

SolarTech Power Solutions

Grid-scale energy storage flow battery



Overview

Associate Professor Fikile Brushett (left) and Kara Rodby PhD '22 have demonstrated a modeling framework that can help guide the development of flow batteries for large-scale, long-duration electricity storage on a future grid dominated by intermittent solar and wind power generators. Can iron-based aqueous flow batteries be used for grid energy storage?

A new iron-based aqueous flow battery shows promise for grid energy storage applications. A commonplace chemical used in water treatment facilities has been repurposed for large-scale energy storage in a new battery design by researchers at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

What types of battery technologies are being developed for grid-scale energy storage?

In this Review, we describe BESTs being developed for grid-scale energy storage, including high-energy, aqueous, redox flow, high-temperature and gas batteries. Battery technologies support various power system services, including providing grid support services and preventing curtailment.

Are battery energy-storage technologies necessary for grid-scale energy storage?

The rise in renewable energy utilization is increasing demand for battery energy-storage technologies (BESTs). BESTs based on lithium-ion batteries are being developed and deployed. However, this technology alone does not meet all the requirements for grid-scale energy storage.

Why do we need a grid-scale energy-storage system?

Under some conditions, excess renewable energy is produced and, without storage, is curtailed 2, 3; under others, demand is greater than generation from renewables. Grid-scale energy-storage (GSES) systems are therefore needed to store excess renewable energy to be released on demand, when power generation is insufficient 4.

How does a grid storage system work?

During discharge, when the battery turns on, the electron flow and redox chemistry reverses, and it generates an electric current, which can then be sent to the grid for use. One benefit of these, for grid storage in particular, is that the system architecture allows independent scaling of energy and power.

What is a flow battery?

The larger the electrolyte supply tank, the more energy the flow battery can store. Flow batteries can serve as backup generators for the electric grid. Flow batteries are one of the key pillars of a decarbonization strategy to store energy from renewable energy resources.

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