1st Linz District Heating Forum 2026

Hosted by the Energieinstitut an der Johannes Kepler Universität Linz

Date: March 17–18, 2026

Venue: Uni-Center, Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria

Programme & Practical Information

ENERGIE INSTITUT an der Johannes Kepler Universität Linz

JKU JOHANNES KEPLER UNIVERSITÄT LINZ

LINZ AG

Programme

16 March 2026

19:00-21:00: Welcome Reception at Ars Electronica Center (Ars-Electronica-Straße 1, Linz), Loft

17 March 2026

09:00-17:30: Johannes Kepler University Linz (Altenberger Straße 69, Linz), Uni-Center

- Welcome & Opening Day 1
- Keynote Speeches
- Parallel Sessions

19:00-22:00: Dinner at „Stadtliebe“ (Landstraße 31, Linz)

18 March 2026

09:00-16:30: Johannes Kepler University Linz (Altenberger Straße 69, Linz), Uni-Center

- Opening Day 2
- Keynote Speeches
- Parallel Sessions

16:30: Farewell coffee and drinks, Uni-Center, Johannes Kepler University Linz (Altenberger Straße 69, Linz)

Preliminary programme: Overview

Monday, 16 March 2026		Tuesday, 17 March 2026			Wednesday, 18 March 2026		
		08:30	Registration – Networking Coffee		08:30	Registration – Networking Coffee	
		09:00	Welcome & Opening Day 1		09:00	Opening Day 2	
		09:30	Keynote Speeches		09:30	Keynote Speeches	
		10:30	Coffee Break		10:30	Coffee Break	
		11:00	Session: Large Thermal Energy Storage 1	Session: Symbiosis 1	11:00	Session: Large Thermal Energy Storage 4	Session: Symbiosis 4
		12:30	Lunch		13:00	Lunch	
		14:00	Session: Large Thermal Energy Storage 2	Session: Symbiosis 2	14:30	Session: Large Thermal Energy Storage 5	Session: Symbiosis 5
		15:30	Coffee Break		16:30	Farewell Coffee and Drinks	
		16:00 - 17:30	Session: Large Thermal Energy Storage 3 HEATROCK	Session: Symbiosis 3 Energize			
19:00	Welcome Reception	19:00	Invited Dinner				

Preliminary programme *(status: 14.01.2026)*

Monday, 16 March 2026

19:00	**Welcome reception & registration** Venue: Ars Electronica Center (Ars-Electronica-Straße 1, 4040 Linz)

Tuesday, 17 March 2026

Johannes Kepler University Linz – Uni-Center

08:30	Registration – Networking Coffee	
	Welcome & Opening Day 1	
09:00	**Welcome: The 1st Linz District Heating Forum on cooperation and storage** **Simon Moser**, *Key Researcher, Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria* **Robert Tichler**, *Director, Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*	
	Keynote Speeches	
09:30	**Flexibility and energy storage: two key research questions in the DH sector** **Anna Volkova**, *Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia* **Business model changes in the district heating context** **Kristina Lygnerud**, *Lund University, Sweden*	
10:30	Coffee Break	
	Parallel Sessions	
11:00	**Large Thermal Energy Storage 1**	**Symbiosis 1**
	Types of LTES and introduction to the TREASURE project **Wim van Helden**, *AEE INTEC, Austria*	Energy cooperation: thinking beyond company borders **Simon Moser**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*
	INTERSTORES: Towards demonstration of underground thermal energy storage for future district heating systems **Abdulrahman Dahash**, *AIT, Austria*	Impact of low-temperature excess heat integration on the design of industrial energy systems **Sophie Knöttner**, *AIT, Austria*
	People, PITs & Policy: Seasonal TES in Switzerland **Sebastian Ammann**, *HSLU, Switzerland*	Networks interconnection and industrial waste heat in north-eastern Italy **Mattia Cottes**, *University of Udine, Italy*
	PTES Vienna: Scale-Up **Marieluise Pöschko-Reinweber**, *Wien Energie, Austria*	Heat Highway Aichfeld (Austria): initiation, implementation, and status quo **Stefan Stering**, *Bioenergie Gruppe, Austria*

		Industrial symbiosis readiness level assessment — A stakeholder co-designed matrix tool for guidance and evaluation **Lovisa Harfeldt**, *RISE, Sweden*
12:30	Lunch	
Parallel Sessions		
14:00	**Large Thermal Energy Storage 2**	**Symbiosis 2**
	Accelerating the uptake of LTES (IEA ES Task 45) and simulation-driven storage development **Geoffroy Gauthier**, *PlanEnergi, Denmark*	Economic impact of supra-regional DH networks **Katharina Rusch**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*
	Bridging the Gap: Innovative TES Solutions for Flexible, Renewable-Powered DHNs **Marina Aparicio Peña**, *Veolia, Spain*	Heat Highway Styria **Thomas Kienberger**, *MU Leoben, Austria*
	Analysis of Seasonal Thermal Energy Storage Integration Scenarios for the District Heating System in Switzerland **Ali Jarkas**, *ZHAW, Switzerland*	Heat Recovery from Treated Wastewater: Case of the City of Riga **Jelena Ziemele**, *Riga Energy Agency, Latvia*
	Non-market benefits of thermal energy storage **Anja Gahleitner**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*	Use of data centre waste heat for the decarbonisation of 3GDH networks: an Italian case study **Luca Socci**, *University of Florence, Italy*
	PTES Rostock: use case and feasibility study (PTES consideration of up to 500,000 m^3 volume) **Uwe Hempfling**, *Hansestadt Rostock, Germany*	Waste heat availability from hydrogen-based industries in district heating systems – A Swedish case study **Sofia Rosén**, *Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden*
15:30	Coffee Break	
Parallel Sessions		
16:00	**Large Thermal Energy Storage 3 - HEATROCK**	**Symbiosis 3 - Energize**
	CTES Linz: Project HEATROCK **Melanie Hörtler**, *Linz AG, Austria*	100 barriers for energy cooperation **Valerie Pfeffer-Rodin**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*
	Cavern thermal energy storage – state of development **Sophie Messerklinger**, *FH Wels, Austria*	LEEN - Learning Energy Efficiency Networks **Anna Gruber**, *FFE Munich, Germany*

	Cavern thermal energy storage – pilot test **Marlene Villeneuve**, *MU Leoben, Austria*	The INKOBA initiative as a framework to sustainable location development **Werner Pamminger**, *Business Upper Austria, Austria*
	Storage Potential of underground Rock Mass - insights from the SPuRM CTES project **Florian Kainz**, *TU Graz, Austria*	INKOBA Sterngartl as a use-case for multi-energy cooperation **Matthäus Haas**, *INKOBA Sterngartl, Austria*
	GIS-Driven Identification of Seasonal Thermal Energy Storage Sites: Swiss Case Studies **Sadik Yigit**, *ZHAW, Switzerland*	Hurricane - Sector-coupling hub for circular use of thermal and industrial waste **Joke Bauwens**, *Arcelormittal, Belgium* **Dirk Vanhoudt**, EnergyVille/*VITO, Belgium*
		Regional symbiosis as a value chain pathway to accelerate the heat transition **Carina Seidnitzer-Gallien**, *AEE INTEC, Austria*

Tuesday, 17 March 2026

19:00	**Invited Dinner** Venue: Restaurant Stadtliebe (Landstraße 31, 4020 Linz)

Wednesday, 18 March 2026 **Johannes Kepler University Linz – Uni-Center**	
08:30	Registration – Networking Coffee
Opening Day 2	
09:00	**Involving stakeholders and customers** **Johannes Reichl**, *Scientific Head Energy Economics, Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria* **Introductory pitch DHC+: Current Innovative Development Directions in District Heating Research** **Gabriele Pesce**, *Director of Innovation & Sustainable Finance, Euroheat & Power, Belgium* **Introductory pitch IEA DHC: International collaboration on District Heating** **Andrej Jentsch**, *IEA DHC Programme Manager, AGFW, Germany*
Keynote Speeches	
09:30	**Heat planning: Success factors, challenges, and implications in Germany** **Anna Billerbeck**, *Fraunhofer ISI, Germany* **Exploring district heating and cooling cultures** **Isaura Bonneux**, *University of Antwerp, Belgium*
10:30	Coffee Break

Parallel Sessions		
11:00	**Large Thermal Energy Storage 4**	**Symbiosis 4**
	LTES in future district heating networks **Stefan Puschnigg**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*	Third party access? Legislation on waste heat integration **Marie-Theres Holzleitner-Senck**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*
	Selecting the right type of thermal energy storage I/II, Application-oriented energy storage selection (IEA ES Task 46) **Andreas Hauer**, *ZAE Bayern, Germany*	Methodology for defining the waste heat value range – developed and applied for electrolyser heat recovery **Nicolas Marx**, *AIT, Austria*
	PTES Graz: Sun Storage **Heimo Ecker-Eckhofen**, *Ecker-Eckhofen, Austria*	Energy Region Southeast Bavaria-Upper Austria-Salzburg (SOBOS) **Michael Perkmann**, *Regionalwerk Chiemgau-Rupertiwinkel gKU, Germany*
	Life Cycle Assessment of Thermal Energy Storage **Helene Mihatsch**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*	Holistic quantification of waste heat potentials for district heating considering decarbonisation pathways **Denis Divkovic**, *Universität Paderborn, Germany*
	Integration of Large Thermal Energy Storages into the district heating grid via heat pumps **Gerald Zotter**, *AEE INTEC, Austria*	Impact of distribution and transmission investment costs of district heating systems on district heating potential **Lukas Kranzl**, *EEG TU Wien, Austria*
	PTES Hoje Taastrup: use case and measurement campaigns **Jianhua Fan**, *DTU, Denmark*	Development of an “Inter-Municipal District Heating Network” within Austria ´s real-world laboratory WEIZplus **Joachim Kelz**, *AEE INTEC, Austria*
13:00	Lunch	
Parallel Sessions		
14:30	**Large Thermal Energy Storage 5**	**Symbiosis 5**
	(Seasonal) thermal energy storage for peak heat loads **Magdalena Pflügl**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*	Electrolysis waste heat in a hydrogen economy framework **Darja Markova**, *Energieinstitut an der JKU Linz, Austria*
	Stakeholder perspectives on LTES **Michal Klauda**, *FENIX, Czechia*	Comprehensive Assessment of Waste Heat and Heat Pumps via Resource Exergy Analysis **Andrej Jentsch**, *AGFW, Germany*

	Large thermal energy storage linked to waste heat-to-district heating symbiosis **Lea Leopoldović**, *Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar, Croatia*	REWARDHeat - Renewable and Waste Heat Recovery for Competitive District Heating and Cooling Networks **Marco Cozzini**, *EURAC, Italy*
	Practical insights on lid design based on Martsal & Dronninglund PTES **Andreas Hawel**, *Aalborg CSP, Denmark*	Heat Highway Tyrol **Leon Haim**, *Haitech / Hall AG, Austria*
	Development of high temperature resistant polymeric liners for large buffer storages **Gernot Wallner** (presenter), *JKU Linz, Austria* **Matthias Posch**, *JKU Linz, Austria* **David Nitsche**, *AGRU, Austria* **Markus Seume**, *Gquadrat, Germany*	Operation of coupled multi-owner district heating networks via distributed optimization **Valentin Kaisermayer**, *BEST, Austria*
	Risk assessment in District Heating Networks: from supra-regional networks to network temperature reductions and seasonal storages **Ralf-Roman Schmidt**, *AIT, Austria*	Facilitation of Industrial Symbiosis in Hubs for Circularity – Waste heat from Waste Water Treatment Plants **Josephin Paetzold**, *AEE INTEC, Austria*

Practical Information

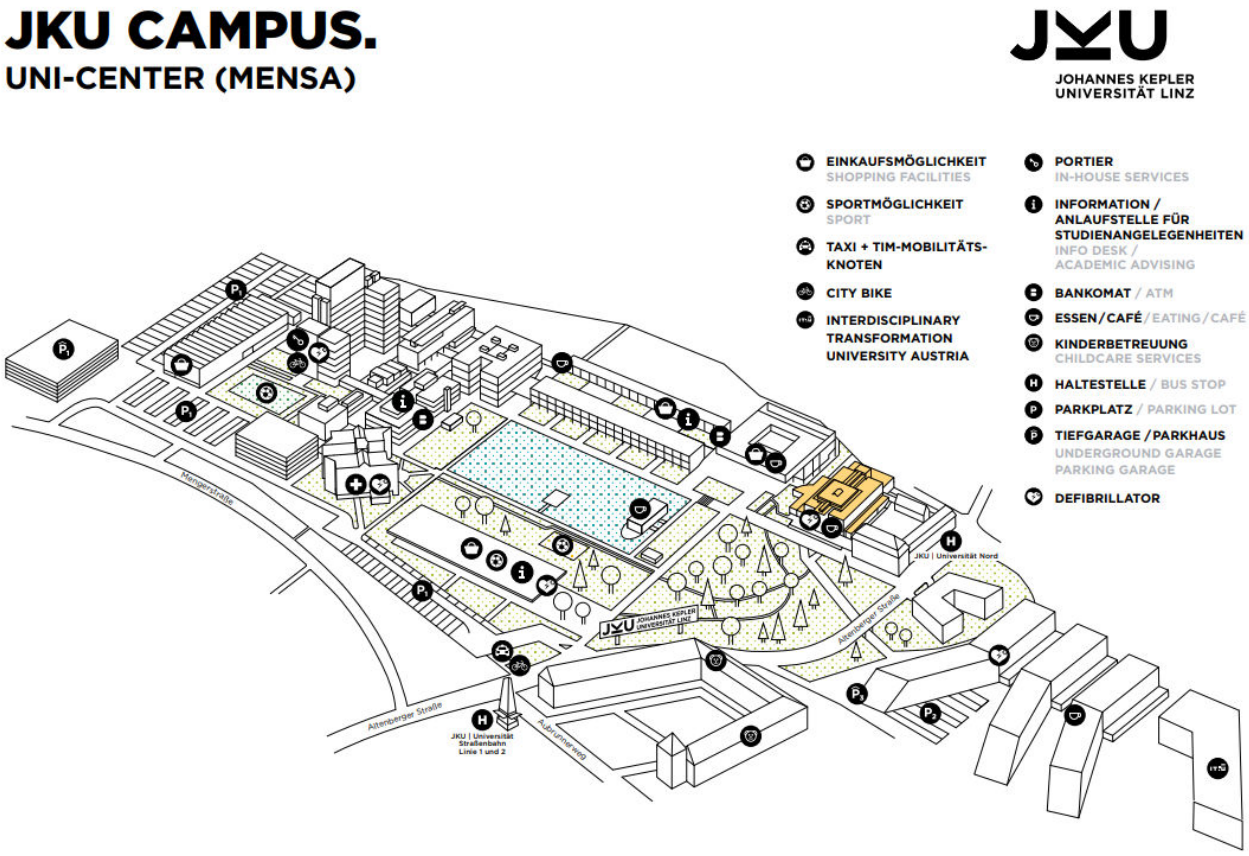
Venue

The Forum will take place at the Uni-Center at Johannes Kepler University in Linz. The JKU is located in the northern part of Linz, easily accessible by public transport from the city center. Visitors' parking is available at the JKU.

Uni-Center, Johannes Kepler University Linz

Altenberger Straße 69, 4040 Linz, Austria

Uni-Center



Local transport between Linz city center and the venue

The venue is located about 8 km from the city center of Linz, where most hotels are situated. You can reach the venue easily by public transport (bus or tram).

From Linz city center, take **tram line 1 or 2** towards **Universität** (final stop). The Uni-Center is located directly next to the tram stop. The ride takes 20 minutes from the city center. You can buy a 24-hour ticket for 6 Euro or a one-week ticket for 19.10 Euro.

Itineraries and tickets can be found on the Linz AG website

How to get to Linz

Linz is located in Upper Austria. The most convenient options to reach Linz are by international train or airplane.

Train

International trains arrive at **Linz Hauptbahnhof (Main Station)**. There are direct train connections from **Vienna, Frankfurt, Berlin** and **Munich** to Linz.

Itineraries and tickets can be found on the ÖBB website

Airplane

The **Linz Airport (Blue Danube Airport Linz)**, located about 13 km southwest of the city center. Other nearby international airports to consider are:

- **Vienna International Airport (VIE)** – approx. 185 km
- **Salzburg Airport (SZG)** – approx. 135 km
- **Munich Airport (MUC)** – approx. 270 km

For intercontinental flights, **Vienna** is usually the best option. Take the 2-hour direct train from Vienna Airport to Linz main station. Sometimes the airport train is included in the flight ticket.

Accommodation

A wide range of hotels are available in the city center of Linz. Early booking is advised.

Suggested hotels

Park Inn by Radisson Linz Hotel ****
Hessenplatz 16-18
4020 Linz
https://www.radissonhotels.com/de-de/hotels/park-inn-linz

Hotel Motel One Linz ***
Hauptplatz 10-11
4020 Linz
https://www.motel-one.com

You can find the full list on the website of the regional tourism board:
Linz Tourismus

Projects contributing to the 1st edition of Linz District Heating Forum

The idea of the Linz District Heating Forum is to join forces in order gather a critical mass of experts for the exchange, dissemination and replication of project results and the projects' innovative ideas.

FUTURE HEAT HIGHWAY	Future Heat Highway: The Austrian flagship project Future Heat Highway demonstrates how **supra-regional district heating** pipelines can efficiently harness **industrial waste heat** and renewable sources in four Austrian industrial regions. Concrete rollout plans are being developed for four regions, which specifically combine technological innovation with regional strengths.
	HEATROCK: cavern thermal energy storage in crystalline rocks. Large-scale seasonal thermal energy storage systems will play a key role in the heat transition. One promising option is large-scale heat storage in caverns in solid rock (**cavern thermal energy storages**). Cavern storage systems have a very long service life and are barely visible.
TREASURE	Treasure: demonstrating **large pit thermal energy storages**. Our goal is to bridge the gap between research and practice to ensure robust, safe, cost effective and sustainable large-scale thermal energy storage; and develop secure and smart system integration concepts and increase the effectiveness of realizing pit thermal energy storage (PTES) technology in Europe.
ENERGIZE SUPPORTING THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION OF EUROPEAN BUSINESSES	The ENERGIZE project (**ENERgy coopERation** for Growth, Innovation, and Zero Emissions in **Industrial Parks**) seeks to demonstrate the feasibility of cooperative energy models in selected EU industrial zones (Manresa, Spain; Valesia Region, Italy; Zlín Region, Czech Republic; Upper Austria) by fostering energy collaboration.
HyEfRe	HyEfRe: Hydrogen integration for efficient renewable energy systems. HyEfRe addresses the challenges of integrating volatile renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, and decarbonizing the Central European energy system. As a result, a favourable investment environment will be pursued in Central Europe to promote renewable energy and green hydrogen technologies as a sector coupling solution, along with **waste heat integration** as a holistic approach.
energy storage IEA Technology Collaboration Programme	IEA ES 46 AppESS: **Application oriented energy storage selection**. The objective of this new Task is to develop a methodological approach for classifying potential energy storage applications based on their technical and economic requirements, and to match them with the most suitable storage technologies.
Industrial Energy-Related Technologies and Systems iets	IEA IETS Task 21 Phase 3: Carbon Capture in Industry and **Facilitation of Industrial Symbiosis**. The subtask "Carbon Capture" considers the technical integration of CCUS into industrial systems and their assessment in the LCA. The subtask "Industrial Symbiosis" examines how industrial symbiosis can be initiated and which business models are suitable for its implementation.
IEA DHC	Hy2Heat: **Using electrolysis waste heat in district heating**. The aim of HY2HEAT is to analyse the techno-economic synergies of electrolysis waste heat integration in DH systems (including the assessment of the role and expected volumes), to evaluate the best technical solutions for capturing and upgrading the electrolyser waste heat for utilisation in DH networks, and to derive a practical guide for DH operators for the pursuit of the potential and its technical integration.