

Media Title : The Star
Headline : FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO DRIVE ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY
Date : 13 December 2021
Section : Business / Bizbytes
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FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO DRIVE ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY

WHILE building owners and homeowners are ready to jump onboard energy efficiency projects to reduce energy consumption, there is often a lack of financing support and expertise to find the right energy service companies (ESCOs).

To drive the development and adoption of energy efficiency projects in the country, UOB Malaysia has launched Asia's first integrated financing platform, U-Energy, to help businesses and homeowners save on electricity bills, cut carbon emissions and achieve their sustainability goals.

The U-Energy platform features 10 ESCOs from which customers can tap into for energy efficiency projects. ESCOs play a key role in the ecosystem by providing technology and services such as project consultation, sustainable and cost-efficient design energy audit, as well as end-to-end implementation and management of the retrofits to buildings.

These U-Energy partners can support common energy efficiency projects such as improving chiller and air conditioning efficiency, installing solar panels on rooftops, switching to LED lights, optimising energy and power management systems, changing the building façade to reflect direct sunlight to reduce heat absorption, as well as replacing elevators with energy-regeneration technology.

On average, the ESCOs on the U-Energy platform can help customers cut at least 20% in energy consumption.

The financial programme is supported by government agencies such as the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA) Malaysia, Malaysian Investment Development Authority, and Malaysian Green Technology Corporation.

Under UOB Malaysia's green financing scheme, commercial and industrial building owners can opt for direct purchase of the energy-efficient equipment or system. This offer includes a loan of up to RM25mil with a maximum seven-year loan facility, subject to optimal equipment and system sizing by the U-Energy partners.

Loan applications of building owners by existing UOB Malaysia customers will be put on a fast-track approval process. They will also have a choice to take up the "energy-as-a-service" model whereby UOB Malaysia will provide green loans to the U-Energy partners at no upfront cost.

For homeowners, a 0% interest instalment plan of up to three years is available when UOB credit cards are used as the mode of payment for their energy efficiency retrofitting projects.

U-Energy is part of UOB's sustainable financing solutions under the UOB Smart City Sustainable Finance Framework. The other schemes are the Green Trade Finance Framework, Real Estate Sustainable Finance Framework and Green Circular Economy Framework.

Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the objective of UOB's sustainable financing framework is to enable companies to apply for green banking products without having to go through the hassle of developing their own financing framework.

For more information on U-Energy, visit www.UOBgroup.com/u-energy