

## NaturaSì and Aspiag Service to participate in SUPER-HEERO, a European project to boost energy efficiency in supermarkets

- The NaturaSì and Aspiag Service supermarkets that will participate in the project are located in Padua, Italy.
- The stores will be provided a series of energy auditing services and a set of innovative financial schemes to implement measures that improve their energy efficiency.

*Padua (Italy), 13 July, 2021* – The supermarkets NaturaSì and Aspiag Service in Padua, Italy, have confirmed their participation as pilot units in SUPER-HEERO, a European project funded under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme that aims to boost energy efficiency investment in small and medium supermarkets.

Two different stores have already been identified to install smart meters and assess energy consumption in sight of planning energy efficiency and technological retrofit measures. The smart meters will be provided and installed free of charge and will remain property of the supermarket at the end of project. Moreover, the pilot units will be introduced to a set innovative financial schemes, loyalty programmes and customer rewards through which they could finance the energy efficiency measures needed. Last, but not least, the supermarkets will be included in a series of outreach and communication activities, as well as in a free advertising campaign that will boost their positioning at both national and EU level.

Energy efficiency investments are important for the environment and convenient for expected return and payback times. However, in the retail sector, it is still difficult to attract private finance to boost the energy transition process on a large scale, and supermarkets are a good example of this. Of the total operating cost of a supermarket, energy can account for between 10% and 15%, which is huge for a business operating with tight margins.

SUPER-HEERO aims at providing a replicable financial scheme for energy efficiency investment in small and medium supermarkets, based on three methods:

- Citizen financing through crowdfunding, co-operative schemes, and gamification strategies build on loyalty programmes.
- Strategic partnerships with ESCOs and utilities that financially support energy efficiency investments. This is based on the benefits of engaging a large base of energy users through a supermarket's co-operative programme.
- And engagement of technology providers in performance-based schemes that allow them to profit from their products and technologies. This is achieved through innovative circular business



models like leasing and technology as a service to make the technology more affordable and accessible for supermarkets and similar businesses.

With these methods, SUPER-HEERO provides an instrument for supermarkets to access the much-needed funding that allows for the implementation of energy efficiency strategies, unlocking potential energy savings of over 40%. This, in turn, would generate economic, social and environmental gains

### **About SUPER-HEERO**

The SUPER-HEERO project, which kicked off in June 2020, aims at triggering investments in energy efficiency in supermarkets through the involvement of stakeholders and local communities. The project's approach relies on three main instruments: engineered Energy Performance Contracts (EPC), product-service models for technology providers engagement, and community-based crowdfunding and cooperative initiatives. The novelty of this initiative relies in the innovative concept that it leverages customer loyalty programmes, providing a new way for supermarket operators and their shoppers to work together towards energy efficiency.

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