



Inspirational story	Bringing together local supply and demand for energy in the IJmond region	INST-04
Country	Netherlands	
Energy efficiency measures	Local energy market	
SME sector	Mixed – Business parks	
Why	<p>To be independent from energy suppliers while creating leverage for sustainability and green energy. This is what GreenBiz IJmond is enabling with GreenBiz Energy. The aim of GreenBiz Energy is to bring together local energy supply and demand for sustainably generated energy. Each business park in the IJmond region contains several green energy producers and consumers, who maintain their sustainably generated energy on their own business park and trade it among themselves. Customers therefore buy their energy directly from fellow entrepreneurs.</p>	
How	<p>Approach GreenBiz Energy was set up as one of the pillars of the (foundation) GreenBiz IJmond, a public-private partnership consisting of the IJmond environmental service, the Province of North Holland, the municipalities of Beverwijk, Heemskerk, Uitgeest and Velzen, as well as entrepreneurs from the IJmond region. GreenBiz IJmond supports entrepreneurs from the IJmond region in becoming more sustainable. The board of GreenBiz IJmond consists of eight entrepreneurial forces that regularly consult with a focus group consisting of representatives of the four participating municipalities, the IJmond environmental service, ROC Nova College and a deputy of the province of North Holland. The Greenbiz Energy initiative was launched with support from an Interreg grant. Local entrepreneurs who found it interesting to participate set up a small-scale Local Energy Market (LEM) on their own. The associated administrative actions were taken up by the GreenBiz IJmond foundation. This meant that GreenBiz Energy was registered with the Chamber of Commerce, and that a technical platform was selected and set up to work with. The participating entrepreneurs only had to switch from their traditional energy supplier to GreenBiz Energy. With 25 start-up participants, GreenBiz Energy joined the ENTRANCE platform. A representative of the foundation was responsible for matching generated power and customers. As GreenBiz Energy grew and more participants joined over time, the administrative burden of matching supply and demand became too much. Following this, a partnership was formed with Edmij, a flex service provider that took over this task. The flex service provider is formally the energy supplier. Flexibility is accessed on the local energy market. On a small-scale</p>	





basis, electricity consumption is adjusted to energy market prices whenever possible. There are currently seven business parks in the IJmond region connected to the LEM.

Setback

Setting up an LEM is relatively new, and when starting something new one runs into barriers. This also happened with GreenBiz Energy. The first barrier arose when choosing a legal structure. Initially, they went for a partnership. However, entrepreneurs were reluctant to participate in this structure, because in a partnership each participant enters into an agreement with each other and there is joint ownership of energy production resources, such as solar panels. After GreenBiz Energy abandoned this idea, it opted to set up a local energy market (LEM) platform, which is governed by a limited liability company under the GreenBiz IJmond Foundation. This offers participants more flexibility, e.g. they can choose to cancel per month and there are minimal interdependencies. There have also been bumps in the road at the technical/administrative level. When entrepreneurs have been supplied with power for a year, a final account statement has to be prepared. Due to the dependence on external parties, such as the grid operator and the metering company, this initially took a very long time, causing uncertainty among participating entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs were supported in this by constant dialogue and being transparent about the learning process that comes with starting something new. Understanding that entrepreneurs are part of something new, an experiment, helped overcome uncertainty. Because it is not always easy to get entrepreneurs on board, one of the founders of Greenbiz IJmond who is trusted by local entrepreneurs and has the power to connect and motivate entrepreneurs is involved in GreenBiz Energy.

Whom

The close cooperation between public and private, provided by the Public Private Partnership structure, provides a good basis for cooperation with local authorities, and inspires a sense of confidence among entrepreneurs and towards the outside world. To make GreenBiz Energy possible, cooperation has been established with knowledge institutions, advisers, and, in a later phase, with a flex service provider to take on the matching between supply and demand. There were changes in the cooperation with advisers during the process, as not every proposed approach worked equally well for GreenBiz Energy.





<p>What</p>	<p>For most of the entrepreneurs who have switched from their old energy supplier to GreenBiz Energy, the energy bill has gone down and saving money is a key motivation. However, financial benefits are not the only motivation to participate. Most participants have a positive attitude towards sustainability and are keen to contribute to it. Participating in an LEM also contributes to a positive image regarding sustainability, which indirectly has a positive influence on sustainability labels and opportunities for tenders. In 2021, 40 companies from IJmond were connected to GreenBiz Energy's LEM. These companies collectively consumed around 1 million kWh annually, almost half of which was sustainably generated by the connected entrepreneurs in 2021.</p>
<p>Lessons learned</p>	<p>The entrepreneurs who started GreenBiz Energy know: 'Innovation involves trying out and sometimes fine-tuning the route in between.' Being transparent about the process and continuing to communicate, and the involvement of a trusted partner, has ensured that GreenBiz Energy has been built up with a group of committed entrepreneurs and grown into a well-known phenomenon in the IJmond region.</p>

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