

Europe's largest low-carbon energy research community welcomes first transatlantic member

The European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) has welcomed the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR) as its first transatlantic member following the conclusion of negotiations for Canada's association to Pillar II of Horizon Europe. This development will allow for enhanced international collaboration in low-carbon energy research, providing new opportunities for innovation and global partnerships on both sides of the Atlantic.

Brussels, July 23, 2024 – The European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) and Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR) have announced their collaboration, with UQTR becoming EERA's first transatlantic member. This cooperation follows the official acceptance of the university as a full member of EERA, marking a step in expanding cooperation in low-carbon energy research and innovation. This historic membership was made possible thanks to [Canada's association to Pillar II of Horizon Europe](#), the EU's €95 billion research and innovation programme.

The high-level expertise of UQTR globally recognised in its niches of excellence, particularly in renewable energies based on hydrogen and biomass, constitutes added value for EERA. UQTR's membership in EERA is set to boost collaborative efforts in the field of low-carbon energy research. As part of EERA, UQTR will contribute to and benefit from increased synergies and mutual learning with other leading research institutions across Europe. This collaboration exemplifies the spirit of Horizon Europe, fostering global cooperation to develop innovative solutions to some of the most pressing global challenges.

"We are delighted to confirm that EERA's Executive Committee has enthusiastically approved the membership of Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières as a full member" announced Henk-Jan Vink, EERA's president. "UQTR will join initially our Joint Programmes Bioenergy and Fuel Cells and Hydrogen. It is a collaboration which opens promising opportunities and we expect that it will foster enhanced synergies and mutual learning on the low-carbon energy research field between the institutions we represent on both sides of the Atlantic" explained Adel El Gammal, Secretary General of the association.

For its part, Christian Blanchette, rector of UQTR, stated that *"UQTR's membership in EERA follows the agreement signed by the Canadian government to become an associated country of Horizon Europe. We are very proud to be the first transatlantic university member of EERA. This promising collaboration boosts the advancement and development of cutting-edge research in energy transition on a European and global scale, particularly in the two areas of common interest: hydrogen and bioenergy. We are very grateful to the team of Quebec Government Office in Brussels, thanks to them, the UQTR-EERA partnership link has been established."*

Geneviève Brisson, Delegate General of Québec in Brussels, states that *"Québec's Government Office in Brussels is proud to have endorsed, since the early talks, the accession of the University of Québec à Trois-Rivières to EERA that led to today's membership. This new addition to EERA's network marks the firm commitment of Québec to diversify strategic partnerships with Europe while driving forward the internationalisation of its excellent research, education, mobility, and policy advocacy for a clean energy transition. This milestone clearly paves the way for stronger and deeper collaboration under the newly announced Association Agreement of Canada to Horizon Europe that will enhance innovation, economic competitiveness and cutting-edge technology on both sides of the Atlantic."*

The proactive support and engagement of Québec's Government Office in Brussels was instrumental in establishing and strengthening the partnership between the UQTR and EERA, underscoring the importance of diplomatic and governmental action in the global and European research landscape.

[The association agreement between Canada and the EU for Horizon Europe was signed on 3 July in Montréal.](#) This allows Canadian entities, including Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, to apply for and participate in Horizon Europe proposals as prospective beneficiaries. Consequently, UQTR's membership of EERA opens a multitude of potential collaborations within the framework of Horizon Europe's calls for proposals.

About the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA)

The European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) is an association of European public research centres and universities active in low-carbon energy research. EERA pursues the mission of catalysing European energy research for a climate-neutral society by 2050. Bringing together more than 250 organisations from 32 countries, EERA is Europe's largest energy research community. EERA coordinates its research activities through 18 Joint Programmes and is a key player in the European Union's Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan. For further information, see <https://www.eera-set.eu/>.

About Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR)

A member of the Université du Québec network, UQTR was founded in 1969. With 27 departments and two schools (engineering and business), the university has some 15,000 students, nearly a quarter of whom are enrolled in graduate studies, and more than 3,300 of whom are international students. With a faculty that has been largely renewed in recent years, the university offers a stimulating environment that has enabled it to rank among the Canadian universities with one of the strongest increases in research funding, up nearly 240% since 2018. It has 54 research units and nearly 40 research chairs in fields ranging from energy to social work and the environment. Energy transition is a top priority for the University, which also boasts two centres of excellence that have carved out their niche in the hydrogen and bioenergy sectors: the Hydrogen Research Institute and the Innovations Institute in Ecomaterials, Ecoproducts and Ecoenergies based on biomass (I2E3). For further information, see <https://www.uqtr.ca/index.shtml>.

Hydrogen Research Institute (HRI)

One of the leaders in hydrogen research in Canada, HRI is a research unit dedicated to research on hydrogen energy and technologies founded in 1994: the study and the development of technologies for the production, storage and safe use of hydrogen as an energy vector are at the centre of its mission. For further information, see https://oraprdnt.uqtr.quebec.ca/portail/gscw031?owa_no_site=6622

Innovations Institute in Ecomaterials, Ecoproducts and Ecoenergies based on biomass (I2E3)

I2E3 aims to be a university research institute dedicated to the regional development and the advancement of the circular bioeconomy based on the use of biomass energy production, mainly in the form of renewable fuels, as well as the respect for the environment. For further information, see https://oraprdnt.uqtr.quebec.ca/portail/gscw031?owa_no_site=20&owa_no_fiche=107&owa_bottin=

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