

CASE STUDY:

F4OR

Fit For Offshore
Renewables

CHALLENGE

There's a big push for UK businesses to be part of the offshore renewable energy supply chain to support economic growth. Due to rapid expansion, particularly in offshore wind, more innovative businesses will be needed to provide the services and products required to support increased demand.



Fit for Offshore Renewables (F4OR) is a unique service to help the UK supply chain get ready to bid for work in the offshore renewable energy sector. It aims to support the development of an increasingly competent, capable, and competitive UK offshore renewable energy supply chain – maximising opportunity, both domestically and globally.

SOLUTION

ORE Catapult started the F4OR programme in 2019 to support companies entering the offshore renewable energy supply chain and win business.

The programme is designed for established businesses with ten or more employees and with a turnover of at least £1m. There isn't a need for companies to have prior experience in the offshore renewable energy sector, but they must have identified it as a strategic opportunity for growth. Participating companies range from organisations with no offshore renewable energy experience, such as those currently focused on oil or gas who want to transfer to renewables, to established suppliers ready to excel in the industry.

PROGRAMME BENEFITS:

- Training regarding the unique risks and opportunities in the offshore renewable energy sector
- Tailored advice for companies to understand their value proposition and target market
- The opportunity to grow a network of supply chain contacts
- The chance to build capabilities in core business management systems
- If a company achieves 'granted' status, it will be promoted to industry contacts who could become future customers.

To receive 'granted' status, a company must prove they have the knowledge, capability, and competence to meet the standard required to do business in the offshore renewables sector. 'Granted' status demonstrates that the company is trusted and has the attitude to succeed.

Andrew Stormonth-Darling, F4OR's Programme Manager, said: "There is now a massive and ever-growing demand for competent and reliable UK businesses to form part of the offshore renewable energy supply chain. With such a large number of projects in development, we need more businesses than ever to meet that demand.

"WE CAN ONLY ACHIEVE THE RAPID EXPANSION WE NEED WITH A HEALTHY, STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN, WHICH IS LOCAL TO THE PROJECTS BEING BUILT. THAT'S WHAT THIS PROGRAMME IS DOING – IT'S HELPING TO BRING IN NEW ENTRANTS TO EXPAND THE SUPPLY CHAIN AND ENSURE UK COMPANIES ARE AS COMPETITIVE AS POSSIBLE."

RESULTS

F4OR has supported 82 companies UK-wide in the last three years and over 30 significant new business contracts have been secured. Companies experienced an 85% average uplift in turnover after taking part in the programme and 45 have successfully received 'granted' status.

This is a case study of one of the companies that have taken part in the F4OR programme.

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT ORE CATAPULT'S F4OR PROGRAMME

<https://ore.catapult.org.uk/what-we-do/supply-chain-growth/fit-4-offshore-renewables/>

SMS - LOWESTOFT GROUP

The SMS Group is a ship repairer, marine engineering services provider and turn-key interior outfitter that is now transitioning into the renewables and energy space in East Anglia.

The F4OR programme helped the company mature at a more advanced pace into the renewables sector, facilitated valuable connections in the industry and helped direct the company's business strategy.

The SMS Group said: "We've clearly benefited from the F4OR initiative; as a business, we're better networked in the space, having the credibility to develop new and existing relationships. We're on a measurable journey of self-improvement, and, perhaps most importantly, this definitive diversification is positively impacting our bottom line. We're

obviously also seeing increased awareness of The SMS Group, not only locally, but also nationally - and most interestingly, we're being referenced in the renewables and energy space, as well as the marine space."

Overall, the programme has resulted in real, quantifiable successes. The SMS Group have moved into a service and maintenance type of contract to support energy-specific floating assets. They are also exploring support of offshore wind turbines from a survey, repair, and maintenance perspective. Recruitment is on the rise and the headcount is growing. They estimate the renewables and energy sector will account for 15% of their sales by the end of the trading year, increasing to 25% in the next 24 months.