

# ENERGIE

## CASE STUDY



### The Project

The REST project was set up to encourage hoteliers to manage and reduce their energy consumption and to increase their knowledge of the opportunities that exist for the use of renewable energy. The overall aim of the project was to develop a network of energy conscious hotels within the EU, through conducting a series of energy audits, which involved an assessment and evaluation of current energy costs and usage in the building(s). The results of these audits were used to develop an action plan detailing how the hotel could become 'carbon neutral'.

The project involved 12 energy agencies from six member states of the European Union and Energie-Cités. The consortium was put together by the Freiburg Energy Agency and Energie-Cités and it was decided amongst the partners that Milton Keynes Energy Agency (MKEA) would be the coordinator. The project was successfully negotiated with the Commission and work commenced on 1st February 2002.

### Project Deliverables

- Each partner organisation to deliver 20 energy audits
- For 5 hotels per partner to act upon the recommendations of these audits
- Reduce annual energy bill of each participating hotel by up to 40%
- Reduce the annual carbon dioxide emissions of each hotel by 100%
- Establish an advisory group
- Establish a 'green' network for participating hotels on the internet

### Project Outcomes

It soon became clear that many of the hotels approached were still at a fairly basic level of energy efficiency, and there were "easy wins" to be made before starting to consider renewable energy sources. This meant that the focus of the project changed slightly, leading to fewer than anticipated installations of green energy and the implementation of more energy efficiency measures. It was also discovered that smaller, family-owned hotels were more likely to be keen to address environmental issues than big chains, which looked very much at the economic bottom line. This meant that overall carbon savings were lower than initially expected, although in some countries more properties participated than planned. In the UK, the Youth Hostels Association was a willing partner for several of its hostels, but lacked the financial resources to make major investments in renewable energy.

### Case Study 04 Milton Keynes Energy Agency

#### Project:

REST  
Renewable Energy  
and  
Sustainable Tourism

#### Key Action:

Altener Programme


#### Project size:

0.8M€

#### Consortium Members:

13 partners





To date approximately 200 hotels have been audited and of these 24 have become REST hotels through the implementation of activities specified in their action plans. One of more successful projects was undertaken with Hotel Victoria in Freiburg, Germany. This now runs on 100% renewable energy using solar, wind, water power and wood, all of which is locally sourced. The Hotel Victoria has also observed benefits to the business with the number of guests staying at the hotel significantly increasing.

To find out more details on the project and to view information about other hotels that have benefited from the REST project please visit: [www.rest-hotels.org](http://www.rest-hotels.org).

### Experience gained

Although the work provided useful experience for MKEA, there were fewer benefits than expected. It had been hoped to develop a longer term activity advising hotels and other tourism-related businesses, but it was clear that the volume of work could not justify a specialist employee. Most hotels appeared content with the more basic advice available through the UK Government's ActionEnergy (now part of the Carbon Trust advice scheme) and did not feel a need for additional information on renewable energy.

### Advice for future participants

The coordination of the REST project was MKEA's first experience of coordinating a European project and from their experience they have a number of recommendations.

Firstly, if your project is sector based **ensure that the key market actors are involved in the consortium**. The REST project managed to get letters of commitment from the key market actors (i.e. the hotels, key individuals from the tourism sector), but failed to involve them as members of the consortium. As a result, it became very difficult to get the hotels to fulfil their obligations in participating and contributing towards the costs of the energy audits. This meant that the uptake of the service was limited and impacted upon the achievement of some of the project objectives. Secondly, you should **know your partners and be aware of their previous experience and performance within European projects**. MKEA experienced problems with some of their partners, which they now know were not appropriate for the project and as a result have recently put a proposal on hold due to insufficient interest from the right partners. They suggest that **setting up a consortium agreement** may help overcome some of the problems that can be experienced with partners, as this sets a baseline for what is expected. Thirdly, when writing the proposal, be **clear and concise about what you want to achieve and be realistic about the deliverables** that can be achieved in the allocated timeframe. Also ensure that the proposal is for an activity that is an **important part of your organisation's long term objectives**.

*"If a project is not worth doing without EU money, it is not worth doing with EU money"*

*(Ian Byrne, MKEA)*

Finally, be aware that **costs incurred before the project has been negotiated, and after the completion date, are non-recoverable** from the Commission and will have to be covered by your organisation or from other sources of funding. This is important to remember, when coordinating the final claim, as there is a lot of work involved in tidying up the "loose ends" and collecting all the evidence and final reports.

#### In summary:

- Be clear and realistic about your project objectives
- It is key to know your partners and their previous performances in EU projects
- A well thought-out consortium agreement may help to overcome some of the problems that can occur with project partners
- Involve the key market actors (e.g. the energy users) in the consortium as much as possible
- Be careful not to underestimate the costs for putting together the final report. If these costs are not set out in the budget they will not be recoverable from the Commission.

For further details of the REST project please visit [www.rest-hotels.org](http://www.rest-hotels.org)