

Sustainable Nordic City Solutions Inspire the Canadian City of Hamilton

Through an Open Innovation competition nine Nordic companies were invited to present their sustainable urban development solutions to the Canadian city of Hamilton, Ontario on 13 September. In a setup similar to the Lion's Den, three solutions were identified as being most attractive and will be taken into consideration in Hamilton's future tenders. The competition was financed by Nordic Innovation and organised by EIT Climate-KIC, Quercus Group and Global Utmaning.

In the spring of 2018, the City of Hamilton, in response to its need for massive energy retrofit of its large social housing stock, launched an Open Innovation call in collaboration with EIT Climate-KIC, Quercus Group and Global Utmaning. The competition, financed by Nordic Innovation, aimed to engage innovators, companies and other relevant stakeholders from the Nordics to work on the concrete challenges facing Hamilton's urban renewal. The ambition is for the proposed solution to be replicable in other cities facing similar challenges across the world.

Impressive and Diverse Response

The response from the call for solutions was impressive, and in September 2018 nine Nordic solution owners were invited to take part in the three day Urban Open Innovation Lab "Future of Hamilton". The proposed solutions addressed matters such as how to encourage the construction of more energy efficient buildings, smart solutions to recreational facilities as well as circular economy.

'The Urban Open Innovation Lab was a tremendous experience, bringing new perspectives that uncovered opportunities for improved efficiencies through Nordic technologies. The connections and conversations through this lab are continuing and the novel ideas are inspiring new approaches in housing.'

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Tom Hunter – CEO CityHousing Hamilton

In order to reach the solution owners, EIT Climate-KIC drew on its extensive European network consisting of actors from academia, business and city officials across Europe. Relevant solution owners have through the process been connected to the city of Hamilton and dialogue has been initiated and facilitated.

Nordic Technologies to Canada

Nine Nordic businesses were invited to Hamilton to learn about the city and its particular context before pitching their technological solutions. In style of 'The Lion's Den', the specific solutions were pitched in front of a panel of four judges then chose the three most promising and implementable solutions.

The top three solutions were:

1. AquaGreen - promising solutions to turn waste water sludge into energy, agricultural fertiliser and active coal, that can then be reused in waste water treatment.
2. WoodUpp - urging a forest country like Canada to embrace up-cycling of wood from construction to products from isolation to cloth.
3. AquaGlobe - delivering smart water technologies to radically reduce energy use from water distribution on the supplier side.

"The Urban innovation Lab was a great opportunity for AquaGreen to present our technology where we turn waste into thermal energy and fertiliser without environmental pollutants and heavy metals. We are very proud of winning the competition, and the strategic fit is perfect for us, as we are working on establishing a Joint Venture in the area around Toronto to focus on the North American market. We are therefore looking very much forward to discuss directly with the management of Hamilton's waste water treatment plants in November'.

Henning Schmidt-Petersen, AquaGreen

"For AquaGlobe participating in the Urban Open Innovation Lab in Hamilton was a great opportunity. Connecting some of the most innovative and ambitious players in the water industry, we demonstrate sustainable water technology directly in the operational supply net of Skanderborg Utility while measuring its performance in real time. The key is in the synergy - and I am happy we got to pitch that in Hamilton."

Rune Kier Nielsen, AquaGlobe - Water Solution Center

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Behind the Urban Open Innovation Lab

Among the innovative solutions pitched at the event was Danfoss' retrofit technology Fibo Intercon tackling the recycling of concrete. FTEP Energy pitched a Building Stock Model for the circular economy. All solution owners will be invited to bid for tenders issued by the city of Hamilton in collaboration with local developers. Thereby they may become part of the natural and sustainable development of the city for years to come.

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Climate-KIC is supported by the
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Background

Read more about the competition here: <https://www.climate-kic.org/hamilton/>

EIT Climate-KIC is a European knowledge and innovation community, working to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Through our convening power, EIT Climate-KIC brings together the most effective groups to create the innovation that can lead to systemic change.

By bringing together partners in the worlds of business, academia, and the public and non-profit sectors to create networks of expertise, we facilitate the development of innovative products, services and systems, help bring them to market and scale them up for maximum impact.

Supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), we identify and support innovation that helps society mitigate and adapt to climate change. We believe that a decarbonised, sustainable economy is not only necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change, but presents a wealth of opportunities for business and society.

For more information visit:

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