

AECOM and Arup appointed in joint venture to deliver UK's Great Grid Upgrade

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AECOM, a world-renowned infrastructure consultancy, has announced its joint venture with Arup as the design and consenting service partner for the National Grid's Great Grid Partnership. This partnership signifies a major step forward in the UK's energy transition strategy.

The Great Grid Partnership aims to deliver a comprehensive design and construction programme by 2030. This programme will connect clean energy sources to homes and businesses throughout England and Wales. This critical infrastructure upgrade forms part of a wider £9bn supply chain framework that will support future infrastructure projects beyond 2030.

"We're excited to work with National Grid and our partners to shape the energy transition in England and Wales through the delivery of modern, stable, and flexible grid infrastructure," said Colin Wood, chief executive of AECOM's Europe and India region. "Our unrivalled enterprise capabilities enable our teams to draw on a deep, global bench of expertise in grid design, positioning us to not only execute on National Grid's ambitious objectives but to also meet the unprecedented demand for grid improvements in the region."

This major grid modernisation programme will deliver a fivefold increase in electricity infrastructure over the next six years compared to the past three decades. This significant undertaking falls under the Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) framework and encompasses nine key projects. Planned renewable energy facilities, such as North Sea wind farms, will benefit from improved connections to the UK's national power grid. This enhanced infrastructure will support the transition to net zero, ultimately leading to more affordable energy and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.

“As one of the world’s top environmental and sustainability consulting firms, our teams play a defining role in both designing and delivering the solutions that are advancing the global energy transition,” said Frank Sweet, chief executive of AECOM’s global Environment business. “This latest program for National Grid bolsters our position as a trusted advisor for our many long-term clients as they lead the shift to more sustainable energy sources.”

The joint venture will be responsible for securing Development Consent Orders (DCOs) for individual schemes within the programme. This process involves technical and environmental design, along with stakeholder engagement to ensure project plans are well-communicated and understood.

This appointment marks a significant development in the UK’s journey towards a cleaner and more sustainable energy future. AECOM’s expertise, combined with the collaborative efforts of the Great Grid Partnership, promises to deliver a critical infrastructure upgrade that will benefit homes and businesses across England and Wales for years to come.