



Policy & Research Fund

2023 Report

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Wind Energy Ireland's Policy & Research Fund

Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) established a Policy and Research Fund during 2022 to progress the strategic objectives of the Wind Energy Ireland 2022-2025 Strategy.

The revenue secured from the funding is ring-fenced for the WEI Policy & Research team, to drive growth in strategic policy delivery through development of innovative reports, investments in initiatives to enhance the messaging of WEI to policymakers at home and abroad, and the recruitment of new staff in key priority areas and as part of the WEI graduate programme.

In 2023, the Policy and Research Fund was supported by DP Energy, ESB, RWE, Greencoat Renewables, Future Energy Ireland and Statkraft.



Progressing
the strategic
objectives of the
Wind Energy
Ireland 2022-2025
Strategy.

What Has It Helped Deliver

The Policy & Research Fund has been a key enabler of the delivery of Wind Energy Ireland's strategic objectives in 2023.

The fund has contributed towards several evidence-based research activities that have been used to support policy development for renewables in Ireland, including Act Now: Accelerating onshore renewable energy in Ireland with KPMG and We can build them: Supporting Irish ports to build offshore wind farms with Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions. A full list of key policy-priming research reports completed during the year is contained later in this report.

It has also played a vital role in enabling WEI to grow our involvement and influence in the fast-moving world of EU energy policy by bringing on board a Brussels-based consultancy, Hannover Communications, which allows WEI to play a direct role in EU renewables policy. In 2023 we have been engaged in key policy developments such as the electricity market design review, the emergency price cap regulation, the Renewable Energy Directive, and the Net Zero Industry Act.

Finally, it has helped support WEI's graduate programme to expand the capability in our Policy & Research team and develop the next generation of talent for the sector. Our graduates are supporting us to deliver on the key strategic priorities identified by members under our new strategy. This includes additional focus on grid, markets, planning, offshore and hydrogen.

**Build an
inclusive
and diverse
organisation
culture**



Building Evidence Which Matters

The fund has contributed towards several evidence-based research activities throughout the year that have been used to support policy development for renewables in Ireland.

These include:

Act Now: Accelerating onshore renewable energy in Ireland - KPMG

An analysis of the Planning Reform Bill – Arthur Cox (partial funding)

Cutting Carbon, Cutting Bills: Analysis of savings in gas consumption delivered by wind farms in 2022 – Baringa

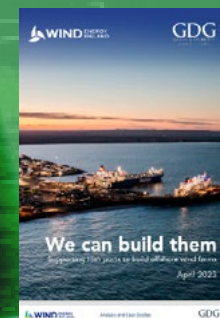
Health & Safety Guidelines for Offshore Wind: An analysis of Ireland's existing legal framework - Blue Wise Marine (partial funding)

Clean Energy Package Impact Assessment – Energy Reform

Ireland's Offshore Wind Potential: From Net Zero to Net Export – MaREI Research Centre

We can build them: Supporting Irish ports to build offshore wind farms – Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions (partial funding)

Wind and Solar Resource Study Ireland – Brightwind



Accelerating onshore renewable energy in Ireland

Meet Our Graduates

With thanks to the funding secured under the Policy & Research fund, WEI has established a new two-year Graduate Development Programme, and welcomed five new graduates into our team over the past two years. **A number of our graduates have subsequently secured permanent roles in WEI.**

Eva McCarthy and Seán McLoughlin joined the organisation during 2023 and are supporting our Policy & Research team to deliver on the key strategic priorities identified by members under our new strategy.

The Policy & Research fund also enabled WEI to recruit a number of interns across the organisation in 2023, in the Policy & Research, External Affairs and Marketing teams.



Eva McCarthy



Seán McLoughlin

“ Welcomed five new graduates into our team over the past two years. ”



Making An Impact In Brussels

Policy challenges and opportunities are increasingly emerging at EU level as the European Commission and the co-legislators seek to navigate the energy transition amid increasingly complex geopolitical circumstances.

In 2023, thanks to the Policy & Research Fund, WEI appointed Brussels-based agency, Hanover Communications, to assist us in responding to developments by EU policymakers and ensure that the specific interests of the Irish wind industry are effectively brought into the discussions.

This allowed us to involve ourselves in key policy initiatives such as the electricity market design review, the emergency price cap regulation, the Renewable Energy Directive, and the Net Zero Industry Act.

2024 is set to be even more important at EU level and it is critical that WEI is equipped to engage with crucial upcoming policy and political processes.

In the year ahead we will have a new batch of MEPs in the European Parliament, a new Commission, and a new Irish Commissioner – all bringing their own priorities to the European political arena.

Decisions taken at EU level have a major impact on Irish energy policy. Monitoring, understanding and influencing EU policy has therefore become a fundamental part of WEI's work on behalf of the Irish wind industry. We cannot do this without a strong network of key connections in place, and in 2024 the landscape is set to change significantly (see timeline below). In the year ahead we will have a new batch of MEPs in the European Parliament, a new Commission, and a new Irish Commissioner – all bringing their own priorities to the European political arena.



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At the same time, 2024 also kick-starts the 2040 process, with the Commission set to produce their detailed impact assessment to inform Climate and Energy ambition for the post-2030 period. This will heavily influence things like targets for renewable energy, interconnection, the EU-ETS, storage and flexibility, green hydrogen, electrification, and perhaps most fundamentally, how electricity markets will be designed for a future Net-Zero world.

WEI must be actively engaged in this process and build up our network that will enable us to influence policy as it is developed over the coming five years. The Policy & Research Fund allows us to do so on your behalf.



Thank You



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