

# Inertia is an energy storage element

What is power system inertia?

Power system engineers typically describe the inertia of a generator in terms of stored rotational kinetic energy (EPRI 2019), so inertia has the same units of energy (power delivered over a period of time).

What is inertia in power plants?

Inertia from rotating electrical generators in fossil, nuclear, and hydroelectric power plants represents a source of stored energy that can be tapped for a few seconds to provide the grid time to respond to power plant or other system failures.

Which energy storage technology provides inertia for power systems?

With a weighted score of 4.3, flywheels (with lithium-ion batteries a close second) appear as the most suitable energy storage technology to provide inertia for power systems.

Should energy storage be a virtual inertial source?

Incorporating energy storage as a virtual inertial source would require fundamental changes in grid operations and market design. Because grid rotational inertia is considered an inherent property of power generation, there is no market mechanism to include inertia generation as an ancillary service.

What is generator inertia?

Generator inertia is our starting point for examining how fast the system must respond to a contingency event. This section details how generator inertia resists changes in system frequency. Under normal conditions, electricity demand is met by the constant injection of energy into the grid from many power plants.

How does inertia affect the power grid?

Highly responsive control technology and inverters with grid-forming functionality enable the system to supply or absorb power within milliseconds, helping to stabilize the power grid. This service is called inertia. The more electricity comes from renewable, fluctuating energy sources, the more difficult it becomes to keep the power grid stable.



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