

# University of Sussex to lead new £15 million centre focussed on how to reduce the UK's energy demand

Submitted by: BlueSky Education

Thursday, 13 July 2023

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The University of Sussex has received £15 million from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to establish a new Energy Demand Research Centre, as newly announced today (Thursday 13 July).

The new national Energy Demand Research Centre will be led by the Universities of Sussex and Newcastle, involving ten other UK universities. It will investigate how domestic, industrial and transport energy demands can be reduced across the UK.

The Centre, whose Director Professor Mari Martiskainen is based at the University of Sussex Business School, will build an evidence base for understanding consumer behaviour, researching mechanisms to improve energy efficiency, and assessing the impact of reducing energy demand on different communities.

Lowering energy use is critical in the race to net zero. Previous evidence has shown that overall energy use in the UK "could be halved by 2050, whilst enhancing quality of life". The new Centre will build on this.

The new Centre will investigate how domestic, industrial and transport energy demand reduction can be delivered on a local and national level across the UK, and what that means in real terms for the British public.

Mari Martiskainen, Professor of Energy and Society in the University of Sussex Business School, said:

"This new Centre will deliver important research and policy recommendations into how to reach net zero. Energy demand reduction will improve energy security, reduce household energy bills and address climate change.

"Many people and businesses across the UK, including in the Brighton area, have struggled with their energy costs in the last year, so it is vital that we improve energy efficiency of our buildings to make them more resilient to both extreme weather and future price shocks."

Prof Steven McGuire, Dean of the University of Sussex Business School, said:

"The University of Sussex Business School is delighted to be the new home for the Energy Demand Research Centre. Sussex's expertise in energy research goes back several decades and the new centre draws on this intellectual tradition.

"The addition of the Energy Demand Research Centre to our existing Sussex Energy Group and the newly announced Bennett Institute for Policy Innovation and Acceleration means that Sussex has an exceptionally large, deep and expert collection of leading academics working on combating climate change through rigorous research that informs policy and practice."

The new Energy Demand Research Centre is part of £53 million in funding awarded by UKRI to boost knowledge, innovation and new technologies to decarbonise the energy sector. The six research centres will drive forward change in the energy system and help to meet the UK's net zero target by 2050.

The funding for the Energy Demand Research Centre comes from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council.

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