

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Crowd votes Spanish off-grid eco complex best contributor to sustainable energy future

## Spanish crowdfunding platform ECrowd! and the Mar de Fulles project take home 2016 Citizenenergy Project of the Year title

Brussels, 1 February 2017. Today, community energy portal Citizenenergy bestowed its 2016 Project of the Year Award to Spanish crowdfunding platform ECrowd! and the Mar de Fulles eco-complex for the pair's outstanding contribution to a sustainable energy future. The results, presented in front of full house during a special EU Parliament event on citizen engagement, are the outcome of some 430 votes cast in December 2016. ECrowd! and the Mar de Fulles project took home an incredible 79% of the total vote.

"There has never been a more important time to promote low carbon and sustainable projects; a key way to achieve success is by engaging with communities through alternative and collective finance models," stresses ECrowd Founder Matthieu van Haperen. ECrowd! is currently Spain's only crowdfunding platform for positive impact projects such as Mar de Fulles. The platform joined forces with the Citizenenergy portal for cross-border investment in community energy as of April 2016; the Mar de Fulles project was ECrowd!'s first offering as a Citizenenergy featured platform.

"Crowdfunding a portion of Mar de Fulles with ECrowd! allowed more than 130 small investors to get directly involved in the project and share in the project's success," explains Josep Antoni Nebot Garriga, CEO of PV installer Heliotec and partner of the Mar de Fulles eco hotel. Nebot Garriga sees collective and participatory financing platforms as ideal for making renewable energy projects possible and getting the community involved.

The 2016 Project of the Year Award recognises the pioneering work of crowdfunding platforms and energy cooperatives across Europe in getting such important sustainable energy projects funded. According to the motto, what gets financed by the crowd should also get judged by the crowd, Citizenenergy asked the public to rate the crowdfunded and cooperative based energy projects featured during the portal's first year online according to their contribution to a sustainable energy future.

The awards ceremony took place within the framework of a special EU Parliament event on citizen engagement, hosted by MEP Dario Tamburrano of Italy and organised by the Active Citizenship Network. The audience heard policy



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recommendations arising from the arduous experience of launching Citizenergy as well as other concrete examples from cooperatives and crowdfunding platforms working to help finance the energy transition. Representatives from the EU Directorate General of Energy and Council of European Energy Regulators spoke about the challenge of stimulating demand for sustainable energy across EU markets as well as the need to bolster public involvement in the area.

Directly involving the public in the energy transition will be crucial to ensuring its success. Citizenergy, the platforms and projects it features, and the 2016 Project of the Year award lends recognition to the significance of community based investment in this equation.

## Further information

- [Photo gallery](#) on Flickr
- [Event on YouTube](#)
- [Event programme](#) and [poster](#) (pdf)
- Information on [Citizenergy legal recommendations](#)
- Further [information on the winners](#) (pdf)
- 2016 Citizenergy Project of the Year [Award candidates](#)
- Award [press release](#) of 5 December

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## CITIZENERGY

Crowdfunding platforms and cooperatives both enable individuals to directly invest in sustainable energy, but it is difficult to get an overview of the possibilities. Citizenergy changes all this. Made possible by European Union funding, Citizenergy is the first platform to encourage cross-border investment in sustainable energy and the first to provide information on sustainable energy opportunities from both crowdfunding platforms and cooperatives. It reinforces the work of such organisations in financing renewable and energy efficiency projects, increasing



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their reach while promoting transparency. The Tripadvisor of our sustainable energy landscape, Citizenenergy is a valuable resource for individuals looking to get involved in the energy revolution. [citizenenergy.eu](http://citizenenergy.eu)

