

WHAT WILL A CONCERTO PROJECT COVER?

A Concerto project should aim to demonstrate the high potential for reducing energy consumption and increasing the use of renewable energy through adoption of an integrated approach to energy policies in a well-defined geographical area. Concerto demonstrations should encourage other communities across Europe to adopt this integrated approach, thereby multiplying the benefits, both local and global.

Projects will involve balanced, comprehensive actions – with the support of all relevant stakeholders – including the large-scale integration of energy from renewable sources into overall energy use. Within each community, the self-supply of energy – in particular renewable – must be integrated with appropriate demand-side measures to limit energy consumption, in particular through the concept of eco-building – e.g., by designing buildings to minimise energy use for heat, light and cooling – and polygeneration – e.g., by optimising the outputs from power generation through harnessing the heat generated for district heating.

Concerto projects will focus on demonstrating the social, environmental and economic benefits of integrating renewable energy supplies with rational energy-use techniques and sustainable energy-management systems on a community scale.

Projects are expected to produce well-monitored field experiences of energy supply and demand patterns, in order to ensure the success of the concepts demonstrated and their transferability to other communities. In addition, socio-economic analysis should measure the local trends in energy costs and savings from the project.

HOW TO APPLY?

The European Commission will publish a call for proposals for Concerto projects on 17 June 2003. The deadline for submission of proposals will be 17 December 2003.

To obtain full details of the call, and the conditions that proposals need to fulfil, please see the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/rtd/6/index_en.htm

A series of information days will be held so that interested parties can learn more about Concerto. Details will be available on the above website.

Further information may also be obtained from:
European Commission
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Energy and Transport DG

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy and Transport develops and implements policy in these closely linked areas. The 2000 Green Paper *Towards a European strategy for the security of energy supply* analysed Europe's structural weaknesses: energy consumption is rising, while the EU is becoming increasingly dependent on external sources of energy. To respect its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, the EU must reduce its production of greenhouse gases. The Green Paper proposes a strategy to reduce energy consumption in Europe, through improved energy efficiency and greater use of renewable energy sources. Action at the level of local communities is vital if this strategy is to be implemented successfully.

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CONCERTO



In tune with your local energy strategy



WHAT IS CONCERTO?

The best orchestral performance blends together harmoniously the sounds of the different instruments. So it is with energy strategies, where a local community is best served by blending together different sources of energy, and techniques and technologies for increasing energy efficiency.

Concerto is a major new European Union initiative which will support local communities in developing concrete initiatives that are both sustainable and highly energy-efficient. Such communities may be new or existing, and seeking to improve their energy performance.

Communities supported by Concerto will be working towards a completely integrated energy policy, harmonising a substantial use of renewable energy sources with innovative technologies and systems to minimise energy consumption and to improve the quality of citizens' lives.

EU funding for a typical Concerto project is likely to fall in the range of EUR 5-15 million, and to represent up to 35 % of the eligible project costs. This funding will come from the EU's Sixth Research Framework Programme (FP6), and will support integrated demonstration and dissemination actions (including a significant (up to 20 %) short-term research component) which are carried out with an EU dimension and which involve the real-scale application of new, renewable and efficient energy technologies.

HOW CAN MY COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM CONCERTO?

Concerto is about helping communities integrate sustainable energy-efficiency strategies into high-quality local development. Such communities will already have chosen to improve their performance with a strong political commitment to doing so. Concerto will help them to develop the energy system best suited to the needs of their community, with the prospect that these solutions will also be transferable to other communities.

Increasing the share of renewable energy and managing energy demand efficiently will bring both immediate and longer-term benefits to the citizens of a Concerto community. A cleaner and more pleasant local environment will improve quality of life and health. At the same time, reducing energy consumption – and switching to more sustainable energy sources – will lower the overall costs of energy provision for the community, despite growth in the demand for energy services and the higher unit prices of sustainable energy.

Local initiatives in Concerto communities will contribute to the EU's global goals to fight climate change as well as to improve the security of energy supplies. Switching to local, cleaner energy sources also means creating jobs in the community, rather than relying on external power supply.

WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN A CONCERTO PROJECT?

Concerto projects should involve communities in different countries working together towards shared, ambitious goals. In each community, politicians, planners, developers and citizens should actively co-operate to develop and demonstrate high degrees of decentralised energy supply from various sources, integrated with new and renewable energy sources, as well as a conscientious application of the leading energy-efficiency measures in the various end-use sectors (conventional energy supplies will not be eligible for support).

Each of the communities should make substantial efforts to improve the performance of their overall energy systems and share experiences with each other, both within each project and with other Concerto projects. They should be communities of a representative size, which can serve as a model for widespread replication across the EU. Each Concerto community needs a strong commitment from the relevant local authorities, as well as the different local market actors and decision-makers. This will be critical if they are to develop actively – and ensure the success of – a high level of local, renewable energy supplies from a range of sustainable sources, and adopt a full range of design and technological measures to improve energy efficiency.

In improving their energy performance, Concerto communities should also realise wider benefits touching everyone within that community, including a cleaner living and working environment, increased local control over energy supplies together with related employment, and reduced overall costs of energy services.

It is envisaged that a representative group of projects, involving a mix of ambitious and pioneering communities across Europe, will receive EU support. Initiatives to encourage the sharing of ideas and experience amongst these communities, and dissemination to other communities, will form an essential part of each Concerto project.

Typical Concerto project consortia will include local and regional authorities, utilities, energy-service providers, energy agencies, technology providers, energy research and analysis teams, socio-economists and energy users. Participation by communities in the new Member States is particularly encouraged.