

SUCCESS CASE 15.2025

Technically Speaking – Women in Energy



THE CHALLENGE

The Netherlands faces a significant gender gap in STEM professions, particularly in the energy transition, with one of the highest underrepresentation rates of women in Europe. The Technically Speaking project aims to close this gap by addressing deep-rooted gender stereotypes within organizational cultures in the energy sector. These stereotypes and biases hinder women's participation and career growth in STEM, presenting a critical barrier to achieving gender equality in the field.

STEM sectors face a significant labor shortage, offering women ample opportunities for jobs that provide sustainable income and economic independence. Within these STEM fields, this project specifically targets the labor market associated with the energy transition.

The energy sector, traditionally characterized by a low representation of women, faces a critical challenge with the energy transition. This societal task impacts everyone, making it imperative to address gender inclusivity as a part of the solution. Women's participation in the energy sector is essential to driving innovation and achieving equitable progress in this critical industry.

THE SOLUTION

The Technically Speaking initiative aims to close the gender gap in the energy sector, a field crucial to addressing the global challenge of energy transition. With STEM labor shortages, this project highlights the untapped potential of women to contribute significantly to this transformative effort. By promoting gender equality, the initiative not only opens pathways for women to secure sustainable careers but also ensures diverse perspectives are included in shaping the future of energy.

This project, Technically Speaking, brings together knowledge organizations, societal partners, and employers in the energy sector to develop a gender-inclusive growth model for social innovation collaboratively.

Through Technically Speaking, Alliander (DSO), Gasunie (TSO), Tennet (TSO), WOMEN Inc. (NGO), VHTO (NGO), TNO (knowledge institution), and 75inQ (NGO) are working to promote gender equality for women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and applied mathematics (STEM) in the Netherlands. The project is funded for 2,5 years (2024 – 2027) by the European Social Fund.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- Raising societal awareness through a media campaign. Using data-driven and evidence-based methods to diagnose where and how gender bias manifests within organizations.
- Designing and implementing social innovations in co-creation with companies through action research to break gender biases.
- Evaluating at various levels whether the social innovations successfully addressed and mitigated gender biases.
- Establishing a learning network to facilitate knowledge sharing between organizations.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- The project is based on a charter between DSO's and TSO's in the Netherlands to increase female professionals in the energy sector. This commitment is supported by all Dutch DSO's and TSO's.
- The collaboration with stakeholders like women's organisations, knowledge institutions and the wider energy sector
- The financial support of the Dutch national government through the European Social Fund grants.
- The combination of research, media campaign and interventions within the energy sector.