

Consultation Framework

NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME

DOC-230921-GYQ



OPENING STATEMENT

The decarbonisation of Irish society relies on fundamental changes to how energy is generated and consumed. To enable these changes at the right pace and the right price, we will rely on the electricity network, and we need to make the connection between how renewable energy is generated, and how we use or store it. Every Irish home, farm, community, and business is being called on to play a part. The National Network, Local Connections Programme has been established to work with, and for, customers to make this possible.

We are entering a period of rapid change and uncertainty. Over the coming years, technologies will change and Irish homes', farms' and communities' energy needs will too. We will need to be able to adapt to meet changing needs and emerging challenges. In this document we have sought to develop a proposed plan that accounts for uncertainty and delivers that adaptability.

For example:

- 1 Iterative stakeholder engagement and communications to inform different aspects of the programme as the programme matures.
- 2 Targeting communications to different stakeholder groups to bring people on a journey.
- 3 Extensive commitment of resources to communications and collaboration, working with partners and customers to understand their needs and how they change, so we can adapt.

Over the life of this programme we will face uncertainties and risks. If we proceed too quickly, we increase the risk that customers will not be ready, or technologies will not be as mature. But if we do not proceed quickly enough, there is a risk that the solutions will not be in place when then need to be. Without taking the initial steps now, there is a risk that we and our partners could not replicate solutions that we pilot or commence a national rollout until later in the decade.

We will need to commit people and capital to deliver this programme, and we are reaching a critical decision point regarding the level of resources to commit. ESB Networks serves, and is funded by, all electricity customers. All our customers will share in the benefit, but they will also share in the costs and the risk if we act too slowly or too soon. As such, we want to give all customers an opportunity to consult.

- Do you think we should take a more measured pace and begin to scale closer to 2030, or commit resources needed to begin build towards a national rollout commencing in 2024 / 2025?
- There are trade offs between different developments in this plan that we could prioritise. What do you think we should prioritise, and how will this affect your business.

We need your input to determine the path forward. So please have your say!

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1 NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS - HAVE YOUR SAY!

This document is the proposed Consultation Framework. In this document we set out:

- 1 Our stakeholders' initial perspectives, and how we are applying these insights.
- 2 How we will engage over the life of the programme, in an insight driven way.
- The role of consultation and communications in supporting piloting, continuous improvement, and making it real for customers and communities.

It is critical that we implement solutions that optimally meet the wishes and needs of the customers and industry participants of Ireland. In developing these proposals, we have taken time to seek and utilise stakeholder input from round tables and focus groups, as well as to research and utilise exemplar international experiences. This has enabled us to develop the proposed approaches within this document. While we have confidence that these can meet the overall programme objectives, we are open to change and, as a result, we have prioritised this transparent and consultative approach.

There were several key dimensions on which we based this document and it is important to us that we develop an understanding of your perspectives, objectives and concerns across each of those.

It may be useful to consider the below questions while reading this document. Please note when responding to this document, it is not necessary to respond to each of the below questions; responding to a specific question or a general response is welcomed and appreciated.



SELECTION CRITERIA

Do you think the proposed approach in identifying, recruiting and listening to our stakeholders is effective? Are there other steps we should take?



TARGET LOCATIONS

As we begin to roll out in pilot locations, will the proposed approach (insight driven communications, continuous monitoring, engagement and listening) be effective?



NUMBER OF STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATING

Have you views on the number of stakeholders in each category (stakeholders, targeted stakeholders, everybody else) we should reach at each stage in the programme?



TYPES OF CUSTOMERS PARTICIPATING

Are there groups of customers who are more at risk of being left behind? How can we address this? Who should we work with?



PILOTING

How do you think we could support stakeholders through piloting?
How could we leverage piloting to support general awareness and education?

1 NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS - HAVE YOUR SAY!

It is also important to us that we maximise the overall value of the programme across our stakeholders. As such, we invite perspectives on additional considerations that we could fold into our approach:



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Are there customer and stakeholder learning objectives we should prioritise?



CUSTOMER & POLICY OBJECTIVES

Are there key customer or societal objectives we should focus on through our consultation and communications approach?



CUSTOMER EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

What do you think the key opportunities to drive customer education and awareness will be?



SUPPLY CHAIN

What other parts of the supply chain should we focus on engaging?

Glossary

Consultation Framework

2 GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION	
DSO	Distribution System Operator	
DSR	Demand Side Response	
RESS-1	Renewable Electricity Support Scheme 1	
SEM	Single Electricity Market	
TSO	Transmission System Operator	

THE KEY OBJECTIVE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

To ensure that we build an inclusive Network to support the energy requirements of the people of Ireland. In doing this, we need to listen and respect varying opinions and insights, we need to be transparent and communicative on the programme delivery plan, we must share knowledge with industry in an open and timely manner, we need to engage and collaborate with customers, communities, and industry. Together with industry and policy makers, we will not leave anyone behind.

We cannot deliver the National Network, Local Connections Programme in isolation.

In the initial stages of this programme design, it was established that there will be a reliance on stakeholders across customers, communities, and industry. It will require the support of policy makers, and the participation of our customers, to deliver the National Network, Local Connections Programme. By 2030, the ambition is that every home, farm, business, community and industry group will have played a part in delivering the Programme and our challenge is trifold:

- Firstly, how do we ensure our stakeholder views are reflected in the programme design and delivery?
- Secondly, how do we engage in a timely, meaningful, and relevant way to ensure that we bring all stakeholders on this journey with us?
- Thirdly, how do we ensure that we are moving at a pace and delivering at a scale that is in line with industry and customer expectation and need?

These challenges are interlinked, and our communications and consultation approach will be required to address these.

The Challenge: How do we ensure our stakeholders views are reflected in the programme design and delivery?

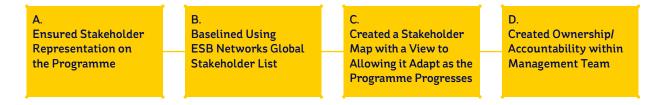
4.1 WHO ARE OUR STAKEHOLDERS?

We will need to reach every single Irish home, farm, business, and every industry and company operating on the energy landscape today. It is today's 17-year-olds, living at home with their parents who, in 10 years' time will have a home. It will be the fledgling businesses sitting in innovation hubs across Ireland today who, in 10 years' time will demand security of energy supply which is affordable and green. It is every single home, every single farm, every single business which exists today and every single home, farm, business which will exist in the future.

We have identified that our stakeholder map is extensive; every person in Ireland will participate. However, after reviewing case studies on other Irish and international transformational programmes, and their communication and consultation approaches, we have developed a working assumption that engaging everyone at this initial phase of the programme would be counterproductive. This is a complex proposition, and we need to bring people on a journey. We need to educate and build awareness in a timely and relevant way.

4.2 HOW WE CREATED OUR STAKEHOLDER MAP?

Our approach to establishing our Stakeholder Map for Phase 1 of the programme:



A. Ensured Stakeholder Representation in the Programme:

We currently have a communication professional sitting on the management team to advocate for the stakeholder and we propose to appoint a dedicated stakeholder and communications manager to advocate and be the voice of the stakeholder as the programme progresses.

B. Baselined using ESB Networks Global Stakeholder List:

There is an established stakeholder list within ESB Networks where key stakeholders have registered their interest in ESB Networks' activity. We reviewed this list to establish group of key stakeholders who could help us shape the initial phase of the programme.

C. Created a Stakeholder Map with a View to Allowing it Adapt as the Programme Progresses:

Currently there exists two routes to joining our stakeholder map. Firstly: self-registration – we created a project email account (engagement@esbnetworks.ie) and when meeting stakeholders, we encourage them to register their interest on the programme via this channel. The second route is programme management team nomination. When various members of our team are collaborating or require collaboration with different stakeholder groups, we map these companies/individuals to our stakeholder map.

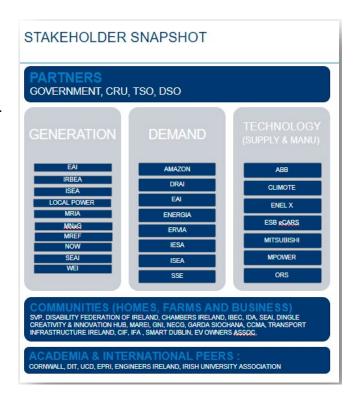
D. Created Ownership/Accountability within Management Team:

Every stakeholder on our map is mapped to a programme management team member who is responsible for keeping them informed, engaged or to collaborate with them. To date (September 2021) we have 186 stakeholders mapped to our Stakeholder Map, which spans across 6 segments – Partners, Generation, Demand, Technology (supply and manufacturing), Communities (homes, farms, and business), and Academia & International Peers.

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4.3 WHAT DO OUR STAKEHOLDERS CURRENTLY THINK?

In Q4 2021, we will review this segmentation, having identified other stakeholders whose voices we want to hear. This includes emerging energy companies, who are currently under-represented in standard industry forums, and other contributors who have been self-nominating onto the list.



STAKEHOLDERS	KEY INSIGHT	WHAT DO THEY WANT FROM ESB NETWORKS NOW?	WHAT DO THEY WANT IN THE FUTURE?
Generation Segment	Industry want clarity on technical requirements. Surveys show 80% of industry want these standards without caveat, plus 11% want them with caveats.	This particular segment is moving at pace and wants the National Network, Local Connections Programme to match their pace. A proposed roadmap. Ability to give non-firm access and focus on 'real world' problems.	To collaborate with ESB Networks in building a robust network where they still have a sustainable business model Want ESB Networks to be less risk adverse and deliver 'sand box' pilots – more and on a bigger scale (like the Dingle project on a bigger scale). Case studies, protocols and process working in a small area before rolling out nationwide.
Demand Segment	Industry want to know that we are going to deliver in partnership and they won't be overlooked. They want to know the areas where flexibility will be needed. They feel that at the moment, there is no real incentive for us to recruit customers.	Roadmaps and assurances. They want to know that 'they' are being considered. Information on Demand Side management. Less talk more action. Show 'me' where I can make money. Information and foresight of e.g. pilots etc. 62% say they will invest, innovate and recruit plus 30% say they expect industry to get investing.	A clear defined understanding of how we can create a sustainable business model and transform at the correct pace.
Emerging Energy Companies	Stakeholders felt that the intent is great, but this needs to happen with greater urgency. The time is right – mid-decade is too late. Stakeholders highlighted how the world is changing and that in the past people asked the builder to put solar panels at the back of the house, now they want them at the front!	Work with innovators. Energy disruptors are not sure that uptake is the issue: Look beyond uptake and at the bigger picture. It's about management. Consultation – more of that, but not death by consultation: it needs to be accelerated. Payment – it is not so much the incentive as the absence that is a barrier.	Information is the biggest barrier – you cannot tell people enough. "They know what's needed" – they need to manage the existing infrastructure in an efficient way. ESB Networks to provide the signals: The reason that we are not in the Irish market is because there is no flexibility market in place to exploit the opportunities!

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STAKEHOLDERS	KEY INSIGHT	WHAT DO THEY WANT FROM ESB NETWORKS NOW?	WHAT DO THEY WANT IN THE FUTURE?
Technology	For participation to be simple and affordable, it is critical that the right technologies are the default technologies for builders, installers, retailers, investors and consumers.	Guidance, assurances and lead time. We need reassurance on the technology and investment. Protocols and processes are needed. It has to be compatible with devices out there.	Standardised formats for how systems will interact.
Customer & Community	Age groups and various demographics differ on elements of this programme but key insight across all is 'Make it easy and affordable for me to be a good citizen' and come to me with simple options don't make me think'.	Simple tangible communications. Financial incentives or some way of making 'doing the right thing' affordable.	Clear and simple propositions. Simple and relevant information in a timely way – 'don't scare us, but don't tell me about something that is 10 years from happening make it real!'

4.4 HOW ARE WE APPLYING THESE STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS?

Table above is a snapshot of sentiment we have extracted from our insight tracker. To date we have logged 180+ insights/queries collated from the wide range of stakeholder engagement we have undertaken. Each insight is mapped to a workstream or proposal in development, assigned an owner from within the management team, and used to inform many aspects of the programme. Stakeholder insights have shaped our high-level programme design, communication roadmap, consultation direction, programme name, our national awareness campaign and our approach in individual proposals including the market and technology plans. In sections 3.5 - 3.9 below, we have outlined how particular insights have shaped the direction of these areas.



4.5 HIGH LEVEL PROGRAMME DESIGN

Industry are looking for more information on the technical aspects of the programme so as they can make more informed decisions and transform themselves in line with the rollout of the programme. As a direct result of these insights, we have been actively including this perspective into our consultation direction.

4.6 COMMUNICATION ROADMAP

The following are direct quotes from one of our focus groups: 'information needs to be accessible', 'communities and people need to understand what it all means'. Conscious of this feedback we established three communication roadmaps as a tool to communicate with stakeholders, we have found this to be a much more accessible way of engaging with stakeholders and supporting them in understanding the various components of this programme. We have been using these communication roadmaps as a structure in all our communications since March 2021 to September 2021.

Roadmap 1: Access & Awareness: how will we work towards creating an active energy system.

Roadmap 2: Technology: how will we optimise the system for renewable, customer and community participation.

Roadmap 1: Market Design: how will we bring flexibility to the system by re-imaging market arrangements.

4.7 CONSULTATIONS DIRECTION

Industry, Customer and Community feedback has been similar in relation to delivering on this programme and the level of input stakeholders would like to have. To illustrate, here are some direct quotes from focus group participants: 'communities and people need to be very involved in this', 'We are open for consultation, but ESB Networks needs to lead this'.

The project has certain deliverables for 2021 and overlaying this with our stakeholder interest we have identified the key items on which we are actively seeking engagement, and which align with our stakeholders' areas of interest:

- 1 2030 Power System Requirement
- 2 Local Network Visibility Plan
- 3 Consultation Framework
- 4 Piloting
- 5 Data, Control & Signals Guidance

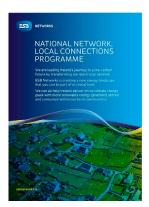
- 6 Data Platforms & Dashboards Roadmap
- 7 Operational Systems Roadmap
- 8 Phased Flexibility Market Development Plan
- 9 Flexibility Multiyear Plan
- 10 First Call to Tender
- 11 Residential Roadmap

4.8 PROGRAMME NAME:

Active System Management was not resonating with stakeholders: it was confusing and people's natural inclination was this was a technology project. We went through a body of work to establish a name which would have scalability as the programme evolves and could accurately represent what the programme is to deliver. Appreciating that no name is going to accurately describe the breath and depth of the project, we established a short list of 8 names, created a straw poll to represent the national demographic, conducted research (as part of the ongoing focus groups we had in field), conducted an internal survey and also looked to our brand agency to give their recommendation on which name would lend itself to communicating to the wide audience over the lifespan of the programme. The output was **National Network, Local Connections Programme.**

4.9 NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN:

Through all the research and stakeholder insights we have collated so far, the big questions people have are: what is this programme about?, how is it going to support Ireland's Climate Action Targets?, how will it transform?, what does this mean for me? and how do I learn more or get involved? The campaign we will launch in Q4/2021 will address these top line questions, our targeting in the communication will be directed to industry and business stakeholders predominately with a trickle-down affect for all other stakeholder segments.







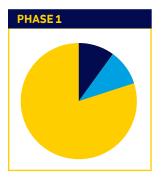


The Challenge: How do we engage in a timely, meaningful, and relevant way to ensure that we bring all stakeholders on this journey with us?

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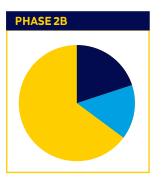
As the programme evolves and matures, so will our key stakeholder groups. The way we engage, communicate, build awareness, and educate will all adapt over time. But for the moment, we have mapped to three target audiences and to three levels of communication, consultation, and engagement.

TARGET AUDIENCES	COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT (WHAT SHOULD STAKEHOLDERS EXPECT?)
Stakeholders on our Stakeholder List – these people are here because the want to be, they need to be, or they must be.	Active communication, actively encouraged and invited to participate in consultations and actively engaged with.
Targeted stakeholders to support this period of programme development.	Active target insights via research mix and their insights inform communication, actively encouraged, and invited to participate in consultations and we actively engage with them.
Everybody else - people who are unaware of the programme because it is not relevantyet nor is it necessary for them to understand the programmeyet!	General awareness with opportunity to learn more by joining our stakeholder list.



5







STAKEHOLDERS

TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

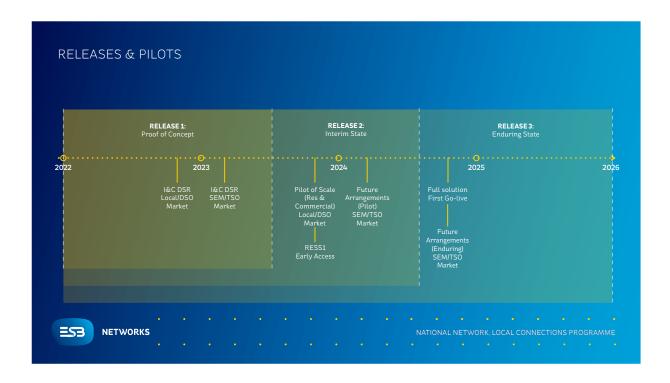
EVERYBODY ELSE

The Challenge: How do we ensure that we are moving at a pace and delivering at a scale that is in line with industry and customer expectation and need?

6 THE CHALLENGE: HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT WE ARE MOVING AT A PACE AND DELIVERING AT A SCALE THAT IS IN LINE WITH INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATION AND NEED?

6.1 PACE AND SCALE

We have looked to our stakeholders to evaluate the pace and scale to which we are proposing to deliver on this Programme, effectively asking them do they think are we going too fast, too slow, are we being too ambitions or are we lacking ambition? The proposed delivery of this Programme has been set up to deliver in line with 2030 Climate Action Plan Targets, to be considerate of the changes that industry will be required to make to transform, and to consider customers and how ready they will be for the transformation.

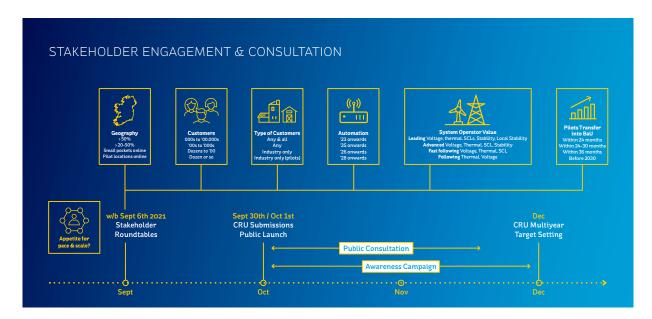


6 THE CHALLENGE: HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT WE ARE MOVING AT A PACE AND DELIVERING AT A SCALE THAT IS IN LINE WITH INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATION AND NEED?

How are we consulting with our stakeholders on 'Pace and Scale'?

We have built in this question into our stakeholder and engagement approach so we can establish the appetite for pace and scale. The schedule of this activity is as outlined in the image below.

As this document has been created pre our initial stakeholder round table session, we don't currently have any direct insights to share. We are very interested in stakeholders' feedback on this issue and for the stakeholder round tables due to commence in September, we have commissioned a third party communications company to be the stakeholder advocate at the meeting. This will ensure that stakeholder insight in this area is captured and our stakeholders fully understand the consequences of delivering the programme to the ambitious timeline we have set out in the 'pilots and scale' image in the above section 5.1 and the impact on the climate, customers and industry if we increase or decrease pace and scale.



Towards 2025 Enabling the delivery of the National Network, Local Connections Programme

7 TOWARDS 2025 - ENABLING THE DELIVERY OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME

To ensure that we have a robust Consultation Framework which will serve as a tool to advocate for stakeholders, will support project delivery, and adoption of propositions from all stakeholders, we will get our organisation, industry, customers, and communities ready for the change that the National Network, Local Connections Programme will bring into their homes, farms, businesses, communities, and industries. We have learned from our engagement from stakeholders in the initial phase of the programme and are using these insights to inform our next steps.

Key insights:

- 1 It's not just about consultation it's about insight driven communications in advance of engagement and then followed by relevant consultation.
- 2 It's about continuing to monitor, engage and listen to our stakeholders.
- 3 It's about journey mapping on behalf of our stakeholders across every segment to ensure we really understand their perspective.
- 4 It's about putting the stakeholder in the centre of our programme management meetings and having a resource to advocate for them.
- 5 It's about thinking 'what is best for stakeholders' not what is the path of least resistance for the programme.
- 6 Listen! If there has been one lesson we have really learned so far on this programme it is that we need to listen to understand, and how powerful this can be in supporting the rollout of the National Network, Local Connections Programme.

7.1 WE WILL HAVE INSIGHT DRIVEN COMMUNICATION & CONSULTATIONS

We plan to continue to learn, improve and test our communications and consultation approaches over the course of the programme. In the change and engagement workstream, we have resourced an 'insights' block of work to span across the lifecyle of the programme. The output of this work will be a continuous stream of stakeholder driven insights from capturing qualitative and quantitative research from workshops, thought leadership presentations, inbound queries, focus groups, surveys, website traffic, pilots and all stakeholder touchpoints associated with the programme.

These insights will inform the direction of our communication materials at a macro level; in building awareness with the public and, at a micro level, in shaping our targeted communications to stakeholders associated with pilots or certain initiatives. Insights will also support the programme management team in understanding which consultations they should prioritise as they design and deliver on the programme, and to understand and address stakeholder queries in advance of crafting consultation documents.

7 TOWARDS 2025 - ENABLING THE DELIVERY OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME

7.2 WE WILL SUPPORT PILOTS - FOR US TO LEARN AND TO SHARE THE LESSONS LEARNED WITH STAKEHOLDERS.

This programme has 3 releases and 5 pilots. The communications and consultation plan will follow the stakeholder insight driven approach so we are communicating and engaging in a timely and relevant way. Process and systems changes surrounding these pilots will vary from pilot to pilot and will be dependent on many factors: the procurement process and where the pilots will be deployed, types of stakeholders recruited, types of customer(s) in pilot, what stakeholders from across all segments would like to understand from the pilot, and how we are building on the lessons learned from preceding pilots.

7.3 WE WILL SUPPORT INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS & COMMUNITIES

As the programme matures and as our organisation and industry develops, propositions to support the National Network, Local Connections Programme will consider how we will partner with other organisations to maximise reach, penetration and adoption within customers and communities. This will be in collaboration with industry. Decision points, en route to communication and engagement with end customers, will need to be proposed, consulted on and agreed with key stakeholders and decision makers.

7.4 WE WILL MAKE IT REAL FOR INDUSTRY, CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITIES

As the programme delivers on release 1, it would be timely to bring the lessons learned into a tangible format to make it real for industry so they can benefit from the pilot studies. Similarly post release 3, it would be timely to work with industry to deliver a tangible roadshow to deliver an engaging customer/community experience.

TOWARDS 2025 - ENABLING THE DELIVERY OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ongoing at relevant intervals to 2025

GENERAL AWARENESS & EDUCATION



PUBLICATIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO NOTIFY AND COLLOBORATE WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

RELEASE 1 2022- 2023

PILOT 1: I&C DSR LOCAL/DSO MARKET

Identify Stakeholders, develop and implement relevant communication and engagment plan to support all phases of this pilot.

PILOT 2: I&C DSR SEM/TSO MARKET

Identify Stakeholders, develop and implement relevant communication and engagment plan to support all phases of this pilot. Take lessons learned and communicate back to wider stakeholder group.

INDUSTRY

- Make it Real

Tangible output from pilots that we develop to make it real for industry.

RELEASE 2 2024

PILOT 3: PILOT OF SCALE & RESS-1

Identify Stakeholders, develop and implement relevant communication and engagment plan to support all phases of this pilot.

PILOT 4: FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS (PILOT) SEM/TSO MARKET

Identify Stakeholders, develop and implement relevant communication and engagment plan to support all phases of this.

RELEASE 3 2025

PILOT 5: FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS (PILOT) SEM/TSO MARKET

Identify Stakeholders, develop and implement relevant communication and engagment plan to support all phases of this pilot.

CUSTOMER COMMUNITY

- Make it Real

Tangible output from pilots that we develop (in partnership with industry.





STAKEHOLDER RESEARCH



Consultation Framework

CLOSING STATEMENT

Thank you for taking time to review our proposed Consultation Framework for the National Network, Local Connections Programme. We hope that with your feedback we will have a robust Consultation Framework to ensure that we build an inclusive Network to support the energy requirements of the people of Ireland.