

From art to engineering, Tulane researchers tackle energy challenges together

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Numerous panels at the Future of Energy Forum featured Tulane researchers, including Cynthia Ebinger (left), the Marshall-Heape Chair in Geology, and Cristóbal Molina Baeza (center), the Favrot Visiting Assistant Professor of Architecture, who spoke on “Challenges and Misconceptions Around Critical Minerals.” (Photo by Kenny Lass)

From developing wind-turbine bearings inspired by the human knee, to encouraging social infrastructure in cities that support energy development, Tulane University’s Future of Energy Forum highlighted that the fastest route to a cleaner, more resilient energy future runs straight through

interdisciplinary research.

“From the world-renowned Tulane Energy Institute to the Center for Energy Law and Policy to the ByWater Institute, our faculty and alumni find new solutions by crossing disciplinary boundaries — whether they're finding new approaches to global energy governance or developing new solutions for energy storage and infrastructure,” Tulane President Michael A. Fitts told a packed crowd Sept. 10 as he opened the second annual forum.

During his remarks, Fitts previewed more disciplinary crossings to come, announcing plans to launch the Tulane Institute of Advanced Energy Studies, a university-wide hub connecting research and education across science, engineering, law, business and beyond.

More than 1,700 people registered for the free forum, which lasted through Sept. 12. Speakers and panelists, who appeared across three stages during the event, included Colette Hirstius, president of Shell USA; Drew Marsh, chair and CEO of Entergy; and Walter Isaacson, Leonard Lauder Professor of American History and Values at Tulane.

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