



WOMEN FOR MARKET UPTAKE OF RENEWABLE HEATING AND COOLING

Report on networking and matchmaking events – First Round

Deliverable 4.3

WP4. Raising awareness, building capacity and catalysing women-led opportunities for the uptake of RHC

Project title

W4RES - Scaling-up the involvement of women in supporting and accelerating market uptake of renewable energy sources for heating and cooling

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Main authors

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Miriam de Angelis, Serena Fabbrini | APRE |
| | |
| | |

ABBREVIATIONS

MS : Member State

AC: Associated Country

EU: European union

HE: Horizon Europe

RHC: Renewable Heating and Cooling

NCP: National Contact Points

EEN: Enterprise Europe Network

R&D: Research & Development

SME: Small-Medium Enterprise

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The organization and execution of brokerage events is one of activities that has been performed within the W4RES project, as a way of supporting national and regional research stakeholders in identifying and cross linking partners from other MS/AC in view of building trans-national consortia for EU research and innovation projects under Horizon Europe.

During the months covered by this deliverable (M01 to M10), W4RES has been involved in the organization of four brokerage events:

1. Horizon Europe Brokerage Event for Cluster 5 – 2022, held online on the 4th of February, 2022
2. W4RES-GREENET Joint Networking Event - HE Energy supply/use calls for proposals, held online on the 29th of September 2022

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1 THE RATIONALE OF W4RES NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

The main objective of the document is to report the networking activities organised under Task 4.3 withing the first round of W4RES Awareness Raising Campaigns. The aim of this task is to offer networking opportunities and catalyse business-driven collaborations through a series of networking and matchmaking events in which women working on RHC projects (both within and outside of the EU) can pursue greater visibility, professional connections and investments. From M12 to M24 of the project, APRE organised two of such events attracting actors from the international RHC community to catalyse international collaborations and investments, exports in developing markets, etc. In order to ensure efficiency and maximum visibility, APRE partnered with the Horizon Europe (HE) Cluster 5 National Contact Points (NCPs) and Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) for the events' organisation.

The Brokerage Events were organized jointly with the launch of Horizon Europe Cluster 5 calls for proposals where companies and organizations from different countries participate with the intention of seeking financial resources for their Research & Development (R&D) activities. The Brokerage Event consisted in a series of bilateral meetings, lasting approximately 30 minutes each, structured according to an agenda created on the basis of the interest shown for the various technology offers.

Participating in a Brokerage Event significantly increases the opportunity to establish new profitable contacts and generally offers participants the opportunity to:

- promote their technologies and experiences
- acknowledge the most innovative solutions
- develop technological, commercial or research partnerships.

Brokerage Events therefore represent an important matching opportunity between the supply and demand for technology expressed by companies, universities and research institutions in order to develop technology and business partnerships as well as joint participation in European research projects.

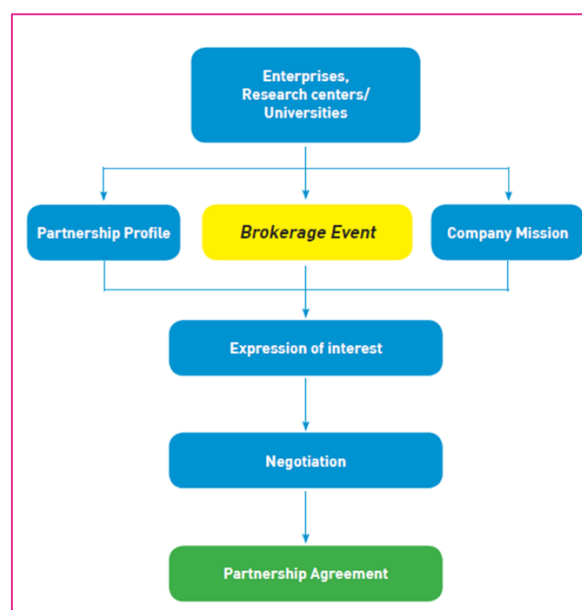


Figure 1 Components of the W4RES networking process

1.1 How W4RES Brokerage Events work

Every company or organization that is interested in participating in a Brokerage Event needs to register online on the official website of the chosen Brokerage Event. W4RES uses the online B2match platform (<https://www.b2match.com/>), whose effectiveness in the management of virtual brokerage events is proven. Each Brokerage Event has a dedicated url.

Any organisation interested in participating in the Brokerage Event have to register to the dedicated event website and provide a short description, as well as one or more cooperation profiles describing the expertise they would like to offer in the framework of a potential R&D collaboration. Users also need to specify the type of collaboration:

- technological
- commercial
- research

All profiles are inserted into a single on-line catalogue on the basis of which participants will be able to identify possible counterparts and request meetings.

Attention should be placed on dedicating the necessary attention to detailing the profile: the better the quality of the profile, the better the quality (and number) of meeting requests, besides the chances of signing contacts. The event organisers validate the profiles according to their soundness/completeness. Only after their profile validation users are allowed to request/accept meetings with other participants.

Through the website you can register your profile, view the profiles of other participating organizations and arrange appointments.

The profile consists in:

- company profile, a brief description of the organization
- cooperation profile, where you can specify what you are searching and/or what you are offering

Each participating company may:

- access the portal and upload their profile in the event catalogue
- see the profiles of other participants
- select the profiles that are of interest
- have a personalized agenda of meetings
- add last-minute meetings and update agendas in real time

W4RES partners inform companies and research organizations on the scheduled Brokerage Events, collect requests from participants and provide support for registration and during the events, accompanying participants step by step and throughout all phases until the end of the initiative.

Profiles are validated by the organisers through the b2bmatch tool. The Support Office provides support Brokerage.

From validation on, bilateral meetings can be booked by sending a request to the potential business and technology partners listed in the online catalogue. Each registered and validated participant may request, accept or reject meeting requests. At the end of the meetings' booking phase, each participant automatically receives his/her meetings' agenda with indication of the precise time slots.

1.1.1 The pitching session

Where possible, W4RES Brokerage Events also comprise a pitching session, where selected organisations can present themselves and their expertise in the form of an oral pitch. It consists of a number of pitches of individual organisations presenting the expertise they would like to offer for collaboration or their project ideas in order to scout potential partners for their consortium. Interested entities receive a template specially designed for this purpose, that they need to fill in and send back to the event organisers by a set deadline. At this stage stakeholders are invited to submit their pitch presentation proposals, addressing one of the topics foreseen in the Work Programme and in the brokerage event Agenda. The management of the pitching session follows the following principles:

- Pitches are selected in advance taking into account their relevance to the topics of the event, as well as their degree of general interest of the participants previously assessed.
- Presentations shall last no more than 5 minutes and should ideally held by an organisation that intends to coordinate the proposal or to join a partnership.
- The number of slots available for pitch presentations is limited and, as a result, the W4RES staff select them carefully.
- A presentation template is created by the organization team. Presentations failing to follow the template and the given instructions, especially if exceeding the allowable number of slides, are eventually rejected without further consideration of their content or quality.

The pitching session is videostreamed online on the event website. After the pitching session the pitches are made available on the event website upon consent of the presenters.

2 HORIZON EUROPE BROKERAGE EVENT FOR CLUSTER 5 – 2022 (FEBRUARY, 4TH 2022)

The “Horizon Europe Brokerage Event for Cluster 5 – 2022” was held on the 4th February 2022 online in conjunction with the European Commission virtual information day on HE CL5 calls for proposals 2022.

The event was organised jointly by the Bridge2HE NCPs network, W4RES and EEN, attracting 1293 participants from 49 countries, including those hosting W4RES regional hubs (Germany, Norway, Denmark, Slovakia, Italy, Belgium, Greece and Bulgaria). The distribution of participants per type of organisation is as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Company (SME) | 356 |
| Company (Industry) | 168 |
| University | 263 |
| R&D Institution | 200 |
| Association/Agency/Cluster | 112 |
| Authority/Government | 68 |
| National Contact Point | 11 |
| Consultancy | 72 |
| Other | 43 |

Table 1 The distribution of participants per type of organisation (February, 4th 2022)

The initiative encompassed an introductory video session (from 10:00 to 10:30 h) and a virtual B2B meeting session (from 10:30 to 17:00 h). Both sessions were focused on providing the information and the right context to develop effective collaborations in order to participate in the HE Cluster 5 Funding Opportunities 2022 offered by the European Commission.

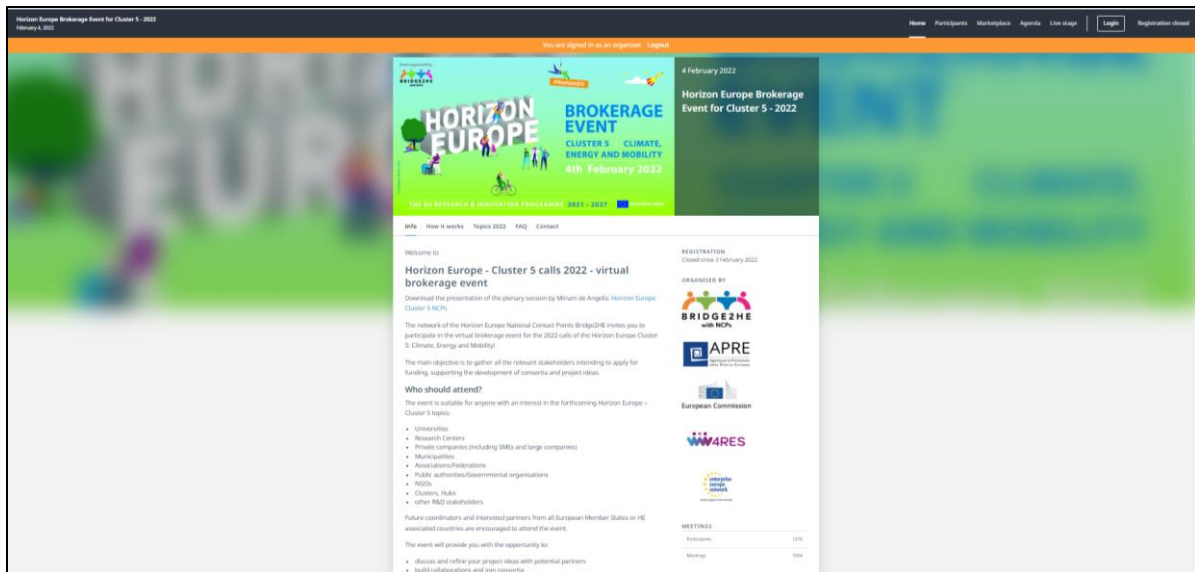


Figure 2 Webpage of the event (February, 4th 2022)

In the framework of the introductory video session APRE presented the format of the event and some tips for an effective consortium building as well as for a good proposal preparation. The audience was guided through the whole process from the scouting of HE funding opportunities to the preparation of a proposal. Miriam de Angelis from APRE presented the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal, the Cluster 5 Work Programme and gave suggestions on how to build a convincing consortium. She also gave an overview of the online resources available to proposers, including the W4RES website and Observatory. Participants were allowed to post comments, questions and support requests through sli.do (<https://www.slido.com/>).

In the framework of the B2B meeting session 1004 bilateral meetings took place, involving 1276 participants, out of which 404 were female professionals active in the fields of energy, climate or mobility.

The event webpage is available at <https://he-cluster5-2022.b2match.io/>.

2.1 Results of the Evaluation forms survey

The B2bmatch tool was used to request feedback from the participants. A total of 382 persons filled in the feedback questionnaire, representing the 30 % of the 1276 participants registered to the brokerage event with a validated profile and involved in bilateral meetings.

The following tables show the results and statistics of the feedback questionnaire.

| Event Feedback | Excellent | Good | Average | Fair | Poor | Grade ¹ |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|------|--------------------|
| Website | 148 | 194 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 4,3 |
| Assistance before and during the event | 213 | 129 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 4,5 |

¹ The grade given is based on a grade of 5 for Excellent, 4 for good etc.

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|----|----|---|-----|
| Location | 242 | 139 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,6 |
| Management of the appointments | 130 | 167 | 65 | 0 | 9 | 4,1 |
| Quality of profiles | 72 | 223 | 65 | 0 | 0 | 4,0 |
| General organization | 158 | 195 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 4,4 |
| Relevance of the meetings | 83 | 223 | 46 | 9 | 0 | 4,1 |
| Did the event meet your expectations? | 83 | 260 | 9 | 18 | 0 | 4,1 |
| Would you participate again? | 177 | 177 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 4,4 |

Table 2 The results and statistics of the feedback questionnaire (February, 4th 2022)

Below an overview of the feedback received on the meetings:

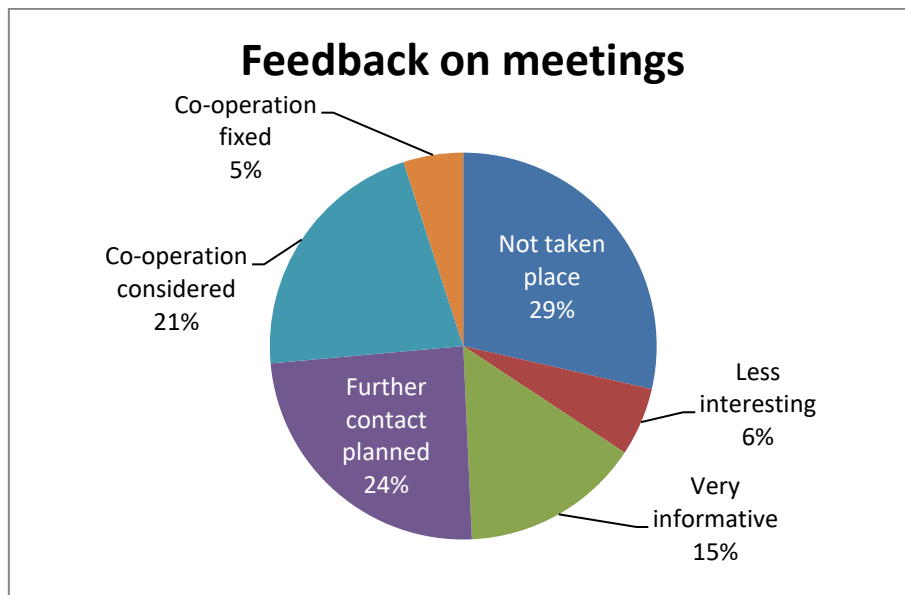


Figure 3 Feedback received on the meetings (February, 4th 2022)

These numbers are based on the feedback received on 387 out of 1004 meetings.

3 W4RES-GREENET JOINT NETWORKING EVENT - HE ENERGY SUPPLY/USE CALLS FOR PROPOSALS (SEPTEMBER, 29TH 2022)

The “W4RES-GREENET Joint Networking Event on HE Energy supply/use calls for proposals” was held on the 29th September 2022 online in the framework of the European Sustainable Energy Week 2022.

The event was organised by W4RES with the support of GREENET, the HE Cluster 5 NCPs network, and EEN, attracting 430 participants from 35 countries, including those hosting W4RES regional hubs (Germany, Norway, Denmark, Slovakia, Italy, Belgium, Greece and Bulgaria).

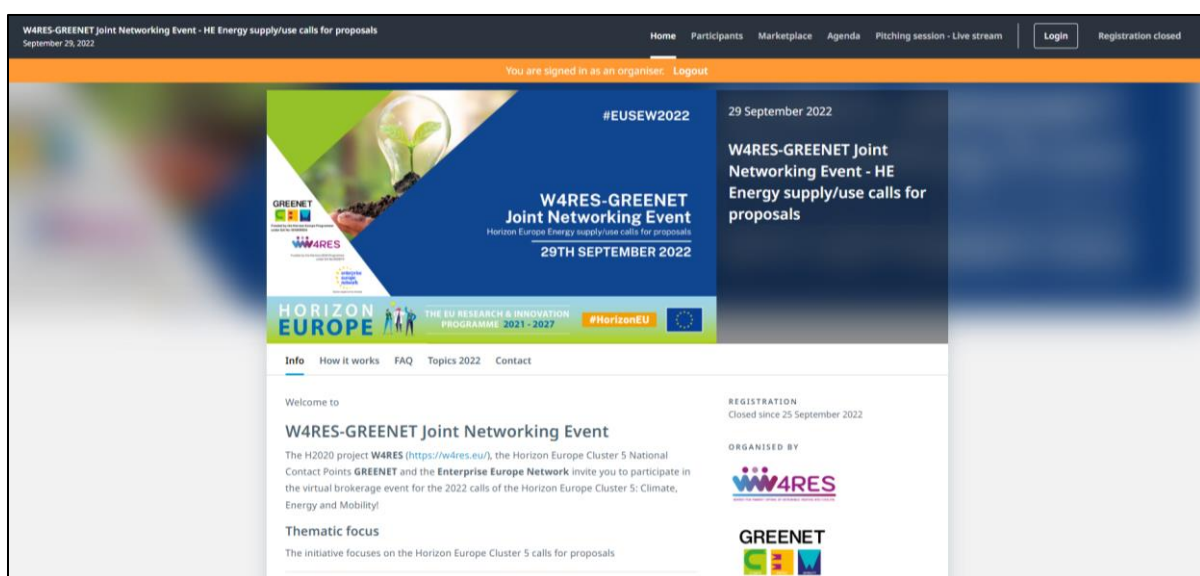


Figure 4 Webpage of the event (September, 29th 2022)

The initiative encompassed a pitching session (from 9:45 to 11:00 h) and a virtual B2B meeting session (from 11:15 to 13:00 h). Both sessions were aimed at enabling effective R&I collaborations between organisations of different type in order to participate in the following HE Cluster 5 calls for proposals 2022, specifically focused on the energy supply and use:

- [HORIZON-CL5-2022-D3-03 - Sustainable, secure and competitive energy supply](#)
- [HORIZON-CL5-2022-D4-02 - Efficient, sustainable and inclusive energy use](#)

The distribution of participants per type of organisation is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Start-up | 26 |
| Company (SME) | 109 |
| Company (Industry) | 57 |

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| University | 98 |
| R&D Institution | 61 |
| Association/Agency | 29 |
| Authority/Government | 23 |
| Other | 27 |

Table 3 The distribution of participants per type of organisation (September, 29th 2022)

In the context of the pitching session, APRE introduced the event and twelve organisations pitched their own expertise on and/or project ideas and expertise request in order to seek R&I collaboration. Each pitch was reviewed and selected by APRE, who also liaised with the speakers in order to make sure that they tested the video stream platform. The following organisations participated in the pitching session:

1. [Elliotcloud](#)
2. [ENERCOM](#)
3. [Dokuz Eylul University](#)
4. [Toga Networks](#)
5. [IT4Innovations](#)
6. [İzmir Institute of Technology](#)
7. [SOCAR](#)
8. [MLB](#)
9. [OPTIT](#)
10. [Nuromedia](#)
11. [BEST](#)
12. [University of Brescia](#)

The presentations are available at <https://energy-networking-event.b2match.io/>.

In the framework of the B2B meeting session 1004 bilateral meetings took place, involving 369 participants, out of which 157 were female professionals active in the fields of energy, climate or mobility.

3.1 Results of the Evaluation forms survey

The B2Bmatch tool was used to request feedback from the participants. A total of 56 people filled in the feedback questionnaire, representing the 13 % of all 430 participants registered with a validated profile at the brokerage event webpage and the 15 % of the 369 participants involved in bilateral meetings. The following tables show the results and statistics of the feedback.

| Event Feedback | Excellent | Good | Average | Fair | Poor | Grade ² |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|------|--------------------|
| Website | 31 | 17 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 4,4 |
| Assistance before and during the event | 27 | 25 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4,3 |
| Location | 27 | 19 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 4,3 |
| Management of the appointments | 29 | 23 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4,5 |
| Quality of profiles | 25 | 21 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 4,4 |
| General organization | 23 | 25 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 4,4 |
| Relevance of the meetings | 21 | 17 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 4,1 |
| Did the event meet your expectations? | 21 | 23 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 4,2 |
| Would you participate again? | 23 | 21 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 4,3 |

Table 4 the results and statistics of the feedback (September, 29th 2022)

Below an overview of the feedback received on the meetings:

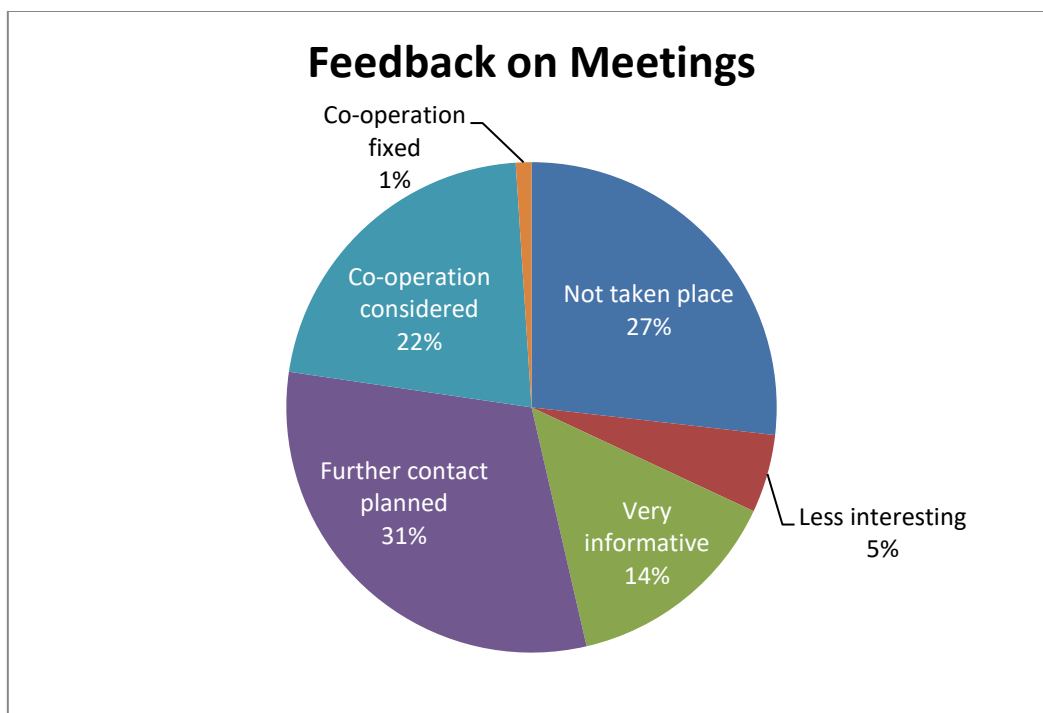


Figure 5 Feedback received on the meetings (September, 29th 2022)

These numbers are based on the feedback received on 90 out of 200 meetings.

² The grade given is based on a grade of 5 for Excellent, 4 for good etc.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of the W4RES brokerage events has been to gather all the relevant stakeholders intending to establish a collaboration in order to apply for funding in Horizon Europe.

A brokerage event is suitable for anyone with an interest in participating in European projects in Horizon Europe , such as Universities, Research Centers, Private companies (including SMEs and large companies), Municipalities, Associations, Federations, Public authorities, Governmental organisations, NGOs, Clusters, Hubs, Stakeholders engaged in R&D, etc.

The brokerage events allow (virtually or onsite) participants to join pre-arranged meetings with other participants to identify possible collaborators and to facilitate the setup of Horizon Europe project consortia. The high number of participants and the numerous bilateral meetings demonstrate the impact of such events on the R&I community and supports the choice made in the W4RES project.

Additionally, the networking events offered a valuable opportunity for W4RES to cooperate with the Horizon Europe National Contact Points so to leverage on their multiplication potential.

