SolarHub

# SolarHub SYNERGIES 2026

## Acceleration Program

## Guide for Solution Providers

SOLARHUB SYNERGIES 2026

Delivered by HE SolarHub Project:
A Greek-Turkish Solar Energy Excellence Hub to Advance the European Green Deal

Funded by
the European Union

# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| Acronym / Abbreviation | Full Form |
|---|---|
| B2Match | Online partnering and matchmaking platform used for SYNERGIES applications |
| BRITE | Brite Solar (Greece) |
| CDE / DEC | Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation |
| CERTH | Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (Greece) |
| CRES | Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (Greece) |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisations |
| DLR | German Aerospace Centre – Institute of Solar Research (Germany) |
| EC | European Commission |
| EGE | Ege University (Turkey) |
| ELEN | Electra Energy Cooperative (Greece) |
| ESG | Environmental, Social, and Governance |
| EU | European Union |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679) |
| GNDER | Turkish Section – International Solar Energy Society (Turkey) |
| GUNAM | METU Center for Solar Energy Research and Applications (Turkey) |
| HTL | Hydrothermal Liquefaction |
| IDI | International Development Ireland (Ireland) |
| IFS | IFS Awards by RCM / TechSaloniki open innovation event (Greece) |
| IoT | Internet of Things |
| IP | Intellectual Property |
| ITU | Istanbul Technical University (Turkey) |
| KALPV | Kalyon PV (Turkey) |
| LCOH | Levelised Cost of Heat |
| METU | Middle East Technical University (Turkey) |
| NDA | Non-Disclosure Agreement |
| ODTÜ | Middle East Technical University (Turkey) |
| PAR | Photosynthetically Active Radiation |
| PD1 | Pre-Design 1 – Low Temperature Solar Thermal Solution |
| PD2 | Pre-Design 2 – Solar-Aided Hydrothermal Treatment |
| PD3 | Pre-Design 3 – Power Production and Micro-Climate Creation for Tree Plants (Agri-PV) |
| PD4 | Pre-Design 4 – Efficient Crop Production through Light and Water Management PV |
| PV | Photovoltaic |
| QH | Quadruple Helix |

| | |
|---|---|
| R&I | Research and Innovation |
| RDFCM | Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia (Greece) |
| SAM | Sammler Solar Thermal Systems (Greece) |
| SHE | Solar Heat Europe (Belgium) |
| SLMPK | Solimpeks Solar Energy (Turkey) |
| SME | Small and Medium Enterprise |
| SRIA | Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda |
| SSH | Social Sciences and Humanities |
| TAGEM | Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Turkey) |
| TAT | Tat Food (Turkey) |
| TRL | Technology Readiness Level |
| TUBK | Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey |
| TZOB | Golbasi Ankara Farmers Association (Turkey) |
| UN SDGs | United Nations Sustainable Development Goals |
| VC | Venture Capital |
| VENUS | Venus Growers (Greece) |
| WIDERA | Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence (Horizon Europe programme) |
| WP | Work Package |

| Project Summary | |
|---|---|
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| Project Webpage: | https://horizonsolarhub.eu/en/ |
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*More information on the project and the partners in the end of the document.*

Disclaimer

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This document is an internal working document and does not constitute an official project deliverable. It has been prepared to support project activities, internal coordination, or stakeholder engagement, and its content reflects the views and progress of the work at the time of preparation.

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The SolarHub project connects innovation ecosystems across Greece and Türkiye in support of solar energy research, innovation, and the objectives of the European Green Deal. For further information, visit https://horizonsolarhub.eu.

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# 1 Executive Summary

SolarHub (Grant No. 101086110) is a four-year EU-funded Horizon Europe WIDERA Excellence Hub project connecting solar energy innovation ecosystems in Greece and Türkiye, running until December 2026. It brings together 21 partners from academia, industry, government and civil society across five regional hubs - Ankara, Thessaloniki, Athens, Istanbul and Izmir - and works to accelerate solar energy innovation in support of the European Green Deal.

**SolarHub SYNERGIES 2026** is the challenge-driven track of the SolarHub Acceleration Programme, organised by the SolarHub consortium as the Energy vertical of the IFS Awards by RCM 2026. It connects external Solution Providers with seven concrete energy challenges defined by our industrial and research partners: Kalyon PV, ODTÜ-GÜNAM (METU), BRITE Hellas, CRES and SAMMLER. Where IGNITION 2026 invited you to bring your own idea, SYNERGIES invites you to solve a real, named industrial problem alongside the partner who owns it.

Most innovators in solar and clean energy face the same wall: a working solution, a credible team, and no clear route into industry. SYNERGIES removes that wall. If your solution fits one of the seven challenges, you gain a direct, structured working relationship with the Challenge Owner, access to SolarHub's four research-grade Pre-Designs, coaching through a Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage and a dedicated Validation Stage, and the opportunity to pitch to investors and compete for the €5,000 SolarHub SYNERGIES Prize.

Applications are submitted exclusively through the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match. Solution Providers register, build a profile, create at least one Opportunity for each challenge they address, and attach a PDF with additional information. The official language is English. All dates in this guide are tentative and may change: stay tuned and follow the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match and the SolarHub website (horizonsolarhub.eu) for the latest updates.

# 2 About SolarHub

## 2.1 What is SolarHub?

SolarHub (Grant No. 101086110) is a Horizon Europe WIDERA Excellence Hub project connecting five regional solar energy innovation ecosystems in Ankara, Thessaloniki, Athens, Istanbul and Izmir. With 21 partners across academia, industry, government and civil society, its mission is to accelerate solar energy innovation and support the European Green Deal through a quadruple-helix approach.

The project co-designs joint strategies, builds innovation and entrepreneurship capacities, supports startups and researchers, and produces four solar energy technology pre-designs. It runs from January 2023 to December 2026. Project website: https://horizonsolarhub.eu.

## 2.2 The SolarHub Acceleration Programme

The SolarHub Acceleration Programme was designed to support innovators and startups across three phases: Ignition (early-stage), Momentum (growth-stage) and Synergies (scale-up and industrial uptake). SYNERGIES 2026 activates the challenge-driven strand of the programme: rather than an open call for ideas, it channels external talent onto specific, partner-owned problems and, through our partnership with the IFS Awards by RCM 2026, embeds a dedicated Energy vertical inside one of Greece's largest open innovation events. With the project concluding in December 2026, this is the final opportunity to work directly with the SolarHub consortium and to convert a working solution into an industrial pathway.

# 3 Programme Overview

## 3.1 Who is this programme for?

SYNERGIES 2026 is for Solution Providers: organisations and teams that already have something to offer against a defined industrial challenge. You are welcome to apply if you are any of the following:

- Companies — startups, SMEs and scale-ups — with a product, prototype, methodology or service
- Research teams at universities and research institutes
- University spin-offs and technology-transfer teams
- Teams of individual innovators and early-stage entrepreneurs

*A solution at any Technology Readiness Level (TRL) is acceptable, provided it can credibly progress during the Validation Stage. You do not need a consortium, and there is no funding obligation to participate.*

> *Anyone can take part, from any country and with or without a legal entity. Only a legal entity established in an EU Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe can be selected as a finalist and receive the prize (see Section 5.2).*

## 3.2 How SYNERGIES works

SYNERGIES is built around a single, focused model: challenge response. We have worked with our industrial and research partners to define seven concrete energy challenges that need solving today (Annex 1). Each challenge has a Challenge Owner — the partner who owns the problem and will work with the selected Solution Provider to solve it. The mechanism is deliberately simple:

1. **Choose.** Select one or more of the seven challenges that your solution addresses.
2. **Apply.** Create a profile and at least one Opportunity per challenge on B2Match and attach a PDF with additional information (Section 7).
3. **Evaluation.** The Challenge Owner and the SolarHub panel evaluate the solutions submitted to each challenge (Section 8).
4. **Mature.** Selected Solution Providers take part in the Bootcamp or the Clarifications Stage, agree a Validation Plan with their Challenge Owner, and work together during the Validation Stage (Section 9).
5. **Pitch.** Each Solution Provider submits a pitch deck; the six highest-scoring eligible solutions pitch to investors online, and the highest-ranked finalist wins the €5,000 SolarHub SYNERGIES Prize (Section 10).

Through our partnership with the IFS Awards by RCM 2026, these challenges are opened to external Solution Providers as a dedicated Energy vertical inside the TechSaloniki open innovation event in Thessaloniki. SolarHub focuses exclusively on the Energy challenges: applications submitted through the SolarHub SYNERGIES community are evaluated by SolarHub and its partners. You may also draw on SolarHub's four Pre-Designs (Annex 2) — research-grade technical assets you can build your solution on top of.

> *The seven published challenges are the complete list for SYNERGIES 2026. They were sourced from our industrial partners, and no further challenges will be added during this programme.*

## 3.3 What Solution Providers receive

Every selected Solution Provider gains access to the following:

🎯 **Direct access to the Challenge Owner:** a structured working relationship with the partner who owns the problem, and their technical team.

🔬 **Pre-Designs & technical assets:** access to SolarHub's four Pre-Designs (Annex 2) and supporting documentation, to build your solution on top of.

🎓 **Bootcamp, Clarifications & coaching:** a Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage (1–6 October 2026) to mature your solution and agree a Validation Plan, and coaching from the SolarHub team throughout the Validation Stage.

🌐 **Network entry:** entry into SolarHub's wider network for follow-up R&I proposals, consortium-building and research infrastructure access.

🎤 **Visibility:** every participant is featured on the SolarHub website; the six finalists pitch online to the Evaluation Committee and invited investors, and, with their consent, their pitches are published.

📋 **Feedback:** your pitch deck scores and brief written feedback from the Evaluation Committee.

🏆 **Prize:** eligibility for the €5,000 SolarHub SYNERGIES Prize, awarded to the highest-ranked finalist (Section 10).

## 3.4 What is expected from you

We have kept participation requirements light and focused. Every Solution Provider is expected to (all dates are tentative and may change — follow B2Match and the SolarHub website for updates):

- Submit an application in English on B2Match by 18 September 2026, with at least one Opportunity per challenge addressed
- If selected, take part in the Bootcamp or the Clarifications Stage (1–6 October 2026) and agree a Validation Plan with the Challenge Owner by 6 October 2026
- Engage actively with the Challenge Owner and attend all agreed meetings and activities during the Validation Stage (6–30 October 2026)
- Submit a detailed pitch deck by 30 October 2026
- If selected as a finalist, pitch at the Online Investor Pitch Event (11 November 2026)
- Provide true and accurate information, and respect the confidentiality of information received from the Organiser and the Challenge Owner
- Acknowledge SolarHub and EU funding in any communication arising from the collaboration

> ✅ *No consortium requirement, no funding obligation. Applications are submitted through the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match.*

# 4 The Seven Energy Challenges

The following seven challenges have been defined by SolarHub consortium partners. These are real industrial and research problems that our partners are actively working to solve. Each challenge names its Challenge Owner and its current Technology Readiness Level. Full technical descriptions are provided in Annex 1.

| # | Challenge Title | Challenge Owner | Domain | TRL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Stock & Material Management for Solar Panel Production | Kalyon PV | Manufacturing optimi-sation | 8 |
| 2 | Integration & Control of Solar Heat with Hydro-thermal Liquefaction | ODTÜ-GÜNAM | Solar fuels | 4 |
| 3 | Digital Twin for Solar Biorefinery | ODTÜ-GÜNAM | Energy digitalisation | 4 |
| 4 | Digital Tool for Optimising PV Module Transpar-ency in Agrivoltaics | BRITE / CRES | Agrivoltaics | 8–9 |
| 5 | Integration of Agri-PV Systems in Weak Rural Grids | CRES | Energy systems | 8 |
| 6 | Smart Control for Industrial Solar-Thermal Sys-tems | SAMMLER | Industrial heat | 7 |
| 7 | Market Introduction of Industrial Solar-Thermal Collectors | CRES | Market deployment | 8–9 |

*This is the complete list. The challenges were sourced from our industrial partners; no additional or upcom-ing challenges will be published, and none will be added over the course of the programme.*

# 5 Eligibility

## 5.1 Who can apply

Participation is open to Solution Providers from any country, with or without a legal entity. Applicants must be over 18 and act for themselves or as authorised representatives of their organisation.

| Applicant Type | Conditions |
|---|---|
| Companies (startups, SMEs, scale-ups) | Any stage of development; a product, prototype, methodology or service that responds to one of the seven challenges |
| Research teams | Affiliated with a recognised university or research institution |
| University spin-offs | Technology-transfer or spin-off teams with a relevant solution |
| Individual innovators / entrepreneurs | Apply as a team; a legal entity is not required to participate, but is required to be selected as a finalist and receive the prize (Section 5.2) |

## 5.2 Geographic and prize eligibility

There is no geographic restriction on participation. Applicants from Greece and Türkiye are particularly encouraged, and Solution Providers from any other country are welcome where they bring clear value to the ecosystem — for example through potential collaborations, joint initiatives or business opportunities. No formal commitments are required.

**Prize eligibility.** Only a legal entity established in an EU Member State (EU27) or in a country associated to Horizon Europe can be selected as a finalist and receive the prize. Association is checked against the European Commission's official List of Participating Countries in Horizon Europe as it stands on 30 October 2026. A team may register a legal entity during the programme, provided it exists by that date.

| Applicant situation | Participate, pitch and be featured | Receive the prize |
|---|---|---|
| Legal entity in EU27 or a Horizon Europe associated country | Yes | Yes |
| Legal entity elsewhere | Yes | No |
| Individual or team without a legal entity | Yes | No |
| SolarHub partners, Challenge Owners and their affiliated entities | No | No |

*Check whether your country is associated to Horizon Europe in the official list of participating countries.*

## 5.3 EU restrictive measures

Participants must comply with EU sanctions, including Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 and Council Regulation (EC) No 765/2006. Entities established in Russia or Belarus, or owned 50% or more by such persons, cannot participate.

## 5.4 Supporting documents

The Organiser may request proof of identity, legal registration, place of establishment or ownership at any stage. Failure to provide it, or the provision of false information, leads to exclusion.

## 5.5 Thematic eligibility

Your solution must respond to one or more of the seven SolarHub Energy Challenges (Annex 1). Across the seven challenges, relevant domains include:

- Solar photovoltaics (PV) and manufacturing optimisation
- Solar thermal systems and industrial heat
- Agrivoltaics and solar-agriculture integration
- Solar fuels, biorefinery and thermochemical processes
- Smart controls, IoT and digitalisation (including digital twins)
- Grid integration and distributed energy resource management
- Market deployment and business models for solar technologies

*? Not sure if your solution qualifies? Email us at contact@horizonsolarhub.eu.*

## 5.6 What is NOT required

- A consortium or partnership to apply
- Any funding contribution or co-financing
- Legal incorporation or company registration at application stage (a legal entity is needed only to be a finalist and receive the prize — see Section 5.2)
- Prior participation in any SolarHub programme
- A connection to Greece or Türkiye (see Section 5.2)

# 6 Programme Timeline

SYNERGIES 2026 runs as the Energy vertical of the IFS Awards by RCM 2026, with SolarHub focusing exclusively on the Energy challenges. Key stages and tentative dates are shown below.

| Stage | Dates | Who |
|---|---|---|
| Application on B2Match | Until 18 September 2026 | All applicants |
| Evaluation and selection | 18–30 September 2026 (results 30 September) | Challenge Owners and SolarHub panel |
| Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage | 1–6 October 2026 | Bootcamp: Solution Providers based in Thessaloniki (IFS Awards track). Clarifications Stage: all other selected Solution Providers |
| Validation Stage | 6–30 October 2026 | All selected Solution Providers |
| Pitch deck submission | By 30 October 2026 | All selected Solution Providers |
| Selection of the six finalists | By 6 November 2026 | Evaluation Committee |
| Online Investor Pitch Event | 11 November 2026 | The six finalists |
| Awards Ceremony | In person, Ankara (date announced to the winner) | The winner is invited |

⚠ *All dates are tentative and may change. Stay tuned and follow the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match and the SolarHub website (horizonsolarhub.eu) for the latest updates.*

# 7 How to Apply

## 7.1 Application platform

Applications are submitted exclusively through the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match, an online partnering platform used by the IFS Awards open innovation event. Creating an account is free. Follow these steps:

1. **Join the community.** Go to the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match (linked from horizonsolarhub.eu and the IFS open-innovation event at b2match.com/e/open-innovation-challenges) and create a free account.
2. **Build your profile.** Create an extensive company / organisation profile — this is what Challenge Owners see first.
3. **Create an Opportunity for each challenge.** Create at least one Opportunity per challenge you address, stating: the challenge addressed and why your solution fits; solution maturity (TRL) and what it currently does; your plan for the Validation Stage; and the resources and support you need from the Challenge Owner.
4. **Attach a PDF.** Attach a PDF with additional information on your solution. Annex 3 lists the information we recommend you include.
5. **Submit by the deadline.** Applications close on 18 September 2026 (tentative — check B2Match and the SolarHub website for the confirmed deadline). Late submissions will not be considered.

*A Solution Provider may apply to more than one challenge.*

## 7.2 Language

Applications must be submitted in English. Submissions in any other language will not be evaluated. All programme activities are conducted in English.

## 7.3 Submission tips

- Submit well before the deadline — technical issues close to the deadline are not grounds for extension
- Keep each Opportunity focused on one specific challenge; be concrete about how your solution meets it
- Make sure the information on your legal status is accurate — it determines whether you can be selected as a finalist and receive the prize (Section 5.2)
- Review your application for completeness before submitting

> 📩 *Questions about the programme or your eligibility? Contact us at contact@horizonsolarhub.eu.*

# 8 Selection Process

## 8.1 Committees

**Organising Committee.** The SolarHub programme team runs the programme, applies the rules, communicates with participants and organises the Bootcamp and events. It does not score solutions.

**Evaluation Committee.** The Evaluation Committee takes part in the evaluation at selection, scores the pitch decks, selects the six finalists and ranks the pitches at the Online Investor Pitch Event. Members sign a confidentiality and no-conflict-of-interest declaration and do not score any participant they are linked to. Challenge Owners assess only the solutions submitted to their own challenges.

## 8.2 Evaluation criteria

After an administrative eligibility check, each Challenge Owner and the SolarHub panel evaluate the solutions submitted to its challenge on four criteria:

| Criterion | What it assesses |
|---|---|
| Fit to the challenge | How directly your solution responds to the problem as defined by the Challenge Owner |
| Technical credibility | Whether the solution is real, demonstrable and able to progress during validation |
| Team capacity | Whether the team can deliver during the October 2026 Validation Stage |
| Ecosystem value | Potential for follow-up collaboration, R&I proposals, or commercial deployment with SolarHub partners |

## 8.3 Matching and notification

There is no separate application to “be matched” beyond the submission itself. Evaluation runs from 18 to 30 September 2026, and results are announced on 30 September 2026 (tentative dates, subject to change). Where a solution is appropriate, the Solution Provider is matched with the Challenge Owner and invited to the Bootcamp or the Clarifications Stage. All applicants are notified of the outcome by email.

## 8.4 Corrections and procedural review

The Organiser may allow a short deadline to correct formal errors and may ask for further information on the solution.

Applicants may request a review only for a procedural error, an eligibility error, a conflict of interest or a clear breach of the rules. Scores are not re-evaluated. Review requests are sent to contact@horizonsolarhub.eu.

# 9 Programme Activities

## 9.1 Bootcamp (1–6 October 2026)

Selected Solution Providers based in Thessaloniki attend the Bootcamp in person, as part of the IFS Awards by RCM 2026 programme. The Bootcamp follows the IFS Awards Terms and Conditions.

## 9.2 Clarifications Stage (1–6 October 2026)

All other selected Solution Providers take part in the Clarifications Stage, online, with their Challenge Owner and the SolarHub team. Its purpose is to mature the solution before validation. In one or more sessions, the Solution Provider:

- answers the open questions on its application (scope, maturity, data and resources needed);
- agrees the validation objectives, activities, milestones, and the data or resources the Challenge Owner will provide;
- names the legal entity that will hold the solution for prize purposes (Section 5.2).

## 9.3 Validation Plan

Both routes end with a short Validation Plan agreed with the Challenge Owner by 6 October 2026. A Solution Provider that does not agree a plan does not continue to the Validation Stage.

## 9.4 Validation Stage (6–30 October 2026)

The core of SYNERGIES: each Solution Provider works directly with its Challenge Owner to test, adapt and demonstrate the solution against its Validation Plan. The work can include meetings, data exchange, site visits, proof-of-concept or prototype work, and use of the SolarHub Pre-Designs. The SolarHub team provides coaching throughout the stage.

**Attendance.** Participants must attend agreed meetings and activities. Repeated unjustified absence may lead to exclusion.

**Confidentiality.** Recording sessions or sharing materials with third parties requires the prior consent of the Organiser or the owner of the material. A separate NDA may govern exchanges with a Challenge Owner.

## 9.5 Pitch Deck Submission (by 30 October 2026)

By 30 October 2026, each Solution Provider in the Validation Stage submits a detailed pitch deck (PDF, in English, up to 15 slides) to the Organiser. The deck covers:

1. the challenge and the problem addressed;
2. the solution and how it works;
3. the validation results with the Challenge Owner: what was tested, the data used, and the results against the Validation Plan;
4. maturity: TRL at application and at the end of validation, with evidence;
5. the team and its capacity;
6. market, business model and route to deployment;
7. next steps: pilot plan, partners, and the resources or investment sought.

## 9.6 Selection of the Six Finalists (by 6 November 2026)

The Evaluation Committee scores the decks (Section 10.1), ranks them by average score and invites the six highest-scoring solutions whose providers meet the prize eligibility conditions (Section 5.2) to the Online Investor Pitch Event. If a finalist withdraws, the next-ranked eligible solution is invited. Solutions from providers not eligible for the prize keep their score, may receive a jury mention and remain featured (Section 15).

## 9.7 Online Investor Pitch Event (11 November 2026)

The six finalists pitch online to the Evaluation Committee and invited investors.

- **Format:** up to 5 minutes of pitch and up to 5 minutes of questions, as in IGNITION 2026
- **Audience:** the Evaluation Committee and invited investors; investors attend as guests and do not score
- **Logistics:** connection details are sent to the finalists at least 5 working days in advance

## 9.8 Awards Ceremony (Ankara)

The winner is announced after the Online Investor Pitch Event and is invited to receive the prize at the Awards Ceremony, an in-person event in Ankara. The date is announced to the winner.

# 10 Pitch Evaluation and the SolarHub SYNERGIES Prize

## 10.1 Evaluation Committee and criteria

The Evaluation Committee has at least three independent evaluators. Challenge Owners give factual input on the Validation Stage but do not score. Decks and pitches are scored on four criteria of equal weight, 0–25 points each, for a maximum of 100 points.

| Criterion | Weight | What is assessed |
|---|---|---|
| Fit to the challenge | 25% | How directly the solution answers the challenge, as shown in the Validation Stage |
| Technical credibility and maturity | 25% | Validation evidence, progress in TRL, and whether the solution is real and demonstrable |
| Team capacity | 25% | The team's ability to take the solution forward, e.g. to a pilot |
| Ecosystem value | 25% | Potential for collaboration, R&I proposals, investment or commercial deployment with SolarHub partners |

## 10.2 Final ranking and feedback

The Evaluation Committee scores each pitch at the Online Investor Pitch Event on the same four criteria and ranks the finalists by average score. Ties are broken by the higher score for Fit to the challenge, then by majority vote of the Evaluation Committee.

The procedural review described in Section 8.4 applies to the selection of finalists and the final ranking. Each Solution Provider that submits a deck receives its scores and brief written feedback.

## 10.3 The €5,000 SolarHub SYNERGIES Prize

One prize of €5,000 is awarded to the highest-ranked finalist at the Online Investor Pitch Event. The prize is not split. It is separate from the IFS Awards prizes, which follow the IFS Awards Terms and Conditions.

## 10.4 Award, documents and payment

- **Documents.** Within 5 working days of notification, the provisional winner sends proof of legal registration, bank details for an account in the entity's name and a signed declaration of eligibility.
- **Replacement.** If the documents are not received on time, or an eligibility condition is not met, the prize passes to the next-ranked finalist.
- **Payment.** SolarHub pays the prize in euros by bank transfer to the winning legal entity, not to individuals. Taxes and charges are the winner's responsibility.
- **Revocation.** If a breach of the rules comes to light after the award, the prize is revoked and must be repaid, and it passes to the next-ranked eligible solution.
- **Acknowledgement.** The winner acknowledges SolarHub and EU funding in any communication about the prize.

# 11 From Solution to Pilot

The ambition of SYNERGIES is not a report — it is a working relationship that can lead to a field pilot. SolarHub is a strong consortium and a well-connected community, and we expect that the most promising solutions will evolve into pilot projects tested in real conditions. The path from selected solution to potential pilot runs as follows (dates are tentative and may change):

- **Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage (1–6 October 2026):** selected Solution Providers meet their Challenge Owner, align on scope and agree a Validation Plan.
- **Validation Stage (6–30 October 2026):** the Solution Provider works directly with the Challenge Owner to test, adapt and demonstrate the solution against the challenge, drawing on SolarHub Pre-Designs and technical support where relevant.
- **Pitch deck and Online Investor Pitch Event (30 October – 11 November 2026):** Solution Providers present their validation results; the six finalists pitch to investors and compete for the €5,000 prize.
- **Towards a pilot:** where a solution proves its fit during validation, the Challenge Owner and Solution Provider may agree to take it forward as a field pilot, and into SolarHub's wider network for follow-up R&I proposals, consortium-building and infrastructure access. Pilots are agreed directly between the two parties; SYNERGIES creates the conditions and the relationship that make them possible.

# 12 Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1. Are the published challenges the complete list of current industrial challenges, or are new ones added on a regular basis?**

The seven published challenges are the complete list. They were sourced from our industrial partners. No further challenges will be added.

**Q2. Do you have additional or upcoming challenges that are not yet publicly available?**

No. We will not add new challenges to this programme.

**Q3. How are companies selected to collaborate on these challenges?**

A Solution Provider — a company or a research team — creates an Opportunity on B2Match for the challenge it addresses. After an administrative eligibility check, the Challenge Owner and the SolarHub panel evaluate the solution and, if it is appropriate, the Challenge Owner begins working with the Solution Provider to mature it.

**Q4. Are these challenges intended to lead to pilot projects with technology providers?**

Ideally, yes. SolarHub is a strong consortium and a great community, and we hope that these solutions will evolve into pilot projects that are tested in the field.

**Q5. Is there a process through which you match companies with Challenge Owners?**

Yes. Register on the B2Match platform, create an extensive profile of your company, and create at least one Opportunity for each challenge you address, with a PDF attached. SolarHub and the Challenge Owners then review and match Solution Providers to challenges.

**Q6. What technical information is expected in the application?**

Each Opportunity states the challenge addressed and why your solution fits; your solution maturity (TRL) and what it currently does; your plan for the Validation Stage; and the resources and support you need from the Challenge Owner. The attached PDF adds detail — Annex 3 lists the recommended content, including a step-by-step explanation of how your solution addresses the challenge, the expected results and evidence gathered, and any filed or submitted patents.

**Q7. What evaluation criteria are applied?**

At selection, each Challenge Owner and the SolarHub panel assess submissions on fit to the challenge, technical credibility, team capacity and ecosystem value. The pitch decks and final pitches are scored by the Evaluation Committee on the same four areas, with equal weight (25 points each, 100 in total).

**Q8. What are the expected timelines?**

Applications close on 18 September 2026 and results are announced on 30 September 2026. The Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage runs from 1 to 6 October 2026, followed by the Validation Stage from 6 to 30 October 2026. Pitch decks are due by 30 October 2026, the six finalists are selected by 6 November 2026, and the Online Investor Pitch Event takes place on 11 November 2026. Where a solution proves its fit during validation, a field pilot can be initiated by agreement between the Challenge Owner and the Solution Provider. All dates are tentative and may change, so stay tuned and follow the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match and the SolarHub website for updates.

**Q9. Can I take part without a legal entity, or from outside the EU?**

Yes. Anyone can take part, pitch and be featured. However, only a legal entity established in an EU Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe can be selected as a finalist and receive the prize. You may register a legal entity during the programme, provided it exists by 30 October 2026.

**Q10. Do I need to be in Thessaloniki?**

No. The in-person Bootcamp is for Solution Providers based in Thessaloniki (IFS Awards track). All other selected Solution Providers take part in the online Clarifications Stage, and the Validation Stage and Investor Pitch Event can be followed remotely.

# 13 Intellectual Property

Participants warrant that their solutions are their own or that they are authorised to submit them, and that they do not infringe third-party rights.

Participants keep full ownership of their intellectual property. Taking part in SYNERGIES 2026 or winning the prize transfers no IP rights to SolarHub, its partners, the Challenge Owners or the European Commission. IP arising from work with a Challenge Owner is agreed directly between the two parties. Engagement with SolarHub Pre-Designs and Challenges is for development purposes only — no licensing obligations or IP transfer arise from such use.

# 14 Duty of Truth, Confidentiality and Data Protection

**Duty of truth.** Participants must provide true and accurate information about themselves, their legal status and their solutions. False information leads to exclusion, or to revocation of the prize (Section 10.4).

**Confidentiality.** Participants do not disclose non-public business, technical or financial information received from the Organiser or a Challenge Owner without prior written consent, during or after the programme. All submissions are treated as confidential, and evaluators are bound by a confidentiality and no-conflict-of-interest declaration.

**Data protection.** Personal data collected through the B2Match platform is processed under the General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679 — GDPR) only to run the programme and award the prize. The list of participants may be shared with the European Commission for reporting purposes, in line with the project's grant agreement obligations.

# 15 Communication, Dissemination and Changes to the Rules

All participants are featured on the SolarHub website, whether or not they are eligible for the prize, and can seek collaborations with SolarHub partners. With the finalists' consent, their pitches are published after the Online Investor Pitch Event, provided the solution is relevant and within the SolarHub scope, as in IGNITION 2026.

Participants allow SolarHub to use their name, logo and approved solution description in programme communication, including reporting to the European Commission. The official language is English.

**Changes to the rules.** These rules are published before the Validation Stage starts (6 October 2026). The criteria, weights and eligibility conditions are not changed after publication, except for legal reasons or force majeure. All participants receive written notice of any change. Programme dates are tentative and may change; any change of dates is announced on B2Match and the SolarHub website.

# 16 Contact and Further Information

| Channel | Detail |
|---|---|
| Programme website | https://horizonsolarhub.eu |
| Apply at | SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match (linked from the website and the IFS open-innovation event) |
| Programme email | contact@horizonsolarhub.eu (questions and procedural review requests) |
| Programme contact | Odysseas Spyroglou, International Development Ireland Ltd — o.spyroglou@idi.ie |
| Social media | Follow SolarHub on LinkedIn for updates |

*🚀 Ready to apply? Join the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match, build your profile, create an Opportunity for your challenge and attach your PDF before 18 September 2026 (tentative deadline — follow B2Match and our website for updates).*

# 17 Annex 1: SolarHub Energy Challenges

*The seven challenges below have been defined by SolarHub consortium partners. Each is a real industrial or research problem that the named Challenge Owner is actively working to solve. This is the complete list for SYNERGIES 2026.*

## Challenge 1: Stock & Material Management for Solar Panel Production (Kalyon PV | TRL 8)

Solar panel manufacturing requires precise stock and material management. Kalyon PV operates with limited forecasting capabilities and no real-time monitoring across departments. Solutions are sought to improve inventory forecasting, real-time stock tracking, and supplier coordination — reducing production interruptions and excess inventory costs.

## Challenge 2: Integration & Control of Solar Heat with Hydrothermal Liquefaction (ODTÜ-GÜNAM | TRL 4)

Hydrothermal liquefaction (HTL) requires stable temperatures (300–350°C) and high pressures. Solar heat supply fluctuates with weather, causing process instability. ODTÜ-GÜNAM needs an automated control system to coordinate solar collectors, thermal energy storage and the HTL reactor, to enable stable, solar-powered biocrude production.

## Challenge 3: Digital Twin for Solar Biorefinery (ODTÜ-GÜNAM | TRL 4)

Solar biorefineries integrate multiple complex systems. No integrated digital tools currently exist to simulate and optimise their behaviour. ODTÜ-GÜNAM is looking for a modular digital twin capable of simulating thermodynamic processes, monitoring energy and material flows, predicting performance and supporting predictive maintenance.

## Challenge 4: Digital Tool for Optimising PV Module Transparency in Agrivoltaics (BRITE / CRES | TRL 8–9)

PV transparency directly affects both crop yield and energy generation in agrivoltaic installations. Current design relies on trial and error. A digital optimisation tool is needed that calculates ideal transparency levels based on climate zone, crop characteristics and solar radiation — enabling standardised agrivoltaic system design.

## Challenge 5: Integration of Agri-PV Systems in Weak Rural Grids (CRES | TRL 8)

Agrivoltaic installations in rural areas often face weak electricity grids. Large-scale deployment can cause instability and congestion. Methodologies and tools are needed for distributed energy resource management, storage integration, and microgrid or off-grid architectures, to enable stable, scalable rural agrivoltaic deployment.

### Challenge 6: Smart Control for Industrial Solar-Thermal Systems (SAMMLER | TRL 7)

Industrial solar-thermal systems currently use simple temperature-threshold or fixed-schedule controls. SAMMLER is looking for an intelligent control system integrating IoT sensors, adaptive algorithms and predictive maintenance tools to dynamically optimise heat production and storage — with retrofit capability for existing installations.

### Challenge 7: Market Introduction of Industrial Solar-Thermal Collectors (CRES | TRL 8–9)

European solar-thermal collectors face competition from large international manufacturers. CRES needs market entry strategies, demonstration project frameworks and business models to increase adoption of EU-manufactured collectors in industrial and agro-food sectors, and to strengthen domestic manufacturing capacity.

*Full technical descriptions of each challenge are presented here.*

# 18 Annex 2: SolarHub Pre-Designs

The SolarHub consortium has developed four solar energy technology pre-designs as part of its R&I activities. These are technical blueprints for real solar energy systems, built, tested and documented by the consortium's research partners. Solution Providers may draw on them as research-grade technical assets — as a starting point, a foundation to build on, or a basis for proposed improvements.

| Pre-Design | Title | Key Application |
|---|---|---|
| PD1 | Low Temperature Solar Thermal Solution | Industrial and agri-food heat (80–120°C) |
| PD2 | Solar-Aided Hydrothermal Treatment | Agri-food waste valorisation and bio-oil production |
| PD3 | Power Production & Micro-Climate Creation for Tree Plants (Agri-PV) | Tree crop cultivation under a PV canopy |
| PD4 | Efficient Crop Production through Light and Water Management PV | Controlled-environment agriculture (tomatoes, peppers, berries, vines) |

## PD1 — Low Temperature Solar Thermal Solution

A scalable solar thermal system for industrial and agricultural heat applications in the 80–120°C range. Built on high-efficiency flat-plate collectors, a low-cost ceramic sensible heat storage tank, and an AI-enabled smart control system. Designed to partially replace fossil-fuel boilers. Includes a dimensioning and levelised cost of heat (LCOH) calculation tool.

## PD2 — Solar-Aided Hydrothermal Treatment

A system combining parabolic-trough solar collectors, thermal energy storage, and a hydrothermal liquefaction (HTL) reactor to convert agri-food waste into bio-oil, biochar and fertiliser-grade aqueous products. Designed to operate off-grid and to handle seasonal waste variation. Particularly relevant for agricultural regions in Greece and Türkiye.

## PD3 — Power Production & Micro-Climate Creation for Tree Plants (Agri-PV)

A fixed-tilt, semi-transparent PV installation designed for dual use: renewable electricity generation and microclimate management for tree crops (vines, peaches). Uses a luminescence-shifting nanocoating on the panels to optimise photosynthetically active radiation (PAR). Integrates rainwater collection and protection from extreme weather events.

## PD4 — Efficient Crop Production through Light and Water Management PV

An agrivoltaic system tailored for vegetables and berries (tomatoes, peppers, grapevines), featuring adjustable PV module transparency, light-spectrum modification, integrated rainwater harvesting and irrigation, and a digital sensor platform for real-time monitoring of soil and weather conditions.

*Full technical descriptions of each pre-design are available on the SolarHub website.*

# 19 Annex 3: SYNERGIES 2026 Application Content

*Applications are submitted online through the SolarHub SYNERGIES community on B2Match, as a profile plus at least one Opportunity per challenge, with a PDF attached. The fields below are provided for reference so that Solution Providers can prepare their answers in advance and structure the attached PDF. All content must be in English.*

## PART A: Organisation / Team

| Field | Notes | Format |
|---|---|---|
| Organisation / Team name | The name of your company, research team or organisation | Short text |
| Main contact — Name | Name of the main contact person (over 18; acting for themselves or as authorised representative) | Short text |
| Main contact — Email | Main contact email | Email field |
| Organisation type | Company (startup / SME / scale-up), research team, spin-off, or team of individual innovators | Dropdown |
| Legal entity | Name of the legal entity that will hold the solution for prize purposes, if any (see Section 5.2) | Short text |
| Country of establishment | Country where the legal entity is established, or country of residence / operation if there is no legal entity | Dropdown |
| Organisation / team description | A short profile of your organisation and relevant experience | Short text |
| Link to the SolarHub ecosystem | If not based in Greece or Türkiye: how you intend to bring value to the ecosystem (collaborations, joint initiatives, business opportunities). No commitments required. | Short text (max 300 characters) |

## PART B: Challenge & Solution (B2Match Opportunity)

One Opportunity per challenge. The first four fields are required in every Opportunity; the remaining fields can be covered in the attached PDF.

| Field | Notes | Limit |
|---|---|---|
| Challenge addressed and fit | Select one of the seven SolarHub Energy Challenges (Annex 1) and explain why your solution fits | Selection + short text |
| Solution maturity (TRL) | Current Technology Readiness Level and what the solution currently does | Short text |
| Plan for the Validation Stage | What you would do with the Challenge Owner during the Validation Stage (6–30 October 2026) | Short text |
| Resources & support needed | Resources and support you would need from the Challenge Owner | Short text |
| Solution acronym | A short acronym for your solution — it will be used throughout the whole process | Max 35 characters |
| Brief description of your solution | A concise summary of what your solution is and does | Short text |

| Field | Notes | Limit |
|---|---|---|
| A) Your proposed solution | Explain step-by-step how your product(s)/solution(s)/idea(s) address the specific challenge. What is your value proposition? Are you using any third-party technologies, other than standard platforms such as a computer operating system? | Up to 3000 characters |
| B) Expected results & evidence | Describe the expected results. What evidence have you gathered that the solution meets the goals of the challenge (e.g. research outcomes, cost savings, user retention, other achievements)? Include any filed / submitted patents and patent description. | Up to 3000 characters |

## PART C: Declarations

By applying, the Solution Provider confirms that:

- All information provided in this application is accurate and complete.
- The applicant is over 18 and acts for themselves or as the authorised representative of their organisation.
- Our organisation / team meets the eligibility criteria for SYNERGIES 2026 and complies with EU restrictive measures (Section 5.3).
- We understand and accept the participation obligations (Bootcamp or Clarifications Stage, Validation Stage and pitch deck submission and, if selected as a finalist, the Online Investor Pitch Event).
- We consent to the processing of our personal data in accordance with GDPR for the purpose of running the programme and awarding the prize.
- We have read the SYNERGIES 2026 Guide for Solution Providers, including the prize rules.

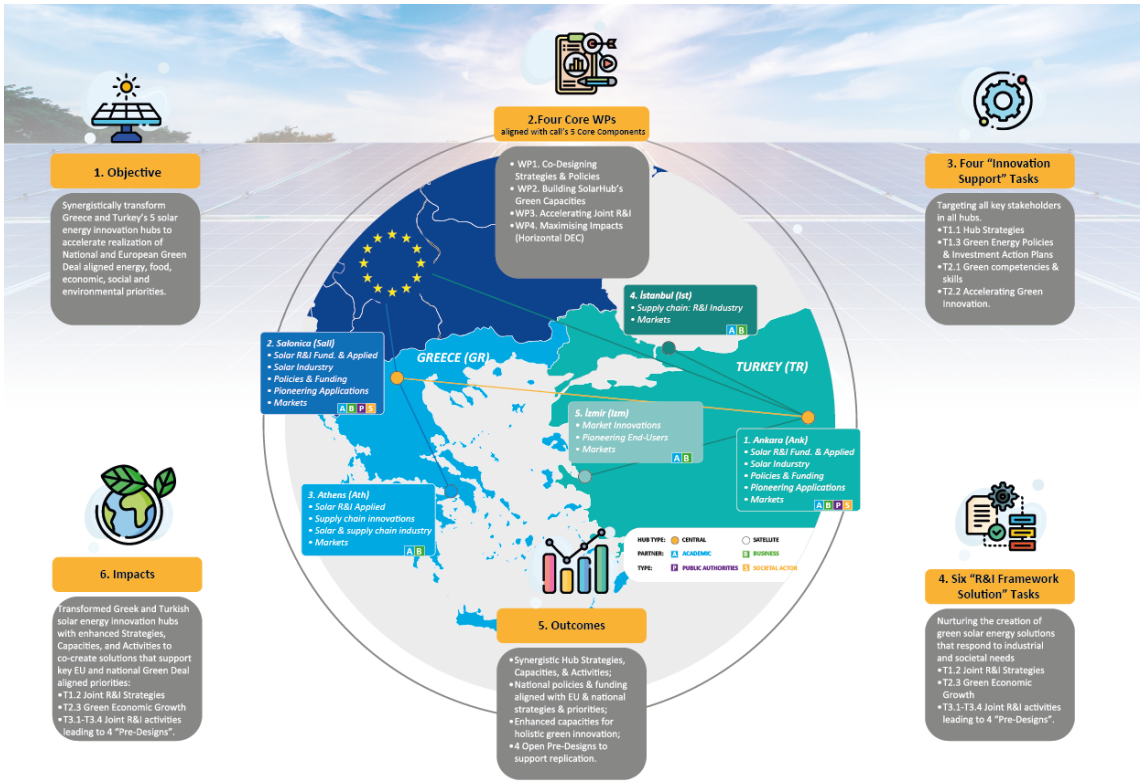
# ID2.2.2 SolarHub SYNERGIES 2026 Acceleration Guide

| **Submission Information** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class | ☐ | Deliverable (D) | ☐ | Internal Deliverable (ID) |
| Level | ☒ | Public (PU) | ☐ | Sensitive (SEN) |
| Work Package | WP2. CAPACITITES | | | |
| Lead Beneficiary | IDI: International Development Ireland Ltd [16] | | | |

| **Contributors** | **Role:** **L = Lead** **F = Provided Feedback** | **C = Contributed Content** **A = Contributed to Activities** | **Institution** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Odysseas Spyroglou | | | IDI [16] |

| **Document History** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ver. | Date | Notes |
| 1.0 | 3 May 2026 | First version of Document. Ready for circulation. |
| 2.0 | 30 Sep 2026 | Guide updated for participants. |

| Project Summary | |
|---|---|
| Short Name: | SolarHub |
| Long Name: | A Greek-Turkish Solar Energy Excellence Hub to Advance the European Green Deal |
| Grant Number: | 101086110 |
| Start & End Dates: | 1 Jan. 2023 – 31 Dec. 2026 |
| Overall Budget: | €4 846 397.50 |
| Coordinator: | METU Center for Solar Energy Research & Applications, Ankara / Turkiye |
| Project Webpage: | https://horizonsolarhub.eu/en/ |
| EU Cordis Webpage: | https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101086110 |




## Consortium

ODTÜ GÜNAM · CERTH Centre for Research & Technology Hellas · ΚΑΠΕ CRES · ODTÜ METU · DLR Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt German Aerospace Center

GÜNDER · Solar Heat Europe · kalyon PV · Brite · Sammler · SOLIMPEKS Solar Energy Corp. · venus

tat · IDI · TÜBİTAK · ELECTRA ENERGY · TAGEM R&D and Innovation

| Consortium Partners | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | # Abbrev. | English Name [Country] | **Unique Role / Capacities** |
| **Academic (7)** | 1. GUNAM | METU Center Solar Energy Research & Appl. [TR] | **Coord. & TR Rep.** |
| | 2. CERTH | Centre for Research & Technology Hellas [GR] | **Co-coord. & GR Rep.** |
| | 3. CRES | Centre Renewable Energy Sources & Saving [GR] | **Athens Hub Rep.** |
| | 4. EGE | Ege University [TR] | **Agriculture & Izmir Hub Rep.** |
| | 5. ODTÜ | Middle East Technical University [TR] | **SSH & Gender** |
| | 6. ITU | Istanbul Technical University [TR] | **Istanbul Hub Rep.** |
| | 7. DLR | German Aerospace Cntr - Inst. of Solar Res. [DE] | **Conc. Solar & EU Links** |
| **Business (9)** | 8. GNDER | TR Section - Intl Solar E. Soc. [TR] | **TR Solar Ind. Rep & Global Links** |
| | 9. SHE | Solar Heat Europe [BE] | **Solar Industries Rep & EU Links** |
| | 10. KALPV | Kalyon PV [TR] | **Technology Supplier/ Manufacturer** |
| | 11. BRITE | Brite Solar [GR] | **AgriPV Solution Provider** |
| | 12. SAM | Sammler Solar Thermal Systems [GR] | **Solar Thermal Solution Provider** |
| | 13. SLMPK | Solimpeks Solar Energy [TR] | **Solar Energy Solution Provider** |
| | 14. VENUS | Venus Growers [GR] | **Pioneering Greek end-user** |
| | 15. TAT | Tat Food [TR] | **Pioneering Turkish end-user** |
| | 16. IDI | International Development Ireland [IE] | **Innovation & Capacity Building** |
| **Public** | 17. TUBK | Scientific & Tech. Research Inst. of Turkey | **TR Sci. Policies & Funding** |
| | 18. RDFCM | Regional Development Fund of C. Macedonia [GR] | **The. Policies, Funding & Hub Rep** |
| | 20. TAGEM | Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry | **Turkish agricultural policies and funding** |
| **SA** | 19. ELEN | Electra Energy Cooperative [GR] | **Thessaloniki Societal Actor** |
| | 21. TZOB | Golbasi Ankara Farmers Association [TR] | **Ankara Societal Actor** |