

## **ENER-G tests teenagers' green energy performance**

Teenagers took control of green energy businesses and powered up their creative and commercial skills at the ENER-G Make It Enterprising Schools Challenge.

Teams from 11 schools across Greater Manchester became mini-manufacturing businesses for the day. Their challenge was to design, manufacture and install eco-friendly power generation and efficiency solutions for a choice of customers that varied from supermarkets and hospitals to gyms and factories. They then pitched their ideas to a panel of senior manager 'dragons' from clean tech business ENER-G ([www.energ.co.uk](http://www.energ.co.uk)), based in Salford, Greater Manchester

The free event was part of The Manufacturing Institute's Make It in Manufacturing campaign ([www.makeit.org.uk](http://www.makeit.org.uk)) to attract talented young people into industry, an initiative that is being expanded this year thanks to support from the Northwest Regional Development Agency and European Regional Development Fund.

The 13 and 14 year-olds were challenged to build imaginative 3D floor plans of an eco-friendly power system for their chosen building. After selecting their job roles – including managing director, operations, finance, logistics, sales and marketing managers – they costed-out their ideas, developed energy performance indicator systems, and created sales and marketing plans. They then appeared before the ENER-G team of 'dragons' to present their ideas.

The winning team from Sale Grammar School formed the 'Green Logic' business – providing energy solutions for schools. Their mission to build 'a better future for the next generation' was achieved by using a combination of technologies including solar panels, motion sensors for lights, ground source heat pumps and recycled rain water. The team invented an imaginative energy performance indicator system – using a traffic light system in every classroom to warn pupils when too much energy was being consumed and remind them to switch power off when not in use.

The dragons praised team members for their ideas and felt that they engaged with one of the biggest challenges in energy efficiency which is getting people to change their behaviours and be more aware of energy wastage.

Physical Energy Plus was the name of second placed team from Buile Hill School, Salford. They developed an eco-gym – powered primarily by its users. They linked running machines and exercise bikes to a turbine to promote 'pedal power', and made use of a low carbon ENER-G combined heat and power system to generate heat for the spa and pool, and electricity. Judges were especially impressed with the team's financial skills and their ability to generate sponsorship funding and achieve a return on investment after four years.

Nicola Eagleton-Crowther, Campaign Manager for Make it at The Manufacturing Institute said: "The young people got a real taste of what it's like to work in industry. It was a very lively, energetic and creative environment and they really got to grips with the brief and were full of fantastic ideas. All the teams came up with some brilliant designs and marketing campaigns and we were delighted by their enthusiasm and performance.

"We got very positive feedback from the students and teachers on the day and this was reflected in the shift in perceptions about working in industry. 90% of school

pupils felt the event had given them a better understanding of the manufacturing industry, while more than two thirds said they would consider a career in the sector.”

Chris Marsland, Technical Director of ENER-G said: “The Make It event was a great success and the school pupils’ grasp of eco-friendly power and environmental considerations demonstrated that these young adults are certainly aware of the necessity of being responsible towards the environment. To see them working together in their teams and producing such credible proposals I am sure would make the real Dragons’ Den panel blush with pride.

“ENER-G is proud to support and encourage this interest in both manufacturing and the environment, as these youngsters are the business leaders of tomorrow and hi tech businesses such as ours require talented people with both technical and enterprising skills. If young people don’t receive the encouragement and guidance now, the future of not only the economy but also the environment will suffer.”

This was the first of a series of North West heats, with the top team from each heat invited to compete in a grand regional final in 2011.

Ends.

**Media information:** Janet Kilpatrick, email: [jk@janetkilpatrick.co.uk](mailto:jk@janetkilpatrick.co.uk), phone: 0161 487 3830, mobile: 07794 192 677.