Grid Mod Pod tackles the who and how of grid modernization

By Tom Martin
November 15, 2023

Grid Mod Pod tackles the who and how of grid modernization

Dr. Elizabeth Cook, host of the Association of Edison Illuminating Companies (AEIC) podcast Grid Mod Pod, has a passion for getting the word out about AEIC's mission—"achieving operational excellence and grid modernization together for the benefit of all"—and the fundamental role of power utilities in delivering a commodity that's "the lifeline of society." But she's also an operations person at heart with a doctorate in electrical engineering, power engineering, and data analytics.

And that's what sets her passion project, the Grid Mod Pod, apart.

How data science is transforming grid management

Tune into the Grid Mod Pod's latest episode, How Data Science is Transforming Grid Management, to learn the importance of grid modernization.

Listen now

She's in it for the details, interested in getting at the *who* and *how* of grid modernization, not just the *what* and *why* more often discussed. And it's this hands-on focus that makes it a must listen for data scientists.

"One of the things that connects each episode of Grid Mod Pod is the idea that data is the great enabler of grid modernization and operational excellence," said Cook. "Data-driven insights, built on the bedrock of curiosity and the discipline of science—gather the data, build the models, run the analytics, apply what's learned, repeat—are key to helping utilities innovate, meet the needs of many different stakeholders, and successfully thread the needle on competing priorities, including safety, reliability, resilience, affordability and equity."

From DER to a broader ops focus

Launched in 2022, the podcast initially focused on operational issues associated with distributed energy

resources (DERs). Based on the success of those initial conversations, AEIC asked Cook to widen her lens and bring more people from across utility operations—and beyond it—into the fold.

“Last year, we covered the gamut of new ‘edge’ technologies that are driving interconnection planning operations changes at utilities,” added Cook. “This year, we’ve got a full slate of programming rooted in grid modernization road mapping.

“We are still considering DER impacts on the grid, but we’re also talking about specific smart-grid technologies; how utilities are approaching grid resilience and reliability, particularly as bigger and better data analytics platforms blossom. Big data and electrification are big trends we address throughout the series, but we’re also looking at battery energy storage, holistic system planning, cybersecurity, and customer centricity.”

This widened view is intentional (and, not insignificantly, maps to the ever-widening purview of data scientists). The Grid Mod Pod delivers on the details of how industry professionals are viewing and tackling the biggest challenges in their utility’s grid modernization efforts. But the show isn’t just for experts; Cook has something more inclusive in mind:

> We want everyone in utility operations to understand that this podcast is for them and emanates from the unique world in which they operate every day. But we think the innovation, creativity, and solution-oriented thinking spotlighted in this podcast can inspire talent outside our industry to give it a closer look. Utilities matter more than ever before. The professional opportunity to participate not only in the transformation of an industry but to help people and the planet meet an existential challenge and thrive is there for the taking. We want people to notice. Utilities are a big-tent industry; we encourage more people to come in, take a look, and, hopefully, stay awhile.

Catch up on the Grid Mod Pod

If you’d like to tune into earlier episodes of the Grid Mod Pod, here are some of our favorites:

- Episode 1: Embracing Grid-Edge Resources with Lee Ragsdale of NCEMC
- Episode 2: Overcoming Obstacles to Solar Energy Projects with Matt Hankey of New Energy Equity
- Episode 3: Project Management for Utilities 101 with Brett Ryhal
- Episode 4: Building Electrification with Dr. Katrina Kelly-Pitou of SmithGroup
- Episode 5: Holistic System Planning for Utilities with Brett Ryhal
- Episode 6: How Data Science is Transforming Grid Management with Tom Martin

---

© 2008 - 2026 E Source Companies LLC. All rights reserved.
Distribution outside subscribing organizations limited by license.