



# European Energy Network

The voluntary network of European Energy Agencies - at the heart of the clean energy transition

## Name and Country of E<sup>n</sup>R Member

MOTIVA – Finland



## Name of Project/Programme & Link to website

Learning from failures as a support for energy transition.

<https://www.motiva.fi/>

## Description of Project

Learning from experiments has been seen important in developing climate and energy solutions, but less attention has been paid to learning from the inevitable failures associated with experiments. Societal learning from failures is nevertheless challenging because sharing such experiences is difficult.

The project focused on a novel kind of intervention developed to support learning from failures related to renewable energy experiments. A series of After Work events for pioneers of energy experiments was held in different locations in Finland during 2018-2019. A total of 139 experts interested in energy experiments took part in the events. The aim of the Energy Pioneers' After Work event series was to encourage energy experimenters and other actors to openly share their failures, thus promoting the adoption of an experimental culture and the local dissemination of experimental lessons.

The events were planned in a way to create a safe space for sharing failures, including e.g. the use of a relaxing atmosphere, humorous examples, and discussions in small groups. Small group discussion results were written up by a project team member, and reports of the events were shared with participants. The series of events was evaluated by collecting feedback from participants and interviewing a number of them after the event.

We studied what the events revealed about the failures and what participants learned from the discussions at these events. Based on the results, we examine how sharing experiences of failures could be promoted, how the intervention itself showed aspects of failure, and what was learned from organizing the series of events.



## Aim/Expected Impact of Project

In order to encourage sharing of experiences of failures, and collective analysis of what can be learned from these experiences, a series of After Work events for pioneers engaging in energy experiments in different locations in Finland during 2018-2019 was organised. A total of 139 experts interested in energy experiments took part in the events.

The events highlighted very concrete lessons from failures such as the need to improve the flow of information, pay attention to the quality of the technical installations of the systems and support the fitting of new technology to the operating environment. Discussing failures also highlighted the influence of the context of the experiments as well as of the competence of connected actors. The underdevelopment of the market and the problems in co-development were identified as further challenges in promoting the energy transition. Vendors' promises' and customer expectations may not meet and there have been problems in communication and interaction.

Identifying the causes of failures is key to developing new workable solutions and supporting broader learning. The experiment proved futile the suspicion that people would perceive the theme of failure as negative and discouraging. On the contrary, sharing failures can even be empowering if one succeeds in creating a psychologically safe state in which sharing failures is valued rather than criticized and peer learning is multifaceted.

The project revealed that, with this new series of events, it is possible to contribute to accelerating the adaptation of new energy solutions to their operating environment, and thus to promoting energy transition.

## Involvement of the Agency and Link to the EU Green Deal

- **Smart Integration**
- **Just Transition**

This intervention was carried out by Centre for Consumer Society Research/University of Helsinki and Motiva within a work package 'Competence development: learning from smart energy pilots and early users' of a large Smart Energy Transition project (2015-2021) funded by the Strategic Research Council, Finland.