

Media Release

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At last, a solar solution for Victorians living in apartment blocks

People living in multi-tenanted apartment blocks in Victoria will soon be able to exercise choice and control over how they access and use solar and battery power as part of a trial from new solar and battery solutions company, Ovida.

In an Australian first, the trial will utilise smart technology to enable people who were not previously able to benefit from solar energy, such as renters, low income earners, and other people living in multi-tenanted apartment blocks, to access solar power in their home.

“Traditionally solar arrangements in multi-tenanted apartment blocks have been all or nothing – meaning all residents had to invest in and use the system for it to work,” said Ovida spokesperson, Paul Adams.

“We know this can be a challenge because apartment blocks often include long-term residents, owners, and short-term occupants who each have different energy needs and expectations.

“In particular, we are unlocking solar power for renters and tenants which, to date, have been undeservedly locked out of microgrid and renewable technology. Thanks to this initiative, they now also have an opportunity to experience solar generated power; a market traditionally dominated by owner-occupiers.

“This trial also tackles energy affordability head-on. By providing the panels, battery and infrastructure free of charge to customers so there are no up-front costs.

“This removes inequality in the market place and by trialling the microgrid technology, we can explore how companies can viably supply such solutions – again, with no financial commitment required from homeowners,” Mr Adams said.

The trial has been made possible through a \$980,000 grant from the Victorian Government and it benefits from experienced consortium partners including Allume Energy, Moreland Energy Foundation Limited and RMIT University.

The trial will provide “behind-the-grid” technology, including solar panels, batteries, cloud-based software, and communications channels, to enable a single solar system to connect with multiple customers.

Community microgrids will be trialled across residential, commercial and mixed-use dwellings in Melbourne’s north, which typically house 10 to 50 renters and/or tenants.

“The solar power generated by the smart microgrid is designed to always be cheaper than the network supply, so the greater the amount of solar energy used by the resident, the lower their bills.

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“We are confident this technology can be scaled up across Victoria, and nationally, giving more people the opportunity to cut their bills and utilise solar power,” Mr Adams said.

The trial will supply solar generated, stored and managed electricity to the three sites for 10 years, with multi-use properties across northern Melbourne invited to participate.

For more information visit www.ovida.com.au

About Ovida

- Ovida is owned and backed by one of Australia's largest energy infrastructure companies, SGSP (Australia) Assets Pty Ltd (SGSPAA), who own \$10.5 billion worth of major utility infrastructure across Australia.
- Ovida increases the competitiveness of large energy users and makes an easier connection to the grid for utility scale renewables
- Ovida makes energy easy and supplies customers with affordable reliable power without any upfront investment

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