

Fast track - Developing future ecosystems of excellence with Invest In activities

WE SPEED UP THE PATH TO INVESTMENTS

Project code: J10588

Project lead: Nivala-Haapajärven seutu NIHAK ry

Project partner: City of Raahе

ERDF funding from the Council of Oulu region: 542 579 €

Total budget: 678 226 €

Project timeline: 1.10.2023-31.3.2026

The project has created a unified and effective way to speed up investments across Southern North Ostrobothnia. The goal has been to make processes smoother, strengthen municipalities' investment readiness, and improve the region's attractiveness both nationally and internationally.

The target groups include companies planning to invest in the region, companies already operating here, as well as municipalities, investors and other developers in industry, energy and the data economy.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

- Clear and fast investment path, where ready sites in the region are presented in an easy-to-understand way for potential investors.
- Shared operating model for municipalities that supports decision-making and strengthens investment readiness across the region.
- Proactive investor engagement that has led to investment decisions, preparation of several investment sites, and increased visibility in investment networks.

EXAMPLES OF RESULTS FROM THE FAST TRACK MODEL:

- **New investments and jobs, including Finland's largest biogas plant and a CO₂ capture facility.**
- **Dozens of new investors: biogas, hydrogen, biochar, solar power, battery storage and data centers.**
- **Municipal investment readiness has strengthened: zoning, permitting and land acquisition are now carried out more proactively, and 10 new industrial zoning areas have been launched in the region.**
- **Invest-In brand: Oulu South Hydrogen Valley supporting international visibility and communication.**
- **The region's largest professional event: Think BIG – More from Energy (over 600 participants).**
- **Visibility at dozens of industry events, including World Hydrogen Summit (Rotterdam), Future Data Summit (Helsinki), Northern Power (Oulu), and Solar Finland (Helsinki).**
- **Pre-planning of Finland's first regional hydrogen transmission network solution has been launched in cooperation with Gasgrid, Fingrid and regional grid companies.**

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NIHAK FAST TRACK

IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

- We map the region's strengths and ecosystems: energy, bio and circular economy, metal and technology industries.
- We define investment-ready sites: land plots, infrastructure, expertise and partners.
- We prepare ready-made investment packages where locations and permitting have been pre-assessed.
- Potential investors are identified and contacted.

ACTIVATING COOPERATION AND CLARIFYING ROLES

- We agree on clear roles and responsibilities: who does what, and when.
- City officials and elected representatives are involved from the very beginning.
- NIHAK compiles the information and coordinates stakeholders; the municipality is responsible for land use and decision-making, and NIHAK supports with facts and proactive communication.

ACCELERATING THE INVESTMENT PROCESS AND BUILDING TRUST

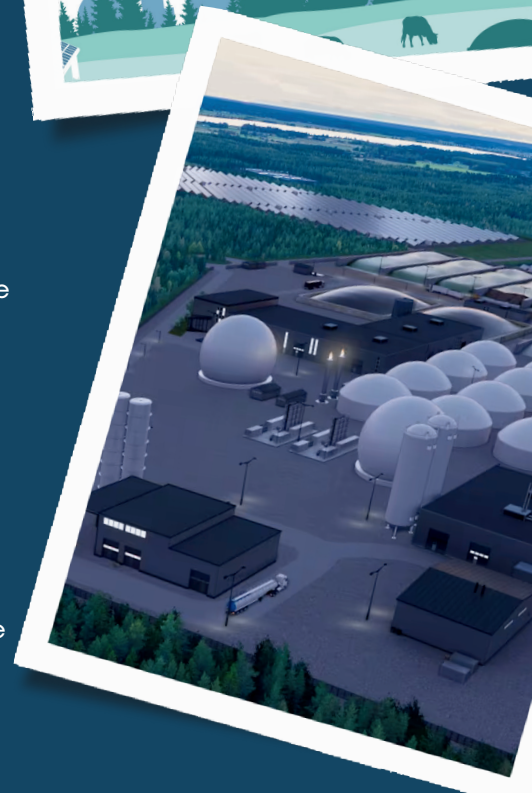
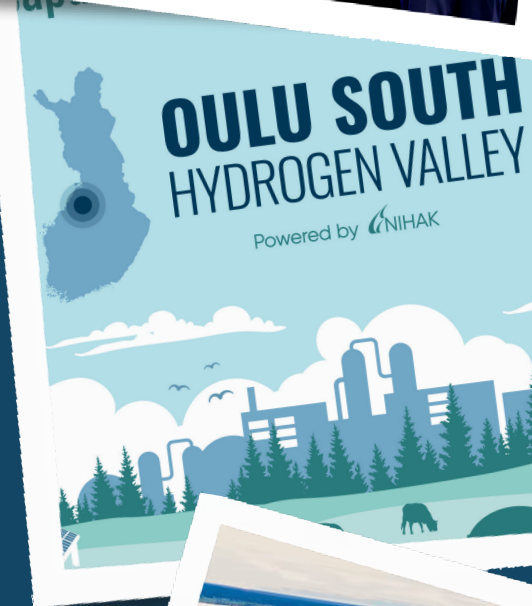
- Proactive communication: decision-makers, entrepreneurs and the public are kept informed.
- The project developer's communication is supported with visual materials and clear messaging to reduce opposition.
- Transparent and solution-oriented cooperation shortens the decision-making process.

BUILDING REGIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS

- The region's ecosystems are presented as visual and easy-to-use materials.
- Continuous communication about the region's strengths and increasing awareness.
- The Think BIG – More from Energy event and the Oulu South Hydrogen Valley brand support the region's visibility.

ENGAGING MUNICIPALITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

- Municipalities contribute to the funding and development of the activities, ensuring continuity.
- A shared Fast Track pathway enables investments to move forward quickly without unnecessary administrative delays.



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