

## VITO (Flanders) leads European circular economy project

VITO, a multidisciplinary technological institute and one of [Flanders' four strategic research centers](#), is coordinating CIRCUSOL, short for 'circular business models for the solar power industry'. Funded by the European Horizon 2020 program, this project strives to develop solar power and [circular economy](#) business models that can support the [energy transition](#) in various sectors.



### Flanders leads European project

In addition to [VITO](#), its fellow strategic research center [imec](#) and several other **Flanders-based institutes and companies**, the CIRCUSOL consortium also includes companies, institutes and organizations from **Sweden** (Lund University), **Switzerland** (Bern University, BKW Energie), **Lithuania** (Soli Tek R&D), **France** (SNAM, CEA Liten, SOREA), **Spain** (ZABALA) and **Germany** (Loser Chemie).

### Solar energy as a service

Today, suppliers sell solar panels and batteries to a user who then manages the solar power generation and storage. When they are no longer used at a specific site, the solar panels and batteries immediately enter the waste stream and get recycled or disposed of.

However, in the business model envisioned by CIRCUSOL, suppliers provide users with solar power generation and storage **as a service rather than a product**. The solar panels and batteries are installed at the user's site, but the supplier remains their owner. As such, the supplier is responsible for recovering the panels and batteries and deciding if they be installed somewhere else, or if they should be recycled.

Learn [why Flanders is a circular economy leader](#).

### More info

[VITO](#) 

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<https://www.flandersinvestmentandtrade.com/invest/en/news/vito-flanders-leads-european-circular-economy-project>