

A graphic design featuring a large rectangular frame. Inside the frame, the words "Power on Trial" are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. To the left of the frame, a jagged line resembling a lightning bolt or a speech bubble tail extends from the left edge towards the word "Trial". Below the frame, several jagged lines radiate upwards towards the bottom of the frame. At the bottom of the image, a large oval contains the text "Who Should Control Our City's Energy Future?".

# Power on Trial

Who Should  
Control  
Our City's  
Energy Future?

## Imprint

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# Introduction

## Preface

This roleplay was developed in the context of an Erasmus+ Small-scale partnership, in order to support teachers and other educational staff who are working in the field of vocational orientation. Our goal with this role play game is to offer an effective and creative method which motivates young students to pursue a career in the renewable energy sector.

In the course of this game students will reenact a disagreement between representatives of fossil fuel companies, sustainable energy experts and a series of different professionals working in jobs linked to renewable and conventional energy. Both the fossil fuel company and the renewable energy company representatives' are trying to convince a judge that their company should be in charge of the city's energy supply.

## Learning Objectives

- **Primarily, this game will teach students about a number of different real-live jobs in the field of renewable energy (Smart-Energy Technologist, Meteorologist, Electro Technician, Wind Turbine Technician, Biomass Heating Technician).**
- **Students will also be encouraged to deepen their knowledge of the renewable energy sector in the context of the climate crisis, as well as the general question of energy supply.**
- **Furthermore, students will be able to improve their ability to concisely develop an argument and take part in a fact-led debate. The activity thus encourages debate, critical thinking, and empathy by asking students to step into the shoes of citizens, workers, scientists, and decision-makers affected by the energy transition.**

# Using the Role Play in your Classroom – Teacher Instructions

## Preparations

We suggest initially taking some time to discuss the topic of renewable energy and the climate crisis in class, in order to emphasize the importance of these topics and raise the students' interest. For doing so, you can refer to the “context” section of the student worksheet.

You can decide how deeply you'd like to engage with the topic:

- For a quick debate session, students can receive the role cards directly and prepare with minimal research.
- For a deeper engagement, we recommend giving students time to research their roles, and with the context: what are fossil fuels or renewable energy, what do they do to the environment, what is climate justice, etc.... This can be done in-class or as home-work.

## Group Setup

- You can choose whether to use all of the role cards or only a selection. Feel free to adapt them to fit your thematic focus, learning goals, and class size.
- We recommend forming small groups (2–3 students) for each role card.
- We suggest assigning the role “Chairperson of the AGJ” as a “dual role”. It makes sense for one of the roles that is a member of the AGJ (sustainable energy expert, meteorologist etc.) to also act as the chairperson of the AGJ (therefore there is no extra explanation of the role provided).

# Using the Role Play in Your Classroom – Teacher Instructions

## Role Cards

This role play kit includes the following role cards, with optional argument cards:

- Judge Panel
- Representative of the EEC (a traditional energy company)
- Three role cards for Unemployed Fossil Fuel Workers
- Youth Council Representative
- Chairperson of the Association of Green Jobs (AGJ)
- Sustainable-Energy Expert (AGJ Member)
- Meteorologist (AGJ Member)
- Electronics Technician Trainee (AGJ Member)
- Wind Energy Technician (AGJ Member)
- Biomass Heating Technician (AGJ Member)

## Optional Add-Ons

To allow for larger groups and broader perspectives you can expand or customize the role play by adding more roles, such as:

- Local politicians
- Media reporters
- Concerned citizens
- Climate activists

## Time Frame

The structure is flexible. However, we suggest the following:

- Preparation and group work: 45 minutes
- Debate: 30–45 minutes
- Debrief or reflection: 15–25 minutes

## Room Setup and Materials

Print out the role cards and if needed the student worksheet. You may display the scene (included in the student worksheet) as a poster or slide to set the mood.

Arrange the room for a public hearing setup: A table for the judges (in front). Tables or chairs in a circle or semicircle for the role speakers. For added realism, you can use props such as a judge's gavel or nameplates.

# Roleplay Instructions

## Step-by-Step

1. *Preparation comes first:* Options on how to prepare the class to engage with the topic of the role play are listed above.
2. *Set the scenario* by reading the „Scene“ section below together with the class - this will introduce the students to the role plays storyline.
3. *Divide the class into groups* of 2-3 and hand out the role cards and student worksheet if needed. Be careful only to hand out the optional argument cards if you deem it necessary.
4. *Group work:* Allow ca. 45 minutes for the students to read their cards and prepare for the debate in groups. Each group prepares their arguments and their opening statement together and selects one main speaker for the debate. This setup encourages collaboration and gives quieter students a role in shaping the arguments. During this time, the team of judges prepares an opening statement as well, which explains the situation and provides some context for why you are all here. The judge panel also familiarize themselves with the rules and the structure of the debate.

5. *Debate:* After the groups have prepared, instruct the judges to take their place in front and the group speakers to take their places in the semi-circle of chairs. Then pass the word to the judge panel, who will open the public hearing and explain the rules and structure of the debate to the speakers. One of the members of the judge panel is given a stop watch or timer in order to make sure the speakers keep to the time limits. The debate ends when there are no new arguments and the judge has come to a decision.
6. *Debrief / Reflection:* You can end this activity with a short check-in and reflection with all the participants, using using the reflection questions listed below:

Group size:	ca. 15–30 participants
Required time:	approx. 90 min
Required material:	Printed role cards and student worksheets, timer

# Debriefing Briefing

## Content related questions

- **What did you learn about energy systems and climate change today?**
- **What are the main differences between fossil fuels and renewable energy sources?**
- **Did you discover any new jobs or roles involved in the energytransition? Which ones stood out to you?**

## Debate related questions

- **What argument did you find most convincing, and why?**
- **Was there any point during the debate where your opinion changed? What influenced that change?**
- **Did anyone say something that surprised you or made you think differently?**

## Critical Thinking and Decision Making

- **If you were on the judge panel, what decision would you make and why?**
- **Was there a clear „right“ answer in this debate, or is the issue more complicated?**
- **What trade-offs did you notice between energy, jobs, the environment, and community needs?**

## Personal Engagement

- **If you had to choose one of the roles to do as a real job, which would you pick and why?**
- **What does this debate make you think about your own future and your role in climate action?**
- **What's one thing you could do in your everyday life that connects to the ideas discussed today?**

# Student Worksheet

## Context

The energy sector plays a crucial role in the fight against one of the greatest challenges of our time: the global climate crisis. 73% or more of climate-damaging emissions worldwide are caused by the energy sector. In order to fight climate change these emissions have to be reduced drastically. This makes a complete transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources such as solar or wind power necessary. There are many qualified and motivated specialists working in the field of renewable energy, whose jobs you will learn about in the course of this game. At the same time, there is currently a shortage of skilled workers for the expansion of wind and solar energy. And this is only one of the struggles standing in the way of a successful energy transition. Fossil fuels have a strong lobby working for them, who often cite the costs of transitioning to renewable energy as a reason not to do it. Another disadvantage of solar and wind energy is the dependence on the weather, which makes these sources less reliable than fossil fuels. Nevertheless, strengthening the field of renewable energies is essential for a future worth living in Europe and worldwide.

## Scene

Our town is in danger. Recent extreme weather changes have challenged our city. Icy temperatures, thunderstorms and hail occur one day, oppressive dry heat the next. This is a huge challenge to our home's infrastructure and has caused the mayor to rethink which companies can handle the energy supplies best.

Until recently, a big company called *EEC* provided energy for the city. They've been doing this for a long time and are known for their reliable, traditional methods. But their system runs on fossil fuels, which release harmful gases into the air and make climate change worse. That's why the city chose to terminate EEC's contract and gave the job to the *Association of Green Jobs (AGJ)* instead – a newer group that promises cleaner energy and more local jobs.

The EEC has been dealing with many cities' energy supplies, they have a lot of experience with their traditional methods. The loss of their contract means monetary loss for them, which is why they

are now suing the city to get it back. They are arguing that the decision was unfair and puts energy security at risk.

The Association of Green Jobs is fairly new, but they claim to have more sustainable methods of handling the energy supply, with new job opportunities for the local people.

Now we are in a public hearing in court, where different groups were invited to present their arguments. Besides the judges, representatives of EEC and their former employees, youth representatives and members of the AGJ are present at this hearing. The goal is to find a solution which energy supply company is better for our town. The fate of the city depends on your arguments – but in the end, the judges will have the final word.

My Role: \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions

- Find your group and read your role card.
- Make notes on why your role is important and discuss with your group.
- Together, prepare your opening statement, which should not be longer than 1 minute.
- Prepare a strategy and further arguments together, on how to convince the other people in the public hearing of the importance of your beliefs.
- Decide who will represent your group in the discussion.

## Judge Panel



### Goal:

Help with the decision who will supply the city with energy in the future based on the best arguments; Ensure justice.

### Responsibilities:

- Listen to the different parties.
- Manage courtroom procedures and maintain order by providing parties the same amount of time to present their arguments.
- Ensure both parties have the opportunity to present their cases fully and fairly.
- Look at the problem fairly, without picking sides.

### Task:

Deliver the opening for the debate, explain the situation and why you are here. Make sure everyone's opinion is heard, but let the participants engage in the debate freely. You make sure no one speaks longer than their permitted time and you call order when the debate gets too loud or chaotic.

## Judge Panel

### Structure of the debate:

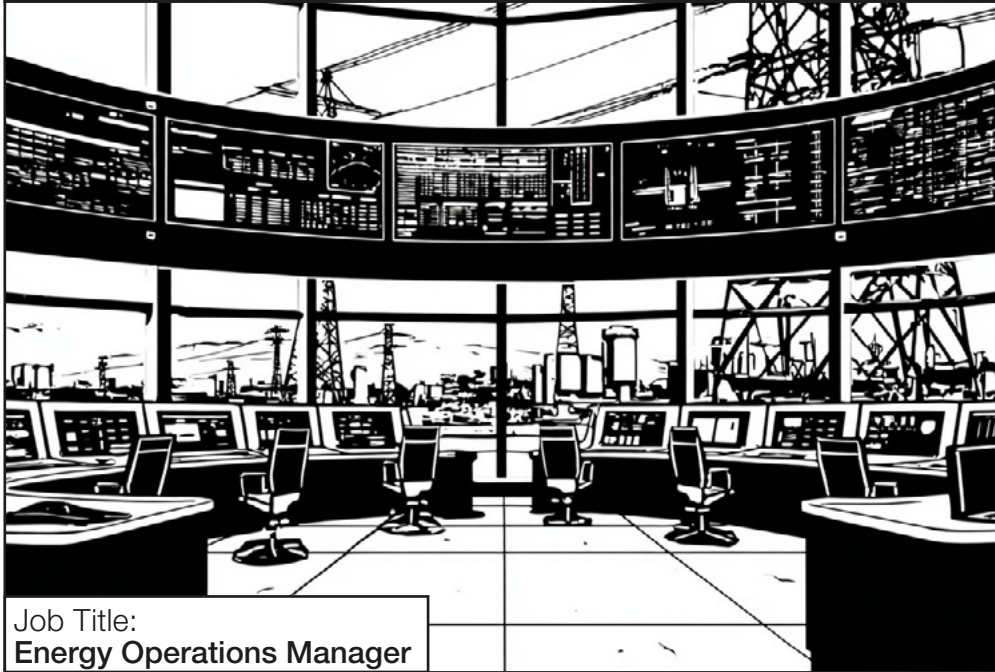
- **Opening Statement:** The representative of the EEC and the chairperson of the AGJ will open the debate with a statement for each side. The EEC begins, then the AGJ. The opening statement can only be one minute long.
- **Free Debate:** All members of both parties can freely bring forward the arguments from their perspective. The judge ensures that everyone has the same opportunity to speak.
- **Closing Statement:** The nominated member of each party has the opportunity to give a closing statement, maximum 2 minutes each.
- The judge panel makes a decision.

### Rules of the debate:

- Everyone makes arguments coming from the perspective of their role card.
- The debate is respectful and calm.
- The members of the debate let each other finish their sentences and keep their statements short.
- Everyone has the opportunity to speak, and the debate shall not be hijacked by a single or few participants.



## Representative of EEC



### Goal:

You are suing the city to get back the energy supply contract. To do that you defend your company in court and prove that conventional energy is still the best option for the city's current needs.

### You ...

- argue that your company ensures reliable, affordable and secure electricity, that does not harm the environment that much.
- believe fossil fuel systems provide reliable and affordable power for the city.
- are concerned that the new company (AGJ) relies on less reliable renewable sources.
- are worried about job losses and economic impact from a fast energy transition.

### Task:

You give an opening statement on behalf of the EEC when the public hearing starts.

## Representative of EEC

### Possible Explanation of Role Card:

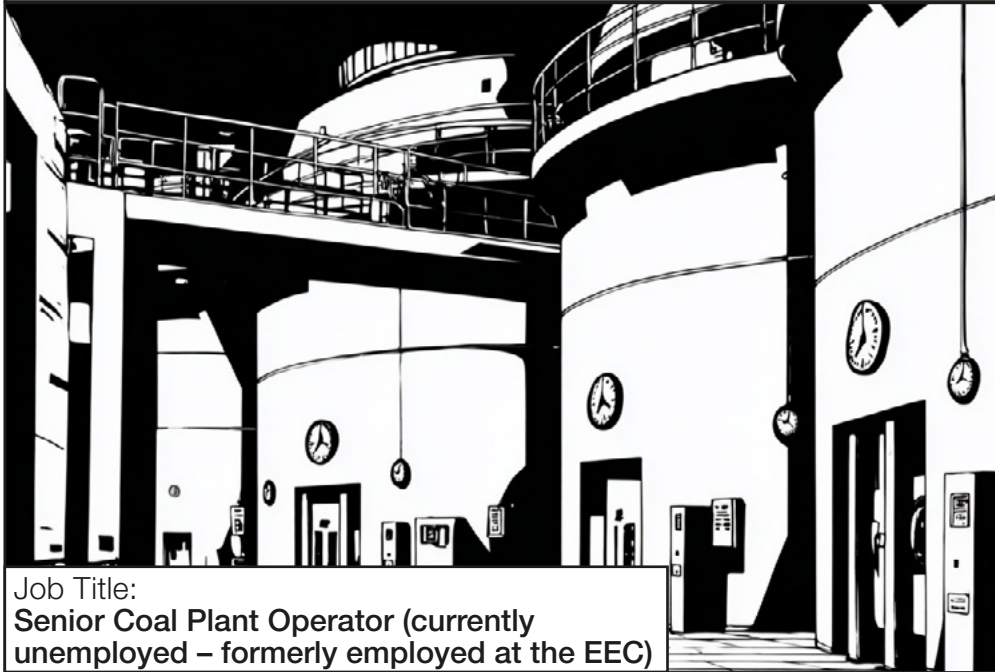
An Energy Operations Manager is like the “team leader” of a power company. They make sure that electricity is produced and delivered to homes and businesses safely and on time. They plan the daily operations, solve problems when something goes wrong, and make sure the company follows safety and environmental rules.

### Possible Arguments:

- **Follow the Rules:** We follow all laws and fulfill our contracts with the city.
- **Reliable Supply:** We provide constant power, unlike green sources that depend on weather.
- **Affordable:** Switching to green energy now would raise electricity prices for citizens.
- **Jobs and Economy:** Our company gives work to local people and supports the city's economy.
- **Realistic Transition:** We want green energy too, but changing too fast could cause problems – we need to take it slow and steady.



## Former Coal Plant Worker



Job Title:  
Senior Coal Plant Operator (currently  
unemployed – formerly employed at the EEC)

### Goal:

You want the city to keep using fossil fuels for now. You think switching to green energy is happening too fast and might cause more problems than it solves.

### You ...

- worked for more than 20 years making sure everything ran smoothly at a coal power plant.
- lost your job after the city cancelled the EEC contract.
- believe renewable energy is unreliable and overhyped.
- feel betrayed by the city, which once relied on fossil fuels for its energy and jobs.
- want energy decisions to be based on reliability, not politics or “green trends.”

## Former Coal Plant Worker

### Possible Explanation of Role Card:

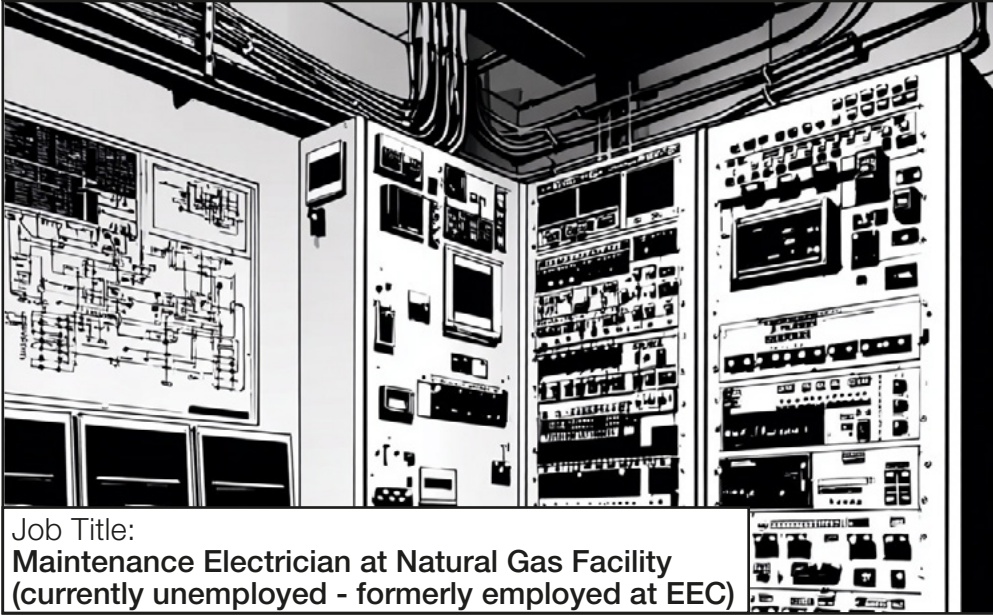
A Senior Coal Plant Operator is someone who runs and looks after a big power station that makes electricity by burning coal. They check that all the machines are working properly, solve problems when something breaks, and make sure the electricity keeps flowing to homes and businesses. Because they have many years of experience, they often guide and train younger workers at the plant.

### Possible Arguments:

- **Energy Security:** When the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine, who keeps the lights on?
- **Respect for Experience:** We built this system. We know how to keep it running safely and efficiently.
- **Skepticism Toward New Tech:** Green energy is full of promises – but are we testing it on real people's livelihoods?
- **Fairness:** We're not asking to stop progress – but don't erase what works before you've built something better.
- **Pride and Identity:** This wasn't just a job – it was a life's work. And now it's being treated like a mistake.



## Former Employee of a Natural Gas Plant



Job Title:

Maintenance Electrician at Natural Gas Facility  
(currently unemployed - formerly employed at EEC)

Goal:

You want to support the shift to green energy but feel conflicted because you need stable income and fear being left behind.

You ...

- provided electrical maintenance for gas-powered energy systems.
- lost your job when the facility downsized after the green transition began.
- personally believe climate change is real and action is needed.
- have a mortgage, kids in school, and see no clear path into the green sector.
- are torn between supporting change and protecting your family's future.

## Former Employee of a Natural Gas Plant

Possible Explanation of Role Card:

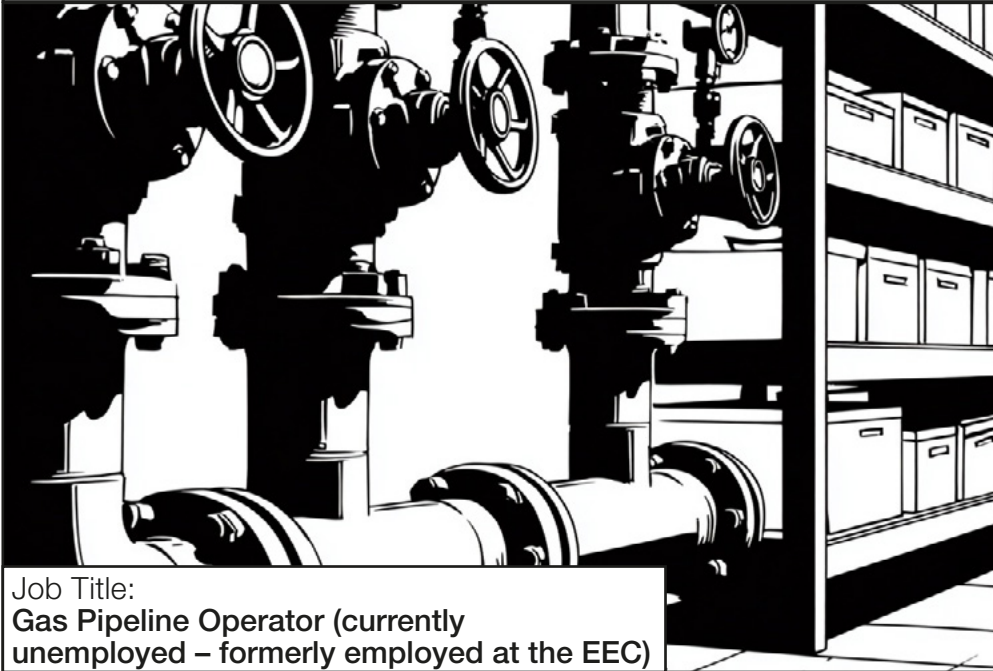
A Maintenance Electrician makes sure all the machines and electrical systems at the gas plant work safely and correctly. They check wires, fix broken equipment, and prevent problems like power failures or gas leaks. Their job keeps the plant running and the city's energy supply secure.

Possible Arguments:

- *Fair Transition:* I believe in clean energy – but people like me need help to get there.
- *Invisible Workers:* Everyone talks about solar panels, but no one sees the workers who kept the old systems running.
- *Support Gap:* I applied for retraining – the courses are full or far away. What am I supposed to do in the meantime?
- *Speed vs. Stability:* I'm not against change, but it has to be realistic. A fast transition with no plan leaves people stranded.
- *Emotional Conflict:* I want a greener future – for my kids. But I also need to feed them today.



## Former Gas Pipeline Operator



Job Title:  
Gas Pipeline Operator (currently  
unemployed – formerly employed at the EEC)

### Goal:

You support green energy in principle but feel frustrated and anxious because you lost your job and fear being forgotten in the process. You want to be included in planning so your skills and future aren't ignored.

### You ...

- spent years checking and fixing gas pipelines that bring energy to homes and factories.
- believe pipelines are still needed during the transition but you are upset about sudden job loss and lack of clear support.
- are worried the shift is moving too fast, putting safety and livelihoods at risk without enough help for workers.
- feel conflicted – agree green energy is important but resent being left behind and uncertain about retraining opportunities.

## Former Gas Pipeline Operator

### Possible Explanation of Role Card:

A gas pipeline operator makes sure that the pipes carrying natural gas to homes, schools, and factories are safe and working properly. They check for leaks, repair broken parts, and keep the gas flowing so people have heat, hot water, and energy.

### Possible Arguments:

- **Safety Concerns:** Pipelines are critical and shutting them down too fast could cause serious problems – but no one asked us how to do this safely.
- **Frustration with Transition:** I want green energy to work, but this change has hurt me and my family. We need better support and real job options.
- **Value of Experience:** Our skills matter, but it feels like we're being forgotten in the rush to 'green' everything.
- **Uncertain Future:** Retraining sounds good, but who's actually helping us? It's scary to think about starting over.
- **Need for Respect:** We kept the city's energy running for years. We deserve respect and a real chance, not just empty promises.
- **Demand for Inclusion:** If you want us on board, include us in the plans – don't just replace us overnight



## Youth Council Representative



Job Title:  
Elected Youth Spokesperson

Goal:  
Speak up for young people and demand a clean, safe future by supporting strong climate action that lasts for many years.

You ...

- are elected by your peers to voice youth concerns in civic debates.
- believe sustainability is a fundamental right, not just policy.

## Youth Council Representative

Possible Explanation of Role Card:

A young person chosen by other kids and teens to speak for them and share their ideas and concerns with adults.

Possible Arguments:

- **Future Generations Matter:** The decisions we make today will affect our lives and the planet we inherit – so we need bold action now.
- **Sustainability is a Right:** Clean air, water, and energy aren't luxuries – they're basic rights everyone deserves.
- **Long-Term Thinking:** Short-term profits can't come before the health of our environment and communities.
- **Urgency of Climate Action:** Extreme weather shows we can't wait any longer – delaying only makes problems worse.
- **Support Green Jobs:** Investing in renewable energy creates new, sustainable jobs for young people like me.
- **Hold Leaders Accountable:** We want leaders who listen to science and youth voices, not just business interests.
- **Intergenerational Justice:** It's unfair that older generations benefit now while we bear the costs later.



## Chairperson of the Association of Green Jobs (AGJ)



Job Title:  
Chairperson & Public Spokesperson of AGJ

### Goal:

Represent AGJ as a united front in the public hearing. Present the various different jobs represented in the AGJ. Defend the organization's vision of a fair, fast, and science-based transition to 100% renewable energy, while offering realistic solutions for jobs, infrastructure, and energy security.

### You ...

- lead and organize AGJ projects and talks with the public.
- make sure climate plans help everyone and create good local green jobs.
- have experience in politics and planning how energy is used.
- works together with youth groups, technicians, and scientists to build a plan that includes all voices.

### Task:

You give an opening statement on behalf of the AGJ when the public hearing starts. In order to present the variety of jobs found in the AGJ, talk to your peers before the debate.

## Chairperson of the Association of Green Jobs (AGJ)

### Possible Arguments:

- **Unified Vision:** Our members – from climate scientists to technicians – bring real, local solutions. We're not just theorists – we're on the ground.
- **Putting the needs of the community first:** This isn't just a business decision. It's about protecting lives, public infrastructure, and our city's future.
- **Job Creation and Justice:** We don't want anyone left behind. That's why we offer retraining and job opportunities in renewables.
- **Crisis Response:** Extreme weather shows we need action now. Delay costs lives and money.
- **Legal and Climate Alignment:** Our energy systems meet both EU laws and the city's climate goals. Fossil fuel companies cannot say the same.
- **Realistic Planning:** We're not tearing everything down overnight. We're building smart, flexible systems that include people from every background.
- **Moral Leadership:** If we don't act, who will? Our city can lead the way toward a fair, green future.



## Sustainable-Energy Expert [AGJ Member]



Job Title:  
Smart-Energy Technologist

### Goal:

Prove that AI (Artificial Intelligence) – and IoT (Internet of Things) – driven renewable energies can meet the city's power needs with lower emissions and cost.

### You ...

- design automated control systems for solar, wind, and biomass plants.
- know EU energy rules and local efficiency standards.
- have led pilot projects that cut city-level energy use.

## Sustainable-Energy Expert [AGJ Member]

### Possible Explanation of Role Card:

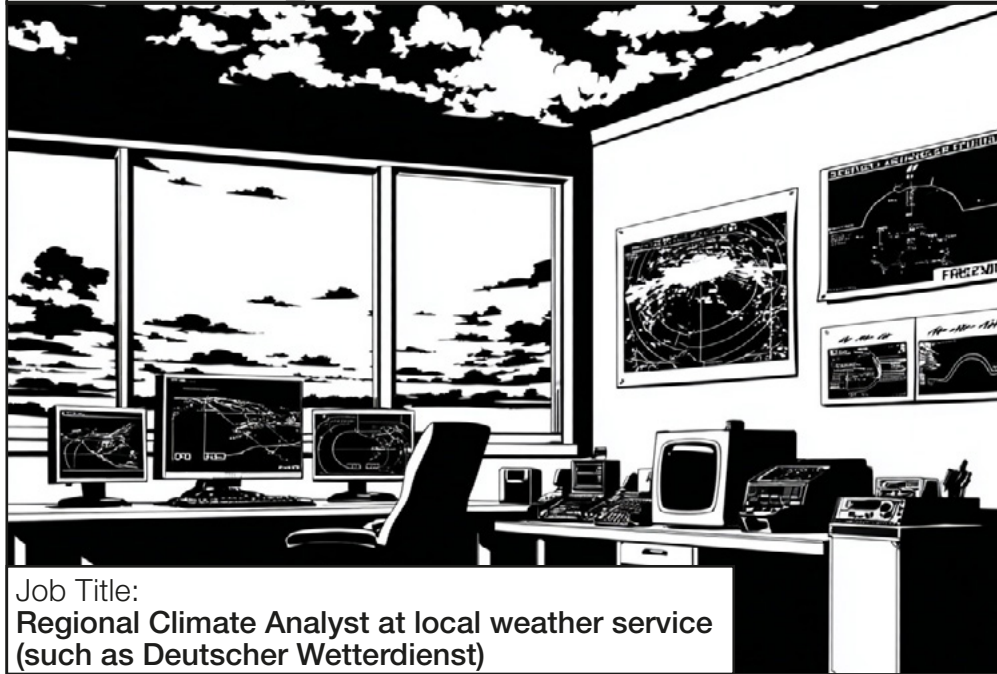
A **Smart-Energy Technologist** makes sure the city can use clean energy like solar, wind, and biomass safely and efficiently. They set up automatic systems that control how energy is produced and used, so nothing is wasted. They help the city save money and lower pollution, and they test new projects to show that green energy can power the city reliably.

### Possible Arguments:

- **Smart Technology:** Using AI and smart systems makes solar, wind, and biomass energy cheaper and more efficient.
- **High Standards:** Our setups follow EU rules to save energy and protect the environment.
- **Proven Success:** Pilot projects prove smart renewables lower the city's energy use.
- **Reliable Power:** Smart tech helps prevent blackouts by balancing energy supply automatically.



# Meteorologist



Job Title:  
Regional Climate Analyst at local weather service  
(such as Deutscher Wetterdienst)

Goal:  
Show that more and more heatwaves and floods in our city are a serious warning – and a good reason to switch to clean, renewable energy from AGJ.

You ...

- keep track of dangerous weather and warn the city when things might get risky.
- know from years of data that pollution from fossil fuels is making climate change worse.
- Help city leaders understand how to make smart energy choices that protect people and the planet

# Meteorologist

Possible Explanation of Role Card:

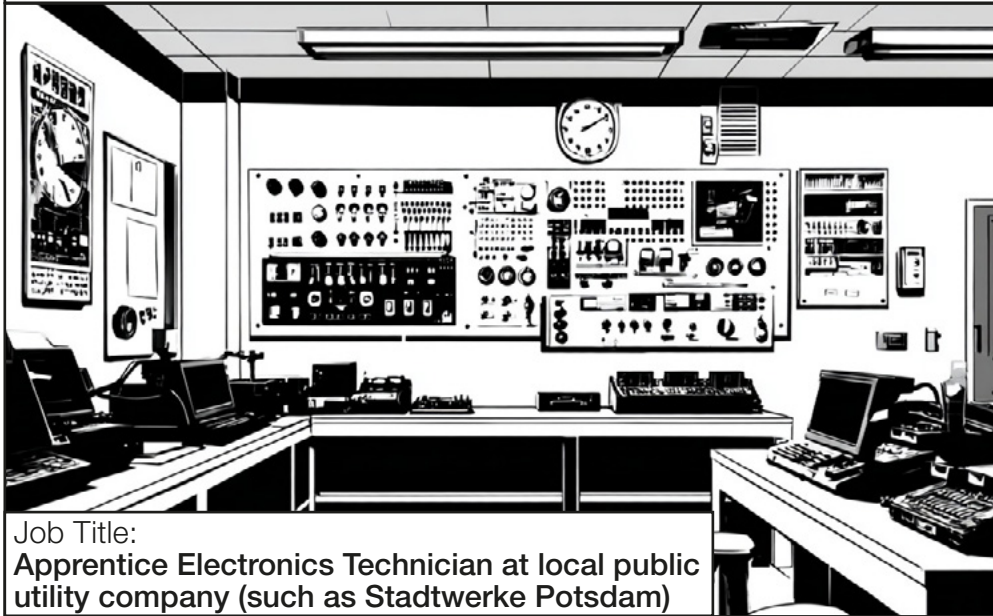
A **Regional Climate Analyst** is a weather expert who studied meteorology to understand and analyze heatwaves, floods, storms, and other extreme weather in an area. They track how the weather is changing over time and help explain how climate change affects the city. They warn the city when big weather risks are coming and give advice on how to make better, safer energy choices for the future.

Possible Arguments:

- **Climate Warning:** Extreme weather like heatwaves and floods are increasing because of fossil fuel pollution.
- **Clear Evidence:** Our data shows burning fossil fuels causes the climate damage we see.
- **Urgent Action:** Switching to renewable energy is the best way to protect our city from future disasters.
- **Expert Advice:** I guide city planners to choose energy solutions that keep people safe



## Electronics Technician Trainee [AGJ Member]



Job Title:  
Apprentice Electronics Technician at local public utility company (such as Stadtwerke Potsdam)

Goal:  
Show that switching to AGJ's smart energy system makes power safer and more reliable – and still keeps local jobs.

You ...

- maintain and repair city tram power lines, streetlights, and energy networks.
- are studying electrical fundamentals and how to use digital tools that help detect and fix problems faster.
- understand that the smart grid that AGJ wants to build uses these kinds of tools to make the energy system work more safely and efficiently.
- see job opportunities in both areas but you support renewable energies.

## Electronics Technician Trainee [AGJ Member]

Possible Explanation of Role Cards:

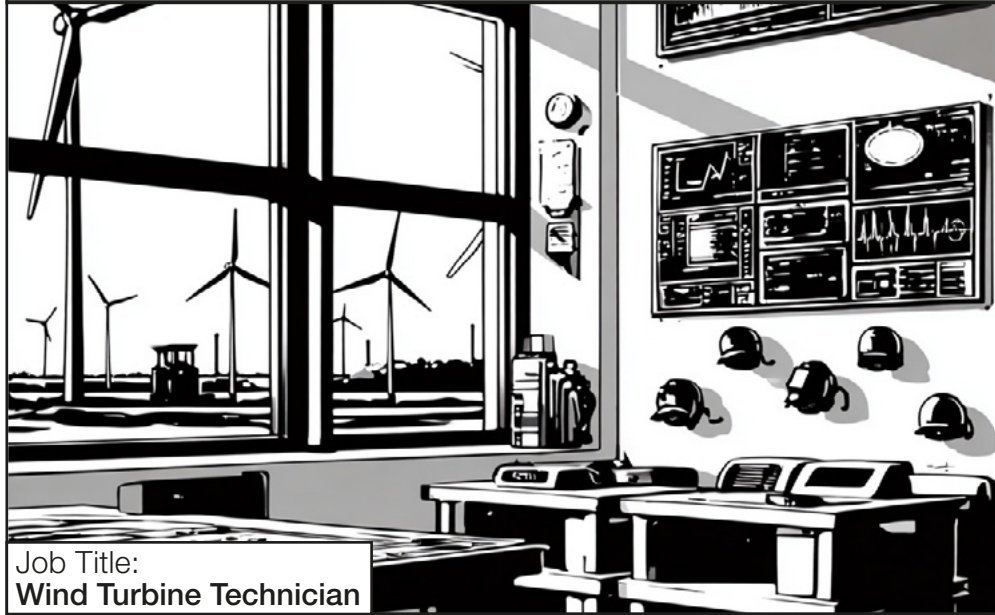
You're training to fix and maintain things like streetlights and tram power lines. You're learning new tech tools and support the move to green energy because it creates local jobs and keeps the city running safely.

Possible Arguments:

- *Modern Grid:* Upgrading to a smart energy grid makes power safer and more reliable.
- *Job Opportunities:* Learning new digital skills opens more local job chances.
- *Balanced Approach:* We can keep local jobs while switching to clean energy by updating the grid.
- *Power Security:* Smart renewables help avoid outages and keep the city running smoothly.



## Wind Energy Technician [AGJ Member]



Job Title:  
**Wind Turbine Technician**

### Goal:

**Advocate for expanding wind energy to provide clean, reliable power and local green jobs.**

### You ...

- install, inspect, and maintain wind turbines in the region.
- are skilled in electrical and mechanical systems, safety protocols, and troubleshooting (finding and fixing problems in a system or machine).
- see firsthand how wind energy reduces carbon emissions and you support sustainable local employment.

## Wind Energy Technician [AGJ Member]

### Possible Explanation of Role Cards:

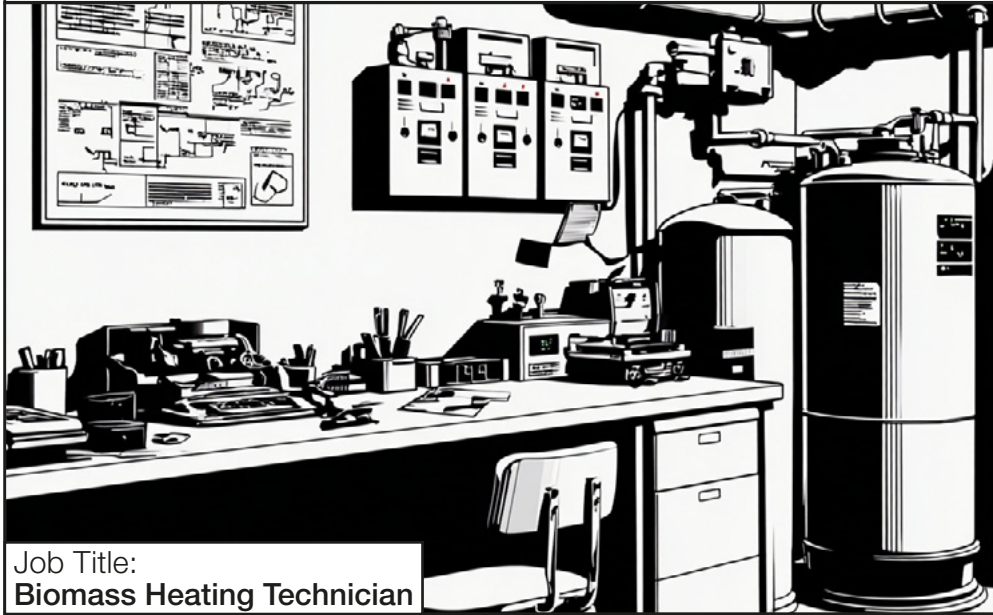
**You install, check, and fix big wind turbines that make clean energy from the wind. You make sure they're working safely and helping reduce pollution while creating local jobs.**

### Possible Arguments:

- **Clean Energy:** Wind power is clean and reliable, cutting carbon emissions.
- **Local Jobs:** Installing and maintaining wind turbines helps create and keep jobs in our community.
- **Sustainable Future:** Wind energy is one of the most powerful tools we have for a clean, safe, and independent energy future.
- **Cost Savings:** Wind energy lowers electricity bills over time because it uses free wind instead of expensive fuel.



## Biomass Heating Technician [AGJ Member]



Job Title:  
Biomass Heating Technician

### Goal:

Promote sustainable heating by installing and maintaining local biomass systems that reduce fossil fuel use.

### You ...

- install and service biomass heating systems using organic fuels like wood pellets and olive pits.
- help customers learn how to use the systems safely and efficiently.
- want to protect the climate by reducing pollution and supporting local energy solutions.
- sometimes struggle to convince people because the systems cost more at first and need regular care.

## Biomass Heating Technician [AGJ Member]

### Possible Explanation of Role Cards:

A Biomass Heating Technician installs and takes care of heating systems that use natural materials like wood pellets or plant waste to create heat. These systems are a cleaner way to warm homes and buildings because they use renewable fuels instead of fossil fuels like gas or coal. The technician makes sure the heating systems work well and safely, helping people stay warm while protecting the environment.

### Possible Arguments:

- **Cleaner Heating:** Biomass heating reduces fossil fuel use and pollution.
- **Customer Support:** I help people learn how to use biomass systems safely and effectively.
- **Local Economy:** Using organic fuels like wood pellets supports nearby farms and businesses.
- **Smart Investment:** Though upfront costs worry some, biomass is a smart choice for a cleaner future.

