

Iberdrola aims to make the agricultural and livestock sectors 100% green

- The energy company, through its start-up programme -PERSEO- and in collaboration with ASAJA and the start-up accelerator of the Junta of Castile and León -WOLARIA-, is looking for innovative solutions to electrify the countryside and promote renewable energies in rural areas.
- In addition to promoting and supporting zero-emission agriculture and livestock farming through the implementation of energy efficiency, self-consumption and sustainable mobility solutions, the aim is for renewables to become a driving force for rural development, to conserve the biodiversity of flora and fauna and to care for the natural heritage.

24/06/2022

Iberdrola is fully committed to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems, and to this end has launched a new challenge. The goal is for the supply of clean and sustainable competitive energy to be compatible with the balance of the environment and the preservation of biodiversity by 2030.

With this challenge, promoted by the energy company's start-up programme, PERSEO, together with ASAJA and the *start-up* accelerator of the Junta de Castilla y León through the Institute for Business Competitiveness (ICE), WOLARIA, Iberdrola is seeking solutions to decarbonise and electrify the agricultural and livestock sectors through renewable energies and sustainable practices.

The company has carried out more than 1,450 actions to protect biodiversity by combining the development of renewable projects with the conservation of the diversity of flora and fauna and the care of natural heritage. In addition, it aims to reforest 20 million trees by the end of the decade, capable of capturing some six million tonnes of CO₂ in 30 years.

The challenge is to support zero-emission agriculture and livestock farming with energy efficiency solutions, self-consumption and sustainable mobility, as well as other measures in favour of biodiversity, CO₂ capture, circular economy and the promotion of new zero-emission fertilisers.

Thus, the challenge is divided into five categories: measures to improve energy efficiency and self-consumption that reduce emissions from energy for air conditioning, irrigation and other processes in rural areas; achieving sustainable mobility and the electrification of agricultural machinery to reduce emissions from the use of fuels for mobility and agricultural work; reducing greenhouse gases and improving biodiversity through formulas that allow CO₂ sequestration in soils and the generation of carbon credits; promoting the circular economy with business models that allow zero-emission management of agricultural and livestock waste, as well as emissions from animal digestive processes, with the aim of achieving carbon-neutral products, and reducing emissions associated with synthetic fertilisers.

A team formed by Iberdrola, ASAJA and WOLARIA - the start-up accelerator of the Junta of Castile and León that works to strengthen the business network in the region and promotes businesses with high growth potential - will select the project that achieves the aforementioned objectives.

The selected initiative will be developed in collaboration with experts from Iberdrola's different businesses and with strategic advice from WOLARIA. In addition, the company could offer the winner the opportunity to scale up the solution, adopting it through commercial agreements or even investing in the company.

The winner of the challenge, for which the registration period has already started and will end on 10 July, will be announced in August. The call for entries will be global in scope.

15 years innovating with start-ups

Since its creation in 2008, PERSEO has invested more than 100 million euros in *start-ups* that develop innovative technologies and business models, focusing on those that improve the sustainability of the energy sector through further electrification and decarbonisation of the economy.

The programme has focused its activities on analysing business opportunities and technological collaboration with *start-ups* and emerging companies around the world, analysing 300 companies each year and creating an ecosystem of almost 7,000 entrepreneurial companies. This investment instrument currently holds a portfolio of eight companies.

Through PERSEO, Iberdrola carries out more than 25 real tests of technologies per year, which serve as a first step towards establishing a commercial relationship or partnership with start-ups. In addition, in the last two years the group has launched a total of fourteen *challenges* in which 700 start-ups have participated.

Beyond the financial contribution, PERSEO's support to these companies has been key in defining their product and business, offering them its knowledge and access to Iberdrola's market. On the other hand, the work carried out with the start-ups has served Iberdrola as a technological antenna to find out where their sector is heading.

Renewable energy, agriculture and livestock farming: symbiosis is possible

The coexistence of crop and grassland and solar photovoltaic installations is moving towards the sustainability of both sectors.

Renewable energy and the primary sector are proving that they not only coexist in the same space, but complement and benefit from each other's actions. The dual use of land for agriculture and energy relieves pressure on ecosystems and biodiversity, which are affected when cultivation areas are expanded. Iberdrola is involved in numerous initiatives that combine the installation of renewable projects with the generation and use of the ecosystem services generated at its plants, such as the use of livestock, beekeeping, and cultivation of aromatic herbs.

The development of photovoltaic plants is making them true refuges for biodiversity, through the creation and conservation of ecosystems and the absence of human activity inside the enclosures.

Nota de prensa