



## Elia Group's incubator sparks digital innovation

The Nest, Elia Group's incubator, is encouraging staff to become digital innovators. The incubator enables the rapid development, prototyping and testing of the most cutting-edge digital ideas from staff within a sandbox environment. Employees at all levels and across all departments of our Group in Belgium and Germany can apply to join The Nest and then spend three days a week over three months developing their ideas with support from a team of technical experts. Eleven ideas have undergone the incubation process so far, helping to drive digital innovation at all levels of the organisation and supporting us to become a fully digital TSO.

The rapid emergence of new digital technologies is generating numerous innovative ways of managing the energy sector's growing complexity. With this in mind, we at Elia Group have two key objectives: transforming into a fully digital TSO in order to deliver even greater quality and efficiency through our core business and internal processes; and building new data-driven business models to ensure we continue to grow and remain relevant. The Nest, our very own internal incubator, allows us to address both of these objectives simultaneously.



*The Nest is a key component of Elia Group's innovation and digital transformation strategy. It acts as a hub for innovation services, offering incubation, innovation design and open innovation services to employees across the organisation. Through its incubation services, The Nest serves as an enabler by providing agile coaching and technical expertise, office space, and tools and methodologies to help employees transform their ideas into prototypes in a very short time frame. The Nest also helps our employees to discover and adopt an agile mindset, which is key for securing our future growth.*



**Michael von Roeder, Chief Digital Officer at Elia Group**

All ideas taken on by The Nest's core team need to provide business value, focusing on areas such as process optimisation, the enhancement of existing solutions and the solving of problems along the value chain: ideas are selected based on six key criteria, in line with our strategy. Over the course of three months, staff dedicate three days a week to working on their project with support from in-house technical experts and coaches. Additional services offered by The Nest to staff across the rest of the organisation range from the provision of support with innovation design – which involves the organisation of discovery, user research and design sprints for our business units – through to the provision of open innovation services, such as start-up scouting and co-creation with external partners around specific action fields. The Nest is therefore driving digital innovation at all levels and across all departments of the Group, supporting innovation and digitalisation across both our internal and external activities.



**For further information**

**Jean Fassiaux** (FR) | M +32 474 46 87 82 | [jean.fassiaux@elia.be](mailto:jean.fassiaux@elia.be)

**Marie-Laure Vanwanseele** (NDL) | M +32 499 86 51 58 | [marielaure.vanwanseele@elia.be](mailto:marielaure.vanwanseele@elia.be)

**Marleen Vanhecke** (ENG) | M +32 486 49 01 09 | [marleen.vanhecke@elia.be](mailto:marleen.vanhecke@elia.be)

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The energy sector is in full transition. Technology and innovation will play a crucial role in decarbonising the system. That's why it's important that we, as a company, create a free space where people can focus on innovative ideas.”

**Chris Peeters, CEO Elia Group**

Since its launch in September last year, The Nest has already enjoyed great success: 11 ideas have undergone the incubation process so far, led by teams focused on, amongst other things, financial controlling, system operation, and asset management. One of the current projects, Advanced Analytics for Topology Optimisation (AATO), combines artificial intelligence with user-centric development to support system engineers with topology optimisation. This should help engineers make faster and better decisions.

Since the energy sector is undergoing drastic and fast-paced changes, The Nest is key to ensuring that we embrace all of the advantages digitalisation has to offer, so that we can continue to champion and advance the decarbonisation of society.

## About Elia Group

### One of Europe's top five players

Elia Group is active in electricity transmission. We ensure that production and consumption are balanced around the clock, supplying 30 million end users with electricity. With subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and north-east of Germany (50Hertz), we operate 19,271 km of high-voltage connections. As such, our group is one of Europe's top 5. With a reliability level of 99.999%, we give society a robust power grid, which is important for socio-economic prosperity. We also aspire to be a catalyst for a successful energy transition towards a reliable, sustainable and affordable energy system.

### We make the energy transition happen

By expanding international high-voltage connections and integrating ever-increasing amounts of renewable energy production, Elia Group promotes both the integration of the European energy market and the decarbonisation of our society. Elia Group is also innovating its operational systems and developing market products so that new technologies and market parties can access our grid, thus making the energy transition happen.

### In the interest of society

As a key player in the energy system, Elia Group is committed to working in the interest of society. We respond to the rapidly changing energy mix, i.e. the increase in renewable energy, and constantly adapt our transmission grid. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget, with a maximum focus on safety. When we carry out our projects, we manage stakeholders proactively by establishing two-way communication with all affected parties very early on in the development process. We also offer our expertise to our sector and relevant authorities to build the energy system of the future.

### International focus

In addition to its activities as a transmission system operator, Elia Group provides various consulting services to international customers through its subsidiary Elia Grid International (EGI). Elia is also part of the Nemo Link consortium that operates the first sub-sea electrical interconnector between Belgium and the UK.

The Group is a listed company whose core shareholder is the municipal holding company Publi-T.

More information: [eliagroup.eu](http://eliagroup.eu)

### Contact

#### Corporate Communication

Jean Fassiaux (FR) | M +32 474 46 87 82 | [jean.fassiaux@elia.be](mailto:jean.fassiaux@elia.be)

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Elia Transmission Belgium SA/NV

