

## California students visit Iberdrola's Hub in Bilbao as an example of a global smart grid innovation centre

- 60 students from the Paul Merage Business School studying 'Global Business for Managers' with a focus on Europe were able to visit the Basque company's Global Smart Grids Innovation Hub in Larraskitu.
- They received information on Iberdrola's energy distribution business, the challenges of smart grids in the face of the energy transition and how innovation is a fundamental lever for responding to these challenges.

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This morning, 60 students from the University of California visited Iberdrola's Global Smart Grids Innovation Hub -GSGIH- in Bilbao. The Hub is part of their training as an example of a global smart grid innovation centre that they have integrated into their Paul Merage School of Business course on 'Global Business for Managers' with a focus on Europe.

The students, led by Professor Cornelia Pechmann, are a group of Full Time and Executive MBAs, most of them already immersed in the working world. As part of their studies at the American university, they visit leading companies and benchmarks in various sectors in Europe to learn first-hand how they develop their businesses.

In this case, Iberdrola was one of the companies selected as an example of commitment to energy transition in the energy distribution business. The director of the GSGIH, Noemí Alonso, hosted this educational knowledge visit, which provided examples of collaboration between companies in the sector in which innovation is the fundamental lever for responding to the challenges of the future of smart grids. *"The hub, in addition to facilitating the development of cutting-edge technology thanks to collaboration with all our partners, is a pole of attraction for talent. Establishing relationships with foreign universities helps us to expand our knowledge network and attract international talent. The visit was very productive for everyone and we were struck by the enthusiasm they expressed when we shared with them our objectives and tools to respond to the challenges of the energy transition"*, explained the director of the Iberdrola Hub in Bilbao.

### GSGIH consolidates its position as a global centre for smart grid innovation

Iberdrola's Global Smart Grids Innovation Hub, located in Bilbao, is consolidating its position as a global centre of innovation and knowledge in smart grids to help respond to the challenges of the energy transition. The centre, in collaboration with the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, acts as a driving force for innovation, combining Iberdrola's technological capacity with more than 91 collaborating entities and companies.

Iberdrola's Networks Business, through the Global Smart Grids Innovation Hub (GSGIH), has created an ecosystem to promote innovation, developing talent through collaboration with universities, offering opportunities to students and preparing the professionals of the future.

The initiative brings together the innovative potential of more than 200 professionals in the development of R&D&I projects related to the challenges of the electricity grids of the future, including greater digitalisation, the processing of the data generated by these infrastructures and

the response, in terms of robustness and flexibility, of the electricity grid to new consumption models, such as electric mobility and self-consumption.

In addition, the centre is established as a market-oriented collaborative technology space, where the best international talent will always be in contact with suppliers, start-ups and universities to stimulate their industrial capacity and accelerate innovation processes.

### Mission: Leading the energy transition

Iberdrola wants to remain at the forefront of the energy transition by developing new business and technological models in distribution grids. The electricity system is undergoing an unprecedented transformation and the grids have become a cornerstone of the energy revolution; an essential platform for moving towards a decarbonised economy, which favours the development of an electricity system with more renewable sources, sustainable mobility, smart cities and self-consumption.

With the creation of the Global Smart Grids Innovation Hub, the group aims to double the number of innovation projects in smart grids, consolidating and expanding the current successful model of collaboration with electrical equipment manufacturers. To this end, the company has identified from the outset more than 120 projects for future development worth €130 million.

Since this Hub began operating, R&D&I projects have been registered for a total estimated investment of €42 million in Iberdrola Redes España. In addition, agreements have been reached with more than 91 technology partners for the development of grid digitalisation solutions, integration of renewables, deployment of electric vehicles and energy storage systems.

Proof of its relevance is the visit made by the European Technology and Innovation Platform for Smart Grids for Energy Transition (ETIP SNET) to carry out one of its Workshops, specifically the Western Region Workshop, which was attended by participants from France, Ireland, Portugal and the United Kingdom. These workshops, held in close collaboration with experts from the European Commission, aim to identify unresolved research and innovation (R&I) issues and monitor the implementation of R&I activities at national and regional level within the EU, ensuring coherence between national and European views and stimulating knowledge exchange between participants.