

# Sunnova Energy

# NOVA shares tumble on ATM, no paydown on convertible debt; attractive opportunity

Maintain Rating: BUY | PO: 16.00 USD | Price: 9.10 USD

### Financing risks near-term cloud LT FCF target launch

We maintain our Buy rating on residential solar provider Sunnova Energy (NOVA). Shares of NOVA are down -20% after the company reported 4Q23 results and discussed its FY24 outlook. Given management reiterated FY24 guidance and 4Q23 lease and loan economics remained intact, we believe the selling pressure is primarily motivated by two specific items in the company's update. First, NOVA announced that it will be putting into place a \$100Mn at-the-market equity issuance facility (ATM) in the coming weeks, though management has committed to no anticipated usage of said facility between now and the next earnings report. Second, based on our conversations, investors appeared to expect NOVA to address its upcoming 2026 convertible debt on the conference call, though management expects to address the converts in 2025. Given that much of the bear thesis on NOVA is tethered to the idea that cash generation and liquidity could be challenged to the point where significant additional parent capital could be required in the coming years, we believe neither of these items directly quell investor concerns in the near-term.

# Smoke but no fire; NOVA's path not materially changed

We view this investor reaction to be unwarranted. First, we do not assess there to be a meaningful read-through of the ATM to projected capital or liquidity needs in 2024; the ATM has been messaged for several quarters now and is modestly sized at \$100Mn. In such a situation, an ATM facility is more likely to smooth out block equity issuance or other means of dilution over time. With respect to the convertible debt, we see merit in management's statement that at 0.25% coupon, the borrowing cost is so modest that NOVA would be unable to find similarly cheap financing from any other source. Still, with the converts trading at 57c on the dollar, investors are right to point at the opportunity as a prudent display of cash redeployment, perhaps supported by loan portfolio monetization that has been discussed as a potentially meaningful source of liquidity in FY24. Clearly lack of belief in FCF inflection in '25: proof is in delivering.

# 4Q23 print otherwise solid; Buy at attractive levels

Investors are clearly second-guessing NOVA's decision making with respect to these two items. These discussions are clouding an otherwise solid earnings print that saw NOVA commit to a recurring annual cash generation target of \$200-500Mn, which should have alleviated ongoing cash generation concerns and provided confidence to long-term growth and financing targets. See opportunity: No change to our \$16 PO or estimates.

Estimates (Dec) (US\$)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025E
EPS	(1.19)	(1.06)	(1.78)	(1.40)	(1.62)
EPS Change (YoY)	58.5%	10.9%	-67.9%	21.3%	-15.7%
Consensus EPS (Bloomberg)			(2.19)	(1.55)	(1.08)
DPS	0	0	0	0	0
Valuation (Dec)					
EV / EBITDA*	126.5x	91.0x	45.3x	26.1x	24.1x
Free Cash Flow Yield*	-68.6%	-110.7%	-198.9%	-230.7%	-232.6%
* For full definitions of <i>IQ</i> method <sup>SM</sup> measures, see page 5.					

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Refer to important disclosures on page 6 to 8. Analyst Certification on page 3. Price
Objective Basis/Risk on page 3.

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#### 22 February 2024

#### Equity

Julien Dumoulin-Smith

Research Analyst BofAS +1 646 855 5855 julien.dumoulin-smith@bofa.com

Paul Zimbardo

Research Analyst BofAS paul.zimbardo@bofa.com

#### **Stock Data**

9.10 USD Price Objective 16.00 USD Date Established 1-Feb-2024 Investment Opinion C-1-9 52-Week Range 7.62 USD - 24.56 USD Mrkt Val (mn) / Shares Out (mn) 1,114 USD / 122.4 86.7% Average Daily Value (mn) 58.11 USD BofA Ticker / Exchange NOVA / NYS Bloomberg / Reuters NOVA US / NOVA.N ROE (2023E) -16.8% Net Dbt to Eqty (Dec-2022A) 267.5% ESGMeter™ High

ESGMeter is not indicative of a company's future stock price performance and is not an investment recommendation or rating. ESGMeter is independent of BofA Global Research's equity investment rating, volatility risk rating, income rating, and price objective for that company. For full details, refer to "BofA ESGMeter Methodology".

# **iQ**profile<sup>™</sup>Sunnova Energy

<i>iQ</i> method <sup>SM</sup> − Bus Performance*					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Return on Capital Employed	-1.1%	1.3%	-1.0%	0.3%	0.6%
Return on Equity	-12.6%	-9.8%	-16.8%	-14.5%	-18.79
Operating Margin	-22.7%	17.4%	-12.9%	3.5%	7.39
Free Cash Flow	(764)	(1,234)	(2,215)	(2,570)	(2,592
iQmethod SM – Quality of Earnings*					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Cash Realization Ratio	NM	NM	NM	NM	NN
Asset Replacement Ratio	6.5x	8.0x	15.3x	13.5x	11.5
Tax Rate	NM	NM	NM	NM	NN
Net Debt-to-Equity Ratio	186.4%	267.5%	269.6%	260.6%	257.79
Interest Cover	-0.7x	1.3x	-1.0x	0.2x	0.3
Income Statement Data (Dec)					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Sales	242	558	799	1,078	1,33
% Change	50.3%	130.7%	43.3%	34.9%	24.19
Gross Profit	222	521	731	987	1,243
% Change	53.7%	134.5%	40.4%	34.9%	26.09
EBITDA	86	119	239	416	450
% Change	43.7%	39.0%	100.8%	73.9%	8.29
Net Interest & Other Income	(92)	(69)	(102)	(199)	(284
Net Income (Adjusted)	(135)	(121)	(205)	(161)	(186
% Change	46.5%	10.2%	-69.1%	21.4%	-15.5%
Free Cash Flow Data (Dec)					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Net Income from Cont Operations (GAAP)	(148)	(154)	(205)	(161)	(186
Depreciation & Amortization	86	108	121	165	20
Change in Working Capital	(227)	(346)	(432)	(553)	(490
Deferred Taxation Charge	NA	NA	NA	NA	. NA
Other Adjustments, Net	79	27	155	196	204
Capital Expenditure	(555)	(868)	(1,855)	(2,216)	(2,321
Free Cash Flow	-764	-1,234	-2,215	-2,570	-2,592
% Change	-7.6%	-61.5%	-79.6%	-16.0%	-0.8%
Share / Issue Repurchase	0	0	0	0	(
Cost of Dividends Paid	0	0	0	0	(
Change in Debt	1,221	2,115	1,891	2,267	2,38
Balance Sheet Data (Dec)					
(US\$ Millions)	2021A	2022A	2023E	2024E	2025
Cash & Equivalents	243	360	128	101	102
Trade Receivables	76	237	237	237	202
Other Current Assets	296	351	587	838	838
Property, Plant & Equipment	2,907	3,785	5,419	7,346	9,380
Other Non-Current Assets	1,979	3,604	4,822	6,069	7,41
Total Assets	5,501	8,337	11,193	14,591	17,93
Short-Term Debt	0	0	0	0	(
Other Current Liabilities	137	256	179	224	269
Long-Term Debt	3,265	5,409	7,326	9,621	12,03
Other Non-Current Liabilities	480	784	1,019	1,092	99
Total Liabilities	3,883	6,449	8,523	10,938	13,302
Total Equity	1,622	1,887	2,670	3,654	4,630
Total Equity & Liabilities	5,504	8,337	11,193	14,591	17,932

## **Company Sector**

Alternative Energy

#### **Company Description**

Founded in 2012, Sunnova (NOVA) is a technology-agnostic residential solar service provider headquartered in Houston, TX. Similar to residential solar service provider peer SunRun (RUN), NOVA principally finances, installs, services, and owns solar panel and battery storage systems on residential customer premises.

#### **Investment Rationale**

We are Buy rated on NOVA as we see value in shares with the company offering an optimistic growth outlook for 2024 and benefitting from declining rates. We emphasize prospective storage attachment, and limited absolute exposure to a downside case in California as supporting a value in a stock where very little growth is embedded into the current valuation.

#### Stock Data

Average Daily Volume 6,385,612

#### **Quarterly Earnings Estimates**

	2022	2023
Q1	-0.70A	NAE
Q2	-0.74A	NAE
Q3	-0.55A	NAE
Q4	0.55A	NAE

# Price objective basis & risk

#### Sunnova Energy (NOVA)

Our price objective for Nova is \$16/share based on sum-of-the-parts valuation. We value the PowerCo portion of the company by taking NPV of Net Customer Value (excl. Net Cash), equivalent to discounting cash flows from the existing asset base by a 15% discount rate. This equates to \$12/sh.

We value expected future installed assets through 2029 on a DCF basis with value created discounted to present at a 20% cost of equity assumption. Including a 6x terminal value multiple on 2029E NPV and the NPV of G&A expense, including non-cash SBC costs and future expected corp capital needs, this equates to \$4/sh.

Downside risks to PO being achieved: NOVA is particularly exposed to rate sensitivity, credit spreads, net metering policies, and risk of broadly competitive environment for customer acquisition squeezing development margins.

Upside risks to PO being achieved: Better than expected recovery in rates and capital market conditions, better than expected growth prospects, better NEM 3.0 outcome, and if the ITC is extended beyond the current schedule.

# **Analyst Certification**

I, Julien Dumoulin-Smith, hereby certify that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect my personal views about the subject securities and issuers. I also certify that no part of my compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or view expressed in this research report.

#### **North America - Utilities and Alt Energy Coverage Cluster**

Investment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
BUY				
	Alliant Energy Corporation	LNT	LNT US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Array Technologies	ARRY	ARRY US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Atlantica Sustainable Infrastructure	AY	AY US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Atmos Energy Corporation	ATO	ATO US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	CenterPoint Energy	CNP	CNP US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Cheniere Energy Inc	LNG	LNG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Clearway Energy	CWENA	CWEN/A US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Clearway Energy	CWEN	CWEN US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	CMS Energy	CMS	CMS US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Consolidated Edison	ED	ED US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	DTE Energy	DTE	DTE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Enlight Renewable Energy Ltd	ENLT	ENLT US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Enlight Renewable Energy Ltd	XENLF	ENLT IT	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Entergy	ETR	ETR US	Paul Zimbardo
	First Solar, Inc.	FSLR	FSLR US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Fluence Energy	FLNC	FLNC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Hannon Armstrong	HASI	HASI US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	MDU Resources Group, Inc.	MDU	MDU US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Nextracker Inc	NXT	NXT US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	NiSource Inc	NI	NI US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	NorthWestern Energy Group	NWE	NWE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	NRG Energy	NRG	NRG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	PG&E Corporation	PCG	PCG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	PNM Resources Inc.	PNM	PNM US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	PPL Corporation	PPL	PPL US	Paul Zimbardo
	Public Service Enterprise Group	PEG	PEG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith



#### North America - Utilities and Alt Energy Coverage Cluster

nvestment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
	Sempra	SRE	SRE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Sunnova Energy	NOVA	NOVA US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	TPI Composites	TPIC	TPIC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Vistra Corp	VST	VST US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Xcel Energy Inc	XEL	XEL US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
UTRAL	3,			,
UIRAL	AES	AES	AES US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
				Paul Zimbardo
	Algonquin Power & Utilities Corp	AQN	AQN US	
	Algonquin Power & Utilities Corp	YAQN	AQN CN	Paul Zimbardo
	AltaGas	YALA	ALA CN	Cameron Lochridge
	Ameren Corporation	AEE	AEE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Ameresco	AMRC	AMRC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	American Electric Power	AEP	AEP US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	ChargePoint Holdings	CHPT	CHPT US	Cameron Lochridge
	Constellation Energy Corp	CEG	CEG US	Paul Zimbardo
	Duke Energy	DUK	DUK US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Emera Inc	YEMA	EMA CN	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Essential Utilities	WTRG	WTRG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Evergy, Inc	EVRG	EVRG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Exelon	EXC	EXC US	
				Paul Zimbardo
	Generac Holdings Inc.	GNRC	GNRC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Hydro One	YH	H CN	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Idacorp	IDA	IDA US	Paul Zimbardo
	Maxeon Solar Technologies	MAXN	MAXN US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	NextEra Energy	NEE	NEE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	NextEra Energy Partners	NEP	NEP US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	OGE Energy Corp	OGE	OGE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Ormat Technologies	ORA	ORA US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Pinnacle West	PNW	PNW US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Portland General Electric Company	POR	POR US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
		SO	SO US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Southern Company			
	Southwest Gas Holdings	SWX	SWX US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	TransAlta Corp	TAC	TAC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	TransAlta Corporation	YTA	TA CN	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
DERPERFORM				
	Allete Inc	ALE	ALE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	American Water Works	AWK	AWK US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Avangrid	AGR	AGR US	Paul Zimbardo
	Avista	AVA	AVA US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Black Hills Corporation	BKH	BKH US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Bloom Energy	BE	BE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Dominion Energy	D	D US	Paul Zimbardo
	0,7			Paul Zimbardo
	Edison International	EIX	EIX US	
	Enphase Energy	ENPH	ENPH US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Eversource Energy	ES	ES US	Paul Zimbardo
	FirstEnergy	FE	FE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Fortis	YFTS	FTS CN	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Fortis Inc	FTS	FTS US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	FREYR Battery	FREY	FREY US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	FTC Solar	FTCI	FTCLUS	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Hawaiian Electric Industries	HE	HE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	MGE Energy	MGEE	MGEE US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	New Jersey Resources Corp	NJR	NJR US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	ONE Gas, Inc.	OGS	OGS US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
				,
	SolarEdge Technologies	SEDG	SEDG US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Spire	SR	SR US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	Stem, Inc.	STEM	STEM US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	SunPower Corp.	SPWR	SPWR US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	UGI Corp.	UGI	UGI US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
	WEC Energy Group Inc	WEC	WEC US	Julien Dumoulin-Smith
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ı K	Nov. Fortrose France	NET	NECTIC	Company Landada
	New Fortress Energy SunRun	NFE RUN	NFE US	Cameron Lochridge Julien Dumoulin-Smith
			RUN US	uuuon Dumoulin Smith



#### North America - Utilities and Alt Energy Coverage Cluster

Investment rating Company BofA Ticker Bloomberg symbol Analyst

# *i***@**method<sup>™</sup> Measures Definitions

<b>Business Performance</b>	Numerator	Denominator
Return On Capital Employed	NOPAT = (EBIT + Interest Income) $\times$ (1 $-$ Tax Rate) + Goodwill Amortization	Total Assets — Current Liabilities + ST Debt + Accumulated Goodwill Amortization
Return On Equity	Net Income	Shareholders' Equity
Operating Margin	Operating Profit	Sales
Earnings Growth	Expected 5 Year CAGR From Latest Actual	N/A
Free Cash Flow	Cash Flow From Operations — Total Capex	N/A
Quality of Earnings	Numerator	Denominator
Cash Realization Ratio	Cash Flow From Operations	Net Income
Asset Replacement Ratio	Capex	Depreciation
Tax Rate	Tax Charge	Pre-Tax Income
Net Debt-To-Equity Ratio	Net Debt = Total Debt - Cash & Equivalents	Total Equity
Interest Cover	EBIT	Interest Expense
Valuation Toolkit	Numerator	Denominator
Price / Earnings Ratio	Current Share Price	Diluted Earnings Per Share (Basis As Specified)
Price / Book Value	Current Share Price	Shareholders' Equity / Current Basic Shares
Dividend Yield	Annualised Declared Cash Dividend	Current Share Price
Free Cash Flow Yield	Cash Flow From Operations – Total Capex	Market Cap = Current Share Price × Current Basic Shares
Enterprise Value / Sales	EV = Current Share Price × Current Shares + Minority Equity + Net Debt +	Sales
•	Other LT Liabilities	
EV / EBITDA	Enterprise Value	Basic EBIT + Depreciation + Amortization

Manethod 3<sup>311</sup> is the set of BofA Global Research standard measures that serve to maintain global consistency under three broad headings: Business Performance, Quality of Earnings, and validations. The key features of iQmethod are: A consistently structured, detailed, and transparent methodology. Guidelines to maximize the effectiveness of the comparative valuation process, and to identify some common pitfalls.

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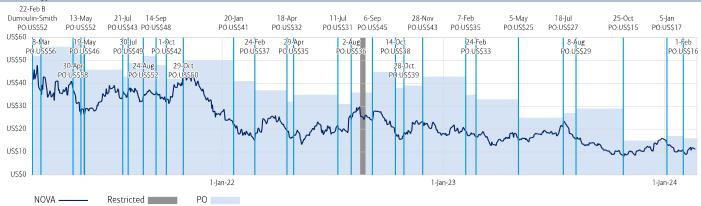
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# **Disclosures**

# **Important Disclosures**

#### Sunnova Energy (NOVA) Price Chart



B: Buy, N: Neutral, U: Underperform, PO: Price Objective, NA: No longer valid, NR: No Rating

The Investment Opinion System is contained at the end of the report under the heading "Fundamental Equity Opinion Key". Dark grey shading indicates the security is restricted with the opinion suspended. Medium grey shading indicates the security is under review with the opinion withdrawn. Light grey shading indicates the security is not covered. Chart is current as of a date no more than one trading day prior to the date of the report.

#### Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Alternative Energy Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships R1	Count	Percent
Buy	8	47.06%	Buy	8	100.00%
Hold	5	29.41%	Hold	3	60.00%
Sell	4	23.53%	Sell	1	25.00%

#### Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Global Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships R1	Count	Percent
Buy	1895	53.62%	Buy	1083	57.15%
Hold	832	23.54%	Hold	454	54.57%
Sell	807	22.84%	Sell	383	47.46%

R1 Issuers that were investment banking clients of BofA Securities or one of its affiliates within the past 12 months. For purposes of this Investment Rating Distribution, the coverage universe includes only stocks. A stock rated Neutral is included as a Hold, and a stock rated Underperform is included as a Sell.

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# Investment rating Total return expectation (within 12-month period of date of initial rating) Ratings dispersion guidelines for coverage cluster<sup>R2</sup>

Buy	≥ 10%	≤ 70%
Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Jnderperform	N/A	≥ 20%

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