



# Georgia microgrids

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Two well-known Atlanta, Ga. institutions -- Georgia Power and the Georgia Institute of Technology -- are teaming to build a \$10-\$15 million research microgrid to achieve a "quantum leap" in understanding the technology.

Owned by Georgia Power, a Southern Company utility, the 1.4 MW microgrid will serve several buildings at Georgia Tech's 400-acre campus in midtown Atlanta.

It's goal is to uncover information about microgrid operations -- both technical and business -- to make development easier.

"The microgrid is a solution that is very appealing but not entirely understood," said Santiago Grijalva, director of the Advanced Computational Electricity Systems (ACES) Laboratory for Georgia Tech. "We see this as an opportunity to make a quantum leap in understanding."

The research microgrid will incorporate energy storage, a fuel cell and a micro-turbine and is designed to eventually accommodate solar panels and electric vehicle chargers.

The university plans to configure the microgrid's resources so that students can gather data on controllers, cybersecurity devices, business models and energy economics. The team wants to develop models that utility customers can adopt.

"How do we scale the concept and methodologies and frameworks so that similar installations can be reproduced?" said Grijalva in an interview with Microgrid Knowledge.

Core equipment, such as the micro-turbines, are being purchased via competitive solicitation; other components will be added via donations. The partners are inviting vendors to bring their controllers and test them in the microgrid.

"The controllers will be fairly advanced so that they can be swapped. More than one vendor will be selected, and more than one system installed and tested," said Grijalva.

The university also hopes to develop a digital simulator that reveals "in high fidelity" layers of operation within the microgrid - the exchange and coordination of physical energy, information, energy and money, he said.

"We want the students to be able to see the system, to have access to the historical data bases, and use the data in a variety of simulations and experiments," he said.



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For Georgia Power, the research microgrid creates a chance "to evaluate how microgrids can be integrated and operated seamlessly as a grid asset," said Jacob Hawkins Georgia Power spokesman.

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