



E-vehicles can be made to give energy to the grid as well as take it | Photo source [MikesPhotos](#) from Pixabay

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CARS DOUBLE AS ENERGY STORAGE UNITS

 MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

A project is demonstrating ways that e-vehicles can be used for storing energy for microgrids when they are not in use

Spotted: We are used to thinking of electric cars as clean transportation, but what if they could also act as clean energy storage units? That is the thinking behind a project by French incubator and future hub The Camp. The Solarcamp project uses vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology to allow the electricity in the batteries of parked e-vehicles to store power for use by local power grids.

In general, electricity needs to be used as it is generated – storing electricity requires a lot of large and expensive batteries, which is not practical for local microgrids that use alternative forms of energy, such as solar and wind. These energy sources cannot be generated consistently and so require additional storage capacity. The V2G project is designed to address this issue in a sustainable way.

The project is being tested at the Aix TGV train station, which uses a number of distributed energy resources, such as solar panels, with the hope of eventually becoming autonomous in energy production. As part of the project, travellers who leave their V2G-compatible cars in the parking lot can use a mobile phone app to let the station know their return date and the level of battery charge they will need on their return. The station will use the cars for energy storage while they are away, and compensate them with digital tokens that can pay for parking, car rental in Paris or other services.

The Camp, which is located in Aix-en-Provence, describes itself as, “inspired by American campuses but also Accelerators and FabLabs,” and as “a futuristic hub with exceptional natural surroundings where people can live and sleep for a few days or a few months, experiment new ways of eating,

work and prototype, attend events and create new bonds through many activities.” The V2G project is just one of many that are in the works.

As the use of sustainable energy increases at a rapid rate, we are seeing more and more innovative ideas for increasing the efficiency of these systems. Some that we have recently covered at Springwise include a [smart solar](#) power system and a hydrogen-fuelled [aviation powertrain](#).

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Takeaway:

The Camp hopes to combine renewable energy with its V2G project, for example, charging electric vehicles using renewable energy, which employees then drive to the train station, where it is used as an energy resource. Such public-minded doubling up, where e-vehicle doubles as transportation and an energy storage unit may become more common, especially as blockchain technology also makes it easier to incentivise this behaviour. This doubling up also allows the manufacture of fewer batteries and a lower environmental cost.