

Ash to Assets: A HolmenHackathon

Have you ever wondered about the untapped potential hidden in everyday by-products? At Holmen, one of the biggest sawmill producers in Sweden, we're diving deep into one specific query: How can we transform wood ash - a by-product from our biofuel boilers created during the heating and drying process of wood - from waste to wonder?

Our mission is clear: to uncover a sustainable, profitable, and either circular or renewable avenue for this ash. Annual wood ash production of Holmen factories is approximately 450 tons. While there's undeniable value in returning some of it to our forests and land, we believe there's a world of innovative possibilities out there waiting to be discovered.

Your creativity and passion are the keys.

To those who rise to this challenge, Holmen offers an exciting opportunity. Successful Hackathon participants will be given a chance for business collaboration, opening doors to joint projects or pilot ventures to bring your visionary ideas to life.

We invite you to become part of this unique opportunity to tackle our challenge. Together with Holmen's experts and the companies in our BioBoosters network, you will have the opportunity to develop innovative methods and solutions. Are you the one to solve the challenge? Submit your application for this hackathon by 20.10.2023 [here](#).

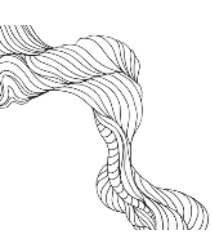
What is it about?

Across Sweden, sawmills, including those at Holmen, face a common challenge: finding sustainable and innovative uses for wood ash. This by-product emerges during our timber refining process, specifically from our biofuel boilers that fuel our drying operations. The primary source of this ash is the bark and sawdust from our production.

From an environmental standpoint, responsibly managing and repurposing wood ash is crucial. By finding innovative ways to utilize this by-product, we can reduce waste, lessen our environmental footprint, and contribute to more circular industrial practices.

Physically, wood ash possesses unique properties. Its texture, mineral content, and alkalinity can be harnessed in various applications, from agriculture to construction and beyond. Although we currently recycle a portion back into our forests, we believe there are more diverse and innovative applications yet to be explored.

Notably, two of our sawmills produce this ash. To give some perspective, our factories collectively produce approximately 450 tons of wood ash annually. As we continue our journey towards sustainable innovation, we invite thinkers, creators, and innovators to join us in this endeavor.



Welcome to solve the challenge!



What is Holmen looking for?

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We encourage participants to think outside the box, but solutions should have a clear connection to at least one of the following areas: sustainability, profitability, circularity, or renewability. They can, for example, consider how the ash can be reused within our own operations, or how it can be used to create new products or services. Ideas and solutions are evaluated based on their creativity, feasibility and business potential. To effectively address our challenge, we are seeking participants from a variety of companies and institutions. We are open to collaborations with actors from a vast array of sectors - ranging from academic institutions to companies close to the market. We are looking for solutions that are practically feasible and can be applied in our operations.

What is Holmen?

Holmen operates in five main business areas in Sweden: Forest, Timber, Cardboard, Paper, and Energy.

In the Forest sector, we focus on sustainable forestry practices. For each tree that is cut down, two new ones are planted, ensuring a continuous cycle of growth and renewal.

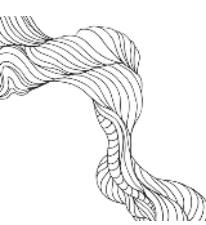
Under the Timber area, we offer high-quality wood that is primarily used in the construction industry. Our timber is robust and serves as the structural backbone in resilient houses.

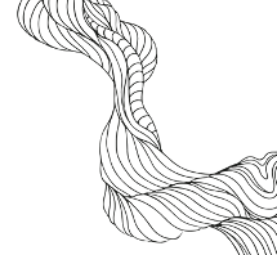
Our Cardboard division specializes in eco-friendly packaging solutions. Our cardboard is not only of high quality but is also produced with a focus on sustainability.

In the Paper sector, we provide sustainable newsprint, magazine paper, and book paper. We strive to minimize our environmental impact throughout the entire production process.

In the Energy sector, we are committed to renewable energy production, with a focus on hydro and wind power. Our renewable energy initiatives support both our own operations and contribute to a sustainable energy landscape.

Through these business areas, Holmen demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability, not just by delivering high-quality products, but also by minimizing our carbon footprint and contributing to a greener future.





Read more: <https://www.holmen.com/>

Participants

Hackathon is open for all interested teams: companies, research institutes, educational organizations, and other actors. Your team can also consist of collaboration between several organizations.

Hackathon is international and working language is English.

Hackathon participation is for free. We will also offer compensation for travel expenses to international teams from the Baltic Sea Region (Norway, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).

Read more from: BioBoosters Hackathon [Rules of Participation](#)

Jury

Jury consists of representatives of Holmen supported by organizer's representatives.

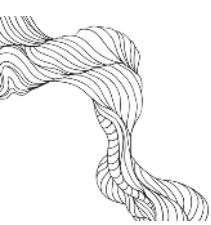
Why should I participate?

As a finalist, you will have a chance to establish long-term business co-operation. Furthermore, you get to:

- Establish co-operation and network with other companies and specialists with interest to the same field;
- Establish international contacts and connections in the field of your interest;
- Acid test your idea with direct feedback from a potential client and discover how to fit your solution idea to the need of the end-users;
- Develop the commercialization potential of your idea and discover new business opportunities with expert mentors' support; and
- Get international recognition and visibility for your team's knowhow.

Timetable

- Publication of the Hackathon invitation 26.09.2023 at 13.00-14.30 CET in a [webinar](#)
- Send in your application by 20.10.2023. The application includes your preliminary idea proposal and a short description of the expertise in your team.
- Selected teams are published by 03.11.2023.
- Kick-off event is organized online on 14.11.2023 at 09.00 CET. In the Kick-off event, the participant teams will meet each other and the Holmen representatives to hear more about the challenge and expectations of Holmen. The teams will present their preliminary ideas and get feedback for further development.
- Hackathon Days 07.12.2023-08.12.2023 will be organized in Umeå. Programme includes mentoring for the participant teams as well as a pitching session for presentations on teams' solution proposals to Holmen. After Jury deliberation,



winner(s) are announced at the end of the Day. Online participation is possible if you are not able to travel onsite.



Apply [here](#)

More information

Ida Norberg, BioFuel Region ida.norberg@biofuelregion.se +46 70 331 54 31

Eva Fridman, BioFuel Region eva.fridman@biofuelregion.se +46 70 263 51 62

Marcus Kyrk, Holmen marcus.kyrk@holmen.com +46 73 086 59 05

Organizer

BioFuel Region is a non-profit member owned company with the mission to enable and facilitate the transition to a viable bioeconomy and a fossil-free vehicle fleet in northern Sweden. We do that by channeling and coordinating creative projects, collaborating with the public sector, business and research and development sectors and by impacting policy issues on regional, national and EU-level.

In collaboration with

JAMK, Jyväskylä University of Applied Science has long experience of organizing hackathons. BioPaavo by Jamk is a Bioeconomy Business Accelerator that aims to create new business and globally significant solutions to combat climate change in the international bioeconomy environment. BioPaavo's key tasks are to develop bioeconomy business and create sustainable business based on new innovations, utilizing new technologies and digitalization, developing abilities and know-how, and building business networks and ecosystems.

BioBoosters project network supports HolmenHackathon via communication and marketing cooperation. Network features 9 prominent bioeconomy innovation hubs around the Baltic Sea – from Finland, Sweden, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. BioBoosters project will organize 18 Hackathons to support the sustainability mission of the bioeconomy companies. BioBoosters project is co-funded via the Interreg BSR programme and the European Regional Development Fund.

[\[Read more about BioBoosters\]](#)

