

IJGlobal ESG Project Sponsor Award – Gridserve

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19/10/2023

Gridserve Sustainable Energy – a “clearly innovative” organisation, according to one of the judges – has won the IJGlobal ESG Project Sponsor Award for 2023.

IJGlobal’s independent panel of judges was impressed by the performance of the UK-based electric vehicle charging company... though one did mention that it could improve diversity on the senior management of the board.

That aside, Gridserve was lauded by the panel with one saying: “It is impressive as it clearly has a genuine focus on each aspect of the E, S and G – and is not just paying lip service.”

Another added: “Gridserve stands out as it is the first UK EV charging infra company to establish and certify a Green Finance Framework, its ESG policies inform targeted GHG reduction, biodiversity conservation and waste management initiatives, sustainable procurement decisions, and key certifications – including being the first sustainable energy company, globally, to obtain ISO 14064 accreditation with Achilles in 2023.”



Yet another judge added: “Good work. Beyond being a sustainable energy business by nature, particularly having the site biodiversity net gain policy and implementation.”

And this was rounded off with a final comment: “It was particularly impressive to read about Gridserve’s 5-stage waste hierarchy, as circularity is not currently given much airtime – but it is just as essential to decarbonisation as renewable energy generation.”

Gridserve genius

In its submission, Gridserve points out that while it is a sustainable energy business, that does not define it as its stated purpose is to go further “to deliver sustainable energy and move the needle on climate change”.

The submission states: “Therefore, we are not just working in an environmental field, we want to live and breathe all things ESG and weave this into the fabric of what we do, as well as to influence positively our supply chain to adopt these standards and to constantly measure, audit and review our policies and procedures in order to improve on what we do.

“In this way we want to minimise our environmental footprint and leave the planet better than we found it.

“Gridserve is committed to carbon reduction certification as a means of achieving its aspirational goal of net zero by 2030 and to meet its compliance and legal obligations. Our brand purpose ‘to move the needle’ is about standing up and saying no to 2 degrees. This is evidenced by our ‘world’s first’ innovations.”

These first mover innovations are:

- Electric Forecourts – together with its open-access Electric Highway, charge hundreds of thousands of EVs and helps take petrol and diesel cars off the road
- first EV charging company in the UK to have been accredited or certified with several of these ESG-relevant ISO standards, which makes it a pioneer for this young and growing industry
- first EV charging company in the UK to have a certified Green Finance Framework with which to issue green loans and bonds

Gridserve worked with external auditor Achilles for ISO 14064 (carbon reduction) and was the first sustainable energy company globally to obtain this accreditation with Achilles, in January 2023.

Boosting its ESG credentials, Gridserve works with its supply chain where ESG risks and policies are included in our procurement decisions.

According to the submission: “Suppliers sign a declaration that references environmental factors, such as emissions reductions, resource use, and the use of conflict materials; social factors, such as modern slavery, child labour, human trafficking and respect for human rights; and governance, in terms of respecting their employees’ rights to form and join trade unions of their own choosing, to bargain collectively and to engage in peaceful assembly as well as respect the right of workers to refrain from such activities”

The implementation of Gridserve’s biodiversity policy is led by a dedicated biodiversity and nature sanctuary manager who sets a programme for each site it works on.

The submission states: “Gridserve sets its standards to the best available techniques and strives to learn from each construction project to ensure improvement in the performance of future developments.

“Gridserve has site specific plans and monitoring to ensure that at least 70% (by weight) of the non-hazardous construction and demolition waste generated on the construction site is prepared for reuse, recycling and other material recovery, including backfilling operations.”

The positive impacts of Gridserve’s policies start at the very basis of its operations and on its solar farms, 13,000 tonnes of carbon have been saved.

The submission states: “With every EV we lease, 100 trees are planted on the drivers’ behalf. Over 46,000 trees have been planted which helps to combat global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide, removing and storing carbon while releasing oxygen back into the air.

“Gridserve has delivered 2 million charging sessions since 2021, and are now powering 10 million miles every month. At our most recent Electric Forecourt project around 85% (by weight) of construction and demolition waste was prepared for reuse, recycling and other material recovery.

“Our Electric Forecourt sites have the latest innovations in green infrastructure, such as green walls, and the landscaping is designed to maximise biodiversity gain through the use of native species and pollinator-friendly planting.

“Where it proves impossible to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain on site, we work with local conservation communities to identify sites and projects where we can offset any shortfall in biodiversity net gain.

“Through the conversion of low-grade arable farmland to permanent grassland, Gridserve’s solar farms represent a significant increase in carbon storage, with an additional 6,000 tonnes of carbon stored (i.e. an increase to the amount of carbon already stored by the site).”

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