



# LEAP-SE

Long-Term Joint EU-AU Research and  
Innovation Partnership on Sustainable Energy

March 2025

## **D5.1 - Online Project Design and Matchmaking Platform with Evolving Features**

Version N°1

Authors:  
Nicola MANISI (LGI)



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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Description
WP	Work Package

## Summary

The LEAP-RE Platform (leap-re.app) is a dynamic and comprehensive platform, designed to support members of the broader African-European renewable energy community in their collaborative and knowledge exchange efforts. Recently, the Platform was enriched with additional features focusing on matchmaking, consortium search and project design capabilities, including their integration with the Funding Watch module already available. This deliverable outlines these newly developed and launched features.

## Keywords

Matchmaking, Consortium Searches, Funding Opportunities.





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# 1. Introduction

The LEAP-RE platform we created during the implementation of LEAP-RE (963530) and will also be used on LEAP-SE. The platform is designed as a digital hub for the renewable energy community, bringing together individuals and organizations dedicated to advancing renewable energy research and implementation. By offering both networking functionalities and collaboration tools, the platform addresses the growing need for integrated and user-friendly digital environments that facilitate the creation of consortia and the design of collaborative projects.

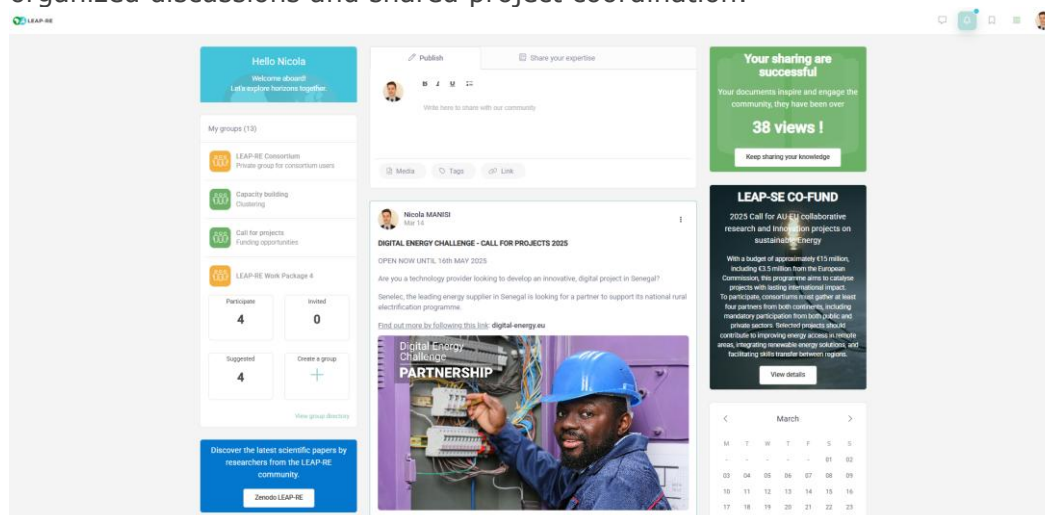
The platform's development follows the strategic objective of enabling stakeholders to build and strengthen partnerships, identify funding opportunities, and create impactful projects. This document provides an overview of the platform's key features, with a focus on matchmaking and consortium building, and demonstrates how these capabilities are effectively utilized by platform users.

## 2. Platform Functionalities

### 2.1 Social networking and other collaborative features.

The LEAP-RE Platform combines professional social networking with tools and module that enhance productivity and collaboration.

The platform fosters a sense of community by allowing users to create detailed profiles, showcasing their expertise and areas of interest. It also facilitates interaction through customizable newsfeeds, where users can share content and stay informed about the latest updates, opportunities, and community activities. Direct communication is facilitated through an integrated messaging system, while groups and collaborative spaces support organized discussions and shared project coordination.



**Figure 1: Social Feed on the LEAP-RE Platform (leap-re.app)**



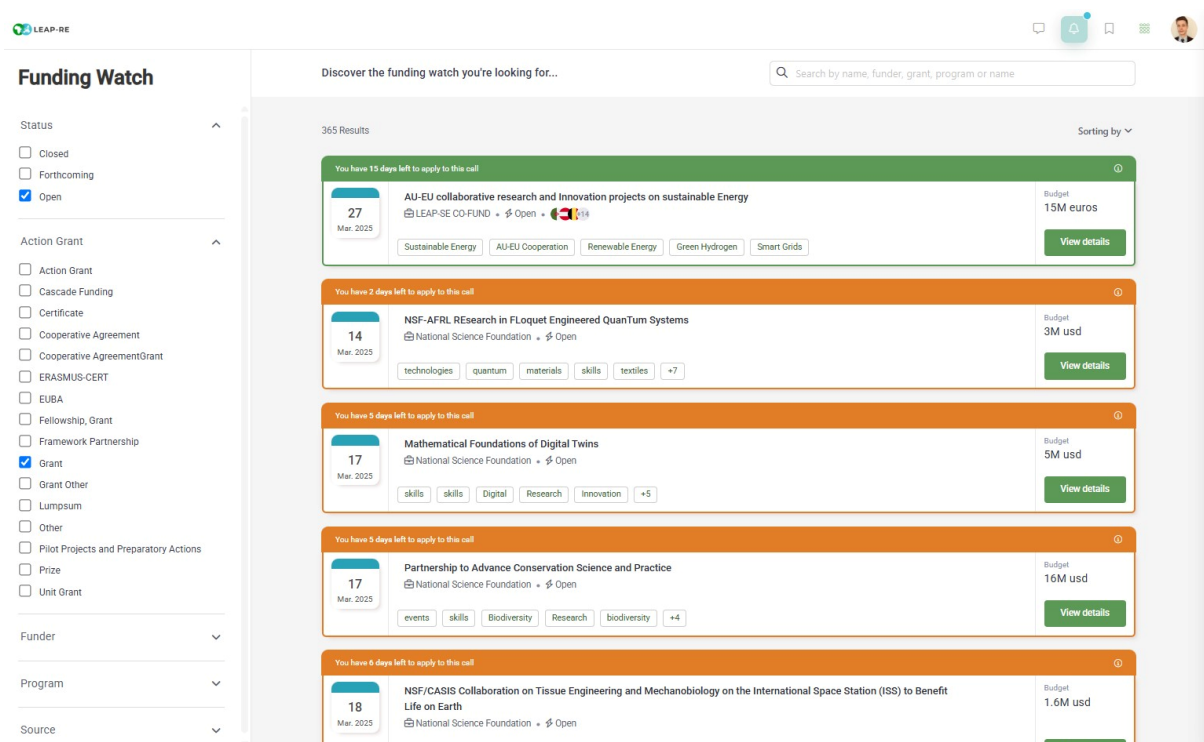


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# 2.2 The Funding Watch

The Funding Watch is a crucial component of the LEAP-RE platform, enabling users to browse and filter through funding opportunities sourced from various databases. Each opportunity is displayed as a funding card, featuring essential details such as the funding body, status, eligibility criteria, and relevant topics.

The Funding Watch feature supports the strategic planning of projects by helping users identify financing options that align with their research and collaboration goals. Users can access detailed information by clicking on specific opportunities and follow the link to external sources for full documentation and application.



**Figure 2: The Funding Watch displaying funding opportunities**

## 2.3 Matchmaking and Consortium Search

The matchmaking and consortium search functionalities empower users to connect with potential partners and build consortia around shared interests or funding opportunities. Key steps include indicating your openness to collaborate, creating a consortium search, and/or exploring and expressing interest in existing searches in ongoing consortium searches you can engage in direct communication with initiators.

### 2.3.1 Indicating your willingness to collaborate



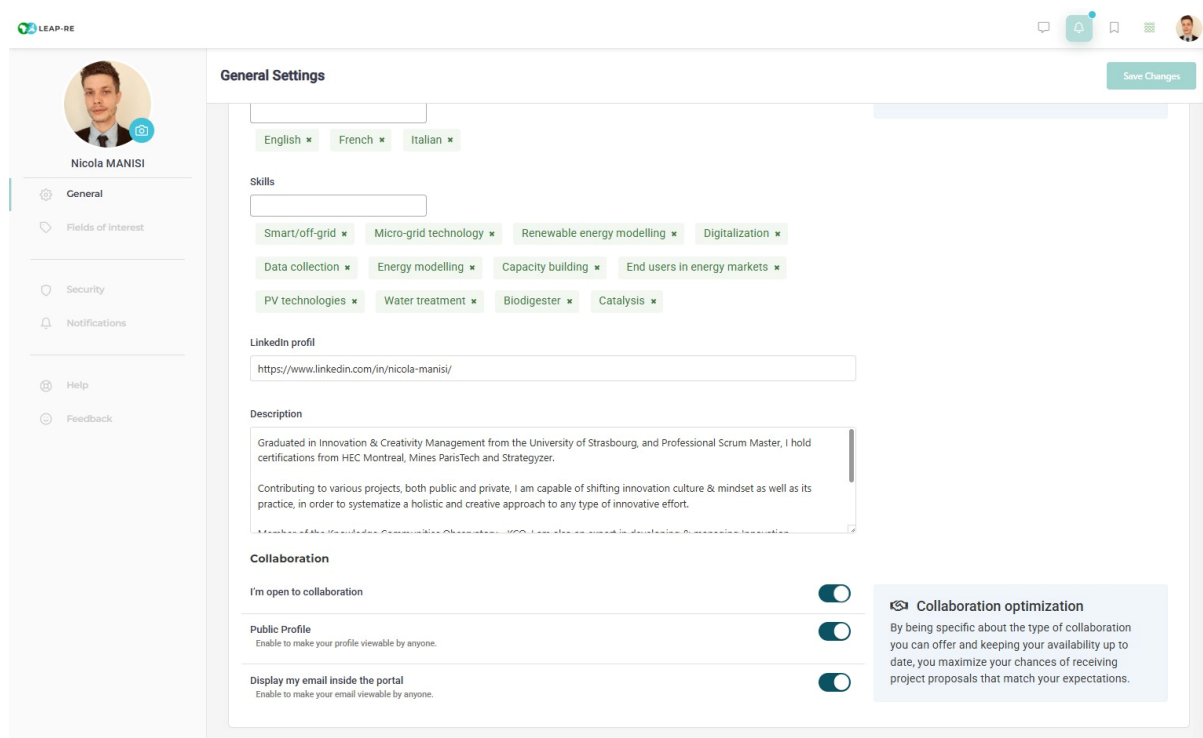


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One of the key features of the Platform, enhancing matchmaking opportunities is the ability for users to indicate their openness to collaboration. Users can activate a badge on their profile (from their settings) that visibly marks them as “open to collaboration.” This badge is prominently displayed in the User Directory, making it easier for other users to quickly identify potential partners who are actively seeking collaboration.

The User Directory is equipped with advanced filtering options that significantly enhance the search process. Users can filter profiles based on specific criteria such as expertise, country, or willingness to collaborate by using intuitive buttons integrated into the directory interface. Additionally, a search field is available to filter users by name, organization, or specific expertise using text input. This functionality ensures that users can efficiently navigate the directory and identify relevant partners without having to manually browse through numerous profiles.

By openly displaying their willingness to collaborate, users increase their chances of being approached for consortium building and project design initiatives. This proactive approach not only facilitates networking but also supports the creation of diverse and strategically aligned consortia.



**Figure 3: Enabling users to indicate that they are open to collaboration**

## 2.3.2 Searching Available Collaboration Opportunities

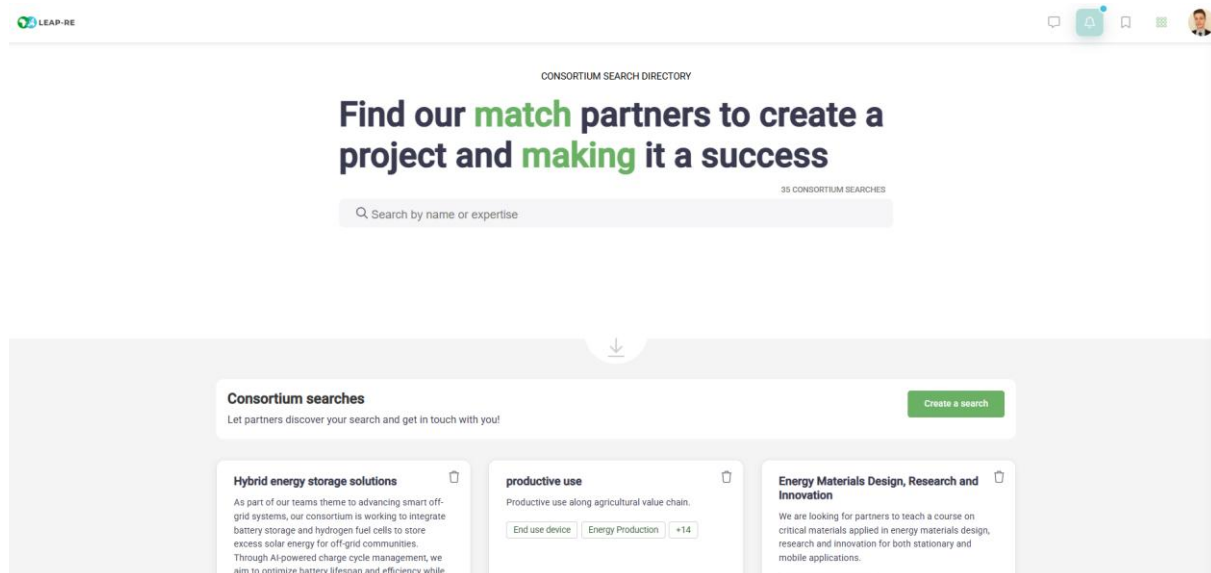
Once users have indicated their willingness to collaborate, they can explore existing consortium searches and collaboration opportunities on the Platform. To do so, users navigate to the Consortium Search page by selecting “Consortium Searches” from the





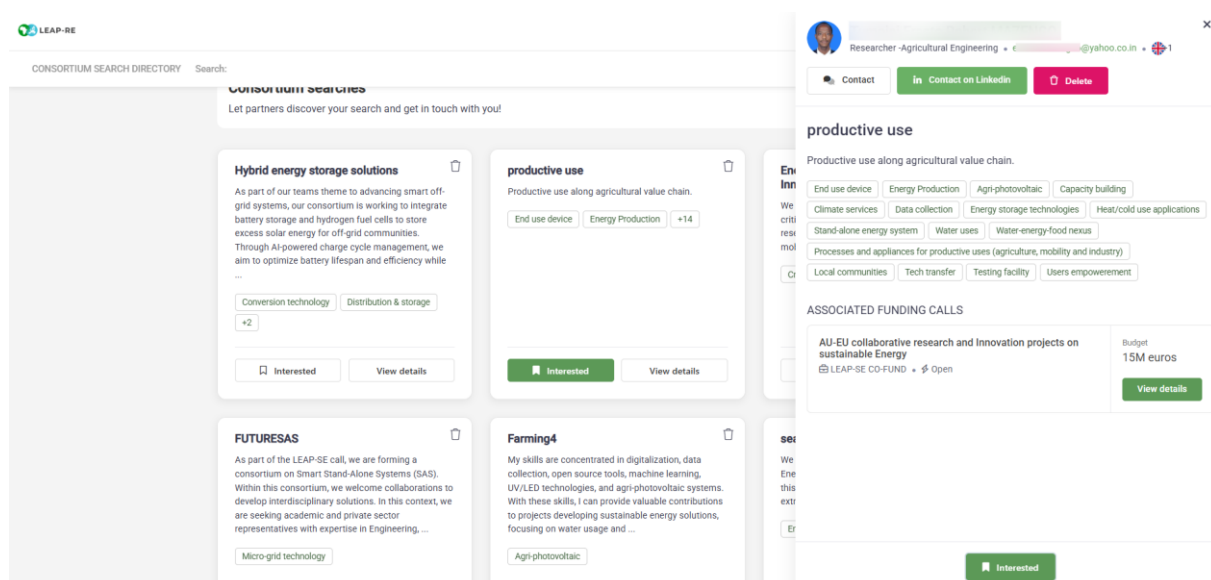
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Platform’s menu. This page serves as a comprehensive directory of ongoing collaboration initiatives, providing users with a detailed overview of current consortium-building efforts.



**Figure 4: Consortium search landing page**

To find a suitable consortium, users can take advantage of the platform’s powerful filtering options, which allow them to search by expertise, thematic area, or other relevant keywords. This search functionality is particularly useful for professionals who are looking to join existing consortia that match their specific skills or research interests. Users can also view more detailed information about each consortium by clicking the “View Details” button on any given search.



**Figure 5: Detailed overview of a Consortium search**





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The detail page provides essential information about the consortium, including its objectives, required expertise, and, when applicable, links to associated funding opportunities available in the Funding Watch. By accessing these details, users gain a comprehensive understanding of the consortium's goals and can assess how their participation might contribute to the project's success.

When users find a consortium that aligns with their expertise or interests, they can indicate their willingness to participate by clicking the "Interested" button on the consortium card.

This simple action sends a notification to the consortium initiator, signalling a potential match. Additionally, users can initiate direct contact with the search creator through multiple channels. The platform's built-in messaging system allows users to start a conversation directly on the platform, fostering immediate and practical communication. If users prefer to connect via professional networks, they can use the "Contact on LinkedIn" option, which redirects to the initiator's LinkedIn profile, provided it is publicly accessible. In cases where the initiator has chosen to display their email address, users can also send an email directly. This multi-channel approach enhances the flexibility and responsiveness of collaboration, enabling quick and effective partner engagement.

### **2.3.3 Creating a Search & Connecting It to Funding Opportunities**

For users looking to initiate a consortium, the LEAP-RE Platform offers a streamlined process to create and publish collaboration searches. The process begins with users navigating to the Consortium Search landing page and clicking on the "Create a search" button. This opens a dedicated form where users are prompted to provide comprehensive information about the proposed consortium.

The first field to complete is the name of the search or project, which should clearly reflect the consortium's purpose or thematic focus. Choosing an informative and precise title is crucial, as it helps attract potential partners who share similar interests. Users are then required to specify the expertise needed to complete the consortium. To facilitate this, the platform provides a list of predefined expertise areas, but users can also manually enter additional keywords to ensure accuracy and relevance. This dual approach makes it easy to highlight the specific skills and knowledge required for successful collaboration.





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CONSORTIUM SEARCH DIRECTORY

Partner Search

This form allows project leaders to find partners with specific expertise. Try to briefly outline your project and the skills you are looking for. This will facilitate the connection with interested experts.

NAME OF YOUR CONSORTIUM SEARCH  
Example

EXPERTISE REQUESTED  
Dismantling Entrepreneurship

DESCRIPTION  
Describe your search

LINK TO A CONSORTIUM SEARCH:  
AU-EU collaborative research and Innovation projects on sustainable Energy  
https://leap-re.app/funding-call-9598

SUBMIT

**Figure 6: Publishing a Consortium/Partner Search**

A brief description follows, where users are encouraged to elaborate on the consortium's objectives, the type of partners they are seeking, and the expected outcomes. This descriptive text serves as an invitation to potential partners, offering them insight into the project's scope and ambitions. Clarity and detail at this stage are essential for attracting the right collaborators.

One of the most distinctive features of the Platform's consortium search functionality is its seamless integration with the Funding Watch. Users have the option to link their consortium search to one or more funding calls, which significantly enhances the search's relevance and attractiveness. There are two main ways to connect a consortium search to funding opportunities. First, users can browse the directly from the search form, typing in keywords to locate specific funding opportunities. Alternatively, they can paste a direct link from the Funding Watch to the consortium search form. Once the funding link is established, it becomes an integral part of the consortium search, allowing users to understand the financial framework supporting the collaboration.





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The screenshot displays the LEAP-RE platform interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the LEAP-RE logo and user profile icons. The main content area is titled 'AU-EU collaborative research and Innovation projects on sustainable Energy'. Below the title, there are two buttons: 'I'm looking for a partner' and 'I'm looking for a consortium'. The project details include: Status: Open, Due date: Mar. 27, 2025 (9 days left), Budget: 15 000 000 euros, Program: LEAP-RE, Funder: LEAP-SE CO-FUND, and a URL: https://www.leap-re.eu/leap-se... The main content area is divided into 'Project details', 'Consortium search' (with 11 results), and 'Partner search' (with 1 result). Under 'Consortium search', there are three entries: 'productive use' (Productive use along agricultural value chain, with filters for 'End use device' and 'Energy Production'), 'Farming4' (My skills are concentrated in digitalization, data collection, open source tools, machine learning, UV/LED technologies, and agri-photovoltaic systems. With these skills, I can provide valuable contributions to projects developing sustainable energy ... with a filter for 'Agri-photovoltaic'), and 'ISDK'. A sidebar on the right provides a summary of the funding call: 'AU-EU collaborative research and Innovation projects on sustainable Energy', Status: Open, Funder: LEAP-SE CO-FUND, Budget: 15 000 000 euros, Identifier: LEAP-SE COFUND, Source: Not specified, Grant: Grant, Competitors: 10, Duration: 36, Deadline Type: multiple, and Deadline To Come: Mar. 27, 2025.

**Figure 7: A Funding Call associated with Consortium and Partner searches**

This linkage between consortium searches and funding opportunities is a vital component of the platform's strategic value. It ensures that potential partners are immediately aware of the financial resources available, allowing them to assess both the feasibility and the ambition of the proposed project. This clear alignment between project goals and funding possibilities helps build consortia that are both thematically coherent and financially supported.

Once all the necessary information is completed and reviewed, users simply click the "Submit" button to publish their consortium search. The newly created search is then displayed on the list of active consortium opportunities, making it visible to the entire community of platform users.

From an administrative perspective, the Platform grants platform admins the authority to manage published searches. Admins have the right to review the content to ensure its relevance and accuracy, as well as to delete duplicate or outdated entries. This moderation capability is essential for maintaining a clean and efficient platform environment, where users can easily access high-quality, relevant collaboration opportunities.

By integrating funding opportunities with consortium searches and facilitating multi-channel communication, the LEAP-RE Platform significantly enhances the consortium-building process. The platform's features not only simplify the creation of consortia but also support strategic project design by connecting partners with complementary expertise and aligning their efforts with available funding.

### 3. Conclusion

The Platform's matchmaking and consortium search functionalities represent a significant advancement in fostering collaboration and consortium building within the renewable





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energy community. By seamlessly integrating funding opportunities from the Funding Watch with targeted partner searches, the platform empowers users to form strategic and financially viable consortia. The combination of advanced search capabilities, multi-channel communication options, and the ability to indicate willingness to collaborate has greatly enhanced user engagement and facilitated the creation of impactful collaborative projects.

Since the launch of the matchmaking feature in January 2025, the platform has witnessed a remarkable increase in user registrations, surpassing the total number of registrations recorded throughout the entire year 2024 in less than 3 months; 988 registrations in 2024 versus 1050 registrations in 2025 as of March 25<sup>th</sup>. This surge in adoption clearly demonstrates the interest regarding the launch of the LEAP-SE call 2025, as the webinars were held on the leap-re.app and that the matchmaking functionality addresses a long-awaited need within the community, providing an intuitive and efficient tool to connect like-minded professionals and support project design.

By continuously evolving and adapting to the needs of the renewable energy sector, the LEAP-RE Platform reaffirms its commitment to empowering stakeholders with the necessary tools to drive innovation and sustainable development. As the platform continues to grow, the matchmaking feature will remain a cornerstone of its collaborative ecosystem, fostering new partnerships and strengthening the collective impact of renewable energy initiatives.

