

AI in Nuclear Energy Faces a Hidden Threat

Why the US is targeting international researchers — and what it means for safety and innovation.

THE DATA

61%

Postdocs with foreign nationality at target universities

The US Department of Labor claims this proportion is unusually high at nine universities under investigation.

This figure — drawn from the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General — reflects a national trend but is being weaponized as evidence of visa abuse. In reality, 61% of postdocs at these institutions are foreign nationals, compared to 38% at other universities. This gap is not fraud, but a function of global talent concentration in elite science hubs.

Source: Nature · Published October 19, 2026
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-026-03345-z>



01

Talent is the New Safety Metric

Regulatory bodies that equate foreign presence with risk are misreading the data. The real risk lies in homogenizing the talent pool, reducing the diversity of thought that drives breakthroughs in AI safety and failure prediction.

02

AI Safety Depends on Global Access

If the US continues to restrict access to international talent, it will accelerate the brain drain to countries like China, where AI-driven nuclear research is now receiving substantial state-backed investment — a direct threat to US technological sovereignty in nuclear energy.



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