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Project H2SHIFT: First open call open until 18 march 2026 for hydrogen innovators (Sponsored)

By **Antonio L. Escárzaga** January 19, 2026

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Applications are now open for the first **Open Call of H2SHIFT**, a European initiative designed to support startups and SMEs developing innovative hydrogen production technologies. The call is open until 18 March 2026 and targets companies working across the hydrogen value chain, particularly those developing alternatives to existing market solutions or leveraging underexploited energy sources.

The **H2SHIFT** project brings together industrial partners, universities and research centres within a single, integrated ecosystem of innovation services. Its offering spans the entire development pathway, from laboratory testing and technical validation to scale-up and business development support. Access to these services is provided through a system of cascading Open Calls managed via a Single Entry Point, allowing potential beneficiaries to apply through one centralised access point.

Development platforms

The first Open Call will select a limited number of companies that will gain subsidised access to three advanced development platforms:

- **Politecnico di Torino**'s test infrastructures for direct hydrogen production from solar energy.
- **Youwind**'s software for modelling hydrogen production in an offshore environment.
- **Resolvent**'s multiphysics simulation platform to support design and scale-up of hydrogen production technologies.

At Politecnico di Torino, researchers will support companies developing thermochemical and photochemical hydrogen production processes. **Domenico Ferrero and Francesco Orsini**, respectively associate professor and researcher of the STEPS group at the Department of Energy Galileo Ferraris, explain: *"Our High-Flux Solar Simulator will enable the testing of prototypes of reactors, and their constituent materials, for the thermochemical splitting of water, a process that exploits only the concentrated heat of the sun to produce hydrogen and oxygen. This technology does not require electricity and therefore represents an interesting alternative for the generation of hydrogen from solar energy".*

Further support at Politecnico di Torino focuses on photo-electro-chemical hydrogen production. **Simelys Hernandez**, associate professor at CREST within the Department of Applied Science and Technology, comments: *"We have recently acquired an ultrasonic device for the production of large-scale photocatalytic cells with constant thickness. This, together with our test bench, will allow us to test and validate at scale new materials and devices for the production of hydrogen by photoelectric means, using only sunlight as a reaction motor".*

Youwind will provide access to its Software as a Service platform, which supports the optimised design of onshore and offshore wind farms by integrating engineering and financial modelling. The platform considers environmental and technical constraints, wake loss models, logistics and downtime optimisation, while tracking selected financial indicators. **Edvald Edvaldsson**, Co-founder and CTO of Youwind, explains: *"Our platform needs to consider the production and storage of hydrogen locally to offshore wind farms, to represent and evaluate the business opportunity. The goal of the collaboration with companies through H2SHIFT's open calls is precisely to further develop our platform to include production models and obtain an estimate of the cost of hydrogen generated with wind energy".*

Resolvent's contribution focuses on multiphysics modelling to support the analysis and

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optimisation of complex hydrogen production processes. **Lene Gottrup Barfod**, Managing Director and Partner at Resolvent, notes: *"We supported several companies that needed to verify the functioning of their prototypes for a subsequent scale-up. Simulation with our platform allows us to study the best configurations and operating conditions for process optimisation and is therefore a very useful tool to support the development of an innovation from lab to market".*

How the application process works

The application process requires companies to complete an online form and submit a video presentation outlining their innovation. As explained by **Alissa Bauer** of the Collège des Ingénieurs, who oversees the presidency of the Single Entry Point: *"The application procedure involves filling out an online form, to be complemented by a video presentation of the innovation. After the deadline of 18 March, the consortium of H2SHIFT will evaluate all the applications received and interview the finalists to select the four winners, one for each development platform".*

Selected companies will have up to six months to work directly with experts from Politecnico di Torino, Youwind and Resolvent. Looking ahead, **Mara Tumiati** of the Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, organiser of the Open Calls, adds: *"At the end of 2026 all the test lines and services of the H2SHIFT ecosystem will be made available through a second open call, and 8 other start-ups and/or SMEs that develop innovation in hydrogen production will be selected".*

Further details about the call and application process are available on the official H2SHIFT website, which also hosts the recording of the project's launch webinar held on 26 November 2025. In addition, the project will host two in-person events for innovators, one on 26 January 2026 in Paris at the Collège des Ingénieurs and another on 4 February 2026 in Turin at the Environment Park. Registration for both events is available via Eventbrite.

H2SHIFT, short for Services for Hydrogen Innovation Facilitation and Testing, is a Horizon Europe Open Innovation Test Bed project providing access to laboratories and specialised expertise to support the validation and scale-up of hydrogen production technologies. Co-financed by the European Union, the project is coordinated by Snam and supported by a consortium of 13 Italian and European partners to strengthen Europe's leadership in hydrogen innovation.

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