating DC power supplies in series**, which allowed the inverter to enter normal operation and feed power into the AC rail. Moving on to the other inverter, the SB3.0 introduced a different class of problem. In testing, it refused to

operate normally due to residual current interactions: the inverter's internal monitoring and the lab's external RCD behaviour did not play as intended. That result wasn't "just a lab issue", it directly influenced the Carport design, because similar protection types exist on-site. A workaround using a lab rectifier confirmed the inverter itself was functional, while the protection coordination remains the integration challenge to solve before Carport commissioning.

Software and control: Modbus TCP + Node-RED.

With the electrical setup stable, the next step was making the inverter *communicate*. Modbus

TCP using the SunSpec profile was used for both read and write access, with Node-RED acting as the client and the inverter as the server. Monitoring included core parameters like P, Q, frequency, voltages, currents, and total yield, and control focused on active power limitation and reactive power percentage control.

The unexpected lesson: scale factors (SF) can break your dashboard. Polling SF registers at a 1500ms interval was unreliable, so the practical solution was to hardcode known multipliers in function nodes to keep the UI accurate and stable. That's not theoretically suboptimal, yet operationally robust for a living lab where students need consistent behaviour.

What worked: Microgrid validation and island-mode behaviour

In the Microgrid, the monitoring and control stack passed key operational criteria: stable Modbus polling, correct real-unit display, and successful P/Q control via the dashboard. In island

mode, the generator provided the grid-forming reference, and the inverter synchronized and operated within expected bounds. A notable observation was that inverter behaviour depended strongly on frequency and voltage conditions. Exactly what you want in a research setup, because it makes grid-following behaviour visible instead of hidden.

Conclusion: a validated Microgrid solution and a ready Carport blueprint

The Microgrid implementation demonstrates that a grid-following PV inverter can be integrated reliably when (1) a stable reference exists, (2) Modbus mapping and scaling are handled correctly, and (3) Node-RED providing a clear monitoring/control interface.

The Carport piece is prepared as a documented design and test plan, with the main remaining challenge being protection coordination (especially around RCD/RCMU behavior) and on-site commissioning constraints.

A blog by: Navod Yatawara, fourth year Electrical Engineering student Participated in the project SolarNL

Learning Community Future Heat Heroes

Van lokale PC naar de cloud: het digitaliseren van warmtepompdata in het HEAT House

Binnen de energietransitie speelt onze warmtevoorziening een cruciale rol. In de echte wereld verandert het weer voortdurend, wat het lastig maakt om verschillende warmtesystemen eerlijk en reproduceerbaar te testen. Om dit probleem op te lossen beschikt Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy over het HEAT House.

In het HEAT House kunnen warmtepompen, cv-ketels, afgiftesystemen, isolatieconcepten en complete klimaatsystemen onder specifieke omstandigheden worden onderzocht. De data die uit deze testsystemen voortkomt, werd tot nu toe uitsluitend lokaal opgeslagen op een computer in de bedieningsruimte via het programma LabVIEW. Het online en toegankelijk maken van deze data was de centrale uitdaging van mijn project.

Digitale infrastructuur van de testomgeving

Als stagiair bij Entrance ben ik het afgelopen half jaar bezig geweest met het ontwerpen en realiseren van een dataplatform om deze lokale testdata beschikbaar te

maken. Het doel van de opdracht was om de data te 'bevrijden' uit het fysieke gebouw en over te brengen naar een toegankelijk online platform, zodat onderzoe-



kers en studenten de resultaten duidelijk in een overzichtelijke visualisatie kunnen inzien zonder technische kennis te hebben in LabVIEW.

Het HEAT House is uitgerust met een groot aantal sensoren verspreid over de verschillende zones, zoals de binnenklimaatruimte, de isolatieschil en de machinekamer. Bij een specifiek experiment is lang niet altijd de data van alle sensoren relevant. Er moet dus vooraf gespecificeerd kunnen worden met welk specifiek experiment iemand bezig is. De ontwikkelde software maakt het mogelijk om voor elk uniek experiment een selecte

groep sensoren samen te stellen. De meetwaarden van deze geselecteerde groep sensoren kan dan vervolgens op een visualisatieplatform gevonden worden.

Dit proces begint in LabVIEW in de bedieningsruimte, van waaruit de sensorwaarden worden geüpload. Vervolgens wordt deze data online opgevangen door een broker client, die speelt als een tussenpersoon om het dataverkeer te reguleren. Deze broker stuurt de gegevens door naar een database voor veilige opslag. Tot slot is er een visualisatieplatform die contact met de database heeft om de specifieke meetwaarden van het experiment

op te halen en om te zetten in grafieken.

Visualisatie en gebruikersinterface

Naast het technische aspect heb ik door middel van literatuuronderzoek en interviews met eindgebruikers onderzocht hoe het visualisatieplatform het beste ingericht kan worden. Tijdens dit onderzoek kwam een belangrijk verandpunt naar voren: hoewel er een enorme hoeveelheid meetgegevens beschikbaar is, draait het bij een experiment uiteindelijk om de data van specifieke sensorgroepen binnen een heel duidelijke tijdsfase. Een onderzoeker wil bijvoorbeeld precies binnen dát ene specifieke uur kunnen zien hoe het is gegaan met de geselecteerde sensoren van die experimentengroep.

Het platform moet daarom strikt overzichtelijk zijn. Het moet de juiste inzichten bieden binnen het gekozen tijdsbestek, maar moet tegelijkertijd zoveel mogelijk onnodige data weglaten om te zorgen dat het dashboard overzichtelijk blijft.

Een blog door: Kars Hekman, vierdejaarsstudent HBO-ICT Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Future Heat Heroes

Terugblik
De realisatie van dit dataplatform is erop gericht om de complexe testgegevens uit het HEAT House centraal en overzichtelijk samen te brengen. Waar de data voorheen lokaal geïsoleerd bleef, wordt deze nu op één concrete plek opgeslagen, wat een betrouwbare basis biedt voor toekomstige terugblik en analyses door onderzoekers en studenten. Ook biedt het platform in de mogelijkheid om in de toekomst eventueel bepaalde resultaten openbaar te tonen.

Ik kijk met veel plezier terug op mijn stageperiode bij Entrance. Ik heb niet alleen diepgaande technische kennis opgedaan binnen mijn eigen onderzoek naar datastromen, maar door de innovatieve omgeving van Entrance heb ik ook veel geleerd over andere projecten binnen de energietransitie. Dit project laat zien dat een gestructureerde digitale opslag onmisbaar is om de kennis binnen het warmteonderzoek te behouden.

Learning Community Future Heat Heroes

Decentralised Thermal Energy Storage

The increasing use of renewable energy creates a persistent mismatch between when power is produced and when it is actually needed. Excess generation during off-peak hours cannot always be used immediately, and without a way to store it, that energy is simply wasted. Converting electricity into heat and storing it for later use is one of the most straightforward ways to solve this problem.

Sand, a Steel Drum, and Some Wire

Sand was chosen as the storage medium because it holds heat for a long time and has desirable thermal properties. The drum itself is a standard 55-gallon steel oil drum, which costs less on second-hand platforms than the dry weight of the materials. Inside it, eight Nichrome resistance wire coils are wound around brick beams and heat the sand when electricity is supplied, and the heat slowly spreads outward through the material. A copper pipe spirals down through the sand carrying sunflower oil, which picks up heat and delivers it to a heat exchanger outside the drum. The outside is wrapped in rockwool to keep the surface temperature safe. The entire prototype costs less than 500 €.

Charging When Energy is Cheap

The system charges overnight and around midday when electricity prices are low, and releases heat during morning and evening peak hours. A microcontroller handles the scheduling, reads three thermocouples inside the drum, and adjusts the operational state of the prototype accordingly. An interesting aspect of this design is that the rate of discharge is not software controlled. Heat diffuses through the sand slowly and predictably, so the system releases energy at a rate determined by the physical properties of the materials and the geometry of the components.

Comparison

A lithium-ion battery of equivalent capacity costs somewhere between 4,000 and 8,000 euros,

carries around 2,000 kg of CO₂ emissions from manufacturing, and needs replacing after 8 to 15 years. The thermal energy storage prototype costs less than 500 euros to build, produces roughly 80 kg of emissions, and has no electrochemical components which degrade over time. The trade-off is control; A lithium-ion battery responds in milliseconds and can be charged or discharged on command, while the thermal storage device operates with thermal lag of approximately six hours. For daily heat management it lines up well with how energy prices actually move through the day, but it will never offer the instant, programmable dispatch that a battery can.

The Bigger Picture

The thermal energy storage prototype is a nice proof of concept, but the real potential of this solution sits at a much larger scale of adoption. Thousands of these systems distributed across homes and neighbourhoods would collectively represent an enormous thermal storage buffer; Excess renewable energy generated during off-peak hours would be absorbed and held until demand picks up, instead

of being wasted. That constant realignment of supply and demand throughout the day would naturally flatten the price fluctuations and improve the competitiveness of renewable energy technologies.

A blog by: Danail Valov, fourth year student of Mechanical Engineering Participated in the Learning Community Future Heat Heroes

Learning Community Hydrogen

Design and Validation of a Modular Battery Test Methodology for Flexible Energy System Applications

Thousands of Dutch households are installing battery systems to store solar energy, respond to dynamic electricity tariffs, and participate in flexibility services. In response to this many emerging technologies are being researched. But here is an uncomfortable question: how do we actually know these batteries will do what was promised, or calculated? The short answer is, we don't, at least not under the conditions that matter.

What this project means

When a battery manufacturer publishes a datasheet, the numbers come from controlled lab tests using constant charge and discharge cycles. That tells you something, but it does not tell you how the battery behaves when your solar panels are producing unevenly, when a dynamic tariff signal tells the system to charge and discharge several times per hour, or when the grid operator asks it to respond within seconds for frequency regulation. This also applies to a lack of readily-available non-safety focused testing facilities for batteries.

This gap has real consequences. A battery rated for a certain capacity at constant load may deliver significantly less under the irregular patterns of an actual home. Efficiency drops, degradation accelerates unpredictably, and response times that look good on paper fall short under dynamic conditions. For homeowners, this means uncertainty. For researchers and grid operators, it means no reliable way to compare products on equal terms.

What was done

As part of my graduation project at Entrance, within the national BatteryNL research program, I set out to develop a battery test

methodology that bridges this gap. The goal was to create a structured and repeatable way to evaluate any residential battery system under realistic operating conditions, regardless of its manufacturer or chemistry.

The starting point was a thorough analysis of existing international standards. What I found confirmed the problem: the main performance standard does not even include a test category for self-consumption, the most common way Dutch households actually use their batteries. Safety standards are well developed, but the industry does not yet have a reliable way to test whether a battery performs as needed in practice.

The methodology I designed is built around three groups of tests, ordered by data dependency. Baseline tests run first and establish the fundamental reference values: demonstrated capacity, round-trip efficiency, internal resistance, thermal behaviour, and more. Dynamic response tests come next, using those baseline values to define their power commands, measuring how quickly and accurately the battery follows step

changes and continuous dispatch profiles. Finally, composite tests combine outputs from both groups into an overall health score and other performance parameters.

This modular structure means that even the baseline group alone produces a meaningful characterisation. Each additional group adds depth without invalidating earlier results, and future researchers can extend the methodology without redesigning what already exists.

Individually, one of the most valuable parts of this project was the proof-of-concept validation on the existing test bench at Entrance, a Pylontech battery paired with a Victron inverter. The real system immediately revealed things that no amount of desk research could have predicted. The battery's power limits turned out to be asymmetric between charge and discharge. The battery management system had current thresholds that affected when it would actually respond to commands. The increasing heat of summer introduced its own unique challenge, that many would not expect the Dutch weather to provoke.

These discoveries directly shaped the final instrumentation and layout recommendations for Entrance's new containerised test facility. Without running the actual tests, we would have designed around assumptions instead of evidence.

The energy transition depends not just on installing more batteries, but on knowing what those batteries can actually do. This methodology gives Entrance the ability to independently evaluate any battery that enters the lab and determine its suitability for specific flexibility services: from peak shaving to frequency regulation. As BatteryNL continues to advance battery technology in the Netherlands, having a reliable and realistic way to test these systems is a necessary foundation, and arriving at this deliverable hopefully advances it.

A blog by: Jose Pujol Freire, fourth year student of Electrical Engineering Participated in the Learning Community Hydrogen

Een blog door: Niels Takkenkamp, vierdejaarsstudent HBO-Rechten
Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Hydrogen

Learning Community Hydrogen

Van één vaste casus naar elk energiesysteem: hoe ik de EnHyCo tool modulair maakte

Stel: je hebt een rekentool voor waterstofenergiesystemen, maar die tool werkt alleen voor één specifieke situatie. Je kunt er niets aan aanpassen, niets toevoegen, en als je een andere casus wilt doorrekenen, moet je de broncode zelf opengooien. Dan is de tool eigenlijk geen tool, maar meer een bevroren snapshot van één project. Dat was de situatie waar ik in februari 2026 mee te maken kreeg bij het EnHyCo project bij Entrance, en dat was meteen ook mijn opdracht: verander dat.

Een tool die vastzat aan Hoogeveen

De EnHyCo tool (kort voor Entrance Hydrogen Configurator) is een Python-applicatie waarmee je energiesystemen met waterstof kunt simuleren en optimaliseren. De tool was gebouwd als proof-of-concept voor een project in Hoogeveen, met een vaste opstelling van zonnepanelen, windturbines, een elektrolyser, een batterij en waterstofopslag. Al die waarden lagen hard in de code verankerd. Wil je een andere combinatie proberen, of een component weglaten? Dat kon niet zonder handmatig in de code te duiken.

Onderzoekers, studenten en andere partners willen de tool inzetten als startpunt voor nieuwe projecten. Die behoefte was er, maar de tool kon die niet invullen. Mijn opdracht was dus: maak de tool flexibel, zodat gebruikers zelf hun energiesysteem kunnen samenstellen.

Het moment dat alles duidelijk werd

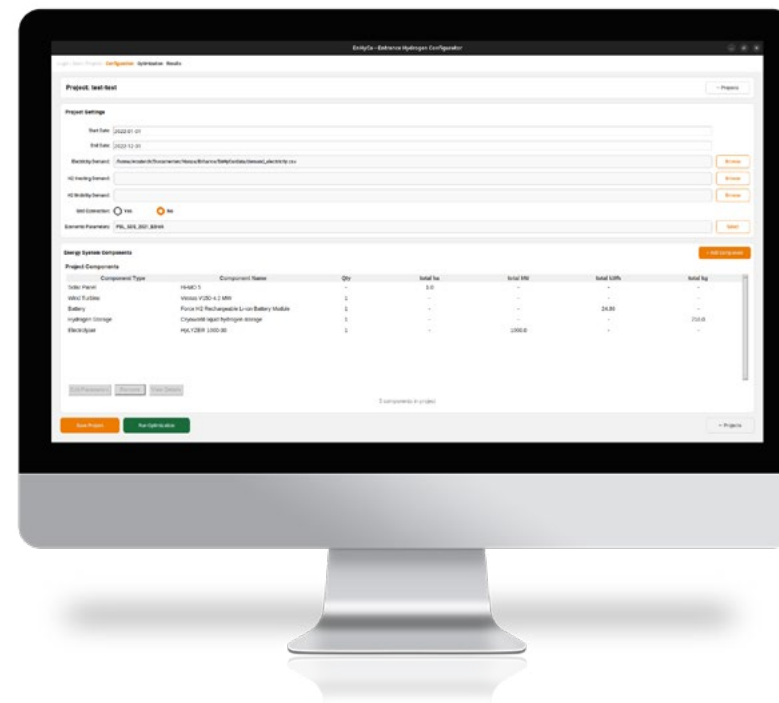
Vroeg in het project bekeek ik de code van de originele simulatiemodule. Wat ik aantrof, maakte de opdracht meteen concreet: één functie van meer dan vijfhonderd regels, zonder duidelijke scheiding tussen de verschillende componenten. Zonnepane-

len, windturbines, elektrolyser, alles door elkaar en onlosmakelijk verbonden. Als je iets wilde wijzigen, moest je weten hoe de hele functie werkte.

Dat was een leermoment. Niet alleen voor dit project, maar in het algemeen: een goede software-architectuur is geen luxe, het is een voorwaarde voor toekomstige aanpasbaarheid. Dat inzicht stuurde de rest van mijn aanpak.

Bouwen vanuit een nieuw fundament

Op basis van literatuuronderzoek naar softwarearchitectuur koos ik voor een modulaire opzet waarbij elk componenttype een eigen klasse krijgt met een gemeenschappelijke interface. Dat betekent dat een zonnepaneel, een batterij en een elektrolyser elk op dezelfde manier met de rest van het systeem communiceren, maar intern hun eigen berekeningen uitvoeren.



Gebruikers kunnen via de interface componenten selecteren, parameters instellen en vervolgens een simulatie starten. De tool rekent dan uit hoe dat systeem presteert over een volledig jaar, op uurbasis. En omdat de architectuur nu modulair is, is een nieuw componenttype (zoals een warmtepomp of een brandstofcel) toe te voegen zonder dat de rest van de code aangepast hoeft te worden.

Een open einde als eindpunt

Het resultaat van deze twintig weken is een werkende, modulaire versie van EnHyCo. De tool kan nu ingezet worden voor uiteenlopende energieprojecten, zonder dat daar programmeerkennis voor nodig is.

De tool is daarmee niet af in de zin van "klaar en perfect". Er zijn nog componenten die uitgewerkt kunnen worden, en de interface kan op punten verder worden verbeterd enzovoort. Maar dat is ook precies de bedoeling van een modulaire opzet: andere teamleden kunnen nu voortbouwen op een duidelijke

Een blog door: Wouter de Veth, vierdejaarsstudent HBO-ICT
Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Hydrogen

structuur, zonder dat ze eerst door een wirwar van hardcoded code hoeven te werken. Dat voelt voor mij als een goed eindpunt.

Wat ik meeneem? Dat goede software begint bij het nadenken over structuur, voordat je de eerste regel schrijft. En dat de energietransitie niet alleen technische kennis vraagt, maar ook tools die mensen echt kunnen gebruiken.

Learning Community REMO-lab

Smaller, Smarter, Greener: Decentralised Hydrogen and Methanol Production from Biogas

My thesis explores farm-scale renewable methanol production from biogas using internal hydrogen generation and life-cycle assessment. During my graduation project at Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy, I investigated how biogas can be upgraded into renewable methanol without relying on external hydrogen produced through electrolysis.

Methanol is an important chemical and energy carrier, yet its production is still largely fossil-based and carbon intensive. At the same time, biogas from agricultural waste is widely available across Europe but often underutilized. This raised a central question for my research: can biogas be converted into methanol in a more efficient and climate-friendly way by producing hydrogen directly within the process itself? To answer this, I compared two process routes at farm-scale and evaluated both their technical performance and environmental impact using life cycle assessment.

I chose this thesis because it was one of the strongest options available to me at the time and aligned well with my future ambitions. Working in an academic environment was an important factor, as it allowed me to ask questions freely, access support when needed, and truly focus on learning rather than just delivering results. I have always valued environments that encourage curiosity and collaboration, and Entrance offered exactly that. Additionally, the topic itself immediately captured my interest. The idea of converting biogas into renewable methanol using innovative process designs sounded both challenging and exciting, which motivated me to fully commit to the project.

The thesis however, also came with significant challenges. The project timeline was compact, requiring efficient planning and decision-making from the start. Moreover, I had to learn two completely new software tools: Aspen Plus for process modelling and OpenLCA for environmental impact assessment. Learning how to use the software was only the first step; understanding how to correctly interpret and evaluate the results was just as demanding. At times, it felt as though I was learning multiple disciplines simultaneously.

One of the most challenging moments occurred while modelling reaction kinetics. I struggled with the software interface and found it difficult to understand how the underlying reaction logic was implemented. Although I received help from several people, I realised that I was following instructions without fully understanding what was happening in the model. Eventually, I decided to take a step back. I found a book explaining the fundamentals behind reaction modelling and spent two full days reading it from beginning to end. That moment marked a turning point. Once I understood the logic behind



the process, the software suddenly made sense, and I gained confidence in my ability to solve complex problems independently.

One of the main insights from my research is that decentralised, farm-scale production units can be a promising pathway for renewable fuel production. Instead of relying solely on large, centralised plants, smaller installations located close to biogas sources, such as farms, can play an important role in the energy transition. However, for these systems to be technically and economically viable, simplicity is essential.

Reducing the number of process components proved to be important. Compact system designs are easier to operate,

more flexible, and potentially more affordable at smaller scales. Integrating hydrogen production and methanol synthesis into a single, unified reactor showed strong potential, as it reduces equipment requirements and energy usage. Technologies such as membrane reactors enable this integration by selectively removing products during the reaction, thereby improving efficiency and shifting reactions in a favourable direction. In my research, this approach resulted in higher methanol production and less compared to more conventional process routes with environmental impact.

Looking ahead, I believe this research can help biogas production units across Europe become more independent and resilient. Many small-scale biogas facilities currently rely heavily on subsidies to remain economically viable. By valorising biogas into a compact, adaptable, and higher-value product such as green methanol, these installations could strengthen their business case and reduce dependency on financial support schemes. Green methanol is easier to store and transport than biogas, has multiple applications as a fuel and chemical feedstock, and fits well within a circular, decentralised energy system.

Future research could focus on optimising reactor designs, validating models with pilot-scale data, and expanding the analysis to include detailed economic assessments. Together, these steps can help bridge the gap between theoretical feasibility and real-world implementation, supporting a more flexible and decentralised renewable energy landscape in Europe.

A blog by: Souzan Khalili, master student European Master of Renewable Energy
Participated in the Learning Community REMO-lab

Learning Community REMO-lab

Electrocoagulation: waste to nutrients

The Netherlands is one of the most agriculturally productive countries in the world. With a high density of livestock on relatively little land, Dutch agriculture is remarkably efficient. However, this success brings an environmental challenge: managing large volumes of manure.

Issues with nutrient management

Manure contains valuable nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus that help crops grow. But having too much of these nutrients can cause major environmental problems. Excess nutrients can lead to eutrophication, a process where algae grow rapidly, blocking sunlight and reducing oxygen in the water. This harms aquatic life and lowers water quality. To prevent this, strict regulations limit how much manure can be applied to farmland. Because manure contains both nitrogen and phosphorus, farmers often reach the phosphorus limit first. As a result, excess manure must be processed or transported elsewhere. This creates an urgent need for better nutrient management solutions.

Nutrient separation through electrocoagulation

One way to process surplus manure is through anaerobic digestion. This process produces biogas, a renewable energy source, and leaves behind a nutrient-rich byproduct called digestate. While digestion helps recover energy, it does not remove nutrients. The digestate still contains both nitrogen and phosphorus, meaning application limits still apply. To make digestate more usable, a separation step is needed to remove phosphorus while keeping nitrogen available for crops. One promising technique is electrocoagulation.

Electrocoagulation is a technique that uses electricity to treat wastewater. By applying an electric current, (recycled) metals, like iron, dissolve into the liquid. These metal particles

bind to certain substances, like phosphorus, causing them to clump together (coagulate) and settle out. In theory, this could allow phosphorus to be removed while nitrogen remains in the liquid. The goal of this project was to develop a simple lab-scale procedure to test whether electrocoagulation could work as a screening method for different digestates. Instead of optimising the process for one specific type, the focus was on understanding whether it could reliably clarify digestate under different conditions.

The experiments investigated factors such as treatment time, electrical input, digestate concentration, and initial pH. The method was considered promising if it could produce visibly clearer solutions without excessive electricity use or the need for additional chemicals.

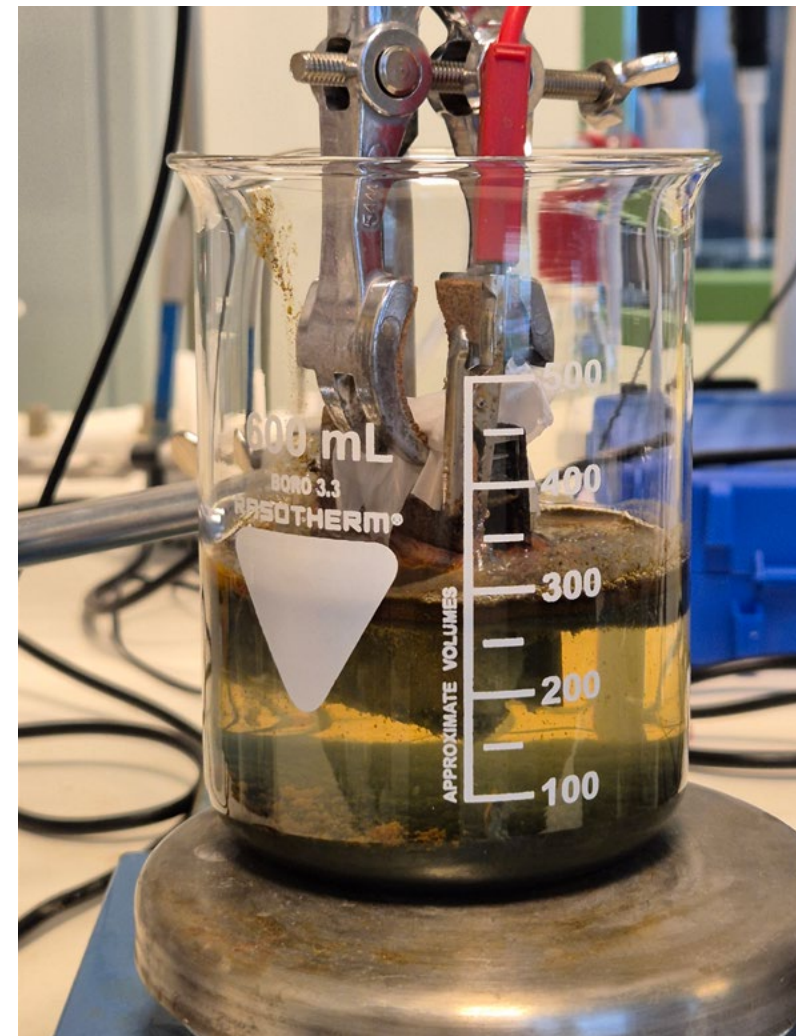
The results were encouraging. Electrocoagulation was able to significantly improve the clarity of digestate. Simple measurements, such as optical clarity, proved effective for comparing performance under different conditions. Basic test kits were also useful for monitoring nitrogen

levels and identifying treatment trends.

Some challenges remain. Measuring the exact amount of sludge produced was difficult due to its high moisture content, and certain chemical tests had limitations in sensitivity. Nevertheless, the overall findings suggest that electrocoagulation has real potential as a pre-treatment step for digestate.

Conclusion

Managing manure sustainably is one of the key environmental challenges facing Dutch agriculture. Technologies that enable better nutrient separation could help farmers comply with regulations while making more efficient use of valuable nutrients. This project helped develop a procedure to study electrocoagulation for different digestates. While further optimisation is needed, the results provide a starting point for future work. As agriculture transitions into more circular and sustainable economies, innovative treatment methods like electrocoagulation may become part of the solution to closing nutrient cycles and protecting water quality.



A blog by: Dani Wu, second year MSc Engineering student at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen Participated in the Learning Community REMO-lab

Learning Community Urban Energy

Van brede verkenning naar concreet duurzaam advies

De wereld om ons heen verandert in hoog tempo. Klimaatverandering, afnemende biodiversiteit en de uitputting van natuurlijke hulpbronnen zorgen ervoor dat de manier waarop we leven, bouwen en werken steeds kritischer wordt bekeken. Wanneer industrie en infrastructuur niet worden aangepast aan deze uitdagingen, heeft dat ingrijpende gevolgen voor mens en natuur. Juist daarom groeit de aandacht voor duurzame oplossingen die niet alleen technisch haalbaar zijn, maar ook bijdragen aan een toekomstbestendige leefomgeving.

Ook in Nederland is deze ontwikkeling duidelijk zichtbaar. Als land dat vooroploopt in duurzaamheid en energietransitie wordt steeds vaker gezocht naar manieren om gebouwen energiezuiniger, klimaatadaptiever en natuurinclusiever te maken. Daarbij verschuift de focus niet alleen naar grootschalige energieopwekking, maar ook naar de verduurzaming van bestaande en nieuwe gebouwen, waaronder kantoren.

Tegen deze achtergrond hebben wij tijdens onze stage bij Cruydt-Hoeck Wildeplantenzaden & Bloemenweidenzaden onderzoek gedaan naar de verdere ver-

duurzaming van het kantoor van Cruydt-Hoeck, zowel het huidige kantoor als de plannen voor een



nieuw kantoor. Cruydt-Hoeck is een inheemse planten- en zadenkwekerij die zich vanuit haar kernactiviteiten al sterk inzet voor biodiversiteit en duurzaamheid. Juist vanuit deze visie kijkt het bedrijf kritisch naar de eigen bedrijfsvoering. De centrale vraag tijdens onze stage was hoe het kantoor verder verduurzaamd kan worden op een manier die technisch haalbaar, financieel verantwoord en passend is bij de identiteit van de organisatie.

Onze stage begon met een brede verkenning van duurzame innovaties die toepasbaar zijn op kantooromgevingen. In deze fase hebben wij gekeken naar uiteenlopende maatregelen,

zoals verandering in gedrag van medewerkers, verbeteringen aan de gebouwschil, energie meters, thermo chromatische ramen en slimme gebouwsystemen. Door middel van literatuuronderzoek en het presenteren van onze bevindingen tijdens de Learning Community kregen wij inzicht in welke oplossingen in theorie interessant zijn en waar in de praktijk mogelijke beperkingen liggen. Deze brede aanpak hielp ons om het vraagstuk niet te snel te versmallen en eerst het grotere geheel te begrijpen.

Naarmate het onderzoek vorderde, werd duidelijk dat twee innovaties bijzonder goed aansloten bij zowel de ambities als de praktische situatie van Cruydt-Hoeck. Dit betrof een groendak en een Building Management System, oftewel een BMS. Vanaf dat moment verschoof de focus van een brede inventarisatie naar een verdiepend onderzoek, waarbij ieder van ons zich richtte op één van deze twee innovaties.

Het groendak is onderzocht vanwege de sterke koppeling met de kernwaarden van Cruydt-Hoeck. Als organisatie die zich richt op inheemse planten en biodiversiteit biedt een groendak

niet alleen voordelen op het gebied van isolatie en waterretentie, maar ook een duidelijke ecologische meerwaarde. Binnen dit onderzoek is gekeken naar de technische haalbaarheid, de onderhoudsbehoefte en de mogelijke energiebesparing. Hieruit kwam naar voren dat een extensief groendak geschikt is voor zowel bestaande bouw als nieuwbouw, relatief weinig onderhoud vereist en tegelijkertijd bijdraagt aan een prettiger binnenklimaat en een langere levensduur van de dakconstructie.

Parallel hieraan is het Building Management System onderzocht als meer technische en data-gedreven oplossing. Een BMS maakt het mogelijk om installaties zoals verwarming, ventilatie en verlichting slimmer aan te sturen op basis van gebruik en behoefte. In dit deel van het onderzoek is vooral gekeken naar hoe monitoring en inzicht in bouwprestaties kunnen leiden tot energiebesparing, zonder ingrijpende fysieke aanpassingen aan het gebouw. Waar het

groendak vooral zichtbaar en ecologisch is, ligt de kracht van een BMS juist in optimalisatie en efficiëntie achter de schermen.

Terugkijkend heeft deze stage ons veel geleerd over het verbinden van theorie en praktijk. We hebben ervaren hoe abstracte duurzaamheidsconcepten concreet toepasbaar worden binnen een echte organisatie met eigen belangen, ambities en beperkingen. Daarnaast hebben wij onze analytische vaardigheden verder ontwikkeld en geleerd om gestructureerd toe te werken naar een onderbouwd en realistisch advies.

Deze stage heeft ons laten zien dat verduurzaming en de energietransitie niet draait om één perfecte oplossing, maar om het maken van bewuste keuzes die passen bij de context van een organisatie. Juist de afweging tussen techniek, ecologie en financiën maakt werken aan duurzaamheid uitdagend en interessant en heeft onze interesse in dit vakgebied verder versterkt.

Een blog door: Gerben Boerema en Berend de Graaf, tweedejaarsstudenten Technische Bedrijfskunde Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

From Architecture to Energy System: Powering Sustainable Off-Grid Floating Homes through Roof Design

Imagine a home floating on the waters of northern Netherlands, generating all its energy via the rooftop. Rising water levels, climate change, and limited land make floating homes an increasingly practical solution, but going completely off-grid turns energy independence into a real challenge. In these homes, the roof becomes much more than a simple design element; it's the heart of the energy system, shaping performance, efficiency, and sustainability.

In off-grid floating modular homes, the roof plays a central role in energy generation, system efficiency, and overall performance. At the same time, it must remain affordable and architecturally coherent. Not every roof design balances all these aspects, which leads to a key question: how can roof design actively support sustainable off-grid floating living?

Entrance Learning Community Urban Energy & Floating Future

During my master's thesis, I became part of the Entrance Learning Community Urban Energy, in collaboration with Kenniscentrum NoorderRuimte. Within

this setting, I worked in the Floating Future (FF) group. A multidisciplinary team exploring the future of floating living in the Netherlands. What makes FF unique is its broad perspective. Energy systems, spatial design, sustainability, policy, social and environmental aspects are all considered together. This environment pushed me to look beyond a single discipline and place my research within a much larger and more realistic context.

Learning Through Collaboration

Weekly meetings with the FF group became an essential part of my research journey. Each session brought new insights, as partici-



pants presented their work from technical, spatial, environmental, social, or economic angles. These discussions made one thing clear: floating housing is a system where design decisions are deeply interconnected.

One moment in particular changed my project's direction. Initially, I planned to use an electric heating system. On paper, it seemed logical. But analysing the energy balance revealed electricity demand was much higher than expected and poorly matched with on-site renewable production.

After discussing this issue with group members during weekly meetings, I decided to rethink the concept. The solution was to move away from electric heating

and introduce a wood pellet stove instead. This shift significantly improved system balance and made the off-grid concept far more realistic. More importantly, it showed the value of questioning assumptions and learning through collaboration.

Project Aim

The main aim of this project was to optimise roof design for off-grid floating modular homes in northern Netherlands. The goal was to improve energy autonomy while maintaining architectural quality and techno-economic feasibility.

A key principle was that energy should be generated entirely within the footprint of the building itself. No additional land or

external space was considered, as space is a valuable resource in floating developments. The roof was therefore treated as the primary—and only—platform for renewable energy production. The research focused on how different roof configurations affect energy generation, system performance, and design flexibility.

System Concept and Energy Strategy

Since the homes operate off-grid, the energy system fully relies on on-site generation. Electricity is produced through a combination of solar panels and small vertical-axis wind turbines integrated into the roof design. This hybrid setup helps the system respond to changing weather conditions typical for the region.

To keep electricity demand manageable, electric heating was excluded. Instead, a wood pellet stove was selected as the main heating source. Thanks to their renewable origin and relatively low carbon impact, wood pellets offer a practical, robust solution for off-grid floating homes.

Challenges, Findings, and Conclusion

One of the biggest challenges was balancing energy demand and supply within the limited roof area. Floating structures bring spatial and structural constraints, and roof designs optimised for energy production do not always align with modular construction or spatial quality. By developing and comparing several roof design scenarios, clear trade-offs between energy yield, flexibility, and cost became visible. The results show that even small design adjustments can significantly impact system performance. Ultimately, this project highlights how sustainability depends on integrated design thinking. By aligning architecture, energy systems, and techno-economic considerations, as well as limiting resource use to the building itself, off-grid floating homes can become more resilient, efficient, and future-proof. Roof design, treated as an active part of the energy system, plays a decisive role in making sustainable floating living a reality.

A blog by: Zahra Esfandiari, master student Sustainable Energy Systems Management
Participated in the Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

When an Idea Begins with an Image

This project explores floating housing as a response to climate change, focusing on structures that must remain resilient to fluctuating water levels while maintaining energy autonomy under increasingly unstable centralised energy networks.

The core idea proposes introducing an active protective layer above the dwelling, rather than relying solely on reinforced vertical envelopes. Initially conceived as an “umbrella,” this layer functions as a climatic buffer, reducing exposure to wind, rain, and solar radiation while mediating between the building and its environment. As the design developed, the umbrella gradually extended downward, evolving into a continuous curved enclosure in the form of a dome. Through this transformation, the protective layer becomes an integrated architectural and energy system, influencing thermal behavior, solar access, ventilation, and energy exchange.

Four scenarios were defined:

- A single unit without a dome
- A single unit under a dome
- A cluster of seven units without domes
- A cluster of seven units under a shared dome

The question was simple: Simulation results showed that, at the single-unit scale, the dome reduced annual energy demand by 15.5%. At the cluster scale, the reduction was around 10.2%.

Designed with DNA logic

The housing units in this project are based on the DNA system by ABC2C:

The dome-induced reduction in thermal load allowed for optimised sizing of the PV–Battery–Hydrogen hybrid system

and enhanced energy supply reliability in the cluster configuration. Additionally, the dome increased the available photovoltaic installation area from 343 m² to 383 m², thereby improving annual solar generation capacity and strengthening overall energy self-sufficiency.

Hybrid Energy System

The hourly energy balance model demonstrated that the integration of battery storage with seasonal hydrogen storage ensures uninterrupted operation in the dome-based cluster scenario, as presented in this table.

Results of the Hybrid Energy System, cluster scenario with dome

COP of HP	3.5	
SOC	5	kWh
Max capacity kwh	16	kWh
PEM fuel cell capacity	8	kW
LHV(h2)	3.3	kWh/m^3
Initial storage hydrogen	600	Nm^3
Hydrogen flow	0.44	m^3
storage hydrogen capacity	700	Nm^3
Electrolyser	1.53	kW
Hours without energy	0	h
Hours with no PV production	4489	h
Fuel cell efficiency	0.65	
Electrolyser efficiency	0.5	
Pressure	200	bar
Volume of hydrogen storage	3.5	m^3

Economic Assessment

Based on the economic evaluation of the dome-based cluster scenario, the largest share of CAPEX is attributed to the dome structure itself, followed by the hydrogen subsystem and battery storage. When financial support for the capital investment is considered, the initial investment burden is reduced, and the Net Present Value (NPV) becomes positive, indicating that the project is economically viable and financially attractive over the analysis period.

Life Cycle Assessment

According to the defined system boundaries of the LCA, the assessment includes only the market supply of system components, while installation, operation, transport, and end-of-life phases are excluded. For the Dome cluster scenario, the total climate change impact was calculated at 7180.5 kg CO₂-equivalent per functional unit. More than 80% of this impact is associated with structural components, particularly the dome, indicating that, within the defined scope, embodied impacts from material supply dominate the overall environmental footprint rather than operational energy use.

Recommendation

By the end of the project, a clear shift in perspective emerged: a floating house should not be understood merely as a structure that rests on water, but as an active and self-reliant energy system. What began as a simple “umbrella” response to environmental conditions

gradually evolved into a performance-driven strategy, a secondary layer that moderates thermal behavior while enabling the integration of a hybrid energy system.

At the cluster scale, this approach became even more powerful. The houses were no longer isolated units, but interconnected nodes within a small energy network. With modular replication, this model could expand into dome-based floating districts, or even cities, provided that appropriate regulatory frameworks and urban planning strategies are developed to support autonomous energy communities.

A blog by: Bateni Fatemeh, master student Sustainable Energy Systems Management
Participated in the Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

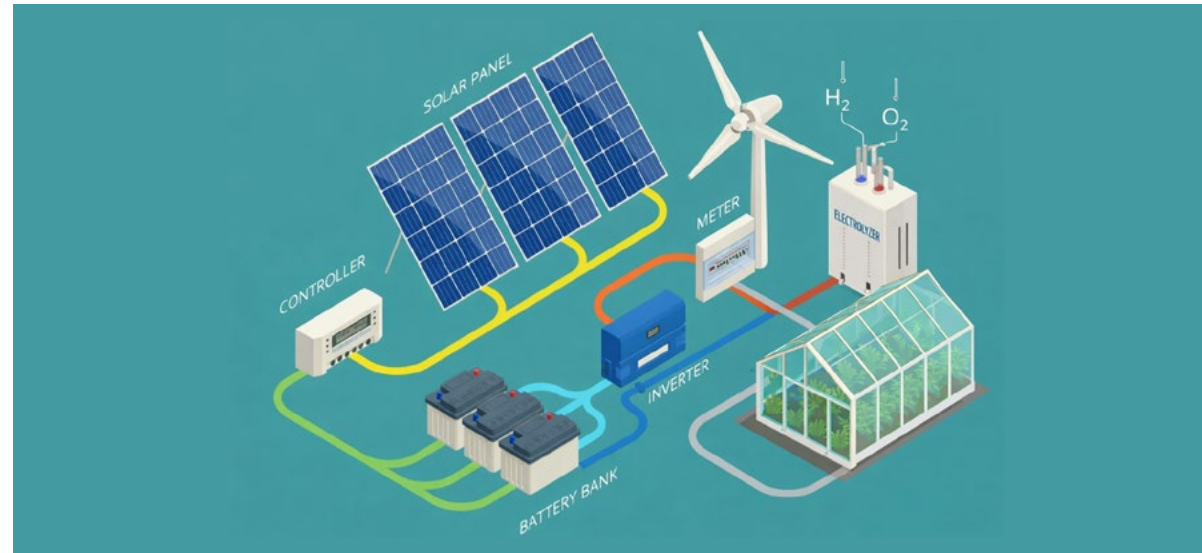
How Renewable Energy Systems Influence Electricity Supply and Emissions in Dutch Greenhouses

Dutch greenhouses are famous for producing food efficiently, but they also have a less glamorous reputation: they use a lot of energy.

When I started my thesis, I started with a simple question: how much energy does a modern greenhouse really need, and what happens if we try to make that energy renewable? In the Netherlands, greenhouses operate year-round and depend heavily on electricity and heat to control temperature, light, and humidity. This makes them a perfect test case for the energy transition, but also a complicated one.

In this study, I evaluated the technical, economic, and environmental performance of different renewable energy systems for a Dutch greenhouse and its associated buildings. The goal was not to find a single perfect solution, but to understand how different system designs perform when energy autonomy, emissions, and costs are all considered at the same time. The case study focused on Cruydt-Hoeck, a long-established ecological seed company located in Friesland, in the northern Netherlands.

Cruydt-Hoeck plans to expand its operations by constructing a new 1,000 m² greenhouse and a neighbouring 2,700 m² multifunctional building. They aim to fully electrify its energy consumption and achieve a high level of sustainability. The core of my research focused on renewable energy systems in Dutch greenhouse operations. Technologies like solar panels, wind turbines, and battery systems are already being used. I also considered hydrogen production technology from surplus energy as a future plan. On paper, many of these systems



look like clear climate winners. In reality, choosing between them involves trade-offs between energy performance, emissions, and costs.

To make those trade-offs visible, I used a Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA). Instead of focusing solely on emissions during operation, LCA considers the entire picture, including equipment production, installation, use, and long-term impact. This was a turning point for me during the project. Some systems that seemed “green” at first glance turned out to have hidden impacts elsewhere, while others performed better than

expected when viewed over their full lifetime. Comparing different energy production options revealed important differences in system performance and raised a crucial question: is installing renewable energy enough, or do we also need to rethink how different configurations are designed? Suddenly, the suitability of each option became just as important as energy production itself.

During this research, it became clear how practical these decisions really are. This is not about abstract climate targets, but about real greenhouse

operators deciding where to invest their money. Should they prioritise emissions reduction per euro invested? Lower total energy use? Or flexibility for future expansion? There is no single “best” solution, only more educated alternatives.

This thesis project showed me that the energy transition in agriculture is not a straight line from fossil to renewable. It is a process of weighing options, learning from data, and sometimes changing

direction halfway through. And maybe that is the most important insight of all: sustainability is not just about technology, but about decision-making under real-world constraints.

A blog by: Fattah Jalali, master student Sustainable Energy Systems Management
Participated in the Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

Van wisselwoning naar starterswoning

Tijdens het begin van mijn afstudeeronderzoek liep ik tegen een vraag aan die eigenlijk heel logisch is. In Groningen staan op meerdere plekken tijdelijke woningen. Ze zijn geplaatst tijdens de versterkingsoperatie na aardbevingsschade. Nu de versterking vordert, raken steeds meer van deze woningen hun functie kwijt. Tegelijk hoor je overal dat starters geen betaalbare woning kunnen vinden. Dat voelde als een gemiste kans.

Wat ik leerde tijdens mijn afstudeeronderzoek in Groningen

In opdracht van Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy en Tandem BV onderzocht ik of deze tijdelijke woningen een tweede leven kunnen krijgen als permanente Tiny houses voor starters. Niet alleen technisch of financieel, maar vooral ook vanuit bedrijfskundig perspectief.

De eerste stap was begrijpen van het probleem. Ik ben gestart met deskresearch. Ik dook in cijfers over woningtekorten, tijdelijke huisvesting en regelgeving. Al snel werd duidelijk dat deze twee werelden elkaar raken.

- Er is structureel woningtekort.
- Er is bestaande wooninfrastructuur die dreigt te verdwijnen.



Van breed idee naar scherpe keuzes

In de ontwerpfase merkte ik hoe belangrijk het is om focus te houden. Je kunt eindeloos kijken naar woningnood, duurzaamheid of regelgeving. Ik moest keuzes maken. Samen met mijn begeleiders heb ik het onderzoek afgebakend tot drie onderdelen:

- Wat kost herbestemming.
- Welke kansen en risico's spelen er.
- Wat betekent dit project voor Tandem als organisatie.

Dat hielp om het onderzoek behapbaar te maken en om steeds terug te gaan naar de kern.

Resultaten ontdekken tijdens het proces

De financiële doorrekening was een belangrijk leerpunt. Ik werkte met ramingen, expertinput en aannames. Tijdens dit proces merkte ik hoe gevoelig uitkomsten zijn voor keuzes. Kleine wijzigingen in kosten of opbrengsten maken al verschil in aantrekkelijkheid. Uiteindelijk bleek dat verkoop van de woningen net geen gewenste winst oplevert, maar ook geen verlies. Verhuur is haalbaar, maar vraagt langdurige inzet.

Minstens zo belangrijk vond ik het werken met kwalitatieve data. Door vragenlijsten onder starters kreeg ik een beter beeld van hun wensen. Niet de grootte stond centraal, maar vooral:

- betaalbaarheid
- locatie
- privacy
- eigen voorzieningen

Dat bevestigde voor mij dat tiny houses alleen werken als ze slim zijn ontworpen en niet te krap worden ingevuld.

Leren omgaan met onzekerheid

Een groot deel van het onderzoek ging over regelgeving en duurzaamheid. Hier merkte ik hoe

belangrijk actuele kennis is. Regels zoals BENG (Bouwenenergieclassificatie) en MPG (Milieu Prestatie Gebouwen) kunnen het verschil maken tussen haalbaar en onhaalbaar. Tegelijk veranderen deze regels continu. Een belangrijke ontdekking was dat kleinere woningen vanaf juli 2026 gunstiger worden beoordeeld op milieuprestatie. Dat maakt dit soort projecten realistischer.

Ook gesprekken met experts over energieoplossingen hielpen mij om verder te kijken dan techniek alleen. Duurzaamheid gaat niet alleen over idealen, maar ook over kosten, subsidies en praktische toepasbaarheid.

Wat dit project betekent voor Tandem

Door het toepassen van bedrijfskundige modellen kreeg ik beter inzicht in Tandem als organisatie. Ik zag dat dit project geen grote organisatorische veranderingen vraagt. De kennis, cultuur en manier van werken sluiten al goed aan. Wel betekent het een strategische verbreding naar een nieuwe markt.

Een blog door: Jesse Hamstra, vierdejaarsstudent Bedrijfskunde
Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Urban Energy

Daarom kwam ik uit bij het idee van een pilot. Klein beginnen, leren in de praktijk en daarna pas opschalen. Dat past bij Tandem en bij de onzekerheden rondom dit type projecten.

Terugkijkend

Dit onderzoek heeft mij vooral geleerd hoe belangrijk het proces is. Niet alles is zwart-wit. Financieel is het project niet perfect rendabel, maar strategisch en maatschappelijk wel interessant. Door te blijven schakelen tussen cijfers, mensen en context werd het advies scherper.

Voor mij laat dit onderzoek zien dat afstuderen niet alleen draait om een eindrapport, maar om leren omgaan met complexiteit, keuzes maken en onderbouwen waarom iets wél of juist niet logisch is. Dat neem ik mee in mijn verdere loopbaan.

Learning Community Urban Energy

Van de tekentafel naar het water: een nieuw thuis op pontons

In Nederland is het woningtekort een groeiend probleem dat vraagt om gedurfde en creatieve oplossingen. Terwijl bouwgrond op land schaarser en duurder wordt, kijken we bij Entrance, Centre of Expertise Energy, ABC2C en Tandem BV naar een heel ander oppervlak: het water. Waarom zouden we geen duurzame, modulaire woningen bouwen op bestaande pontons?

Als studenten Bedrijfskunde aan de Hanze hebben wij de afgelopen maanden intensief onderzoek gedaan naar de haalbaarheid van dit concept. Onze missie was helder: het vertalen van versnipperde technische plannen en PowerPoint-presentaties naar een volledig, rendabel en duurzaam Business Model Canvas (BMC) dat klaar is om professioneel gepresenteerd te worden aan gemeenten en andere stakeholders.

De markt: wie wil er op het water wonen?

Om de marktpotentie te toetsen, hebben we een enquête uitgevoerd onder 56 respondenten. De resultaten zijn verrassend eenduidig: de interesse in drijvend wonen is groot, vooral onder de

jongere generaties. Ruim 60% van de geïnteresseerden valt in de leeftijdscategorie 18-35 jaar. Voor deze jongvolwassenen zijn betaalbaarheid en duurzaamheid de belangrijkste drijfveren om voor een alternatieve woonvorm te kiezen.

Omdat er bij pontonwoningen geen sprake is van traditionele grondkosten, kunnen we de instapprijs aanzienlijk verlagen. Ons onderzoek wijst uit dat een verkoopprijs van ongeveer €280.000 perfect aansluit bij het budget van deze doelgroep. Voor hen is dit niet zomaar een huis, maar een kans om een eigen plek te bemachtigen in een oververhitte markt.

Klimaatadaptatie als waardepropositie

Maar het gaat niet alleen om de prijs. Drijvend wonen biedt een uniek antwoord op de ecologische uitdagingen van onze tijd. Wanneer de waterspiegel stijgt als gevolg van klimaatverandering, stijgt je woning simpelweg mee. Dit maakt het concept zeer aantrekkelijk voor gemeenten die worstelen met waterveiligheid en een tekort aan bouwgrond. Door modulaire units te bouwen met circulaire materialen, dragen we direct bij aan een duurzamere samenleving.

Het proces: Leren en Innoveren

Het ontwikkelen van dit businessmodel was een uitdagende reis die ons van literatuuronderzoek naar fysieke bedrijfsbezoeken in Loppersum leidde. Een belangrijk inzicht tijdens het project was dat technische perfectie alleen niet voldoende is. Zonder een gevalideerd verdienmodel en een sterke focus op de klantrelatie blijft een innovatie slechts een idee op papier.

In ons BMC hebben we daarom alle cruciale elementen samengebracht: van de noodzakelijke samenwerking met waterschappen voor vergunningen tot een



transparante kostenstructuur. Zo hebben we een maandelijkse servicebijdrage van €200 vastgesteld voor het structurele onderhoud van de pontons en gezamenlijke voorzieningen, wat zorgt voor financiële stabiliteit op de lange termijn.

Conclusie en advies

Onze conclusie na dit onderzoek is krachtig: van dit project krijg je energie! Het plan voor duurzame woningen op bestaande pontons biedt voldoende maatschappelijke meerwaarde en financiële perspectieven om door te zetten.

Wij adviseren de betrokken partijen dan ook om op korte termijn te starten met een pilotproject. Dit is de ideale manier om het concept in de praktijk te testen, bewonerservaringen te verzamelen en de juridische kaders verder te verkennen. De toekomst van wonen ligt op het water, en met dit businessmodel ligt er een solide fundament om die toekomst te realiseren.

Een blog door: Finn de Boer, Jasper Jongepier, Nick Nijboer en Sophie Waijper, eerstejaarsstudenten Bedrijfskunde Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

Floating Futures: Designing for Human Needs

Floating housing became important to me when I started questioning how residents experience daily life in this type of neighbourhood. Before joining the Floating Future programme, I had seen Hoendiep in Groningen. Its linear layout felt somewhat gloomy. I remember wondering whether residents could easily socialise with their neighbours, whether they felt connected, safe, and part of a community. That first impression stayed with me and gradually turned into a research curiosity.

Floating housing is becoming increasingly relevant in Groningen. Due to climate change, heavier rainfalls, and ground subsidence caused by decades of gas extraction, alternative housing solutions are no longer futuristic ideas. They are realistic necessities. Floating neighbourhoods are often discussed in terms of technical feasibility, construction systems, stability, energy performance, and economic viability. These aspects are essential, especially in a region that must adapt to environmental uncertainty. However, during the Floating Future programme, I noticed that most discussions focused strongly on technical and engineering solutions.

Coming from a non-technical background, this was my biggest

challenge. Many fellow students approached floating housing from structural, mechanical, or energy-system perspectives. Their focus was on materials, anchoring systems, floating foundations, and infrastructure. While these aspects are undeniably important, I started to feel that something was missing in the conversation. I began to ask a different question: what about the lived experience?

Bridging Design and Human Needs

The core problem I identified was a potential gap between the design of floating housing and the everyday experiences of residents. If design decisions are mainly driven by technical systems and economic efficiency, there is a risk that residents' deeper

human needs remain underexplored. A neighbourhood can be safe, energy-efficient, and climate-proof, yet still feel isolating or socially fragmented.

Theoretical Framework

In my research, I worked with Human Needs Theory, focusing on six fundamental needs: certainty, connection, growth, contribution, variety, and significance. These needs shape how people experience their homes and neighbourhoods. Certainty relates to feeling safe and stable. Connection refers to relationships and belonging. Growth and contribution reflect opportunities to develop and to add value to a community. Variety and significance relate to stimulation, identity, and feeling valued. When these needs are not consciously integrated into the design process, floating housing may function technically, but not socially or psychologically. To connect human needs with broader system thinking, I used the 6-P methodology. While Human Needs Theory operates at the level of everyday life and individual experience, the 6-P model addresses broader systemic dimensions such as People, Planet, Possibilities, Particularities, Potentials, and Proliferations.

Combining these two frameworks allowed me to explore how individual well-being and spatial design interact with environmental, social, and systemic considerations. One framework focuses on lived experience; the other examines complexity at a larger scale. Together, they create a bridge between daily life and system transformation.

Research Methodology

My research combined both secondary and primary data. First, I analysed existing reports and documents related to floating housing developments to understand the spatial, technical, and policy context. Second, I conducted interviews with architects involved in floating housing projects. I explored how they approach design decisions and whether human needs are explicitly considered. Third, I conducted a survey among residents and used a photo-elicitation technique to understand how they experience their living environment. By coding the data according to the six human needs, patterns began to emerge.

From Analysis to the Intervention

Interestingly, needs such as certainty and connection were

relatively visible in design considerations. Safety, accessibility, and some shared spaces were addressed. However, variety and significance appeared less explicitly integrated. Questions about identity, diversity of spaces, and opportunities for residents to shape their environment were less prominent. These findings became central in shaping my intervention. Based on the analysis, I developed a three-layer intervention tool aimed at architects, planners, and municipal professionals. The first layer is conceptual and translates the interaction between Human Needs Theory and the 6-P method into human-centred design principles. The second layer consists of guiding questions that help professionals reflect on whether their design decisions support residents' needs. For example, does the layout support spontaneous encounters? Are sustainability systems visible and understandable? Is there spatial variety between private, semi-public, and shared areas? The third layer introduces a validation component, encouraging iterative and flexible reflection and dialogue

between designers and stakeholders.

What I Learned at Entrance

Working on this project taught me to embrace complexity. At first, integrating Human Needs Theory with the 6-P methodology felt overwhelming. Gradually, I learned to see complexity not as a barrier, but as a necessary condition for meaningful innovation. Being part of Entrance meant working in an interdisciplinary environment where technical, social, political, and spatial perspectives intersect. Although I initially felt challenged by my lack of technical background, this position eventually became my strength. It allowed me to focus on the human dimension that sometimes risks being overshadowed by technical ambition. Floating housing is not only about adapting to climate change. It is about creating places where people can feel secure, connected, significant, and able to grow. If floating neighbourhoods are to become part of a sustainable future in Groningen, they must float not only structurally, but socially.

A blog by: Raziye Salimi, master student Energy for Society Participated in the Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

Learning Community, Floating Future: Amphibious housing in the province of Groningen

Summary

Clay-soil areas in the northern Netherlands face land subsidence, heavier rainfall events and rising groundwater and sea levels. These processes increasingly reduce the reliability of traditional housing solutions. Amphibious housing, houses that rest on the ground under normal conditions but float during high water, are technically possible and have been proven in small pilots. Yet scaling to neighbourhood or municipal level remains limited: planning rules are not aligned with adaptive building types, permitting and water-management responsibilities are split across authorities, and experience with larger projects is limited. This research addresses that implementation gap.

Main research question

What spatial conditions and regulatory frameworks are required to integrate amphibious housing in clay-soil areas of the northern Netherlands in the

context of land subsidence and climate change?

Potential areas for amphibious housing

Potential sites meet a set of physical indicators: low elevation, weak soils (compacted peat or soft clay), proximity to "boezem water", frequent inland water-logging, and signs of peat oxidation or subsidence that threaten freshwater lenses and increase salinisation. Areas that score highly on these indicators should be considered candidate locations for amphibious housing.

Priority areas (based on these indicators):

- **Eemsdelta (Delfzijl):** low-lying Ommelanden and lands that are already problematic to build on, here amphibious solutions are a technically logical alternative.
- **Appingedam / Eemskanaal corridor:** soft peat and close boezem connections make

amphibious or floating housing realistic for larger developments.

- **Lauwersmeer boezem area:** frequent high-water events and dynamic local water systems make it suitable for pilot projects.

Physical suitability alone does not guarantee possibility. Practical realisation depends on governance, social acceptance (especially in earthquake-affected places), and a clear permitting strategy (for example Bbl compliance or an out-of-plan route). These institutional and social factors determine whether and when a potential site can be tested or realised.

What we can learn from reference projects

Reference projects (Zuiderburen, Leeuwarden; Veenetië, Woerden; Maasbommel; H2O Wonen, Zeewolde) provide practical lessons:

- **Hybrid typologies work best in weak soils.** In peat or soft clay with limited water depth, hybrids (mixes of amphibious, floating and traditional housing) are often the most realistic option.
- **Use water for multiple functions.** Design strategies such as water gardens, storage

areas and adaptive planting raise ecological and spatial quality.

- **Service connections are critical.** Wastewater management and emergency access are operational constraints that must be solved for permanent living.
- **Costs and business cases matter.** Initial costs are higher, but life-cycle savings on maintenance and avoided flood damage can compensate; clear business cases reduce developer risk.

Stakeholder perspectives (interviews)

Although we can identify potential areas and learn from reference projects, it is of course important to consider how to proceed. Based on interviews with the municipality and the water board, both parties were not very enthusiastic about the project: they do not (yet) see a need to apply amphibious housing as a climate measure and have other priorities. These findings were discussed with stakeholders; from those discussions it can be concluded that:

Tandem BV

- Technically possible, but there is financial uncertainty.

- Banks and insurers remain cautious.
- Younger people are more open than older residents.
- Market is still exploring.

BLUE21

- Amphibious/floating housing can be earthquake resistant.
- The main barrier is governance, not technology.
- Projects succeed more when linked to existing policy goals.
- Upscaling requires multiple success factors working together.

Architect

- Amphibious housing fits where water space already exists (rivers, boezem zones).
- Design offers spatial and ecological opportunities (flora & fauna).

Barriers & what increases the chances of success

Main barriers:

- Low political priority
- Unclear permitting routes
- Financial risk and uncertainty
- Limited public familiarity
- Unclear responsibilities (municipality, water board, province)

What increases the chance of success:

- Awareness and acceptance are preconditions.
- Link projects to existing policy goals (water retention, earthquake resilience, energy transition).
- Visible pilots and early resident involvement.
- Start small and plan for scaling.
- Early cooperation between municipality, designer and water board.
- Strong, life-cycle based business cases and public de-risking instruments to attract banks/insurers.

Without awareness → no political priority → no pilots → no upscaling. Awareness is the first domino to push.

Starting small, showing results, and communicating them visibly is the way to create both local acceptance and political acceptance. Only then can amphibious housing move from small pilots to a scalable and resilient practice.

A blog by: Zehra Toptas, fourth year student Built Environment Participated in the Learning Communities Urban Energy

Learning Community Urban Energy

Transparant hout: een mooi materiaal, maar hoe komt het verder?

Stel je voor: hout dat licht doorlaat. Het klinkt misschien alsof het niet kan, maar binnen Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy wordt gewerkt aan transparant hout. Dit is een innovatief materiaal dat wordt gemaakt van houtrestmateriaal, zoals zaagsel, in combinatie met PMMA. Daardoor ontstaat een plaat die lichtdoorlatend is en mogelijk gebruikt kan worden als duurzaam alternatief voor glas.

Wat transparant hout interessant maakt, is niet alleen dat het er bijzonder uitziet. Het materiaal kan ook veel beter isoleren dan gewoon glas. Daardoor zou het in de toekomst kunnen helpen om gebouwen energiezuiniger te maken. Dat maakt transparant hout interessant voor de bouw, maar bijvoorbeeld ook voor toepassingen waarbij daglicht belangrijk is, zoals kassen of gevels.

Toch is transparant hout nog geen kant-en-klaar bouwproduct. Er zijn al kleine stukken gemaakt, maar de stap naar grotere platen en echte toepassing in de praktijk vraagt nog om veel onderzoek, testen en organisatie.

Mijn onderzoek

Tijdens mijn afstudeeronderzoek bij Entrance heb ik niet onderzocht hoe je transparant hout precies maakt. Mijn onderzoek ging vooral over de bedrijfskundige kant van het project. Ik keek naar de samenwerking binnen het consortium en naar wat er nodig is om transparant hout verder te brengen richting opschaling, een pilot en uiteindelijk marktintroductie.

Binnen het consortium werken drie partijen samen: LLBoltz, Tandem Vormgeving & Bouwadvies BV en Negotica Projectontwikkeling BV. Iedere partij heeft daarin een eigen rol. LLBoltz richt zich vooral op de technische ontwikkeling van het materiaal. Tandem kijkt naar

de bouwkundige toepasbaarheid en Negotica brengt kennis in over markt, strategie, innovatie en financiering.

Die rolverdeling is in de basis duidelijk. Het vraagstuk zit vooral in de volgende fase. Want een veelbelovend materiaal komt niet vanzelf in de praktijk terecht. Daarvoor moeten grotere platen worden gemaakt, eigenschappen worden getest en keuzes worden gemaakt over de eerste toepassing.

Van proefstuk naar praktijk

Op dit moment bevindt transparant hout zich nog vooral in de onderzoeksfase. De volgende stap is om grotere platen te produceren en te testen. Denk daarbij aan eigenschappen zoals isolatiewaarde, brandveiligheid, veroudering, krasgevoeligheid en UV-bestendigheid. Pas daarna kan goed worden bepaald waar het materiaal het beste voor gebruikt kan worden.

Uit mijn gesprekken kwam naar voren dat een kas een logische eerste demonstratie kan zijn. Voor een kas hoeft het materiaal namelijk niet volledig helder te zijn zoals glas. Het is vooral belangrijk dat er daglicht binnenkomt en

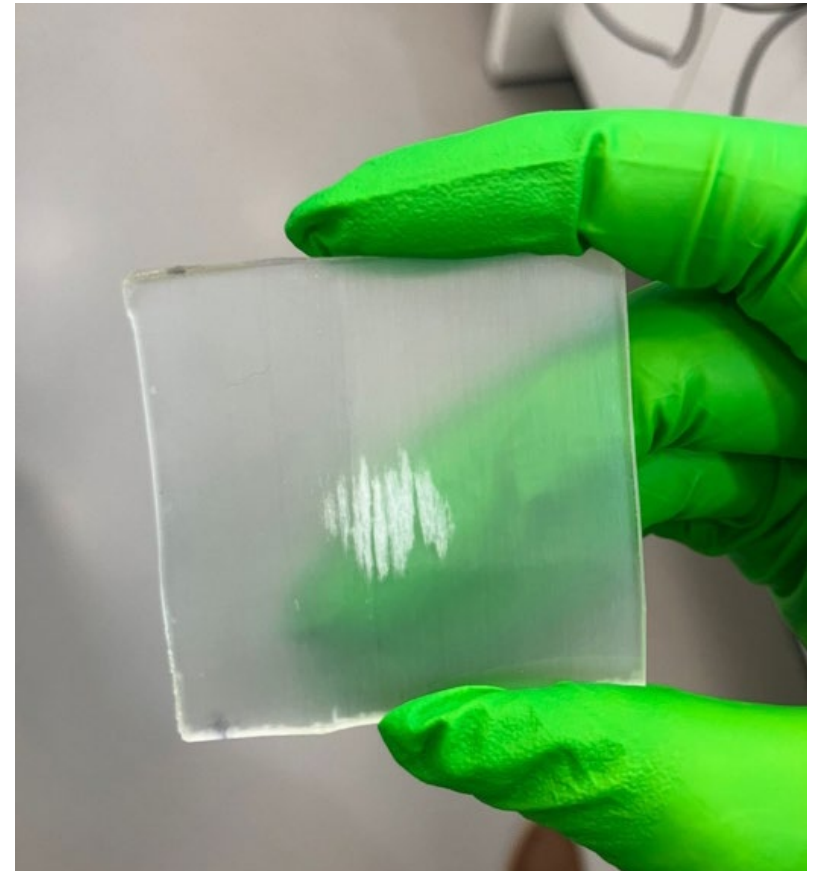
dat het materiaal goed isoleert. Omdat transparant hout nog wat diffuser is, kan dat juist goed passen bij zo'n toepassing.

Daarbij gaat het niet alleen om techniek. Er zijn ook middelen, tijd, financiering en duidelijke afspraken nodig. Wie houdt de voortgang in de gaten? Welke toepassing krijgt voorrang? Welke testen zijn als eerste nodig? En wanneer besluit je of het project klaar is voor de volgende stap?

Wat ik heb geleerd

Wat mij vooral is bijgebleven, is dat innovatie niet alleen draait om een goed idee of een bijzonder materiaal. Een innovatie moet ook georganiseerd worden. Er zijn mensen nodig die het materiaal ontwikkelen, maar ook partijen die kijken naar toepassing, markt, financiering en samenwerking.

Voor mij als Bedrijfskundestudent was dat interessant. Ik keek niet naar de chemische details van transparant hout, maar naar de vraag hoe je samenwerking en besluitvorming inricht rondom zo'n nieuw materiaal. Juist bij duurzame innovaties is dat belangrijk. Zonder duidelijke vervolgstap blijft een kansrijk idee namelijk snel hangen in de onderzoeksfase.



Figuur 1 – Transparant houtmonster

Transparant hout laat voor mij goed zien hoe breed de energietransitie is. Het gaat niet alleen over techniek of duurzaamheid,

maar ook over samenwerken, keuzes maken en ideeën verder brengen. Juist daar kan Bedrijfskunde veel waarde toevoegen.

Een blog door: Bas Bronts, vierdejaarsstudent Bedrijfskunde Deelgenomen aan de Learning Community Urban Energy

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

Step-by-step blogging Entrance

It started with an awkward question

If you stop a young person on the street and ask, “What do you think about hydrogen?”, you often get a polite smile and... not much else. Not because they do not care about the energy transition, but because hydrogen can feel abstract, technical, and far away from daily life.

And there is another layer: hydrogen is a contested topic. People argue about life-cycle emissions, safety, cost, and whether it makes sense compared with direct electrification. From the start, I decided I would not take a promotional angle. I wanted an analytical one. My goal was not to make hydrogen look “cool”, but to understand what helps young people feel informed, not pushed.

That is also why I chose young adults as the target group. They will be future energy users, voters, and decision makers. If their engagement is missing,

the transition conversation stays incomplete. At the same time, their media habits are simply different from traditional communication. So, the real question became: how do we design hydrogen communication that fits the way young people actually learn and scroll?

I did a “format test”, not a content battle

Instead of comparing different messages, I kept the content consistent and only changed the format. I created two versions of the same information: a short vertical video and a static infographic. Then I tested how each format influenced three things: engagement, risk perception, and willingness to support.

Because there is no full sampling list of young adults in public space, I used a street-intercept survey with a time-location sampling strategy. In practice, that meant planning specific places and time slots, then

rotating between them to avoid only recruiting one type of student. I collected data around the university area, the city centre near Grote Markt, and around Groningen Central Station. I also spread data collection across different weekday time windows. The aim was simple: more variety, less repetition.

To be honest, this stage was the most “real life” part of the project. I approached close to two hundred people on the street. Many said no. Some were busy. Some were not in the target age range. In the end, I got 106 valid responses: 64 in the video condition and 42 in the infographic condition.

After the street phase, I also organised a small workshop. The survey gave me the numbers, but the workshop helped me understand “the why” behind those numbers.

The results were practical: it is not “video vs infographic”, it is “video and infographic”

What I found first was reassuring: young people are not indifferent. Most participants already cared about the bigger transition goals. They tend to value sustainable energy and reducing

dependence on natural gas. So, the issue is not a lack of climate intention.

The changes after information exposure were modest in general perception, but the learning effect was clear. On basic knowledge questions, correct answers increased by more than 20 percentage points. One detail stood out: in the video condition, the improvement on “hydrogen fits heavy transport and industry” was especially strong.

The second big insight was about the role of each format. Under the same content: The video was stronger at grabbing attention and sparking curiosity. It helped people feel they learned something quickly. The infographic was more often described as professional, clear, and easy to save and revisit.

So, the takeaway was not that one format wins. The takeaway was that they do different jobs. If your goal is awareness and initial interest, video helps. If your goal is clarity and long-term reference, an infographic helps. And the strongest strategy is often to combine them: use video to pull people in, then use an infographic



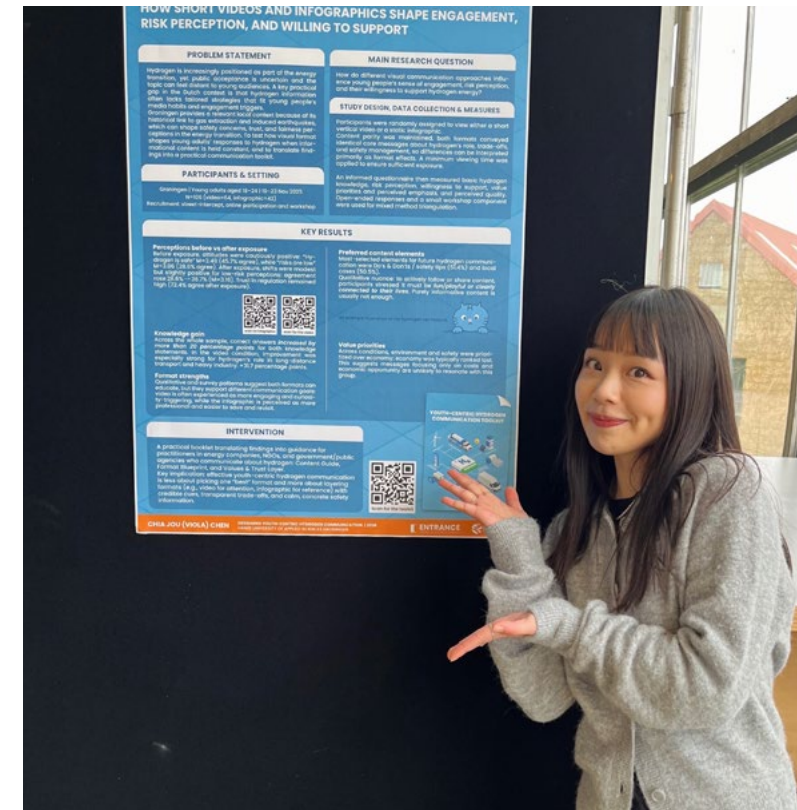
to let them pause, check, and come back later.

The “why” mattered more than I expected

The workshop and open-ended responses added the missing human layer.

One repeated theme was distance: hydrogen still felt “not

for me” unless it was linked to local and everyday examples. Another theme was safety: participants did not want fear-based messages, but they did want concrete safety explanations. Not vague reassurance. They wanted calm, specific information and a sense that risks are managed responsibly.



And then there was the social media reality: being informative is not enough. If you want content to be followed or shared, tone and format matter. People mentioned that short, fast, and visually native content works better. Some even suggested playful elements or light humour, as long as it does not feel like propaganda.

Trust also came up again and again. Young people asked for visible sources, clear ownership, and transparency about trade-offs. If communication hides uncertainty or feels too one-sided, they switch off quickly.

My intervention: a toolkit that turns research into action

The final step was to translate everything into something usable: the Youth-Centric Hydrogen Communication Toolkit.

I built it as a practical booklet that organisations can use as a “workshop in a box”. The toolkit has three parts:

Content Guide: what to say

This part helps teams choose the right ingredients: basic hydrogen literacy, local cases, concrete safety information, and relatable examples that do not talk down to the audience.

Format Blueprint: how to say it

This part shows how to design short videos and infographics for different communication goals, and how to sequence them as a combined strategy rather than treating them as competitors.

Values and Trust Layer: how to keep it fair and credible

This part is like a checklist for transparency: show sources, be clear about trade-offs, explain risk management, and avoid overly promotional framing. The goal is not to “win” the audience, but to respect them.



If I must summarise my learning in one sentence, it is this: Effective youth-centric hydrogen communication is less about picking one best format and more about combining formats with credible cues, transparent trade-offs, and calm, concrete safety information.

Looking back, this semester helped me turn a personal interest into a clearer professional direction. I started with a desire to make renewable energy easier to understand, and I ended up with a stronger method for doing it in a trustworthy way. My signature as a sustainability focused visual communicator is now more than a label. It is a way of working that combines clear visual structure, research-based decisions, and a calm approach to tradeoffs and safety. Looking ahead, I want to bring this approach into communication design and strategy design roles, and help organisations build communication that people can understand, trust, and actually use.

A blog by: Chia You (Viola) Chen, master student Energy for Society Participated in the professorship Communication, Behaviour, & Sustainable Society

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

Citizen Participation in a Positive Energy District

Coming from Taiwan, where I personally experienced being a citizen involved in energy transition projects, I have always been curious about how citizens in other countries perceive and engage with similar developments. This curiosity eventually shaped my thesis topic: citizen participation in a Positive Energy District (PED) project in Groningen.

A Positive Energy District aims to produce more energy than it consumes within a defined area. PED North in Groningen is considered a demonstration project that integrates renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency measures, and community engagement. While it is often described as a successful technical project, I was more interested in the human side: How did citizens actually experience it? What motivated them to participate? And what barriers did they face?

To answer these questions, I conducted qualitative research, mainly through semi-structured interviews. I spoke with local residents who were involved in the

project, as well as other key stakeholders such as project managers. These conversations allowed me to explore not only what happened during the project, but also how people felt about it.

One of the most meaningful parts of my thesis journey was directly listening to citizens' stories. Some residents were motivated by financial incentives or the possibility of reducing their energy bills. Others were driven by environmental values and a desire to contribute to sustainability. In particular, some citizens mentioned that they joined the project because of the earthquake experiences in Groningen. They wanted to reduce the use of gas and contribute to



the energy transition. However, there were also barriers. Financial uncertainty, unclear communication, and doubts about long-term benefits influenced their willingness to participate. I realised that energy transition is not only a technical or policy issue, but also a deeply social one.

Looking back, this thesis has deepened my understanding of citizen engagement in the energy transition. It showed me that successful energy projects require more than advanced technology or strong policy frameworks. They require trust, transparency, and meaningful involvement of local communities. Comparing my experiences in Taiwan with what I observed in the Netherlands also allowed me to see how cultural and institutional contexts shape citizen participation differently. Specifically, there are many energy transition projects currently taking place in Taiwan, which require deeper citizen engagement to avoid further resistance.

Overall, this thesis journey was not only an academic exercise but also a personal reflection on what a sustainable energy transition should look like. For me, it reaffirmed that citizens are not just energy consumers; they are potential co-creators of a more sustainable future. It has also been an inspiring experience that I hope to bring back and share with my fellow Taiwanese!

A blog by: Ting Chuan (Eva) Huang, master student Energy for Society Participated in the professorship Communication, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

How the circular plastic transition can strengthen the energy transition

When we talk about the energy transition, we often focus on renewable energy sources, electrification, and reducing CO₂ emissions. Yet one important factor is frequently overlooked: the materials we use every day. Single-use plastic products such as cups, food containers and cigarette butts are deeply embedded in our consumption patterns and require large amounts of fossil energy to produce.

Addressing plastic use more effectively can support the energy transition.

This insight formed the starting point of my research project at Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy, where I studied the Dutch implementation of Article 10 of the European Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD). Article 10 focuses on awareness-raising measures and the stimulation of reuse as a way to reduce plastic waste. My research examined why these reuse-oriented ambitions are not yet fully realised in the Netherlands, and how this affects broader sustainability transitions.

The problem: why reuse is lagging behind

The core problem identified in my research is that Article 10 of the SUPD has been implemented in a limited way in Dutch policy. Evaluation reports show that, in practice, not enough is being done to actively stimulate reuse systems. A frequently cited example is the festival sector. Due to policy exceptions, many festivals continue to rely heavily on single-use plastics, resulting in large volumes of plastic waste despite the directive's objectives.

To understand how this situation emerged, my research analysed three important aspects. First, I examined how Article 10 was

transposed into Dutch policy. Second, I analysed which stakeholders influenced this process, including ministries, municipalities, industry organisations and event organisers. Third, I identified the main institutional, communicational and behavioural barriers that arose during implementation.

But how does this connect to the energy transition? Producing single-use plastic products is highly energy-intensive and relies largely on fossil resources. Recycling is often presented as the solution, and while recycling is an improvement over disposal, it still requires significant amounts of energy. Reuse, by contrast, consumes considerably less energy because products are used multiple times without the need for repeated processing. From the perspective of the *Trias Energetica*, reuse therefore represents a higher-level strategy: reducing energy demand before focusing on cleaner energy supply.

Strengthening Article 10 and promoting reuse systems more effectively would not only reduce plastic waste, but also lower overall energy consumption. This means fewer renewable energy

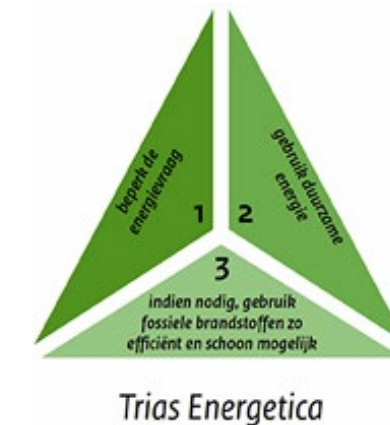
sources are needed to meet demand, indirectly supporting the energy transition.

What the analysis shows

In the Netherlands, the SUPD has mainly been implemented through the *Regeling kunststofproducten voor eenmalig gebruik*. An evaluation of the first years of this regulation reveals several persistent issues. Rules and definitions are often unclear, leaving entrepreneurs uncertain about what exactly is required. Affordable and practical alternatives are not always available, particularly for smaller organisations. Financial instruments, such as additional fees on single-use plastics, have proven ineffective in changing consumer behaviour. As a result, behavioural change among consumers remains limited.

In addition, communication between different levels of government and stakeholders has been fragmented. Responsibilities are spread across ministries, municipalities and enforcement bodies, which creates confusion in practice.

Finally, Dutch policy continues to prioritise recycling over reuse,



allowing existing systems to remain dominant while reuse-oriented initiatives struggle to scale up.

A roadmap as a way forward

To address these challenges, I developed a roadmap as an intervention. The core idea is simple: much of the information needed to implement reuse systems already exists, but it is scattered across reports, pilots and local initiatives. The roadmap brings this information together in one structured overview.

A blog by: Jeffrey Moltmaker, master student Energy for Society Participated in the professorship Communication, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

It offers municipalities practical guidance by presenting best practices, implementation steps, stakeholder engagement strategies and common barriers. By lowering the threshold for action, the roadmap makes it easier for local governments to design and test reuse-oriented policies. This, in turn, can lead to more pilot projects, greater visibility of successful reuse systems and, ultimately, broader adoption.

By strengthening the practical implementation of Article 10, the roadmap helps move reuse from an exception to a standard practice. In doing so, it not only supports the circular plastic transition, but also contributes to reducing energy demand, showing that material policy and energy policy are more closely connected than we often assume.

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

Waarom context en multidisciplinair onderzoek echt het verschil maken

Onderzoek helpt ons om grip te krijgen op complexe vraagstukken. Tegelijkertijd heeft onderzoek ook zijn grenzen. Om iets te kunnen meten, moeten we keuzes maken: wat nemen we mee en wat laten we buiten beschouwing? Dat is noodzakelijk, maar het risico is dat onderzoek steeds verder losraakt van de werkelijkheid waarin mensen leven. Tijdens mijn stage heb ik ervaren hoe belangrijk het is om onderzoek juist dicht bij die werkelijkheid te houden. Context en multidisciplinair samenwerken spelen daarin een centrale rol.

Context: begrijpen wat er echt speelt

Veel regulier onderzoek richt zich op het verzamelen van duidelijke, vergelijkbare data. Denk aan enquêtes, statistieken of experimenten. Die leveren waardevolle inzichten op, maar zeggen vaak vooral wat er gebeurt, en minder waarom. Bovendien is de groep mensen die daadwerkelijk meedoet aan dit soort onderzoek vaak beperkt. Slechts een klein percentage reageert, en die groep is niet altijd representatief voor de samenleving als geheel.

Ook bij experimenteel onderzoek zie je dat de context sterk wordt

vereenvoudigd. Onderzoeken vinden plaats in een lab of online omgeving, met deelnemers die vaak hoger opgeleid zijn en relatief veel op elkaar lijken. De resultaten kunnen intern goed kloppen, maar sluiten niet altijd aan bij de dagelijkse praktijk, waar mensen keuzes maken onder invloed van onzekerheid, sociale druk, geld, beleid en persoonlijke ervaringen.

Context-specifiek onderzoek probeert die kloof te verkleinen. Je gaat die omgeving in. Je kijkt naar hoe situaties zich in het echt afspelen. Je hoort twijfels, ziet tegenstrijdigheden en merkt waar

mensen vastlopen. Die context is een belangrijke bron van informatie.

Multidisciplinair werken: uit de eigen bubbel stappen

Wat mij vooral is opgevallen, is dat context-specifiek onderzoek bijna vanzelf vraagt om een multidisciplinaire aanpak. Veel regulier onderzoek blijft binnen de grenzen van één discipline. Een psycholoog laat bijvoorbeeld een andere psycholoog meekijken of een tekst logisch en kloppend is vanuit psychologisch perspectief. Dat is waardevol, maar ook beperkt. De vraag of iets economisch haalbaar is, technisch uitvoerbaar of beleidsmatig passend, blijft dan vaak buiten beeld.

Bij multidisciplinair onderzoek gebeurt juist het tegenovergestelde. Je beperkt je bewust niet tot je eigen vakgebied en laat anderen meekijken vanuit hun expertise. Dat betekent dat je je aannames laat testen door mensen die anders denken dan jij en dit voorkomt dat je vast blijft zitten in je eigen denkraam.

In ons onderzoek werken onder andere sociale, technische, economische en beleidsmatige perspectieven samen.

Waar de ene discipline focust op gedrag en beleving, kijkt een andere naar systemen, kosten of regelgeving. Door die invalshoeken te combineren, ontstaat een completer beeld van de werkelijkheid. Oplossingen worden niet alleen inhoudelijk sterk, maar ook realistischer en beter toepasbaar.

Het grote verschil met regulier onderzoek is dat je niet alleen controleert of iets klopt binnen je eigen vakgebied, maar ook of het standhoudt daarbuiten. Dat maakt het onderzoek minder eenzijdig en voorkomt dat goede ideeën in de praktijk stranden.

Van onderzoek naar betekenisvolle inzichten

Deze manier van werken verschuift de focus. Het gaat niet meer om de vraag wat theoretisch het beste is, maar om wat in deze specifieke situatie werkt. Door context en disciplines serieus te nemen, wordt onderzoek minder abstract en meer verbonden met de realiteit van mensen.

Wat ik heb geleerd en waar ik naartoe wil

Tijdens mijn stage heb ik geleerd hoe waardevol het is om mijn eigen perspectief niet als uitgangspunt, maar als één van



de perspectieven te zien. Ik heb gemerkt dat echte inzichten vaak ontstaan op het snijvlak van disciplines. Juist wanneer verschillende invalshoeken samenkomen, wordt duidelijk hoe complex de wereld in elkaar zit.

Wat ik hierin verder wil ontwikkelen, is het blijven verrijken van mezelf door te leren kijken vanuit meerdere perspectieven. Ik wil beter de wisselwerking tussen disciplines begrijpen en hoe ze elkaar beïnvloeden. Mijn

psychologische kennis zie ik daarin niet als eindpunt, maar als verbindende schakel. Psychologie kan helpen om gedrag, keuzes en weerstand te begrijpen, juist in die wisselwerking tussen systemen en mensen.

Door multidisciplinair te blijven werken en open te staan voor andere invalshoeken, hoop ik bij te dragen aan onderzoek dat niet alleen klopt op papier, maar ook betekenisvol is in de praktijk.

Een blog door: Hugo Sinnema, vierdejaarsstudent Toegepaste Psychologie
Deelgenomen aan het lectoraat Communication, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

Lectoraat Communications, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

People don't just live in neighbourhoods, they define them and build emotional bonds with them. Through their homes, daily routines, familiar streets, and shared spaces, places become meaningful

Across Europe, cities are exploring Positive Energy Districts (PEDs) as a way to move towards more sustainable futures. PEDs are clusters of buildings or neighbourhoods that generate more energy than they consume. Making this possible requires changes to homes, infrastructure, and therefore directly influence the places where people live. Affecting neighbourhoods and everyday environments of residents.

However, research on Positive Energy Districts has largely focus on technical and economic perspectives. To introduce a social perspective, and to place sense of place at the centre of this discussion, this research explores:

Citizen's participation in Positive Energy Districts: Exploring the role of Sense of Place

By connecting place, people and participation, my research aims to better understand what role people's connection to place has in their willingness to participate in sustainable energy transitions. The research uses the Groningen neighbourhood of De Hoogte as its case study area.

Sense of place refers to the connection people develop with a place through the meanings they attach to it and the emotional connection a person attaches to it. It is shaped by everyday practices, social relations and lived experiences within a specific environment. People do not relate to place in one certain way, therefore, sense of place consists of three interconnected dimensions. *Place identity*, the cognitive component, consists of place-specific beliefs, how a place

becomes part of who you are. *Place attachment*, the affective component, focuses on emotions, attachment, and connection to a place, and *place dependence*, a behavioural component, reflects the functionality and substitutability of a place. Concerning the extent to which a place supports desired activities and goals.

To understand how sense of place is perceived in De Hoogte, I walked through the neighbourhood myself multiple times. Walking through the streets, taking pictures and where possible to speak to people. Several interviews were conducted by talking to residents and professionals working in local social organisations. All interviews were conducted on location, to make it possible for me as a researcher to experience the area and to better understand the environment.

De Hoogte is a northern neighbourhood in Groningen, home to over 4000 residents. Characterised by rental housing and a social housing stock of 73%. It is characterised by socio-economic challenges, including low-income households and higher unemployment rates. Since the 1990s, the neighbourhood has been



shaped by various policy interventions supported by a strong and large network of community organisations and indicatives.

Findings show that sense of place in De Hoogte is layered and scale dependent. Place identity emerges as the most dominant dimensions, consistently described as an active, working-class and village-like neighbourhood. Place attachment is often locally grounded, tied to street or courtyard level rather than the neighbourhood as a whole. Place dependency is shaped by practical needs, such as affordable housing and access to social infrastructure, making cost and practical considerations key drivers of engagement.

Building on these insights, a set of engagement principles for De Hoogte were designed of the intervention. Rather than introducing new initiatives, connecting what is already there. Engagement in De Hoogte builds on existing organisations, trusted faces, familiar communication channels, and takes place at the scale of everyday life, such as streets and familiar local places. Sustainability is most effective when it is framed through

A blog by: Brecht de Vries, master student Energy For Society
Participated in the professorship Communication, Behaviour & Sustainable Society

practical, everyday benefits rather than abstract environmental goals.

This results in the creation of a place-based, interactive walk through the neighbourhood. Where residents can come along and follow a route connecting key local places, where questions invite reflection on sustainability and highlight the role of local initiatives. By engaging with the direct living environment of residents, the walk offers an accessible way to connect people, place and sustainable change.

This research and intervention can input valuable insights for the development of Positive Energy Districts with a lense of sense of place. Rather than treating PEDs as pure technical or economical projects, this research shows that it functions as social processes embedded neighbourhood life. Integrating sense of place into PED development can help strengthen trust, foster collective capacity and create longterm, inclusive participation in energy transitions.



Bij Entrance Leren & Innoveren in de Energietransitie komen studenten, docenten, onderzoekers, bedrijven, overheden en maatschappelijke organisaties samen. We bieden studenten een multidisciplinaire omgeving, met veel interactie met de praktijk. Hierdoor ontwikkelen ze de juiste competenties om de energietransitie vorm te geven en te versnellen. De veranderaars van onze energievoorziening zijn innovatief en creatief en ze werken op een multidisciplinaire wijze samen. Zo krijgen ze een breder inzicht in de verschillende facetten van een onderzoeksvraag.

Meer weten?

Deze professionals leiden we op bij Entrance – Centre of Expertise Energy, onder meer bij onze learning communities. Meer informatie over learning communities, of samen een maatschappelijk vraagstuk oplossen? Neem dan contact met ons op.

Ga naar: <https://www.entrance.eu/over-entrance/learning-communities/>

Contact

Entrance Leren & Innoveren in de Energietransitie
Zernikelaan 17
9747 AA Groningen
T (050) 595 4708
E entrancelc@org.hanze.nl

