

Ofgem AI Technical Sandbox

Submitted by CurrentWorks

Field	Details
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Date	17 March 2026
Submitted to	AIPolicy@ofgem.gov.uk
Consultation ref.	Ofgem AI Technical Sandbox – Published 26 January 2026
Confidentiality	This response may be published in full. No sections are marked confidential.

About CurrentWorks

CurrentWorks (Corriente Viva SL) is a Madrid-based strategic intelligence platform purpose-built for the green energy transition. We serve utilities, OEMs, cleantech investors, and regulators with structured, verifiable intelligence on the deployment of innovation across European and MENA markets. Our operational footprint is European: our live market data infrastructure pulls directly from ENTSO-E, Open Power System Data, and Red Eléctrica ESIOs, and our innovation database is structured against European grid challenges, including those directly relevant to GB transmission and distribution. Our founder spent seven years within the GB regulatory perimeter at National Grid Electricity Transmission, working directly with Ofgem through the RII0-T1 framework, and retains an active network across the GB energy innovation community.

Our platform comprises two integrated assets:

- **Green Energy Innovation (GEI) Database:** A bilingual (English/Spanish) structured database of over 3,000 energy startups, classified across a four-layer taxonomy of 44 grid challenges, 77 innovation solutions, 80 enabling technologies, and 500+ deployment-stage companies. It is the foundational intelligence layer for answering the question: which innovations are ready, relevant, and deployable for a specific grid challenge, right now.
- **CurrentPulse:** A real-time European energy market intelligence platform aggregating live data from ENTSO-E, Open Power System Data, and Red Eléctrica ESIOs across seven market screens. It features an AI Query engine that answers natural language questions about live grid and market conditions, automated report generation, and infrastructure visualisation. CurrentPulse is itself an AI system operating in the energy sector, and we believe it represents a directly relevant sandbox use case, as set out in our Q8 response below.

Our founder, Dr Iliana Portugués, holds a PhD in Electronics and Communications. She served as Director of Innovation at National Grid Electricity Transmission and as VP Innovation at Siemens Energy, contributing directly to over £500m in innovation-driven regulatory savings during the RII0-T1 period and maintaining active relationships with over 200 utility decision-makers across Europe and the MENA region. This experience, inside a GB licensee, inside Ofgem's direct regulatory perimeter, at the highest level of innovation programme delivery, is the lens through which this response is written.

Executive Summary

I began my career working alongside Ofgem as a National Grid innovator, contributing to the RIIO-T1 regulatory framework and the innovation programmes that shaped GB energy policy through that period. I am writing now as the founder building the intelligence infrastructure that the next phase of that work requires. That continuity of purpose is the context for this response.

We welcome this consultation and strongly support the creation of an AI Technical Sandbox. The energy sector faces a critical intelligence gap: the pace at which AI-driven innovation is maturing outstrips the capacity of both regulators and market participants to evaluate, validate, and deploy it responsibly. A structured, evidence-generating sandbox is precisely the mechanism needed to close that gap.

We submit this response as a technology platform with direct operational experience building and deploying AI-powered energy intelligence tools for utility clients operating across interconnected European and global markets. We are writing to contribute substantive recommendations, and to signal clearly that CurrentWorks is ready to participate as a Structured Technology Partner in the sandbox from the point applications open.

Our five principal recommendations are:

1. Establish a formal Structured Technology Partner designation with defined data access rights, governance representation, and IP provisions – not merely “encouraged partnerships”.
2. Add Innovation Intelligence AI – systems that classify and match emerging technologies to deployment opportunities – as an explicit sandbox use case category.
3. Add cross-border regulatory implications as a use-case selection criterion, with formal liaisons established with ENTSO-E, TwinEU, and ACER from the outset.
4. Extend the ethics framework to cover systemic and market-level algorithmic bias – not only consumer-facing AI applications.
5. Publish quarterly sandbox bulletins and commit to at least two interim reporting milestones, and develop a clear post-pilot commercialisation pathway for validated use cases.

Consultation Responses

Q1. Eligibility and Participation

Question

Do you agree with the proposed eligibility criteria for lead Participants (licensees, market participants, and operators of essential services) and the encouragement of partnerships with technology providers, academia, and other innovators?

Position: Broadly Agreed. The Treatment of Technology Partners Must Be Strengthened.

We agree that lead applicants should be entities already subject to Ofgem's regulatory framework. This ensures accountability, data access, and enforceability, prerequisites for meaningful sandbox testing.

However, the current formulation, in which technology providers and innovators are merely "encouraged" as partners, is structurally insufficient. It risks producing a sandbox insulated from the most dynamic sources of AI innovation. The AI systems of greatest regulatory interest include grid optimisation engines, demand forecasting models, innovation-matching platforms, and real-time market intelligence tools. These are predominantly being developed outside the licensee ecosystem, in technology companies and specialist platforms. Treating these organisations as afterthoughts in governance will degrade the quality of use cases selected and the practical relevance of findings.

We understand that Ofgem's direct statutory enforcement reach does not extend to non-licensee technology partners, and our proposal is designed to work within that constraint through contractual mechanisms rather than regulatory obligations. On that basis, we recommend Ofgem establish a formal Structured Technology Partner (STP) designation with the following characteristics:

- **Defined data access rights:** STPs should have contractually specified access to representative datasets from lead Participants, enabling meaningful contributions to and benefits from sandbox-generated evidence.
- **Governance representation:** At least one STP seat on the Steering Group, and formal contributor status (not observer status) in working groups. STPs are developing the systems under evaluation; their perspective is essential for credible use-case assessment.

- **IP and confidentiality clarity:** Clear provisions protecting STP-originated methodologies, taxonomies, and algorithms while enabling publication of non-confidential learning.
- **Named accountability:** Each sandbox project should have a named lead Participant and a named STP, jointly responsible for delivery, reporting, and ethics compliance.

Q2. Use Case Selection

Question

Are the proposed use case selection criteria appropriate and sufficient? Are there other criteria, safeguards, or considerations Ofgem should include?

Position: The Six Criteria Are Sound. Two Additions Are Necessary.

The six proposed criteria, commercial neutrality, innovation, sector impact, regulatory uncertainty, testability, and governance, are well-constructed. We particularly commend the inclusion of regulatory uncertainty as a standalone criterion, since this is precisely the condition that makes a sandbox necessary rather than merely convenient.

Addition 1: Innovation Intelligence AI as an Explicit Use Case Category

The consultation focuses primarily on AI applied to operational and consumer-facing contexts: grid operation, demand forecasting, trading, and customer service. This is appropriate, but it omits a structurally prior and equally high-value category: AI that analyses the innovation landscape itself.

Innovation intelligence AI: systems that classify, rank, and match emerging technologies to specific grid challenges, regulatory requirements, or deployment windows – has direct regulatory relevance. It determines which technologies receive investment, which startups access utility procurement pipelines, and which innovations are submitted for regulatory approval. If such systems embed biases – geographic, linguistic, technological, or commercial – the consequences for competition, market integrity, and consumer outcomes are material and largely invisible under existing regulatory frameworks.

CurrentWorks has direct operational experience in this domain. Our GEI database classifies over 3,000 startups against 44 grid challenges and 77 solution types. We have observed firsthand that taxonomy design choices produce systematic under- or over-representation of certain technology categories – creating real commercial consequences for the startups involved and real intelligence

distortions for the utilities relying on the data. This is precisely the type of risk a regulatory sandbox should examine, validate, and produce guidance on.

We recommend that Ofgem explicitly include AI-powered innovation matching and technology classification as an eligible use case category.

Addition 2: Cross-Border Regulatory Implications as a Selection Criterion

The proposed criteria are silent on cross-border regulatory implications. This is a material gap. AI systems in the energy sector operate across interconnected grids, and the regulatory consequences of sandbox findings will not stop at the GB border.

The urgency is illustrated by current permitting data. According to WindEurope, onshore wind permitting in the EU averaged six years in 2022; the REDIII target is two years; and as of 2025, Germany is the only EU country meeting the 24-month REDIII deadline, at an average of 18 months, while none of the other 26 EU member states meets the target. AI tools that accelerate permitting, connection assessment, and dispatch decisions will face radically different regulatory contexts across jurisdictions. Sandbox findings designed for GB conditions may be directly misleading when applied elsewhere.

We recommend that use-case applications be required to declare the cross-border deployment implications, and that Ofgem establish a formal reporting pathway to ENTSO-E, ACER, and the TwinEU project consortium, all of which are actively developing parallel AI and digital twin governance frameworks across the EU.

Q3. Alignment with Other Initiatives

Question

Is the proposed approach clearly distinct from and complementary to other initiatives? Are there other relevant initiatives Ofgem should consider?

Position: Domestic Alignment Is Well Structured. Three International Gaps Need Addressing.

The proposed alignment with the AI Reg Lab, Energy Regulation Sandbox, and Future Regulation Sandbox is logical. The division of responsibilities: technical testing, ethical and regulatory analysis, live flexibilities, and rule-change trials, is clear and avoids duplication. We support it.

We draw Ofgem's attention to three additional alignment opportunities that are absent from the consultation and that are, in our view, strategically important:

TwinEU: The Most Direct Parallel Initiative

TwinEU is a Horizon Europe initiative, launched in January 2024, with a total budget of €25.2 million, including €20 million in EU funding. Its mission is to build a federated pan-European digital twin of the electricity system, bringing together 15 European TSOs and 15 DSOs across eight demonstration pilots spanning 11 countries. One of those eight demonstrations covers the Iberian Peninsula – Spain and Portugal – focusing specifically on enhancing grid security and resilience through digital twins from generation to consumers.

This is directly material to CurrentWorks. Our CurrentPulse platform already aggregates real-time data from Red Eléctrica ESIOS – the same Iberian grid operator that is a TwinEU partner. We are operating within the TwinEU demonstration geography with a complementary live-data infrastructure. The Ofgem sandbox and TwinEU are running on parallel timelines through 2026. If the two initiatives develop independently, findings will diverge, and cross-border AI deployment will face compounded regulatory uncertainty. Ofgem should formally establish a liaison with the TwinEU consortium now.

ENTSO-E and European Network Codes

ENTSO-E is developing AI governance guidance relevant to transmission system operators across continental Europe. Sandbox findings – particularly on AI applied to grid operation, forecasting, and dispatch – should be designed to feed into, and benefit from, the European evidence base being assembled at the ENTSO-E level. Ofgem should identify the relevant ENTSO-E working group and establish a formal reporting pathway before the pilot launches.

IEA AI in Energy Tracking

The IEA publishes ongoing tracking of AI adoption across the global energy sector. Ofgem should ensure that sandbox evaluation frameworks, particularly around metrics, ethics benchmarks, and risk classification, are aligned with IEA tracking definitions to maximise comparability and international credibility of findings.

Q4. Engagement and Governance

Question

Does the proposed governance structure provide sufficient oversight, transparency, and stakeholder engagement? Are there other mechanisms that should be included?

Position: The Steering Group Model Is Correct. Three Specific Enhancements Are Needed.

The proposed Steering Group model is appropriate. Chaired by Ofgem and with sector-wide representation, it provides the legitimacy needed to make credible use-case selection decisions. The inclusion of consumer groups alongside licensees and operators is especially welcome.

1. Technology Provider Seat on the Steering Group

Technology providers should not be limited to working groups. At least one Steering Group seat should be held by a representative of a technology provider or an innovation platform. Use case selection must benefit from the perspective of those building the AI systems under evaluation, not only those deploying or regulating them. This is standard practice in comparable technology governance structures, including the FCA's Digital Sandbox.

2. Published Conflict of Interest Protocol

The consultation notes that Steering Group members must recuse themselves where conflicts of interest exist, but defers the protocol to subsequent participation agreements. We recommend that Ofgem publish the conflict-of-interest protocol in draft alongside the decision document. Transparency at this stage will increase confidence in the selection process and reduce the risk of post-selection challenges – particularly relevant given that some Steering Group members may have commercial interests in the AI use cases under consideration.

3. Quarterly Sandbox Bulletins

Paragraph 5.6 commits to open knowledge sharing but specifies neither format nor cadence. We recommend that Ofgem commit to publishing quarterly sandbox bulletins structured as: (a) use cases in progress, (b) preliminary technical findings, (c) regulatory questions raised, and (d) guidance implications identified. This would create a feedback loop between sandbox activity and the wider sector without waiting for the end of the 12-month pilot, and would generate early evidence to inform both the AI Reg Lab and the Future Regulation Sandbox.

Q5. Timelines and Next Steps

Question

Are the proposed next steps clear, and is there anything further to consider in refining the timeline?

Position: The Timeline Is Workable. Two Enhancements Would Strengthen It.

The proposed milestones are clearly sequenced and achievable within the stated timeline. The logical progression from consultation through decision to guidance publication and pilot launch reflects a realistic understanding of what governance infrastructure is needed before applications open.

An Autumn 2026 pilot launch is achievable and appropriately ambitious. The eight-week consultation window is tight but sufficient if Ofgem commissions analysis promptly. We note that the response deadline of 20 March 2026 and the anticipated Spring 2026 decision together create a compressed but plausible runway to Autumn launch.

- Pre-registration window: Between the release of the decision document and the opening of formal applications, Ofgem should offer a pre-registration period that allows prospective lead Participants and technology partners to signal intent, begin preliminary partnership discussions, and refine use case concepts. This would reduce cold-start friction at application opening and allow Ofgem to assess demand before formal assessment begins. CurrentWorks would register during this window.
- Interim reporting milestones: Rather than a single end-of-pilot evaluation, Ofgem should commit to published findings at three months and six months. This would generate early regulatory learning, demonstrate sandbox productivity to stakeholders, and surface any governance or data access issues before they become entrenched.

Q6. Ethics and Responsible AI

Question

Does the consultation sufficiently address ethical considerations? Are there further steps to embed ethics and safety in the sandbox?

Position: Consumer Ethics Are Well Addressed. Systemic Bias at Market Level Is Not.

The ethical framework proposed – fairness, transparency, responsible use, consumer trust, pre- and post-test reviews – is appropriate for consumer-facing AI applications. We support it.

We submit that the consultation underweights a distinct and equally consequential category of ethical risk: systemic bias in AI systems operating at the market or infrastructure level, where the affected parties are not individual consumers but categories of technology, geography, or business type. These effects are less visible, harder to attribute, and potentially more durable.

Three examples from our direct operational experience:

- **Innovation-matching bias:** AI systems that classify and rank energy technologies can embed geographic bias (favouring technologies from certain countries or regions), linguistic bias (disadvantaging non-English documentation), or recency bias (overweighting established technologies with rich training data). These biases affect which startups access utility procurement pipelines and, ultimately, which technologies are deployed at scale – with long-run consequences for competition and the pace of decarbonisation.
- **Dispatch bias:** AI grid optimisation systems can embed systematic preferences for certain generation assets in ways not visible through standard market-clearing mechanisms. Over time, these preferences compound and reshape investment signals.
- **Investment intelligence bias:** AI tools directing capital allocation can amplify funding concentration by over-weighting technologies already well-represented in training data, systematically under-funding genuinely novel but under-documented innovations.

We recommend that Ofgem explicitly include systemic and market-level algorithmic bias in the ethics framework, and that ethics reviewers for relevant use cases include representation from innovation ecosystem participants – startups, platform operators, and academic researchers – not only consumer groups and licensees.

Q7. Stakeholder Support

Question

Do you have suggestions for how Ofgem can best support stakeholders throughout the pilot and beyond?

Four Mechanisms, One Platform Offer

Based on direct experience building and deploying AI tools for utility clients across Europe and MENA, we suggest the following:

- **Standardised data access protocols:** Many technology providers face inconsistent and slow data-sharing arrangements across different utility clients. The sandbox should establish baseline data access standards – format, latency, update frequency, and access method – that participating utilities commit to providing. This would dramatically reduce the integration overhead for technology partners and enable more representative testing.
- **Plain-language regulatory mapping:** Many AI developers working in the energy sector are not experts in UK energy regulation. Ofgem should publish a concise regulatory mapping document that identifies which regulations apply to which AI use cases, which compliance obligations arise, and which aspects remain genuinely uncertain. This would improve application quality and lower the barrier to entry for technology partners.
- **CurrentPulse as a sandbox data infrastructure:** CurrentPulse aggregates live market data from ENTSO-E, Open Power System Data, and Red Eléctrica ESIOs across seven market screens with an AI Query engine. This is precisely the kind of representative, real-time European market data that sandbox participants will need for meaningful AI testing against live grid conditions. We formally offer CurrentPulse as a data infrastructure layer for sandbox participants, subject to appropriate data sharing agreements, at no charge during the pilot.
- **Post-pilot commercialisation pathway:** The consultation is silent on what happens to use cases that demonstrate clear consumer and sector benefit after the 12-month pilot. A structured pathway from sandbox validation to commercial deployment – whether via the Energy Regulation Sandbox, UKRI/SIF funding, or direct utility procurement – would significantly increase the quality and ambition of applications from the outset. Without it, the

most capable technology partners will question whether the investment of time and IP is warranted.

Q8. General Feedback and Proposed Use Cases

Question

Do you have any other comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding the proposed pilot, the consultation process, or expected outcomes?

The Intelligence Gap: AI Must Also Be Accountable for What It Knows

The consultation focuses primarily on AI that operates within the energy system – dispatch optimisation, demand forecasting, consumer interaction, anomaly detection. This is appropriate and important.

We draw Ofgem’s attention to a structurally prior question: what AI knows about the energy innovation landscape, and how that knowledge shapes which technologies are evaluated, invested in, and deployed. The energy transition depends not only on efficiently operating existing assets, but on identifying and deploying the right new technologies at the right time. In our direct experience operating the GEI database with utility clients, AI systems that inform innovation strategy are already influencing procurement decisions and investor capital allocation. They are less visible than operational AI, but their influence on the long-run structure of the energy sector is at least as significant – and they carry regulatory risks that no existing framework addresses.

The Ofgem AI Technical Sandbox has an opportunity to be the first major regulatory initiative to address this dimension systematically. We propose two specific use cases for consideration.

Proposed Use Case 1: AI-Powered Innovation Matching and Bias Audit

Lead Participant type: A GB distribution or transmission licensee with an active innovation procurement function.

Technology Partner: CurrentWorks SL, using the GEI database (3,000+ startups, 44 grid challenges, 77 solution types).

Use case: Deploy an AI-powered innovation matching system within a licensee’s technology scouting process. Conduct a structured bias audit – examining geographic, linguistic, and technological bias in the taxonomy and matching outputs. Evaluate against an independent benchmark dataset. Produce published guidance on how innovation AI should be designed, audited, and reported.

Regulatory question addressed: Do existing regulatory frameworks adequately govern AI systems that shape utility technology procurement? Should such systems be subject to disclosure, audit, or bias testing requirements?

Success metrics:

- Quantified geographic, linguistic, and technological bias scores produced for the matching system, benchmarked against an independently curated reference dataset of comparable startups.
- Proportion of regulatory obligations mapped as clearly applicable, clearly inapplicable, or uncertain – target: 100% of relevant frameworks assessed within scope.
- Published bias audit methodology and findings, peer-reviewed by at least one academic institution, within the 12-month pilot window.

Data access: CurrentWorks holds the full GEI dataset as the primary data layer. An independent benchmark dataset will be agreed with the lead Participant and the Steering Group prior to commencement. No additional data infrastructure is required from Ofgem.

Proposed Use Case 2: Real-Time Market AI Query – Regulatory Boundary Testing

Lead Participant type: A GB electricity market participant or system operator.

Technology Partner: CurrentWorks SL, using the CurrentPulse AI Query engine.

Use case: Test the regulatory implications of an AI system that answers natural language questions about live European grid and market conditions, generating structured intelligence outputs that may influence operational or investment decisions. Identify where existing regulatory frameworks (market integrity, consumer protection, system operation codes) apply clearly, where they are unclear, and where gaps exist.

Regulatory question addressed: When an AI system interprets live market data and generates strategic recommendations, what disclosure, liability, and oversight obligations arise? Is the current regulatory framework adequate?

Success metrics:

- Structured regulatory mapping produced across at least five live query categories (e.g. dispatch signals, congestion alerts, price forecasts, interconnector status, generation mix analysis), classifying each against applicable regulatory obligations.
- Minimum of three regulatory uncertainty findings submitted to the AI Reg Lab for guidance consideration, with supporting evidence from live query outputs.

- Assessment of AI output accuracy and potential for market manipulation or consumer harm, conducted jointly with the lead Participant and published as a sector-learning document.

Data access: CurrentPulse has live ENTSO-E and Red Eléctrica ESIOS feeds operational and available immediately. The lead Participant will provide GB operational data under a data sharing agreement to be executed prior to commencement.

Both use cases are ready to proceed. CurrentWorks will submit formal applications when the sandbox application window opens and would welcome preliminary discussions with Ofgem's AI Policy team in the interim.

Summary of Recommendations

Our five principal recommendations, each grounded in operational evidence:

- **Structured Technology Partner designation:** Formal status, data access rights, IP provisions, and at least one Steering Group seat for technology providers. CurrentWorks is ready to serve in this role.
- **Innovation Intelligence AI as a use case category:** Explicitly include AI systems that classify and match technologies to deployment opportunities. This category carries regulatory risk that no existing framework addresses.
- **Cross-border regulatory implications criterion and TwinEU liaison:** Require applicants to declare cross-border deployment implications. Establish formal liaison with TwinEU, ENTSO-E, and ACER before the pilot launches. The TwinEU Iberian Peninsula demonstration operates in the same geography as CurrentPulse's live data infrastructure.
- **Systemic bias in the ethics framework:** Extend coverage beyond consumer-facing AI to include market-level and innovation ecosystem algorithmic bias, with ethics reviewers drawn from the technology and startup community.
- **Quarterly bulletins, interim milestones, and post-pilot pathway:** Commit to published findings at three and six months; specify the post-pilot commercialisation route for validated use cases from the outset.

Next Steps

CurrentWorks SL is submitting this response as both a substantive policy contribution and a clear statement of intent. We are ready to participate in the AI Technical Sandbox as a Structured Technology Partner from the point applications open. We have two specific, developed use cases, described in Q8 above, and the operational infrastructure to support them.

We are also willing to share our GEI taxonomy framework and CurrentPulse data architecture as reference models for how AI systems in the energy sector might be designed and audited, without obligation and at no cost.

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