

A large-scale photograph of an offshore wind farm in the North Sea. In the foreground, a large white wind turbine with three blades is prominent, its tower and nacelle clearly visible. The base of the tower is painted yellow and has the letters 'HY11' on it. In the background, several other wind turbines are scattered across the horizon, and a small offshore platform is visible in the distance. The sky is a pale blue, and the water is a deep blue. The text 'Announcement of a competition for offshore wind project areas in Utsira Nord' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

# Announcement of a competition for offshore wind project areas in Utsira Nord



Norwegian Ministry of Energy



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Ministry of Energy (the Ministry) hereby announces a competition for project areas for offshore renewable energy production in Utsira Nord, in accordance with Act No. 6 of 21 April 2021 on offshore renewable energy production (the Offshore Energy Act).
- 1.2. The competition for project areas is conducted in accordance with Section 2-3 of the Offshore Energy Act and Chapter 2A of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation. The winners of the competition (hereinafter referred to as the rights holders) will be awarded a project area with a time-limited exclusive right to carry out a project-specific impact assessment and to apply for a license pursuant to Section 3-1 of the Offshore Energy Act for production facilities, cf. Section 2-3 (4) of the Offshore Energy Act. The announcement and award of project areas is carried out in accordance with the rules in the Offshore Energy Act and the Offshore Energy Act Regulation. The provisions of the Public Administration Act shall otherwise apply. The Public Procurement Act does not apply to the competition.
- 1.3. By Royal Decree of 12 June 2020, the area Utsira Nord was opened for offshore renewable energy production. Four specific conditions were set for Utsira Nord:
  - a) *No licence shall be granted for wind farms within the Norwegian Armed Forces' firing range END253, unless the Ministry of Defence agrees that a licence may be granted.*
  - b) *No licence shall be granted which could adversely impact maritime safety, and emphasis shall be placed on the Norwegian Coastal Administration's assessments.*
  - c) *In the case of activities in particularly valuable and vulnerable areas (SVO areas), conditions aimed at avoiding damage to the particularly valuable and vulnerable environmental values must be anticipated.*
  - d) *Licence(s) for the development of up to a maximum of 1,500 MW may be granted.*

The Ministry of Defence has agreed that licences may be granted for wind farms within the area that overlap with the Armed Forces' firing range END253, cf. letter a). The proposed separation into project areas has been clarified with the Norwegian Coastal Administration; cf. letter b).

- 1.4. The area constituting Utsira Nord is delimited by the following coordinates:

04° 16' 09'' E, 59° 26' 53'' N  
04° 40' 25'' E, 59° 28' 56'' N  
04° 24' 27'' E, 59° 04' 10'' N  
04° 48' 44'' E, 59° 06' 18'' N

The coordinates are given with geodetic datum WGS 84.

## 2. Determination of project areas

- 2.1. The Ministry hereby establishes the following three project areas in the Utsira Nord area, cf. Section 2a of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation:



# Utsira Nord

Project area  
Opened area

0 2,5 5 10 Kilometers

Figure 1 Illustration of the project areas in Utsira Nord.



Project area 1 is delimited by the following coordinates:

04° 17' 01,00'' E, 59° 26' 56,03'' N  
04° 33' 18,83'' E, 59° 28' 19,39'' N  
04° 35' 40,28'' E, 59° 22' 30,39'' N  
04° 18' 16,41'' E, 59° 21' 03,84'' N  
04° 17' 07,53'' E, 59° 24' 12,80'' N

Project area 2 is delimited by the following coordinates:

04° 19' 15,04'' E, 59° 18' 23,38'' N  
04° 36' 46,87'' E, 59° 19' 51,31'' N  
04° 39' 16,73'' E, 59° 13' 47,90'' N  
04° 21' 07,22'' E, 59° 13' 16,63'' N

Project area 3 is delimited by the following coordinates:

04° 24' 15,09'' E, 59° 04' 42,20'' N  
04° 22' 14,17'' E, 59° 10' 13,26'' N  
04° 40' 20,59'' E, 59° 11' 08,22'' N  
04° 42' 32,21'' E, 59° 05' 45,34'' N

The geodetic datum is WGS 84, and the areas are delimited by geodetic lines between the vertices.

- 2.2. Shipping will be able to use the buffer zones between the project areas.
- 2.3. The installed capacity in each project area cannot exceed 500 MW.
- 2.4. The capacity density for the development in the project area shall be at least 3.5 MW/km<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.5. The Ministry reserves the right at any time to adjust the project area within the opened area if this is necessary to develop the project or out of consideration for other affected interests. Any potential adjustments after a project area has been awarded will be made in consultation with the developer.

### **3. Competition for the award of project areas**

- 3.1. The award of project areas will be conducted through a qualitative competition based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria, cf. Section 2-3 of the Offshore Energy Act. The Ministry has therefore established qualitative criteria. The criteria are set out in Appendix 3.
- 3.2. Section 2-3, third paragraph, of the Offshore Energy Act specifies that applicants must document that they have satisfactory technical competence, financial strength, and comply with relevant requirements for health, environment, and safety, and that the



Ministry may also set other objective and non-discriminatory conditions. The Ministry has therefore established qualification requirements that applicants must meet in order to be awarded project areas. The qualification requirements are set out in Appendix 3.

- 3.3. After the application deadline, the Ministry will assess whether the applicants meet the qualification requirements. Applicants who meet the requirements will be ranked according to the qualitative criteria.
- 3.4. The three applicants who receive the highest overall score in the qualitative competition will each be awarded a project area. The applicant with the highest score will be awarded their preferred project area, the applicant with the second highest score will be awarded their preferred project area among the remaining two project areas, and the applicant with the third highest score will be awarded the last project area.
- 3.5. The three applicants who receive the highest overall score in the competition shall, as soon as possible, and no later than four weeks after being notified by the Ministry that they are to be awarded a project area, establish a separate enterprise under Section 3-5 of the Offshore Energy Act (if the applicant is not or has not formed a separate enterprise at the time of application) which will be awarded each project area. If the above is not carried out within the deadline, the right to be awarded a project area shall lapse.
- 3.6. Within six weeks after the decision to award the project area, the rights holder shall submit a notification with a proposal for a project-specific assessment program, cf. Section 2d of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation. The proposal for the assessment program shall, in addition to the requirements in Section 4 of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation, build on the proposed measures in the application related to the requirements and criteria, as described in more detail in Appendix 3.
- 3.7. The project shall be further developed and matured within the framework of, and in accordance with, the description given in the application, which forms the basis for the award of the project area. Changes compared to the description given in the application shall be substantiated, for example in order to achieve cost reductions, improvements or more efficient project implementation, or to safeguard social or environmental considerations. All changes shall be qualitatively equivalent or better than the description given in the application which forms the basis for award of the project area. The licence application shall document that any changes are qualitatively equivalent or better.
- 3.8. The requirements regarding further development and amendments to the preceding paragraph 3.7 apply irrespective of any transfer of ownership interests. When assessing applications for consent to transfers pursuant to Section 2d of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation, the Ministry will place great emphasis on the fact that the project area is awarded through a competition, including on the basis of the applicant's experience, technical expertise and financial strength. Until the energy facility has





been constructed and commissioned, consent from the Ministry to transfers which, in the Ministry's view, would impair the execution capability cannot be expected. The Ministry may also impose conditions for consent to transfers pursuant to Section 2d of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation.

- 3.9. Licence applications shall be submitted in accordance with Section 7 of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation.
- 3.10. Upon the granting of a license, the right to the project area under Section 2-3 of the Offshore Energy Act lapses for any parts of the project area not covered by the license decision.

#### **4. Competition for state aid**

- 4.1. The Norwegian Parliament has authorized the Ministry of Energy to enter into commitments regarding state aid for floating offshore wind in Vestavind F and Vestavind B, but such that the total state commitments do not exceed a cost framework of NOK 35 billion (2025 kroner), cf. decision 385 of 19 December 2024.<sup>1</sup>
- 4.2. Rights holders who have been awarded project areas and who have further developed and matured these in accordance with paragraph 3.7 will get the right to compete for state aid if they have:
  - a) submitted a license application that meets all requirements in or pursuant to the Energy Act and the Offshore Energy Act, and
  - b) signed a confirmation of an obligation to pay liquidated damages and provided a bank guarantee in favor of the state.

The guarantee in point b) above shall provide security for the fulfillment of the liquidated damages that fall due if the winner of the competition for state aid does not enter into the investment support agreement with the state, cf. paragraph 4.4. The guarantee and signed confirmation of obligation to pay liquidated damages shall be provided at least 14 days before the competition for state aid is conducted.

A template for the guarantee and a template for the obligation to pay liquidated damages will be published well in advance of the competition for state aid.

- 4.3. The competition for state aid will be held if at least two applicants have met the requirements in points a and b of paragraph 4.2. According to Section 7 of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation, the rights holder has two years to submit a license application with a project-specific impact assessment. The Ministry intends to conduct the support competition as soon as possible after this. The time for the competition will be announced at least two months in advance.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Governments proposal in [Prop. 1 S \(2024–2025\)](#) and the Norwegian Parliament resolution [Statsbudsjettet 2025](#) pp. 96.



- 4.4. The support competition will be conducted so that one rights holder receives state aid. The winner of the competition will be the participant who bids the lowest to realize their project (in support/MW). It will not be possible to bid higher than the upper limit for state aid as per the Norwegian Parliaments decision on the cost framework. The support competition will be conducted as an auction with sealed bids where bidders can only submit one final bid.

Detailed rules for the competition will be published well in advance of the competition for state aid. For further information on the support mechanism, etc., see Appendices 9 and 10.

- 4.5. The winner of the competition for state aid shall, as soon as possible, and no later than four weeks after the conclusion of the competition:
- a) Enter a contract with the state based on Appendix 9 Draft Investment Support Agreement. The contract is determined by the Ministry, and will not be subject to negotiation.
  - b) Provide a guarantee for the fulfillment of the agreement as specified in the contract.
- 4.6. The winner of the competition for state aid shall establish, operate, and own an energy facility with an installed capacity as close to 500 MW as possible given the chosen turbine size, limited to a maximum of 500 MW.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.7. Rights holders who do not receive state aid may apply for extension of the exclusive right to the project area, cf. Section 11 of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation.

## **5. Application for the awarding of project areas**

- 5.1. In order to assess any application for the award of a project area, the Ministry will require information about the project and the applicant.
- 5.2. Several companies wishing to develop a project together (hereinafter referred to as a consortium) shall submit one joint application. The consortium members are collectively regarded as a single applicant. The consortium members may collectively fulfill the requirements and criteria, unless specified otherwise.
- 5.3. The application shall contain:
- A) Signed application letter
  - B) Additional information about the applicant
  - C) Copy of articles of association, partnership agreement or binding cooperation agreement
  - D) Documentation of fulfillment of the qualification requirements

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<sup>2</sup> E.g.: If the selected turbine size is 15 MW, the total installed capacity shall be 495 MW, and if the selected turbine size is 18 MW, the installed capacity shall be 486 MW.





- E) Documentation of response to the qualitative criteria
- F) Support letter from associated party contributing to the fulfillment of the qualification requirements and qualitative criteria.

Requirements for the application are described in more detail below.

#### **A) Signed application letter**

The applicant shall submit an application letter signed by the person(s) authorized to represent the company. If the application is signed by someone other than the person(s) with signature rights on behalf of the company, the power of attorney shall be provided. For consortia, the application shall be signed by all consortium members.

Applications for project areas in Utsira Nord apply to all project areas. Applicants are requested to rank the project areas from the most preferred to the least preferred. The ranking shall be done in the application letter.

A template for the application letter is provided in Appendix 1.

#### **B) Additional information about the applicant**

The applicant shall provide the following information:

- a) Full name of the applicant company, address and organisation number.
- b) Documentation confirming that the applicant has been legally established in the form of a certificate of incorporation from the Register of Business Enterprises (Norwegian companies) or equivalent documentation confirming that the applicant is registered in the Register of Business Enterprises, professional register or trade register in the state in which the enterprise is established (foreign companies).
- c) An overview of the applicant's group structure. The overview shall contain the full name, address, organisation number and ownership interest of all group companies, as well as a chart showing the company structure.
- d) Information about the applicant's beneficial owners in accordance with Section 14 of the Money Laundering Act.
- e) Information on where the companies specified in points i) and iii) are registered, the companies' head offices, as well as the composition of the board along with a statement of the board members' domicile and nationality, and who is responsible for the general management of the companies.

For consortia, the information specified above shall be provided for all consortium members. It shall be clearly stated what share each consortium member has.

#### **C) Copy of articles of association, partnership agreement or binding cooperation agreement**

The applicant shall submit articles of association or a binding partnership agreement. The applicant shall also submit any shareholder agreement, if available. If there is no shareholder agreement, this shall be stated.



For consortia, a binding agreement on cooperation between the consortium members shall be provided, including relevant cooperation, partnership, and/or shareholder agreements with appendices.

In addition, a summary of the content of the enclosed agreement(s) shall be provided, with on a maximum of two pages (per agreement). The summary shall describe the key elements of the agreement(s), including decision-making processes and voting rules, roles, ownership, financial liability, transfer limitations, cancellation and termination, etc. The summary shall contain clear references to the relevant provisions of the agreement(s).

**D) Documentation of fulfillment of the qualification requirements**

The applicant shall provide the requested documentation for fulfillment of the qualification requirements in the application. The documentation requirements and how the requirements will be assessed are described in Appendix 3.

The application with appendices shall be structured and labeled in accordance with the requirements in Appendix 8.

**E) Documentation of response to the qualitative criteria**

The applicant must provide the requested documentation for the response to the qualitative criteria in the application. The documentation requirements and how the criteria will be assessed are described in Appendix 3.

The application with appendices shall be structured and labeled in accordance with the layout in Appendix 8.

**F) Letter of support from associated party contributing to the fulfillment of qualification requirements and qualitative criteria**

If the applicant's fulfillment of one or more of the qualification requirements or qualitative criteria is based on support from an associated party, the applicant shall provide a support letter signed by the associated party.

If the applicant relies on support from multiple companies, support letters shall be provided by all companies.

The support letter shall be set out as specified in Appendices 5a and 5b. The letter shall specify which requirement(s) and criteria (including sub-criteria) the support applies to.

Which qualification requirements and qualitative criteria the applicant is permitted to rely on an associated party to fulfill are described in Appendix 3.

5.4. The application for the award of areas must be submitted by:

**15th September 2025 at 12.00pm**

- 5.5. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be assessed.
- 5.6. Multiple applications from the same applicant or consortium will not be accepted.
- 5.7. After expiry of the application deadline, it will not be possible to make changes to the application, except for clarifications following the Ministry's request for clarification of the application, cf. paragraph 5.13.
- 5.8. No changes may be made within the applicant or consortium members after the application deadline for awarding of project areas until the project areas are awarded. Changes in ownership following the award of project areas are regulated by Section 2d of the Offshore Energy Act Regulation, cf. also paragraph 3.8 above.
- 5.9. The Ministry must be notified immediately of any changes to the information in paragraph 5.3 letters B and C up until the award date. The Ministry may independently request additional documentation.

The Ministry must also be notified immediately of any significant changes in the factual circumstances which form the basis for the application up until award of the project area.
- 5.10. The application shall be submitted in Norwegian. Appendices to the application that were originally prepared for purposes other than the application may be submitted in English or another Scandinavian language if they are not available in a Norwegian version. Other formal requirements for the application are set out in Appendix 8.
- 5.11. The application shall be submitted electronically via the application portal. The application portal will be available well in advance of the application deadline. If the application portal contains multiple versions of the same document, the most recently submitted version will be considered valid.
- 5.12. The applicant is responsible for any ambiguities in the application, and for ensuring that all questions and requirements are answered and documented.
- 5.13. The Ministry may, at its discretion, request in writing that the applicant sends, clarifies or supplements the information and documentation received if the information or documentation appears to contain errors or ambiguities, or if certain information or documents are missing. If the applicant does not provide the requested information within the deadline set by the Ministry, the application may be rejected.
- 5.14. The Ministry reserves the right to reject applications that contain deviations, reservations or ambiguities in relation to the announcement documents.



## 6. Further information

- 6.1. The announcement documents and associated appendices have been prepared in Norwegian. The Ministry will publish an unofficial English version of the announcement documents as soon as possible. In the event of differences between the two versions, the Norwegian version shall apply.
- 6.2. After announcement, all communication with the Ministry regarding the announcement and the award of project areas in Utsira Nord shall only take place by email to [havvind@ed.dep.no](mailto:havvind@ed.dep.no). Enquiries made via other channels will not be answered.
- 6.3. Companies considering participating in the competition may submit written questions about the announcement documents in the period from 26 May to 15 June 2025. Each company shall appoint one representative who can submit the questions. Questions may only be submitted via email to [havvind@ed.dep.no](mailto:havvind@ed.dep.no) and will be answered on an ongoing basis. The sender, questions, and answers will be made available at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/energi/landingssider/havvind/utsira-nord-/id3052997/>
- 6.4. All information about the competition, including questions and answers and any changes, will be published at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/energi/landingssider/havvind/utsira-nord-/id3052997/>.
- 6.5. Applicants are encouraged to stay up-to-date at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/energi/landingssider/havvind/utsira-nord-/id3052997/>.

## 7. Schedule

Activity	Date
Announcement published	19 May 2025
Period for submission of questions	26 May – 15 June 2025
Deadline for submission of application	15 September 2025
Award of project areas	Tentatively first half of 2026

## 8. Reservations

- 8.1. In the period up to the application deadline, the Ministry may make corrections, supplements or amendments to the announcement documents. Any corrections, supplements or amendments to the announcement documents will be announced at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/energi/landingssider/havvind/utsira-nord-/id3052997/>. In the event of any changes, the Ministry will consider whether or not the application deadline should be postponed.



- 8.2. The Ministry is working on amendments to the legislation, including relating to national security. The award of project areas will be carried out in accordance with the rules in force at any given time.
- 8.3. The Ministry reserves the right not to award project areas.
- 8.4. In the period until the support competition, the Ministry may make corrections, additions, or changes to the announcement documents regarding the support competition. Any corrections, additions, or changes will be notified at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/energi/landingssider/havvind/utsira-nord-/id3052997/>.

## 9. Appendices

Appendix 1	Template for application letter Utsira Nord
Appendix 2	Project areas, grid conditions, and regulatory matters for Utsira Nord
Appendix 3	Description of qualification requirements and qualitative criteria for Utsira Nord
Appendix 4	Template for cost estimate for Utsira Nord
Appendix 5a	Template for support letter – economic and financial strength
Appendix 5b	Template for support letter – experience
Appendix 6	Template for financial strength
Appendix 7	Template for relevant experience
Appendix 8	Formal requirements for the application and information about the application portal for the competition for project areas for offshore wind in Utsira Nord
Appendix 9	Draft investment aid agreement (to be published shortly)
Appendix 10	Overall description of the support mechanism and competition for state aid
Appendix 11	Template for confirmation of obligation to pay liquidated damages (to be published later)
Appendix 12	Format for demand guarantee (to be published later)
Appendix 13	Detailed auction rules (to be published later)

If any errors are discovered in the announcement and associated appendices, please notify the Ministry by e-mail to [havvind@ed.dep.no](mailto:havvind@ed.dep.no).