

Small wind turbine technology startup secures funding to target telco power needs

Diffuse Energy, an Australian small wind turbine technology startup, announced it has secured \$400,000 in seed funding from Australian venture capital fund, Shearwater Growth Equity. The investment will allow the company to scale production of its small wind turbines for customers in the global telecommunications industry to enable more sustainable and resilient communication networks.

The Newcastle-based start-up spun out of the University of Newcastle said its wind turbines are designed to plug seamlessly into existing telco infrastructure, such as remote towers and convert them from diesel power generation to clean and more cost-effective wind power.

Diffuse Energy co-founder and CEO Joss Kesby said: "We are changing the way telecommunications companies buy renewable technology. Our commercial model removes upfront hardware costs in favour of a monthly subscription."



"We know small wind can work for this industry, the challenge has been how to deploy at scale in remote and off-grid locations in the most cost-effective manner possible," he said. "Our subscription model enables the rapid deployment of turbines onto towers in hard to service locations, converting them from diesel power generation to cheaper and more environmentally friendly wind-power."

He added: "For their size, Diffuse Energy's small wind turbines are among the world's most efficient, and produce the highest energy output in their class."

The company proved the value of its technology for telco Vertel in late 2019. The Diffuse Energy small wind turbines continued to power critical voice and data services for NSW Police, Rural Fire Services, State Emergency Services and NSW Health while bushfires raged throughout the Mid-North Coast and Coffs Harbour region.

Vertel executive director Andrew Findlay said: "The Diffuse Energy wind turbine provided alternative power to key communication sites during a time when many sites were affected by mains power failure."

"Not only could we monitor energy production and consumption remotely and in real-time, but we were able to keep our sites and network services running for our government and the emergency services customers when they needed it most to support communities," he said.

Shearwater Growth Equity managing partner Zac Zavos said: "We invested in Diffuse Energy because they are operating in an unambiguously large and growing renewable energy market. Small wind is the natural complement to solar in that wind often blows when the sun isn't shining. The founding team are very strong and committed to building a generationally great company. Finally, we saw the potential for software-like recurring revenue from their small wind turbines."

Simon Dux

Telco sector facing COVID-19 revenue hit in 2020

The reverberations of the COVID-19 crisis could have a significant impact on telecom services revenue in developed markets such as Australia, according to Analysys Mason. But the telecom market is still expected to stay healthier than almost every other