

# Industry and community must work together for a hydrogen future, say researchers

February 3 2023

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Investment in the hydrogen economy is accelerating at unprecedented

rates, but a large misalignment between industry and community is holding Australia back from effective adoption.

While the industry assumes that the population is concerned about the safety of hydrogen, communities are driven by their personal future and greenhouse gas concerns, according to new research by Swinburne University of Technology's Victorian Hydrogen Hub (VH2).

The wider public do not generally have a detailed understanding about the technical information associated with hydrogen, but this is not impacting [public trust](#) in those working with hydrogen.

In fact, there is generally low levels of concern that incidents such as the Hindenburg disaster would be repeated. Instead, [climate change](#), the environment, and [future generations](#) are most important as people hope to reduce the impact of slow renewable energy adoption.

The study offers promising solutions, highlighting how communities are under-utilized and should be treated as valuable resources, rather than objects to be managed. Critical suggestions such as collaborative frameworks and fostering an integrated and empathetic relationship between stakeholders can enable innovative and collaborative hydrogen energy developments to create a more sustainable future.

Victorian Hydrogen Hub Social License Adjunct Research Fellow Dr. Kim Beasy says, "We've found that often, community members wanted to understand why hydrogen was a good idea and how it contributes towards reducing [greenhouse gas emissions](#). Industry seemed to jump straight to technicalities of the technology such as safety in their perceptions of what the community want to know about. Clearly, we need to better understand how industry and community can work productively together to ensure that the renewable energy sector continues to grow."

"If industry stakeholders can see themselves as [community members](#) too, this could go some way toward reducing the 'us against them' situation that often evolves during development projects. I hope that this research helps the way that stakeholders think about hydrogen differently and shows them that this matters."

The paper is published in the *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy*.

**More information:** Kim Beasy et al, Industry perceptions and community perspectives on advancing a hydrogen economy in Australia, *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ijhydene.2022.11.230](#)

Provided by Swinburne University of Technology

Citation: Industry and community must work together for a hydrogen future, say researchers (2023, February 3) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-02-industry-community-hydrogen-future.html>

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