

# Can AI Master the Human Side of Energy?

MIT's 75-year-old humanities foundation holds the key.

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# 75

## Years of SHASS Integration

The School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at MIT turns 75 this month, having been formally established in 1949.

This milestone marks seven decades of intentional integration of humanistic and social inquiry into the core of technological education. The Lewis Report, which led to SHASS's founding, argued that rapid technological change—like nuclear weapons and AI—requires leaders who can think critically about ethics, governance, and societal impact, not just technical prowess.



# 01

## AI Needs More Than Data

AI systems in energy—whether optimizing grids, managing storage, or modeling climate impacts—often fail when they lack context. The MIT model shows that embedding humanities, ethics, and social science into AI training programs produces systems that anticipate human behavior, regulatory shifts, and public acceptance. Without this, even the most accurate model can misfire in real-world deployment.



# 02

## The Real AI Bottleneck Is Not Compute

The most advanced AI for energy systems today struggles not with processing power, but with interpretability and trust. The MIT experience proves that interdisciplinary education—where engineers study political science or economists analyze cultural narratives—builds AI operators who understand the human systems their models affect. This reduces deployment resistance and improves long-term system resilience.

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