

Midlands Engine starts crucial pan-regional energy conversation to find a pathway to net-zero and capitalise on the region's unique strengths in clean energy

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The whole of the Midlands region is in the vanguard of pioneering environmental innovation, with unique strengths in energy research and development, clean energy generation and clean technologies for industry. It is within this context that the Midlands Engine has launched a region-wide conversation with the aims of:

- Understanding energy challenges and needs in our region
- Identifying energy initiatives and opportunities in the Midlands, and the barriers to their implementation

Tackling the energy challenge is a key strategic objective for the Midlands Engine, with a clear focus on accelerating research and delivering clean energy solutions for businesses to enable sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

The Midlands is home to more than 10,000 organisations, powering forward our region's energy sector: from major players such as National Grid, E.ON, Engie, Rolls-Royce and Worcester Bosch, to SMEs acting as hotbeds of innovation. Together, these businesses employ close to one third of all the people working in the UK energy sector, approximately 56,000 jobs, and have huge transformational potential.

The region also has 21 universities with a combined student population of over 350,000, and a workforce in excess of 60,000 people. Midlands universities have a significant positive impact on the region, contributing more than £5.5 billion gross value added to the economy. They also have a successful track record in the development of world-leading technologies, ranging from the MRI scanner, to DNA profiling, to mass spectrometry and much more.

The Midlands Engine Energy Conversation: mapping the way forward to meet the net-zero challenge

The Midlands Engine is now keen to hear from businesses, researchers and local authorities in order to identify priorities and map out a way forward to meet the net-zero challenge.

Working in partnership with Browne Jacobson LLP and the Energy Research Accelerator, the Midlands Engine will be holding interviews and a roundtable discussion with senior representatives from private and public sector organisations. This will be followed by in-depth workshops later in the year looking at specific energy themes, including decarbonising heat, low carbon transport, business recovery, and skills.

In addition, there is the opportunity to submit insights through an online survey. These detailed consultations will result in a report identifying the principal challenges, opportunities and priorities, and a roadmap for accelerating progress and productivity.

Sir John Peace, Chairman, Midlands Engine, said *“Energy is a vitally important sector across the Midlands, and nearly a third of all jobs nationwide in energy are based in our region. Every business and individual in the Midlands will benefit from the region achieving net-zero, with cleaner air and sustainable power and fuel. The Midlands energy sector has remarkable existing strengths, and our combination of capabilities mean we have great potential; to lead the UK and beyond in energy innovation and in delivering clean, green solutions to the issues we all face today.”*

Peter Ware, Partner and Head of the Government sector at Browne Jacobson, said: *“All organisations depend on energy and can benefit from cleaner and more sustainable energy sources in their pursuit of net zero carbon emissions. We are looking forward to working with businesses across the Midlands to help identify the best opportunities to deliver greener energy both today and in the longer”.*

Professor Martin Freer, Director of the Energy Research Accelerator, said: *“We are very pleased to be working with the Midlands Engine on this programme. At the Energy Research Accelerator we believe that the Midlands has the potential to lead the way in energy innovation in the UK. It is vitally important that we obtain the views of as many people as possible, to both understand the challenges that they are facing, and also the opportunities that they see for their businesses as we move to a net-zero economy.”*

For more information about the Midlands Engine Energy Conversation, visit the [webpage](#).

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