

# Community Energy Identities.

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The Power of Mobilizing Concepts of Citizenship.  
Situational Analysis & International Comparison.

Project Summary, Mar 2017

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# Overview of the Research Project:

## Understanding social innovation in comm. energy.

Research Question:

Can concepts of citizenship and community identity be mobilized as strategic resources for sustainability transitions by community energy projects?

Hypotheses guiding my research:

### CONCEPT

**CITIZENSHIP** comprises concepts of **RESPONSIBILITY** to community and resources  
**RENEWABLE ENERGY IS SYSTEM TRANSITION**  
changing the socio-technical transfiguration as well as roles for community and individual

### AGENDA

**POLITICAL** (structural change), **SOCIAL** (joint realization), **COMMUNAL** (meaningful beyond individual interest)

### COMMUNITY ENERGY DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

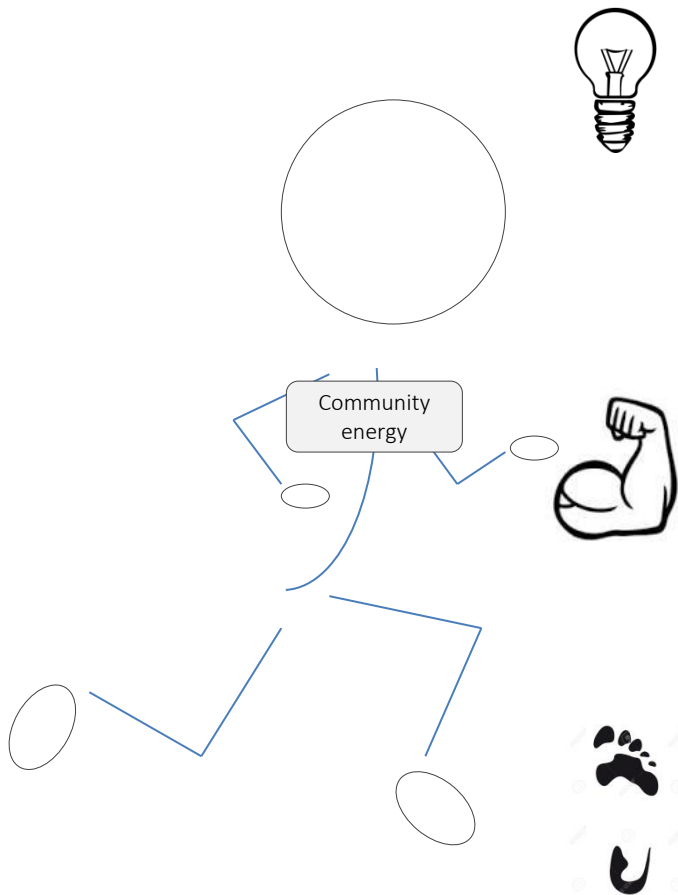
**PROJECTS MATTER** for identity and process  
Community practices are emergent and diverse, yet **INTERNAT. SIMILARITIES** in **CONCEPT** and **AGENDA**

# Telling an international story: Similarities in ideas of citizenship and mobilization?



- Community energy projects in four European countries: Scotland, Denmark, Germany, England
- Differences in policy environment for community energy as well as socio-technical configuration of energy sectors
- Projects in urban, rural and island settings
- Services beyond energy generation (e.g. distribution, retail, education, efficiency, reduced consumption)
- Majority ownership and/or management by community
- Active for more than 2 years

# Preliminary results: Community energy leadership Citizenship, Identity, Process.



## IDENTITY

Emergent yet distinct and shared concept of energy citizenship

Leadership within projects is individualised, with core personas invoking these concepts in others and facilitating individual operationalization

## POWER

CITIZENSHIP and COMMUNITY IDENTITY are mobilized as strategic resources, reinforcing individual as well as community commitment

## TRANSITION

international similarities in CONCEPT and AGENDA underscore the relevance of community practices for broader mobilization

Policy learning: Design for social dimension

# Behind the project: Research on, by, and for community energy.

## Analytical innovation

- Combine research on sustainability transitions with analyses of resource mobilization and power focusing on grassroots innovation.

## Participatory approach

- Research motivated by community practice: What is the power of community energy in sustainability transitions and how can this be reflected in respective policy decision-making?
- Include community energy actors as leaders and experts in the project, with the researcher in a collaborative role.

## Target

- “Producing use-oriented basic research. (...) Theoretically driven and intended to be put to use.” (Hale (2001) *What is Activist Research*: p. 14)
- Finding meaningful ways of collaboration with community energy projects within the research project and communicating results effectively

# Thank you for your attention.

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This summary presents preliminary results.  
It is intended for participating community energy projects.  
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