



Press release

RWE key industry sponsor in Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult Launch Academy





- **RWE proud to be part of ORE Catapult's programme to accelerate new technology innovations for offshore wind**
- **Programme enhances the UK's offshore wind supply chain, enabling greater UK content**
- **RWE's Sofia team sets three challenges to support innovative thinking and cost reductions**

Swindon, 19 October 2022

RWE's largest offshore wind farm in construction, Sofia, recently joined other key industry sponsors to take part in Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult's technology acceleration programme, which has so far raised £9 million for offshore wind entrepreneurs whose companies have taken on 50 new staff since it began in 2019.

Applications for this year's [Launch Academy are now open](#) and as one of the industry sponsors, RWE is seeking to attract UK companies to respond to three priority challenges within the offshore wind industry that require innovative thinking and solutions.

The three challenges RWE is looking for responses on are:

- Autonomous solutions and the best way to integrate them into wind farm site investigations, construction and operations and maintenance.
- Solutions to measure and reduce ecological impacts of wind farm construction and operations on birds.
- Ideas and innovations in cable monitoring and protection, aiming to secure a reduction in OWF cable failures.

Since Launch Academy began, 20 companies have progressed through the nine-month programme that focuses on accelerating technology within the offshore renewables industry. It is designed to enhance the UK's offshore wind supply chain, enable greater UK content and





support cost reduction through innovation.

Successful companies receive support worth around £25,000, assisting them to grow and develop their technology and business, and commercialise their solutions. It is hoped that the results will enable cross industry learning and shared experiences by participants.

RWE Director of Engineering, Phillipa Slater, commented, “RWE has one of the strongest offshore wind development pipelines in the world, and as such will need to be at the forefront of innovation, ensuring the company goes beyond the conventional and supports the drive for sustainability for itself and the broader offshore wind sector.”

“Through our partnership with ORE Catapult for this year’s Launch Academy we have chosen three specific challenge themes that we see as having a real potential to make a difference while supporting innovation in the UK supply chain and playing a role in the commercialisation of a potential gamechanger.”

Stephen Wyatt, Director of Strategy and Emerging Technologies at ORE Catapult, said: “It is fantastic to see how much the Launch Academy has grown over the past three years – attracting significant investment and recognition from across the offshore wind industry. I’m delighted to welcome Ørsted, Equinor, BP and RWE as the industry sponsors who will provide great value to all the companies joining this year’s programme. Launch Academy is the only Technology Accelerator dedicated to offshore wind early-stage companies which allows us to provide highly focused support, strong market pull and enthusiastic investors for leading innovators in the UK supply chain.”

RWE is one of the leading players in offshore wind, with Sofia the largest offshore project in its global fleet. The 1.4 gigawatt (GW) project is 100% RWE-owned and represents a total investment of approximately £3billion. Offshore construction is set to begin in 2023. Final project completion is expected by the end of 2026.





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About Launch Academy

Video: https://youtu.be/BNyRiyc_TIM

Website: <https://ore.catapult.org.uk/what-we-do/innovation/launch-academy/>

Launch Academy was established in 2019 by the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult and supports the commercialisation of ambitious companies launching new products and services for the offshore wind industry.

ORE Catapult has brought technology development and business support under one roof, allowing companies to access its in-house technical capability, alongside a range of business growth expertise from partners including [RWE](#), [Ørsted](#), [Equinor](#), [bp](#), cleantech investors [Sustainable Ventures](#), accountancy firm [BDO](#), IP specialists [Murgitroyd](#), law firm [Shepherd and Wedderburn](#), and storytelling consultants [Stronger Stories](#).

The nine-month programme also offers access to a unique support package from delivery partners, including legal, marketing, accountancy, IP, and investor readiness support, and modules delivered by ORE Catapult on technology development, international export readiness and business case review.

Successful companies receive support services worth around £25,000 per company, assisting them to grow and develop their technology and business, and commercialise their solutions.

About the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult

Website: <https://ore.catapult.org.uk/>

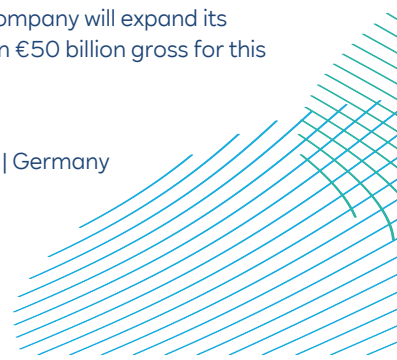
ORE Catapult is the UK's leading innovation centre for offshore renewable energy. It was established in 2013 by the UK Government and is part of a network of Catapults set up by Innovate UK in high growth industries.

Independent and trusted, with a unique combination of world-leading test and demonstration facilities and engineering and research expertise, ORE Catapult convenes the sector and delivers applied research, accelerating technology development, reducing risk and cost, and enhancing UK-wide economic growth.

ORE Catapult has operations in Glasgow, Blyth, Levenmouth, Aberdeen, the Humber, the East of England, the South West and Wales, and operates a collaborative research partnership in China.

RWE Renewables

RWE is leading the way to a green energy world. With an extensive investment and growth strategy, the company will expand its powerful, green generation capacity to 50 gigawatts internationally by 2030. RWE is investing more than €50 billion gross for this





purpose in this decade. The portfolio is based on offshore and onshore wind, solar, hydrogen, batteries, biomass and gas. RWE Supply & Trading provides tailored energy solutions for large customers. RWE has locations in the attractive markets of Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region. The company is responsibly phasing out nuclear energy and coal. Government-mandated phaseout roadmaps have been defined for both of these energy sources. RWE employs around 19,000 people worldwide and has a clear target: to get to net zero by 2040. On its way there, the company has set itself ambitious targets for all activities that cause greenhouse gas emissions. The Science Based Targets initiative has confirmed that these emission reduction targets are in line with the Paris Agreement. Very much in the spirit of the company's purpose: Our energy for a sustainable life.

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