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Consumer smart energy tool to assist households in reducing energy bills

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has announced \$929,000 in funding to Solar Analytics to develop an online consumer smart energy tool called “Solar Maximiser” (the Tool) that provides households with an economic assessment of potential consumer energy resources (CER) investment decisions.

The Tool will assess available resources such as rooftop solar, smart electric hot water, batteries and electric vehicle smart chargers to provide customers with an understanding of the potential benefits of investing in these CERs.

The Tool will be publicly available at no cost and will analyse energy usage, available energy retail tariffs and market data, helping consumers to reduce their energy bills through renewable energy and flexible demand options.

The \$2.7 million project also includes software integration to support the active control of smart heat pump hot water systems, targeting 1,000 systems and 1 MW of flexible demand capacity through the project. Hot water will be dynamically controlled to maximise energy savings against local generation and retail tariffs.

ARENA commissioned the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) to conduct research into the role of domestic hot water in flexible demand. The [report](#) shows how electric water heating systems can help Australia meet decarbonisation targets and support the transition to renewable energy, while providing cost savings to customers. The report will be used as a reference point for future flexible demand projects.

Customers for the Solar Analytics smart energy tool trial and the hot water system trial will be recruited nationally.

Solar Analytics has identified that while some CER, such as solar PV, are already economic, the uptake of other devices such as ‘flexible’ electric hot water, batteries and EVs is being hampered by customer confusion, knowledge gaps and uncertain financial returns.

The Tool aims to provide customers with the relevant knowledge to make better investment decisions, highlighting the benefits of owning CERs, while also connecting them with potential suppliers for quotations and installation of recommended devices.

Solar Analytics has utilised over 1,000 of its existing customers in New South Wales to test and calibrate the Tool prior to the national rollout.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said the Tool aims to assist users in understanding which CER can provide the greatest benefits on their energy bills.

“Solar Analytics’ free Tool will help households identify which resources work best for their homes, whether that is solar PV, electric hot water or batteries,”

“Increasing people’s knowledge of what is possible at their homes, and connecting them with potential suppliers for quotes and installations is a step in the right direction to ensure no one is left behind in our energy transition,” Mr Miller said.

Solar Analytics’ CEO, Stefan Jarnason said: “The Tool will provide a free personalised report to show you whether now is a good time to get rooftop solar, the optimal amount of solar, whether a solar battery is right for you, or if you should get an energy-efficient hot water heat pump,” Mr Jarnason said.

The Tool is free to use and can be accessed at www.solaranalytics.com.au/campaign/solar-maximiser.

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**For more
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