Press Release

Maia, 20 May 2024

Sonae Campus opens its doors to scientific-technological, academic, and business communities to test sustainable solutions

- **Sonae Campus has become a living laboratory for innovation in sustainability, within the scope of the European project PROBONO, and is now open to the community.**
- **The Group is accepting applications to test and evaluate innovative sustainability solutions in a real-world environment until June 11th.**

Sonae Campus, the business park where the headquarters of the Sonae Group is located, will open its doors to scientific-technological communities, universities, startups, and all companies interested in testing and evaluating their innovative sustainability solutions in a real-world environment. This initiative, called the Social Innovation and Open Community Lab, arises within the scope of the European project PROBONO and integrates the Porto Living Lab, whose mission is to implement integrated solutions for biodiversity and energy, efficient and sustainable, to promote and facilitate the energy transition and decarbonization of companies and countries.

The Social Innovation and Open Community Lab initiative focuses on enabling the testing of new solutions in sustainability topics focused on energy, biodiversity, and circularity, benefiting from the buildings, infrastructure, and sustainable solutions of Sonae Campus. Interested parties can submit their applications online until June 11th, 2024, with the possibility of participating in an Open Day on June 4th to discover all the facilities. Each project is expected to have a maximum duration of 6 months, as the purpose of this initiative is to test and evaluate new solutions with a high level of maturity, rather than their development.

João Günther Amaral, Executive Board Member of Sonae, states that "Portugal needs to create a strong innovation ecosystem in the sustainability area. Therefore, we are committed to collaborating with universities, research centres, startups, and companies to bring their projects to light, providing them with the opportunity to test their solutions in a real-world environment at Sonae Campus Living Lab. This joint work is essential to address the sustainability challenges of the current world and to protect the planet, people, and the community. At the same time, it allows us to fulfil our mission of bringing the benefits of progress and innovation to an increasing number of people."

The jury that will evaluate the applications is divided into three areas: Sustainable Energy, with Raul Bonito (R&D and Innovation Energy Solutions Manager at Capwatt) and Joana Vasconcelos

Sonae exists to create a lasting positive impact on businesses, people, communities and on the planet. Managing a diverse portfolio of businesses in retail, financial services, technology, investments, shopping centres and telecommunications, we make the most of our expertise and push ourselves to create the future we all want and need. Creating today a better tomorrow, for all.
Find out more at www.sonae.pt

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(R&D and Innovation Renewable Fuels at Capwatt); Environment and Biodiversity, with Sónia Cardoso (Head of Sustainability at Sonae SGPS) and Marco Aurélio Nunes (Director, Investment Management at Sierra); and Circular Economy, with Marlos Silva (R&D + I Director and Area Leader Digital & Innovation at MC) and Tiago Oliveira (Senior Project Manager at Sonae SGPS).

Sonae Campus integrates buildings that are a reference in terms of sustainable construction and eco-efficiency, such as the Sonae Maia Business Center and the Sonae Tech Hub, which is among the top 100 buildings in the world with the highest score by the United States Green Building Council under the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.

Various sustainability promotion projects are implemented at Sonae Campus, including photovoltaic energy production for self-consumption and for sale to the grid, creating a renewable energy community, electric mobility solutions, promoting biodiversity in green spaces with the creation of urban gardens, beekeeping projects, green walls, bird nesting boxes, reduction of meadow cutting, and ponds that, in addition to biodiversity, promote water retention.

European project involves 15 countries

The PROBONO project brings together 47 partners from 15 countries, with entities from the Sonae companies' universe in Portugal, namely MC, Elergone, Paracentro, and Capwatt. The ambition is to provide validated solutions for the design, construction, and operation of both new and adapted buildings, with reduced emissions and positive energy, contributing to more sustainable communities.

In addition to the Sonae Campus Living Lab in Maia (Portugal), the project includes the establishment of living laboratories in Madrid (Spain), Dublin (Ireland), Brussels (Belgium), Aarhus (Denmark), and Prague (Czech Republic), totalling 6 European countries.

PROBONO was one of the three selected among the 115 proposals submitted to the Horizon 2020 Framework Program LC-GD-4-1-2020: "Building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way." The total budget amounts to €25,020,040.89 for the period 2021-2026.

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