



AI experts warn electricity costs may stunt growth



The government must invest in long-term renewable energy if it wants to drive artificial intelligence (AI) growth in the East of England, experts have warned

The government must invest in long-term renewable energy if it wants to drive artificial intelligence (AI) growth in the East of England, experts have warned AI is set to be at the forefront of a £2bn data centre in Loughton, Essex, as well as the chancellor's plans for 'Europe's Silicon Valley' between Cambridge and Oxford

Dr Haider Raza, a senior AI lecturer at the University of Essex, said it was a "very exciting time" for the region but stressed sustainable energy was needed for AI to flourish. A government spokesman said it was "exploring bold, clean energy solutions" to meet its AI ambitions while aligning with the UK's net zero. The plan has received backing from AstraZeneca, GSK and Astex, which is using AI to develop new cancer drugs at Cambridge Science Park.

However, Dr Raza said "awful" electricity costs could stunt growth and said the government should invest in renewable energy to power AI. AI is set to be at the forefront of a £2bn data centre in Loughton, Essex, as well as the chancellor's plans for 'Europe's Silicon Valley' between Cambridge and Oxford. Dr Haider Raza, a senior AI lecturer at the University of Essex, said it was a "very exciting time" for the region but stressed sustainable energy was needed for AI to flourish

A government spokesman said it was "exploring bold, clean energy solutions" to meet its AI ambitions while aligning with the UK's net zero goal. The plan has received backing from AstraZeneca, GSK and Astex, which is using AI to develop new cancer drugs at Cambridge Science Park.

However, Dr Raza said "awful" electricity costs could stunt growth and said the government should invest in renewable energy to power AI centres. Data centres are going to churn through a lot of energy, especially if they are processing too many jobs and mining large amounts of data. "There are so many aspects we have to manage. Considering the cost of electricity, it's very challenging financially."