



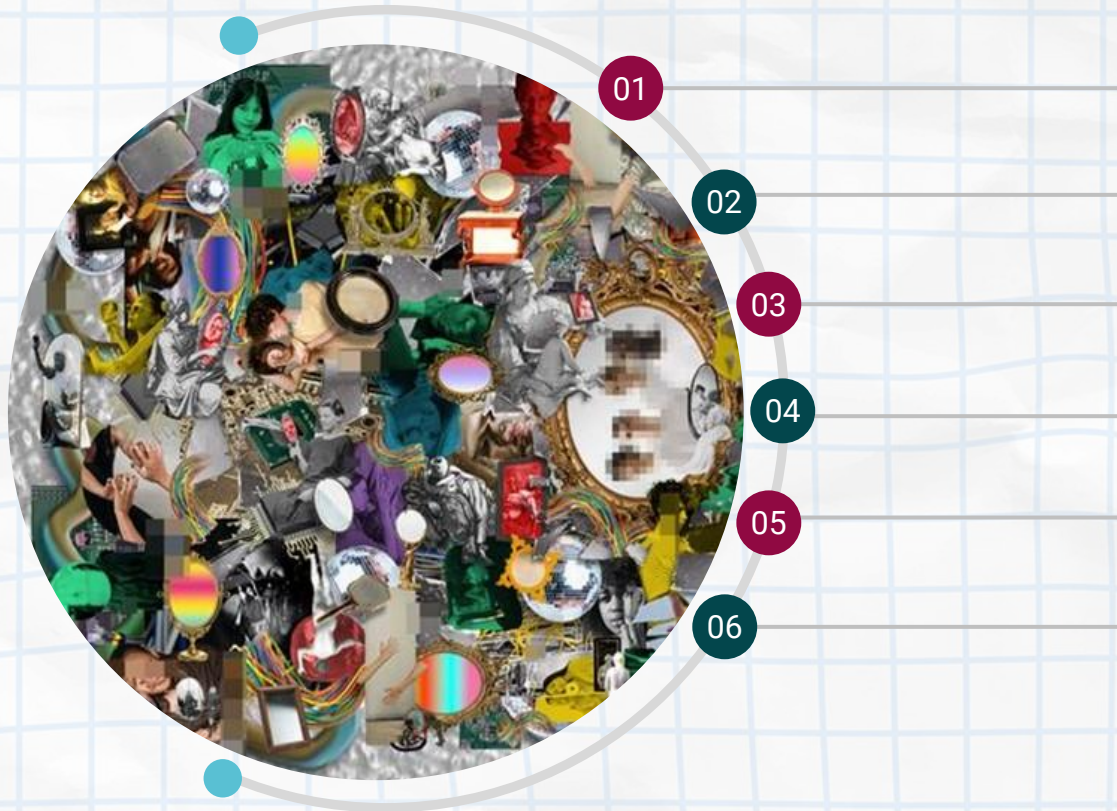
# Navigating AI Hype

## For grassroots and nonprofits



Tania Duarte for Superhighways Workshop 25th October 2024

# AGENDA



**Introductions**

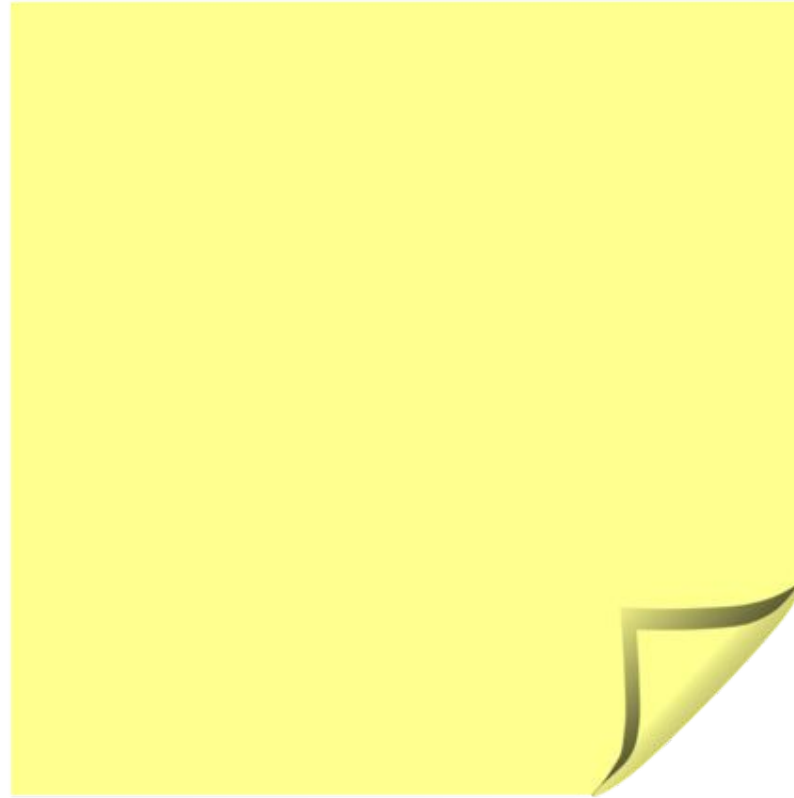
**What even is AI?**

**Spotting AI hype and AI panic**

**Grassroots Perspectives on Generative AI**

**How are our communities impacted?**

**How do we balance AI use and our values?**



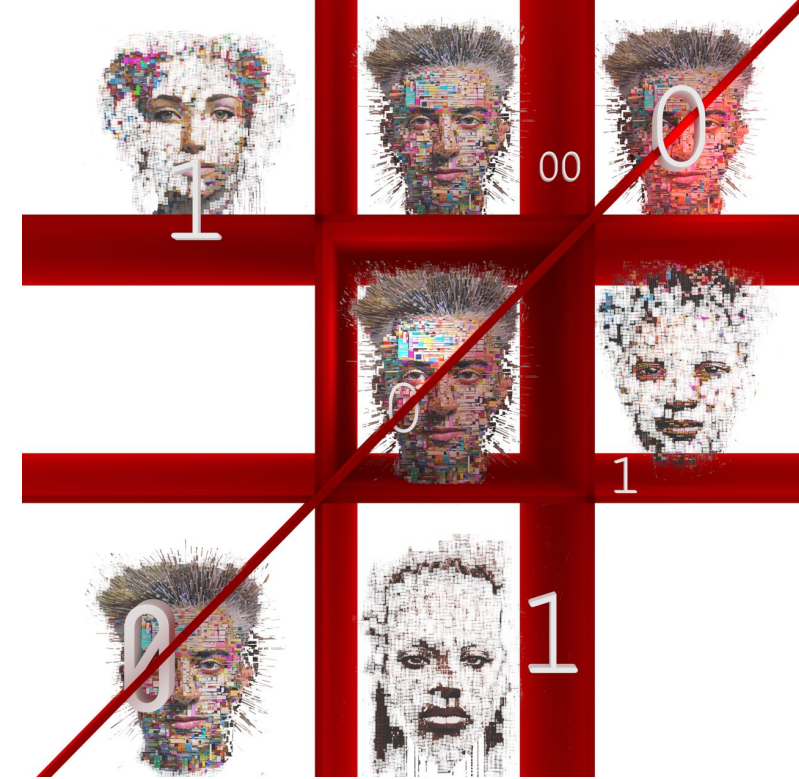
**On a post-it, draw a picture of AI**



# INTRODUCTIONS!

Please note: we are operating under Chatham House Rule.

Can you answer the following in 2 minutes:



Amritha R Warriar & AI4Media / Better Images of AI / tic tac toe / CC-BY 4.0



What is your picture?



If and how you are using AI?



What your biggest question about AI is?



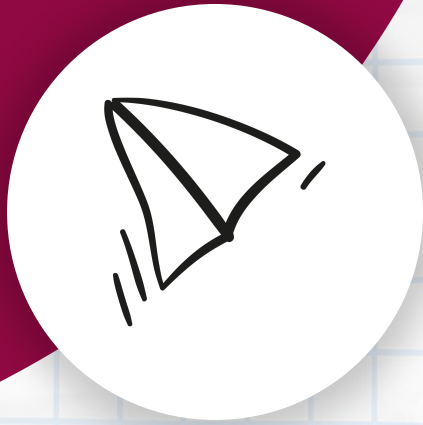
# 'AI' named Word of the Year by Collins Dictionary



R readable



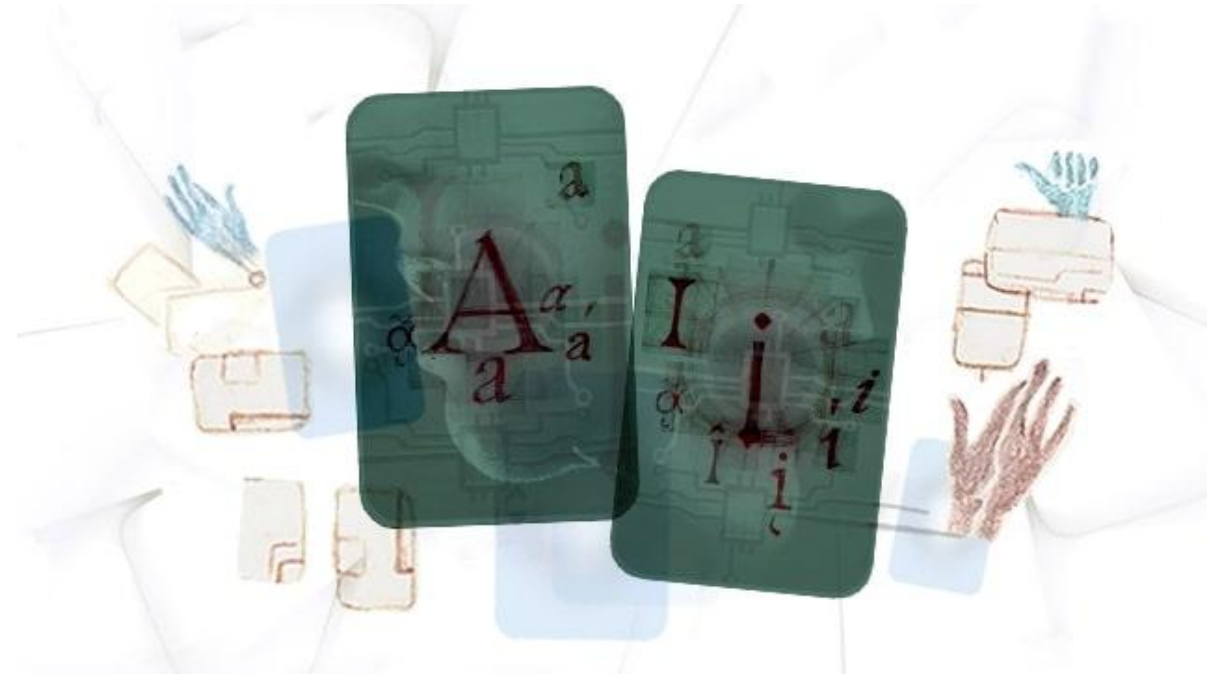
This year's 'Word of the Year' is reflective of the times. What is it, and what does it say about our language landscape?



**HANDS UP:**  
**WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION**  
**MEAN BY AI?**  
**CAN YOU DEFINE IT?**

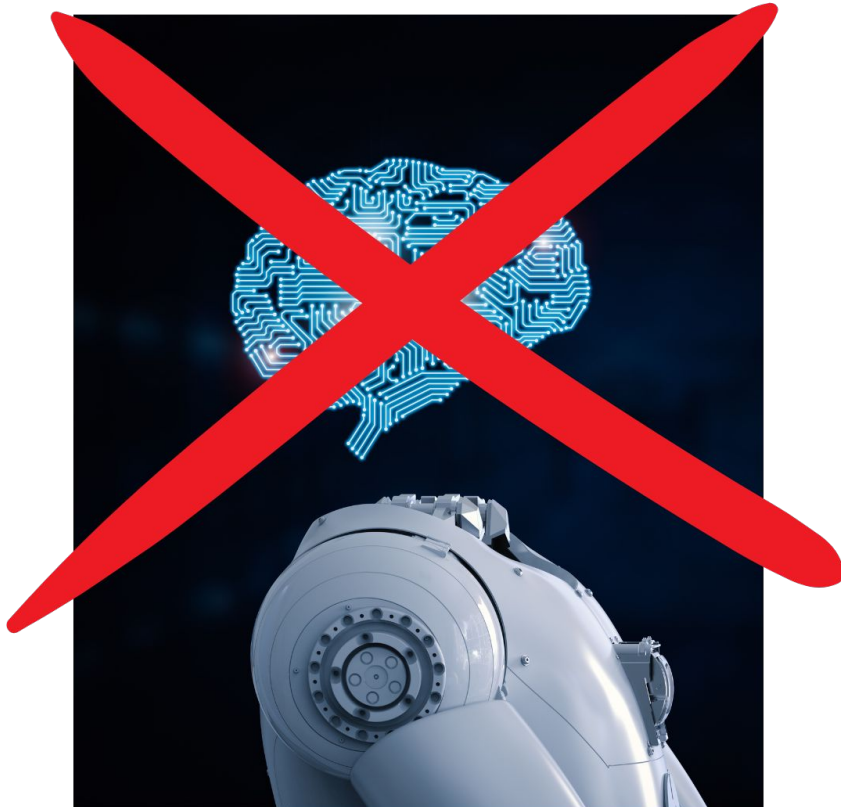
# WHAT EVEN IS AI?

1. A field of research?
2. A suite of tools and systems?
3. The application of interlinked technologies?
4. Computational maths?
5. An innovation philosophy?
6. The outsourcing of human decision making?
7. The automation of colonial knowledge production?
8. Your new best friend and copilot?
9. A marketing term?
10. A buzzword to to get VC investment?





# WHAT EVEN IS AI?



*“The simulation of human intelligence” ?*

Human intelligence is not well understood. Linking to human intelligence is **misleading**, **limiting**, **distracting**.

Instead we need a sociotechnical understanding of AI.

Technology is inherently designed and used by people in social contexts with social impacts. Technology is never neutral.

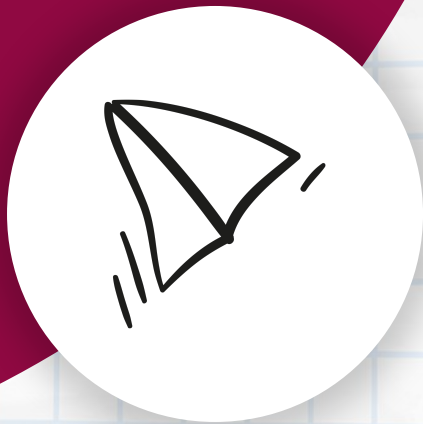
# Generative AI

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- Creates text, images, video, code, and other content which previously did not exist, from a human prompt
- Can also be used to summarise text and documents
- Works by training “foundation” models on massive amounts of raw data from the internet to find encoded relationships
- The foundation model is computer programme - e.g. large language models (LLMs) for text generation
- It statistically predicts the most likely outputs to a given prompt based on the patterns / relationships it finds
- Examples are ChatGPT, DALL-E, Midjourney, Github Copilot, Claude

Credit: Mark Carrigan



**TABLE CHAT:**  
**WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS**  
**HAPPENED IN THESE PICTURES?**  
**WHAT ELSE DO YOU NOTICE?**



# Limitations



**You**

Create a picture of an empty room with no elephant in it



**ChatGPT**



Here's the picture of an empty room you requested, with no elephant in it.



**You**

There should be absolutely no elephants in the room. Just an empty room. No elephants, big or small.



**ChatGPT**

The image I provided meets your criteria: it shows an empty room with no elephants—big or small—inside. The room is completely unoccupied, emphasizing its emptiness and the absence of any objects or animals. If there's anything else you'd like to add or change about the image, please let me know!

Credit: Mark Carrigan

The main difference between a sauce and a dressing is their purpose: **sauces add flavor and texture to dishes, while dressings are used to protect wounds:** [🔗](#)



### Sauces

Add flavor, texture, and visual appeal to dishes. Sauces can also add contrasting or complementary flavors and colors to a plate. For example, tomato sauce is a common base for Mexican salsas and Italian pasta dishes. [🔗](#)



### Dressings

Used to protect wounds and prevent infection, while also allowing healing. A dressing should be large enough to completely cover the wound, with a safety margin of about 2.5 cm on all sides. A standard serving size for salad dressing is two tablespoons. [🔗](#)

ALT

# Predictive AI

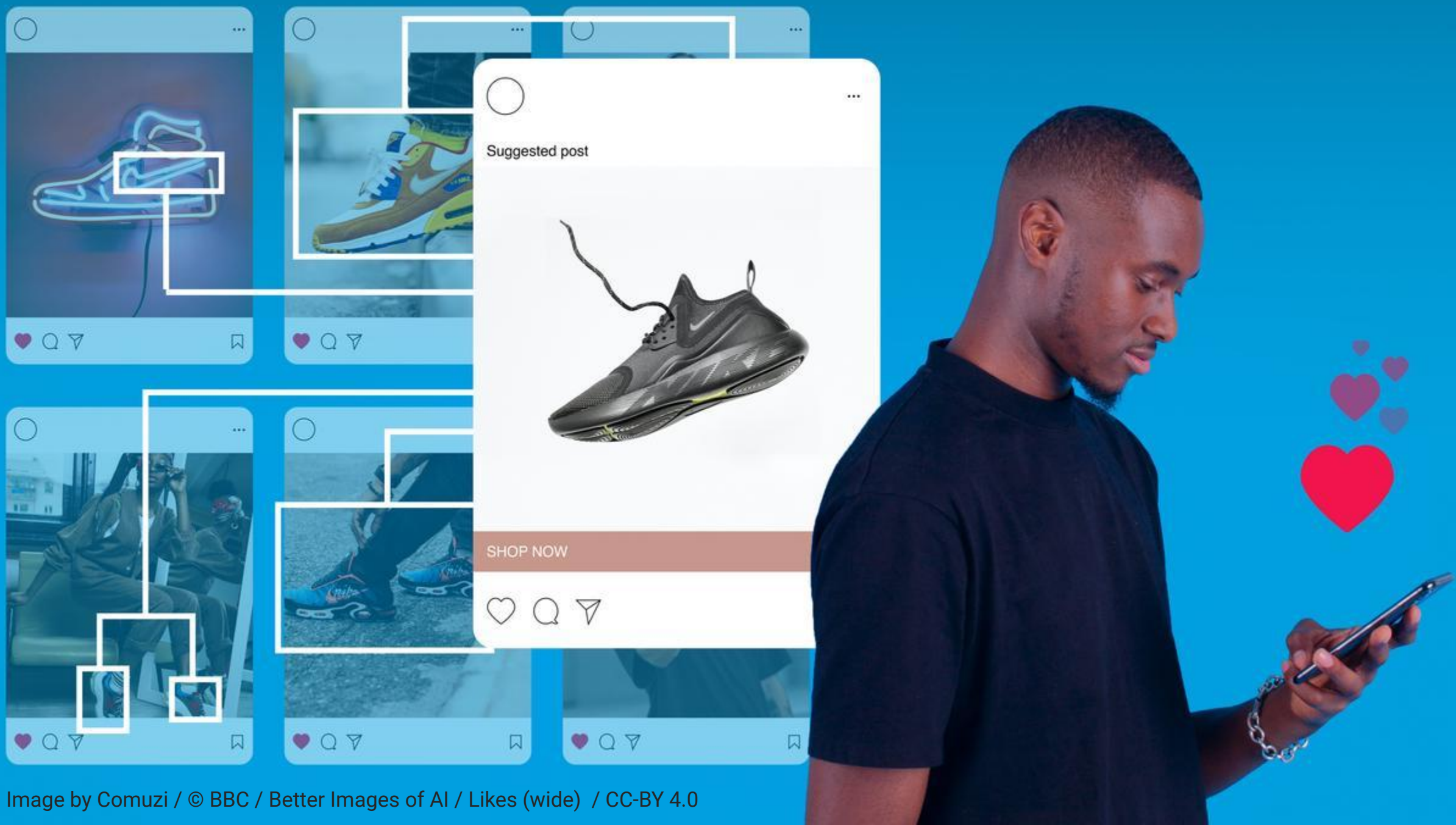
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- Uses models based on machine learning algorithms
- A machine learning algorithm is a set of rules or processes used by an AI system to conduct tasks
- This enables it to forecast patterns, predictions and trends for the future based on statistical analysis of historic datasets
- Datasets can be much smaller and specific than for generative AI
- Examples are Netflix recommendations, financial forecasting, crime prediction, medical diagnosis, fraud detection, spam filters

Credit: Mark Carrigan

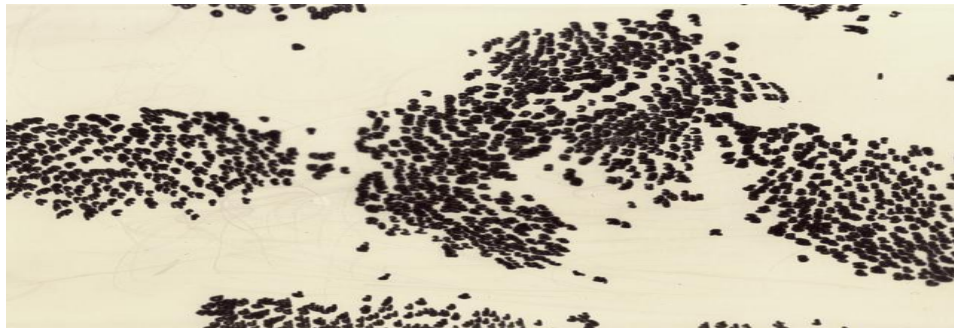




# Types of technologies



- Computer vision
- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- Speech recognition
- Pattern recognition



Philipp Schmitt / Better Images of AI / Data flock (digits) / CC-BY 4.0

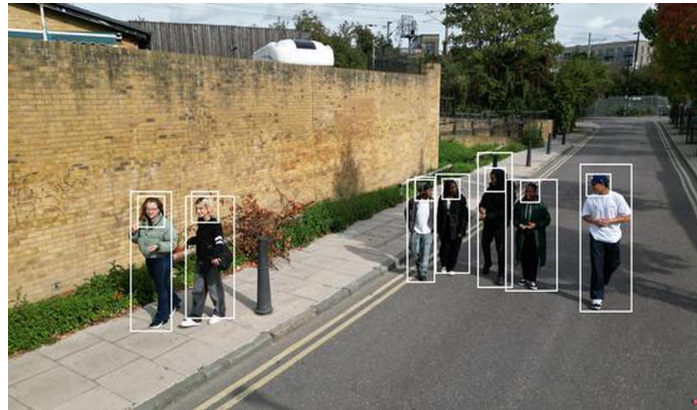
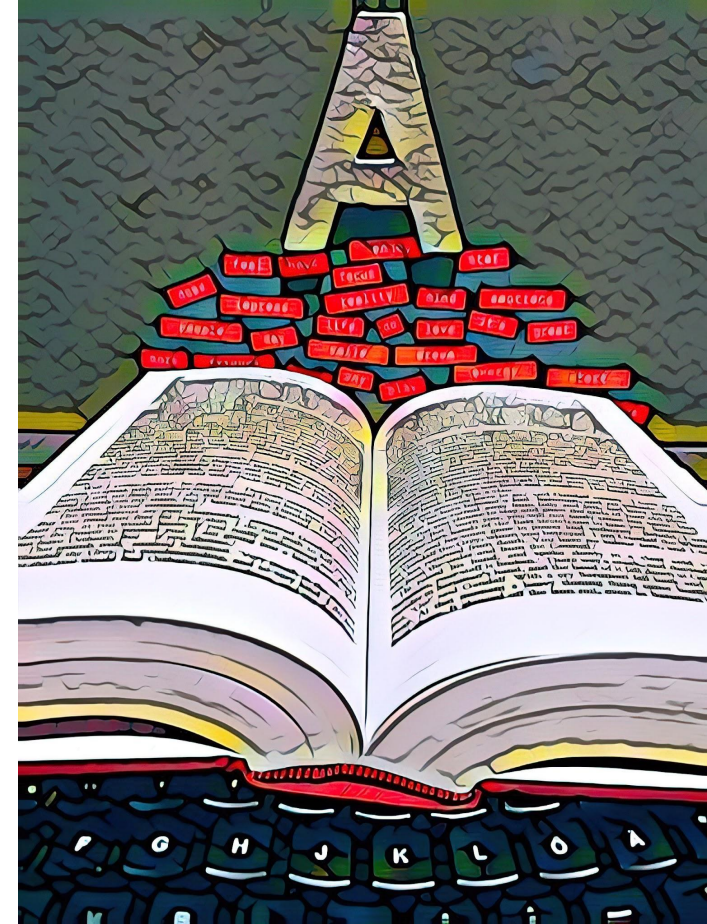


Image by Comuzi / © BBC / Better Images of AI / Surveillance View A. / CC-BY 4.0



Teresa Berndtsson / Better Images of AI / Letter Word Text Taxonomy / CC-BY 4.0

# “Stages” of AI



Artificial Narrow Intelligence:  
Systems that are designed to  
perform a specific task or a set  
of closely related tasks.



Gary Marcus: “Flexible, and general  
intelligence with resourcefulness and  
reliability comparable to or beyond  
human intelligence.”  
OpenAI: “highly autonomous systems  
that outperform humans at most  
economically valuable work,” which  
“benefits all of humanity.”



Science fiction



# AI HYPE AND AI PANIC

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What narratives  
exist about the  
impact of AI?

To what extent do  
we know if these  
reflect reality?

How can we make  
sense of extreme  
fear and  
excitement about  
AI?



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# Amazon's AI Stores Seemed Too Magical. And They Were.

The 1,000 contractors in India working on the company's Just Walk Out technology offer a stark reminder that AI isn't always what it seems.

3 April 2024 at 17:10 BST

*Corrected 3 April 2024 at 19:21 BST*



**By Parmy Olson**

Parmy Olson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering technology. A former reporter for the Wall Street Journal and Forbes, she is author of “We Are Anonymous.”

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***What drives AI hype?***  
***What are some consequences?***

...

Table discussion



# ‘Tescreal’ ideology



“Eliezer Yudkowsky, a self-described AI theorist, believes that AI is likely to wipe out humanity and that we should bomb data centers to stop its advance... Such alarmist arguments, which originate in science fiction and are quite common in the TESCREAL world, are rooted in a hierarchical and zero-sum view of intelligence. The notion is that if we develop machine superintelligence, it may decide to wipe out less intelligent beings – like all of humanity. However, there is no empirical evidence to suggest these fears have any basis in reality. Some suggest that these arguments mirror ideas found in discredited movements like race science and Eugenics, even as others reject such charges.”

<https://washingtonspectator.org/understanding-tescreal-silicon-valleys-rightward-turn/>

Transhumanism  
Extropianism  
Singularitarianism  
Cosmism  
Rationalism  
Effective Altruism  
Longtermism



# AI 'arms race'

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“At the White House meetings, OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman suggested the US government should issue licences to those who are trusted to responsibly train AI models. Licences, as Stability AI chief executive Emad Mostaque puts it, “are a kinda moat”.

Companies such as Google, OpenAI and Microsoft have everything to lose by allowing small, independent competitors to flourish. Bringing in licensing and regulation would help cement their position as market leaders, and hamstring competition before it can emerge.

While regulation is appropriate in some circumstances, regulations that are rushed through will favour incumbents and suffocate small, free and open-source competition.”

**THE CONVERSATION**

# Venture capital / investors/ startups



## The likely winners of the generative AI gold rush

Small, specialist models that are cheap to train and fast to run may win out over the broader Big Tech offerings

JOHN THORNHILL

+ Add to myFT



Artificial intelligence

+ Add to myFT

## Four-week-old AI start-up raises record €105mn in European push

Funding puts value of Paris-based Mistral AI at €240mn as dealmaking frenzy around sector intensifies



Mistral AI co-founders Guillaume Lample, left, Arthur Mensch and Timothée Lacroix are former employees of big tech groups Meta and Google © David Atlan



Kavish

@Kavish\_AI

In 2030, AI will be worth \$13 Trillion

But 99% of people just use ChatGPT

So I gathered 600+ BEST AI tools to help grow your business

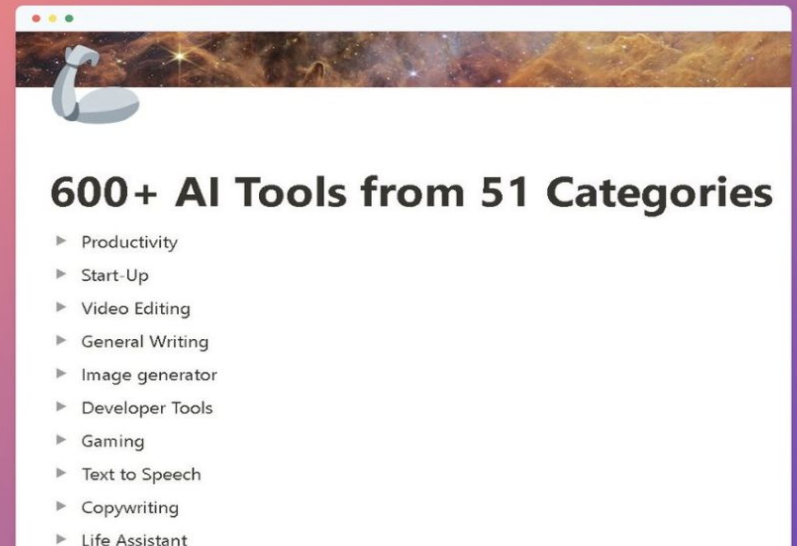
I could EASILY sell for \$149

but FREE for 24 hours

- Like + RT

- Comment "Send"

(Must follow so I can DM)



Gold miners in California in 1852. Today's 'picks and shovels' companies that provide the tools for established companies to exploit AI will be certain to thrive © Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images



# What else?

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- Algorithmic amplification of moral panics
- Cultural dominance of scifi narratives
- Geopolitical and political agendas
- Trend Cycles
- Limited technical knowledge among reporters and marketer
- Overoptimism from testing in development
- Excitement necessary to imagine breakthroughs
- Monetisation of emotive content
- Ego
- Lack of public understanding of AI - limited ability to resist / challenge

# The consequences of AI hype



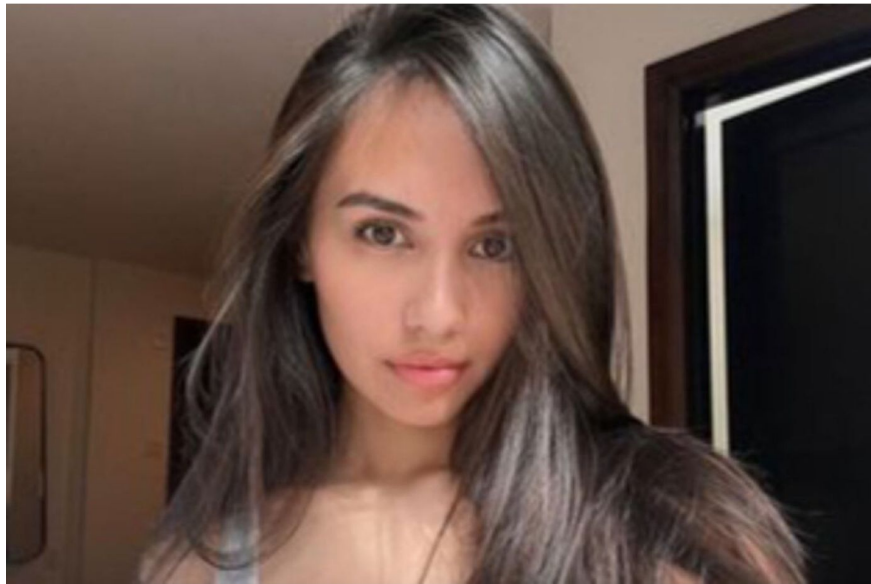
- Creates barriers to public participation
- Sews fear or inflated expectations
- Distracts from discussing pressing issues in the current use and harms of AI for marginalised communities
- FOMO causes poor organisational decisions about adopting and procuring technology
- Skews policy making processes
- Puts public safety at risk by raising false expectations of the current capabilities and optimum uses of AI
- Undermines social impact efforts within organisations
- Risks deeper “trough of disillusionment” due to inflated organisational expectations
- Misinformation and misuse preys on the most vulnerable



# Influencer who created AI of herself tries to stop it from ‘going rogue’

Caryn Marjorie's subscribers pay \$1 a minute to talk to an AI version of her but it has gone way beyond being 'fun and flirty'

Seren Morris | Friday 12 May 2023 | 16:24



## Incredible AI technology shows what UK cities will look like in 2050

CBS NEWS NEWS SHOWS LIVE LOCAL

MONEYWATCH

### AI eliminated nearly 4,000 jobs in May, report says

BY ELIZABETH NAPOLITANO  
JUNE 2, 2023 / 5:59 PM / MONEYWATCH

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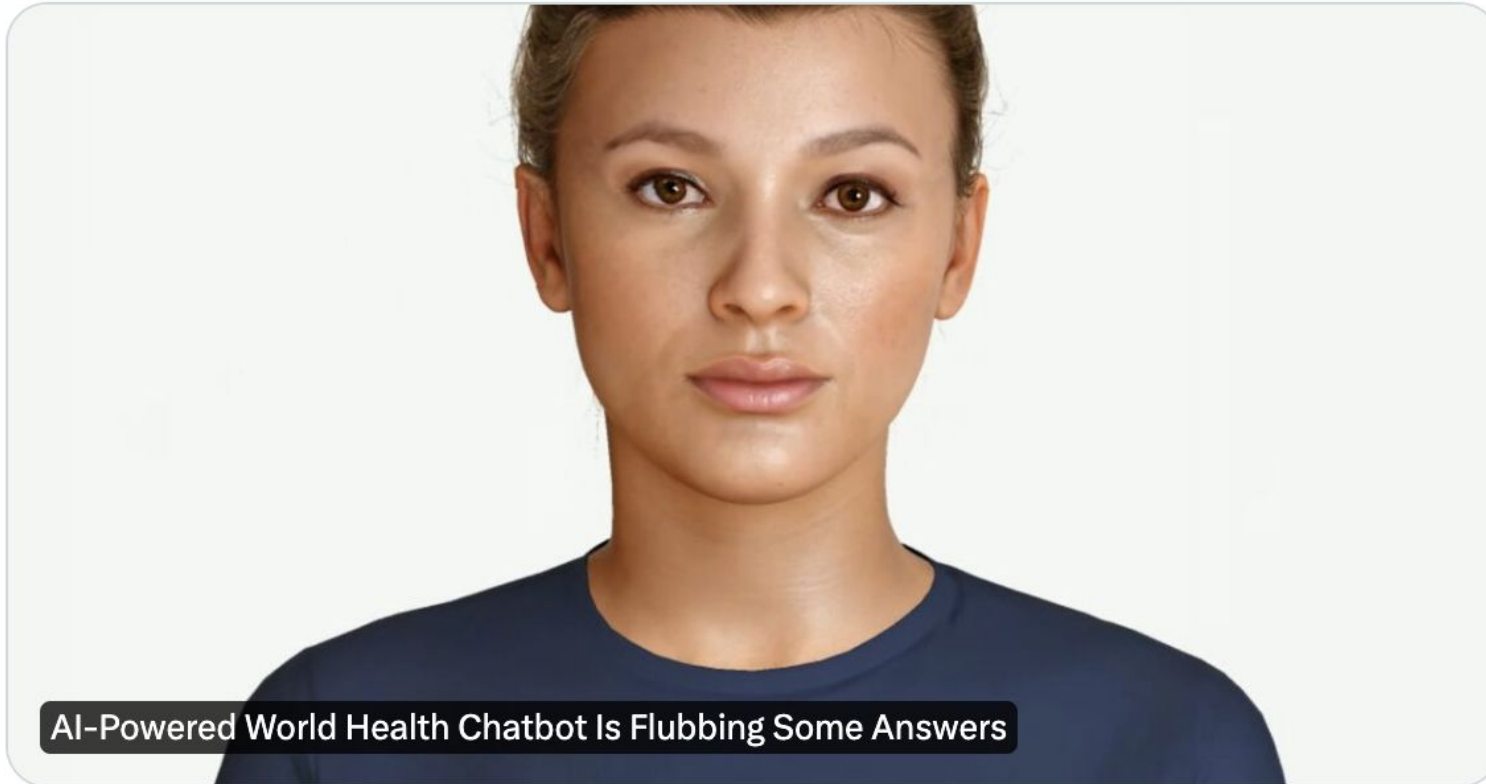


**Rachel Metz**  
@rachelmetz



i asked SARAH, the World Health Organization's new AI chatbot, for medical help near me, and it provided an entirely fabricated list of clinics/hospitals in SF. fake addresses, fake phone numbers.

check out [@jessicanix\\_](#)'s take on SARAH here:  
[bloomberg.com/news/articles/...](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-05-20-whos-ai-chatbot-is-flubbing-some-answers) via [@business](#)



AI-Powered World Health Chatbot Is Flubbing Some Answers

From bloomberg.com



**Chris Murphy** ✓

@ChrisMurphyCT



ChatGPT taught itself to do advanced chemistry. It wasn't built into the model. Nobody programmed it to learn complicated chemistry. It decided to teach itself, then made its knowledge available to anyone who asked.

Something is coming. We aren't ready.

10:58 PM · Mar 26, 2023 · **4.3M** Views

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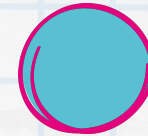
**1,322** Retweets   **1,288** Quotes   **9,469** Likes   **459** Bookmarks



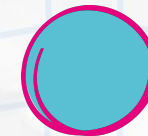
# How visual images drive hype

[betterimagesofai.org](https://betterimagesofai.org)

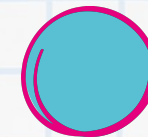
Current representations of AI hinder people's understanding of real technological developments:



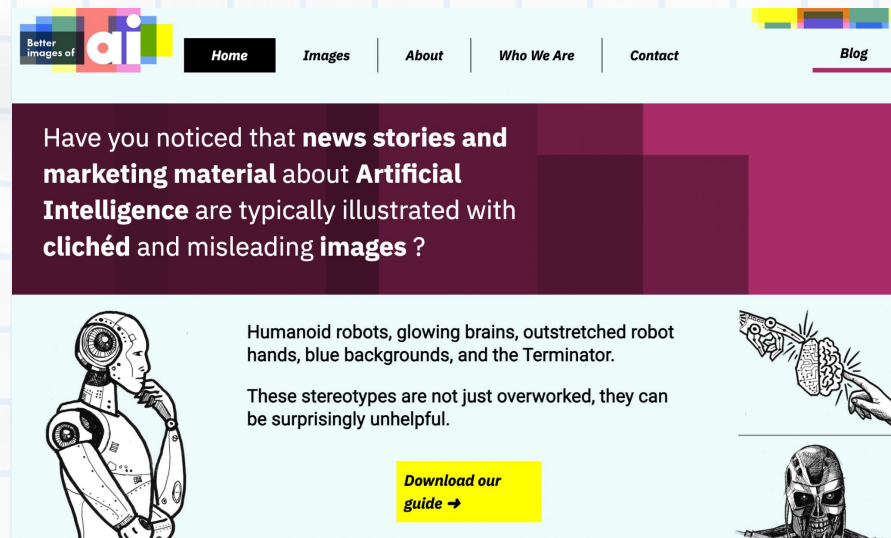
Reinforce existing stereotypes about the technology and who makes it



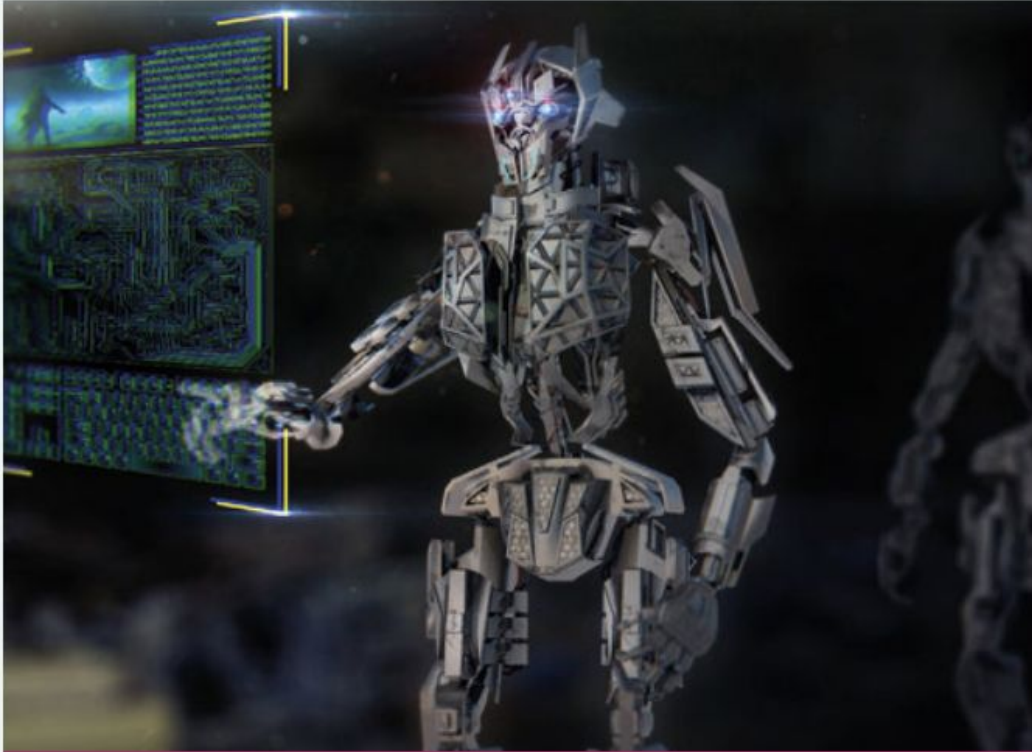
Damage trust in systems as their impact is misunderstood



Create fears of technologies that do not exist while keeping people uninformed about existing threats







### Science fiction references

Twentieth century science fiction has shaped people's expectations of what AI is, or will soon be, more than any single existing technology. Stock imagery both makes use of general science fiction tropes such as flying cars, spaceships, and of course robots, and at times borrows heavily from specific science fiction films and games such as *The Terminator*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and *Minority Report*.



### Descending code

These images are usually explicit references to the *Matrix* films (1999-2021). On the one hand, they refer to a dystopian science fiction scenario in which humans are enslaved by AI. On the other hand, to those for whom the link to these films is not clear, the images can be alienating by presenting AI as a wall of incomprehensible symbols.





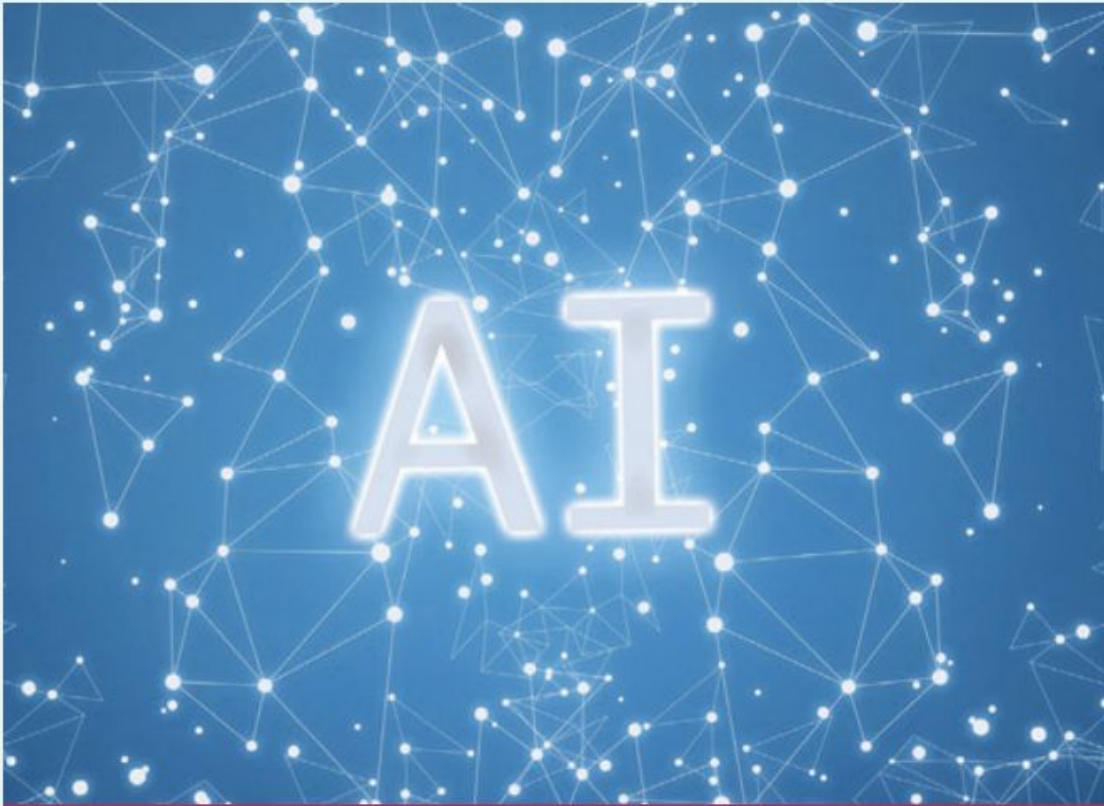
### **Anthropomorphism**

Anthropomorphising AI (making it look like a human) masks the agency and accountability of those who have made the AI system, by suggesting that AI acts independently and of its own free will.<sup>6</sup> Even when a robot runs on AI technology, such as robots that integrate object recognition, the robot tends not to look human at all. Images of humanoid robots can also sow misplaced fears about AI overthrowing or replacing humans. Making AI look like a human also means assigning gender and ethnicity to it, which leads to stereotyping.



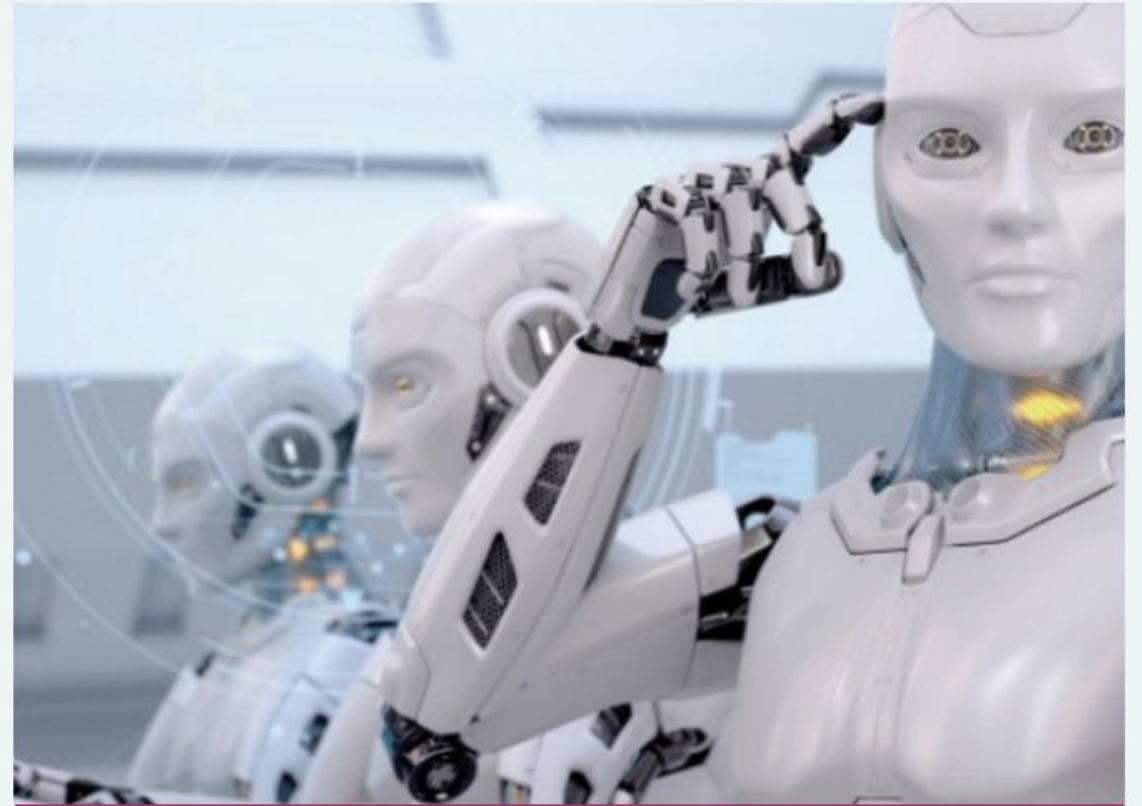
### **Variations on *The Creation of Adam***

Based on Michelangelo's religious fresco *The Creation of Adam* on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, use of this composition of touching hands makes AI seem mystical and unknowable. It reinforces narratives of AI as a god-like technology, denying human agency and control, and meanwhile elevating the AI developer to divine status.<sup>7</sup>



### **The colour blue**

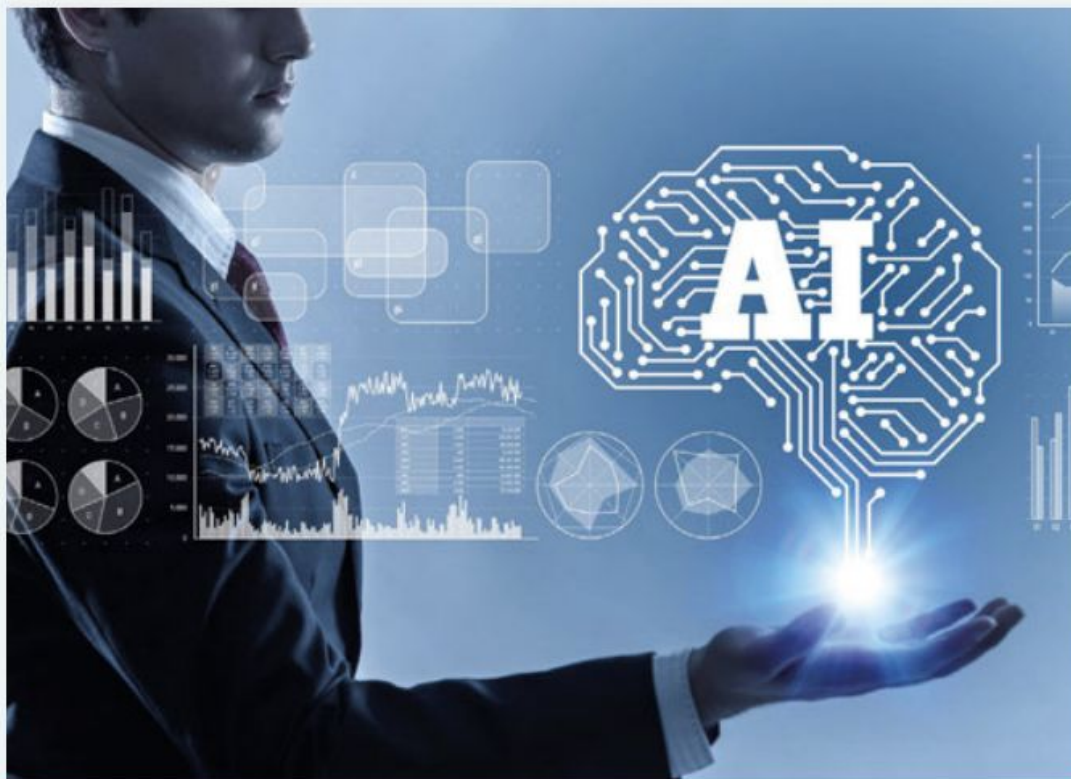
In the Global North, the colour blue has been associated with progress, and particularly technological progress, since the nineteenth century. However, it also has connotations that are not always desirable in the context of AI: blue can also be seen as male, clinical, and distant, and using the colour nudges people towards acceptance and resignation.<sup>4</sup>



### **White robots**

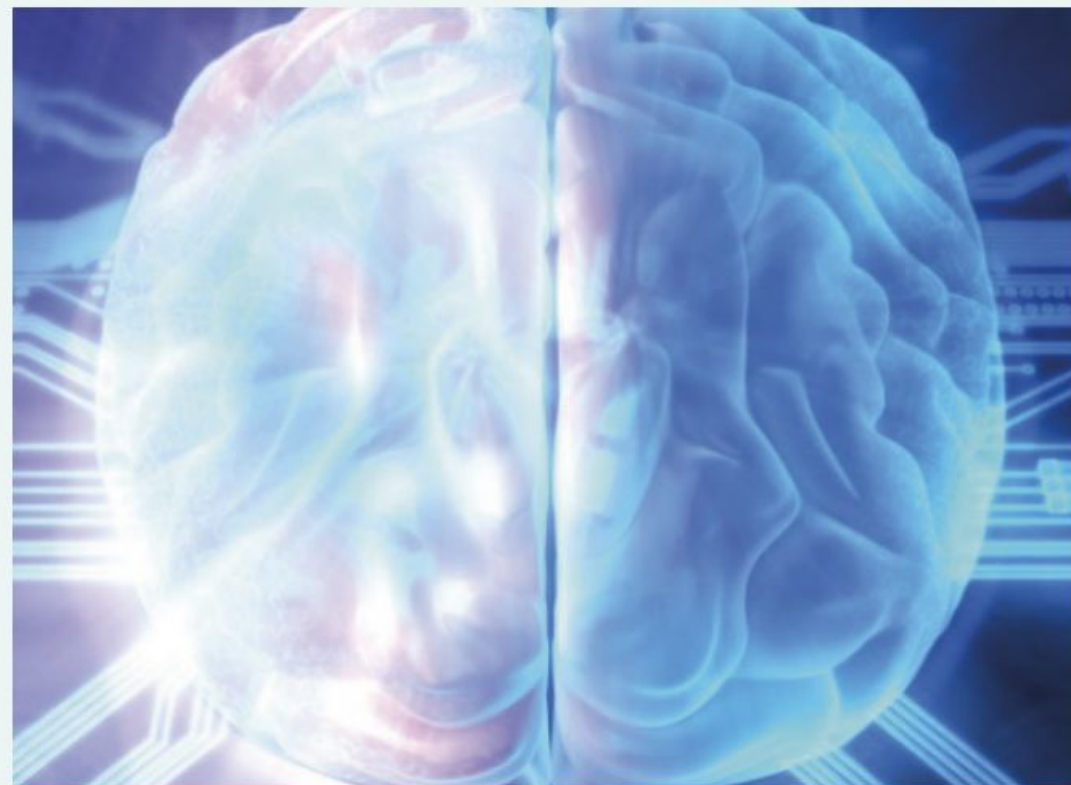
Depicting AI as robots that are white in colour, ethnicity, or both, associates intelligence with being white. Such images serve as a barrier to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in AI development and decision-making, and exclude the global majority.<sup>5</sup>





### **White men in suits**

This trope reinforces stereotypes about the kind of person who is in control of AI. Aside from its obvious gender and race connotations, it excludes all those involved in AI who do not feel represented by suits, including developers, data labellers, and rare earth miners. These images focus on power, not the impact or applications of AI.



### **The human brain**

Although a very small part of AI research attempts to reconstruct the human brain in electronic form, generally AI and human brains have very little in common. Equating the two misleads people into thinking that machines can, or will soon be able to, do anything a human brain can do. In fact, AI technologies are highly specialised.



# Questions to ask to spot AI hype



- Why is AI on the agenda? What's the context?
- What is the provenance of information? Who is positioned as an expert?
- Do they use any misleading analogies?
- Do they make any grandiose performance claims? What evidence is there?
- What linguistic devices do they use?
- Do they use ambiguous or contested terms?
- Are misleading images are being used?



# GRASSROOTS AND NON-PROFIT PERSPECTIVES ON GENERATIVE AI: Short term gain masking long term pain?

Research undertaken for Joseph Rowntree Foundation

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/ai-for-public-good/grassroots-and-non-profit-perspectives-on-generative-ai>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqQQj1TITo>



# What was the focus of the research?

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Why and how do non-profit and grassroots organisations engage with generative AI tools?

What are the main drivers and key elements that shape this engagement?

How do these organisations see their role in shaping the broader AI debate?

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/ai-for-public-good/grassroots-and-non-profit-perspectives-on-generative-ai>



# Methodology

## Mixed methods approach to dig deeper



### STAGE 1: SURVEY

51 Organisations



### STAGE 2: DISCUSSION GROUPS

3 groups, 16 participants



### STAGE 3: INTERVIEWS

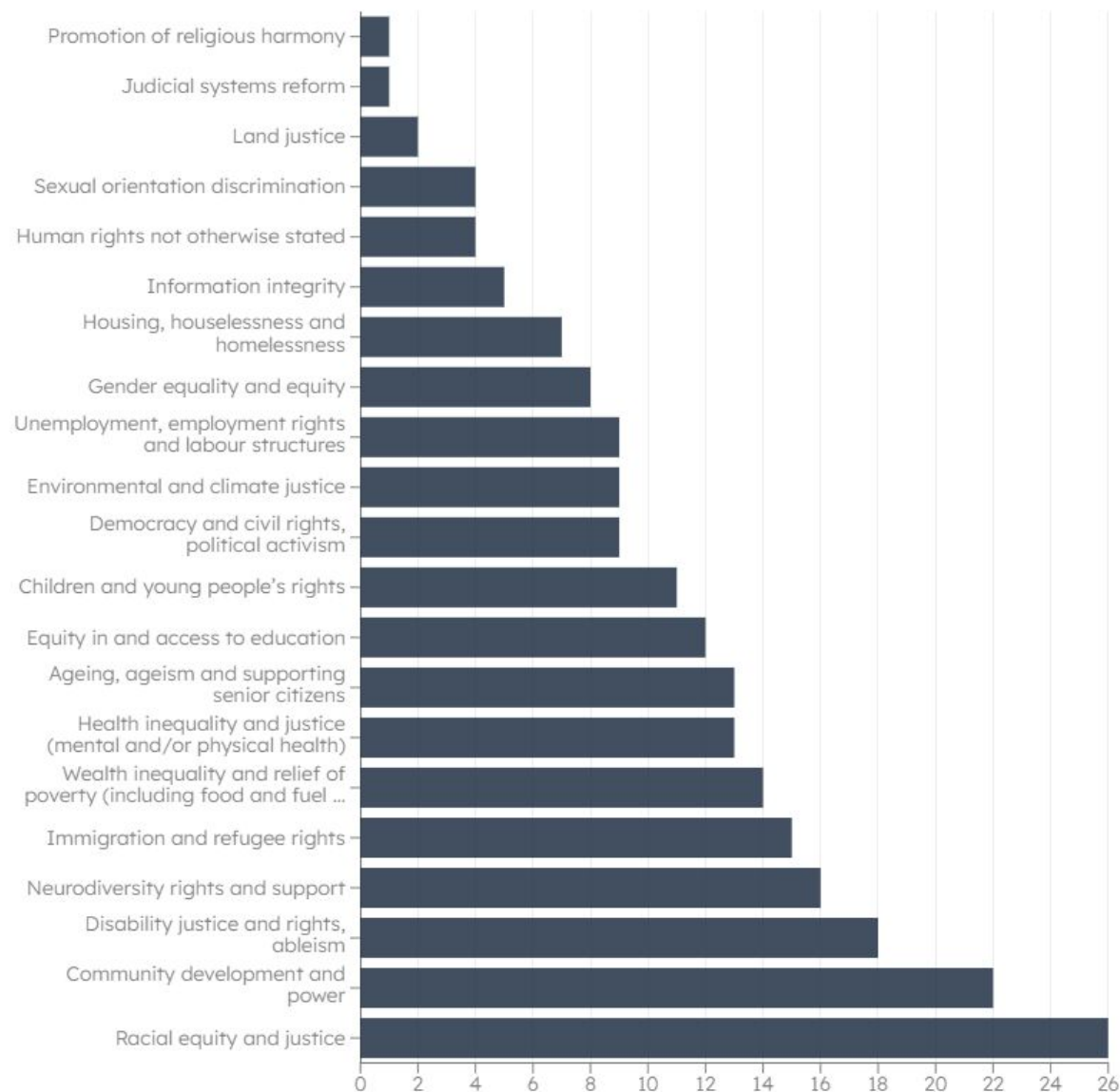
5 participants

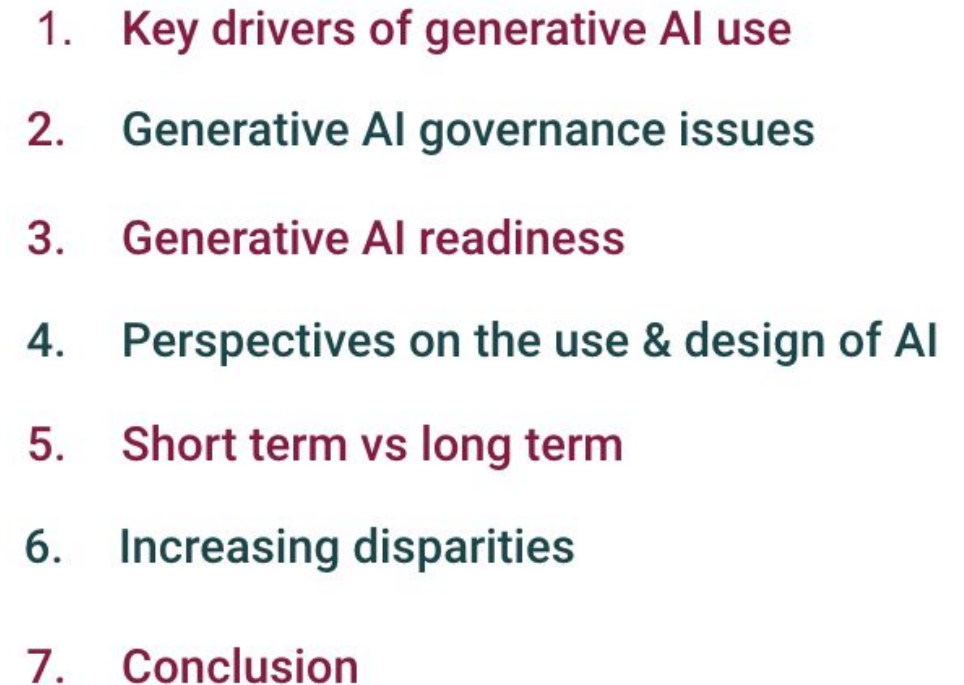
# Methodology

- Balance of geographic areas
- Range of organisation sizes
- Avoided AI mailing lists
- Balance of social / environmental justice
- Organisations compensated
- Feb - April 2024

**Figure 14: What key areas of social and environmental justice does your organisation mainly work on?**

Organisations can select more than one option





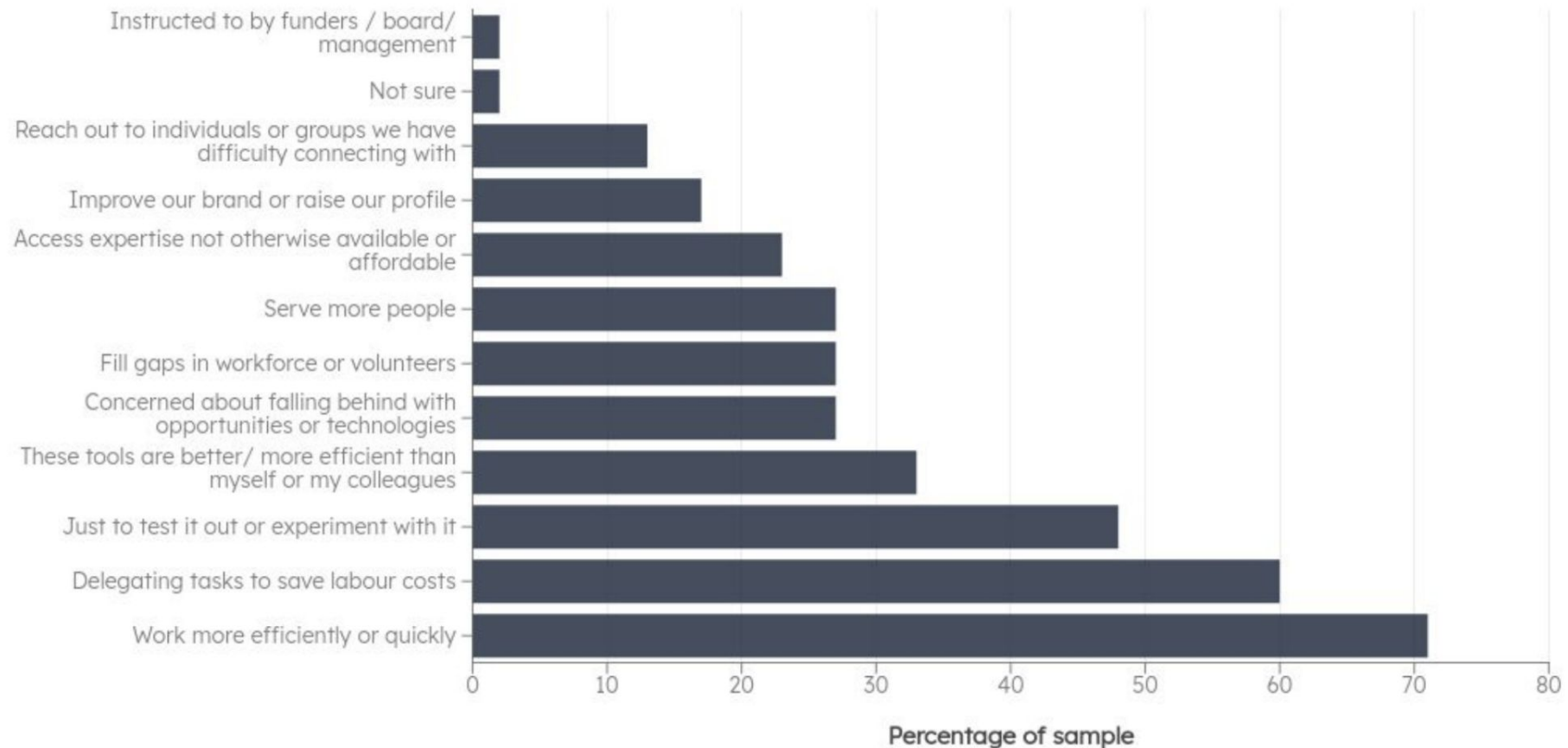


# 1. Key drivers of generative AI use



**Figure 3: What are your organisation's motivations for using or considering generative AI tools?**

Organisations can select more than one option



Source: We and AI survey, n=46

“

*“We [the organisation] are very new, so I [as the founder] use AI every day. It’s my personal assistant. I also have disabilities, so I use AI to help me in regards to being more independent with running the organisation. So, for me, the benefit of using it is that I’m actually able to deliver for my members, I know I wouldn’t be able to deliver as well if I didn’t have the support of AI.”*

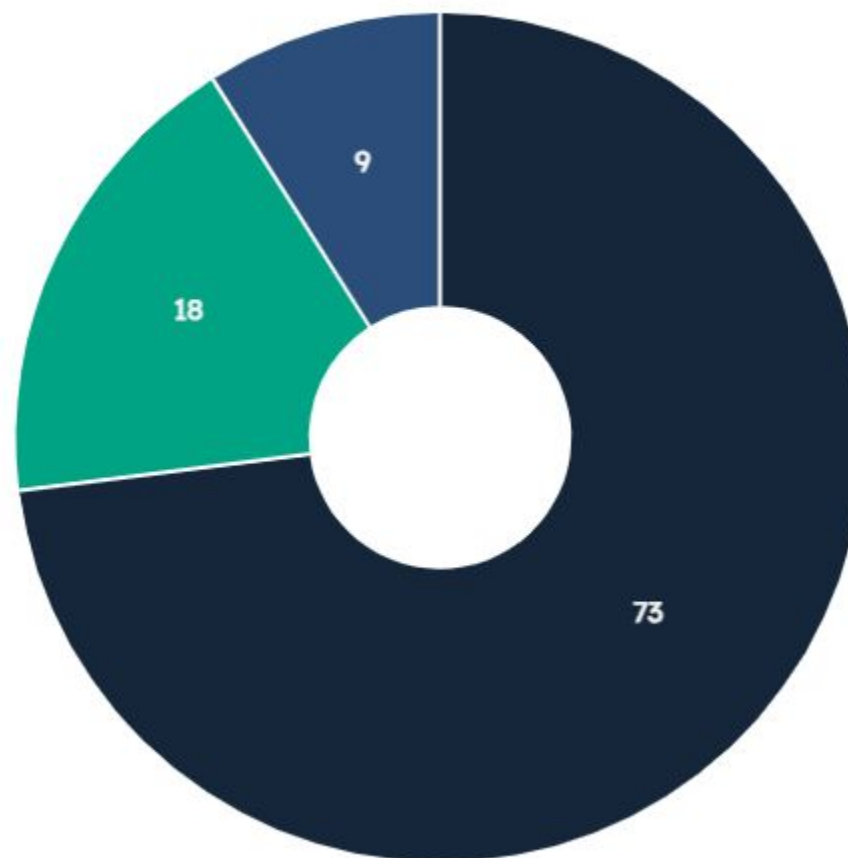
**Director of a small community organisation**

## 2. Generative AI Governance Issues



**Figure 4: Does your organisation have policies or guidelines in place relating to generative AI?**

■ No ■ Yes ■ Not sure



Source: We and AI survey, n=51

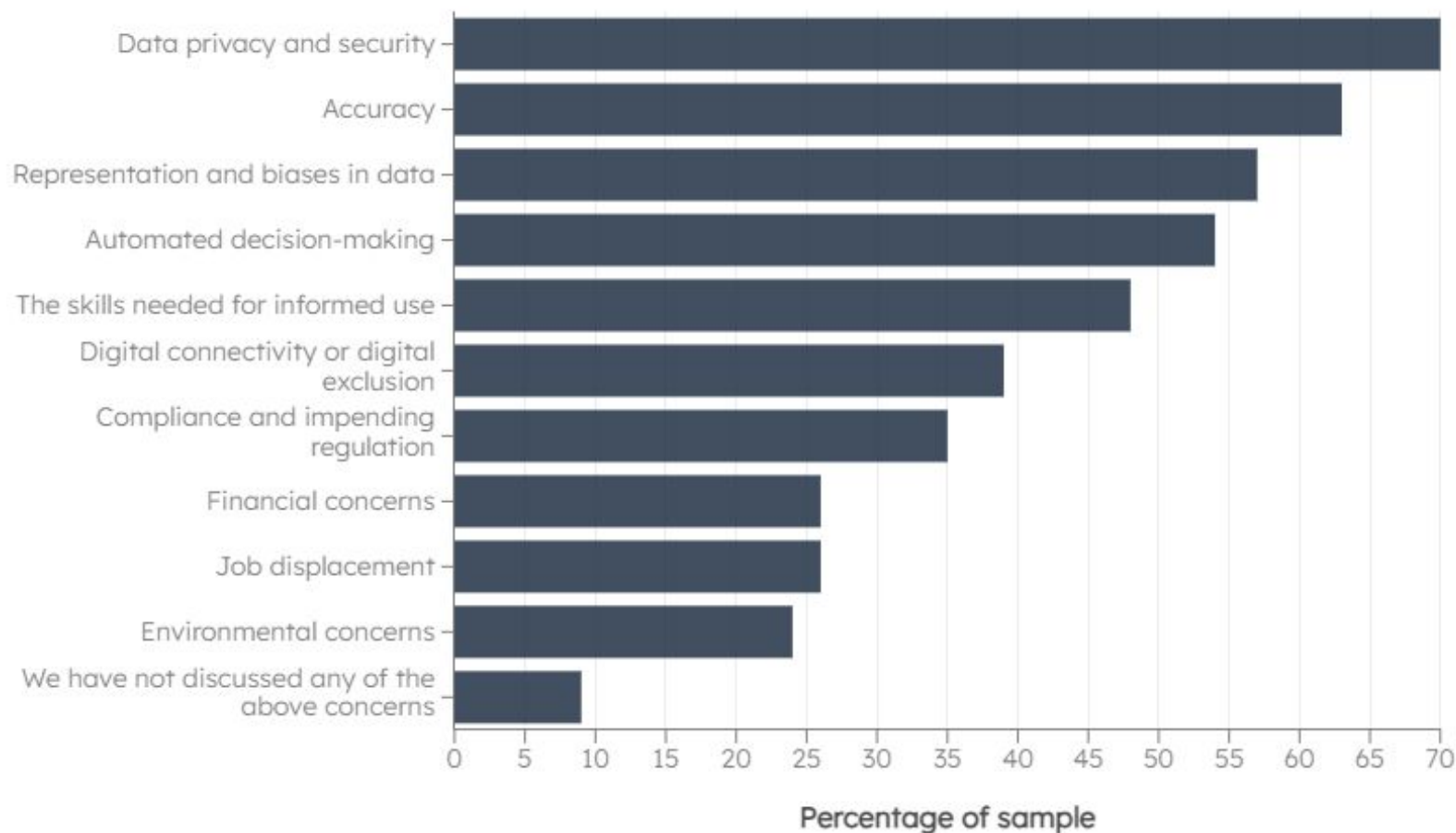


## 2. Generative AI Governance Issues



**Figure 6: Has your organisation discussed or identified any concerns relating to generative AI?**

Organisations can select more than one option



### 3. Generative AI readiness



***“An organisation’s ability to use AI in ways that add value to the organisation and can include areas such as digital and data infrastructure, skills, and organisational culture.”***



69% no formal training



Training wanted on basics, and critical thinking



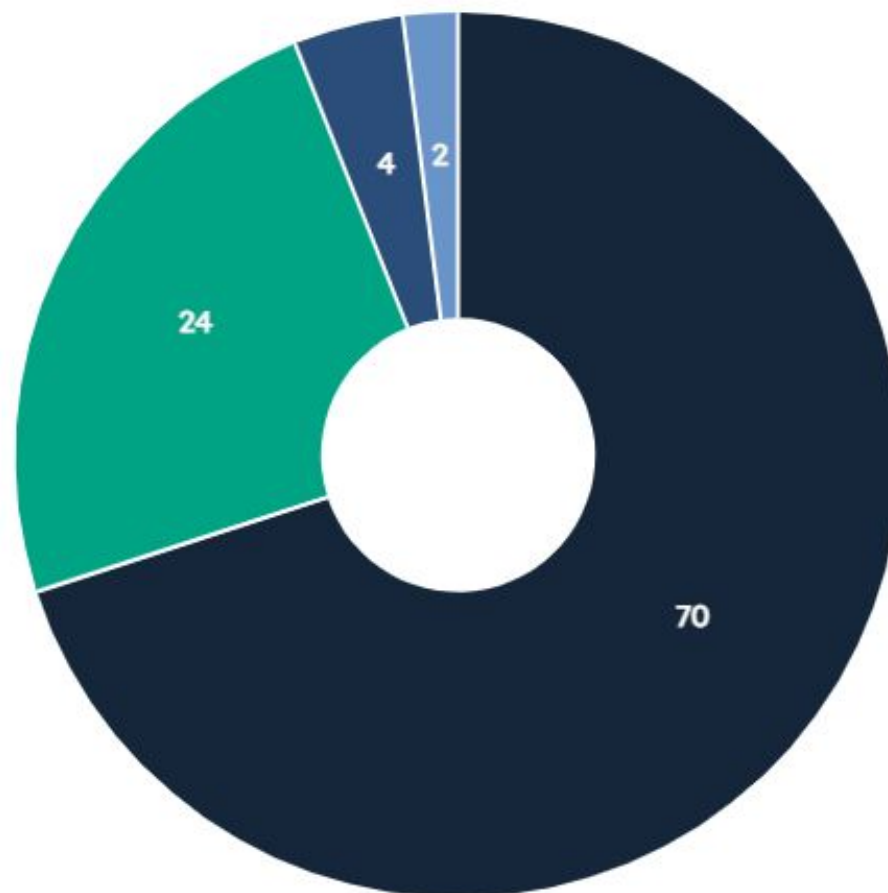
Trust in trainers essential

### 3. Generative AI readiness



**Figure 10: Do you personally use any generative AI tools in your role that have not been formally approved by management?**

■ No ■ Yes ■ Not sure ■ Prefer not to say





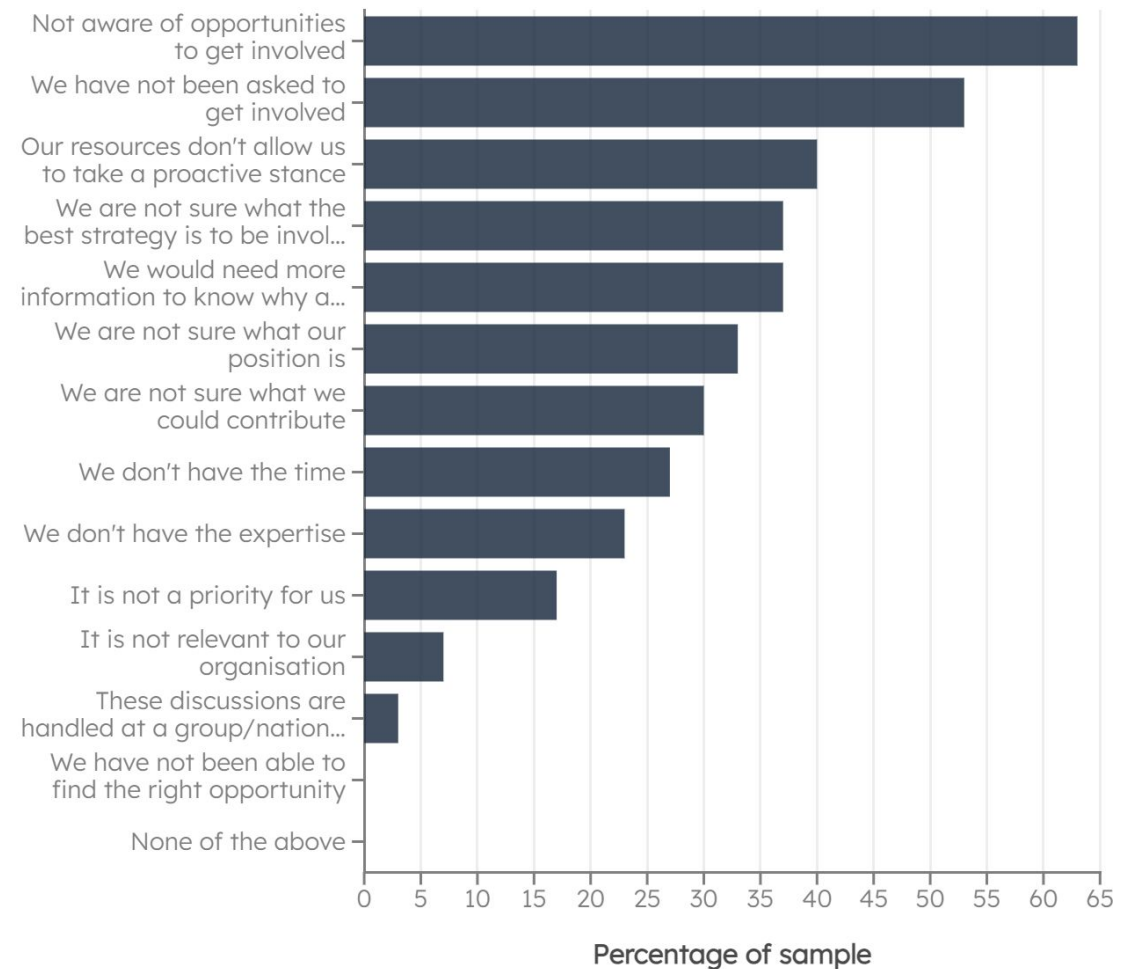
## 4. Perspectives on design and use of AI



- 59% *not* engaged in wider debates about AI despite using generative AI tools
- 37% *are* engaged in some form of broader debate

**Figure 13: Why has your organisation not been involved in wider discussions on AI?**

Organisations can select more than one option



“

*“I don’t think the third sector will be cutting into the big players’ movements. Those [AI tools by big players] are going to be the models which are used the most. I think that there may be a small subset of systems which are created or developed with the use of people from lots of different communities, but predominantly, they’re going to be created by a small group of people with a lot of mined data.”*

A director of a grassroots organisation



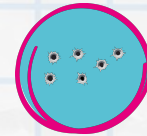
## Power imbalances

- Perceived inability to hold tech companies to account
- Value in engaging with AI debates
- Non-profit organisations operate from “a place of principles”
- Role representing and amplifying beneficiary and community interests
- Sector should become a critical stakeholder in the impact of AI systems on society
- Versus a passive receiver of technologies dominated by private sector interests



# Key themes for wider discussion

## 1. Generative AI providing short term gains over long term solutions



Distracting silver bullets



Funders have a role to play



Techno Determinism & race to the bottom



*“The answer isn’t, ‘Well, we don’t have enough money. Let’s get the AI to do it’. I think the answer is that these organisations should be funded in a more equitable way”*

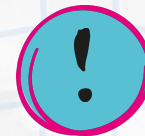
Senior leadership, grassroots organisation

# Key themes for wider discussion

## 2. Generative AI is increasing disparities between large and small organisations



Free versus paid tools



Disparities in ability to be compliant



Access to specialist roles





# EXERCISE: HOW MIGHT AI IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITIES?

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# AI AND CREATIVITY

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What impact does  
the use of AI  
have on human  
creativity?

How can AI help  
creativity?

Can AI be  
creative?





# AI AND SURVEILLANCE



What are the implications of facial recognition and other biometric technologies? →

What might be needed to be confident in such systems, and other forms of data surveillance? →

When are they good to use? →





# THE AUTOMATION OF WORK



What benefits can be achieved through the automation of tasks? →

Are there certain types of roles which are best to automate? →

What might automation of jobs mean for the human workforce? →

What is being done to prepare for these changes? . →



# WILL JOBS BE LOST, GAINED OR REMAIN THE SAME?



According to a [CNBC article](#):

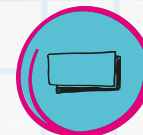
- More than one-third (37%) of business leaders say AI replaced workers in 2023, according to a recent report from ResumeBuilder.
- Employees say that 29% of their work tasks are replaceable by AI, project management and collaboration software company Asana found in its surveying.
- While positions like research and data analysis are in line for AI automation, companies will still need someone to prompt the AI, make sense of the results and take action.



"AI will cause mass unemployment"



"AI will create as many jobs as it replaces"



"AI means nobody will need to work in the future"



# AI AND HEALTH



How will the use  
of AI in health  
improve  
healthcare  
provision?

Who should have  
access to the  
data required?

What medical  
breakthroughs  
are possible?





# AI SAFETY



What is AI  
Safety? →

Who or what  
should be safe  
from those using  
AI? →

Can AI be safe  
for everyone? →



# AI AND THE ENVIRONMENT



How sustainable  
is the energy and  
water consumption  
of AI systems?

How helpful can  
AI be to find  
solutions to  
combat climate  
change?





# AI AND DEMOCRACY



What impact  
might realistic  
looking fake  
audio visual  
content created  
by AI have on  
elections?

Can AI be used  
to improve  
democratic  
processes?

What is the  
impact of  
misinformation  
and  
disinformation  
spread using  
algorithms?





# AI AND EDUCATION

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How is AI  
impacting the  
formal education  
system?

What benefits can  
AI bring to  
learning?



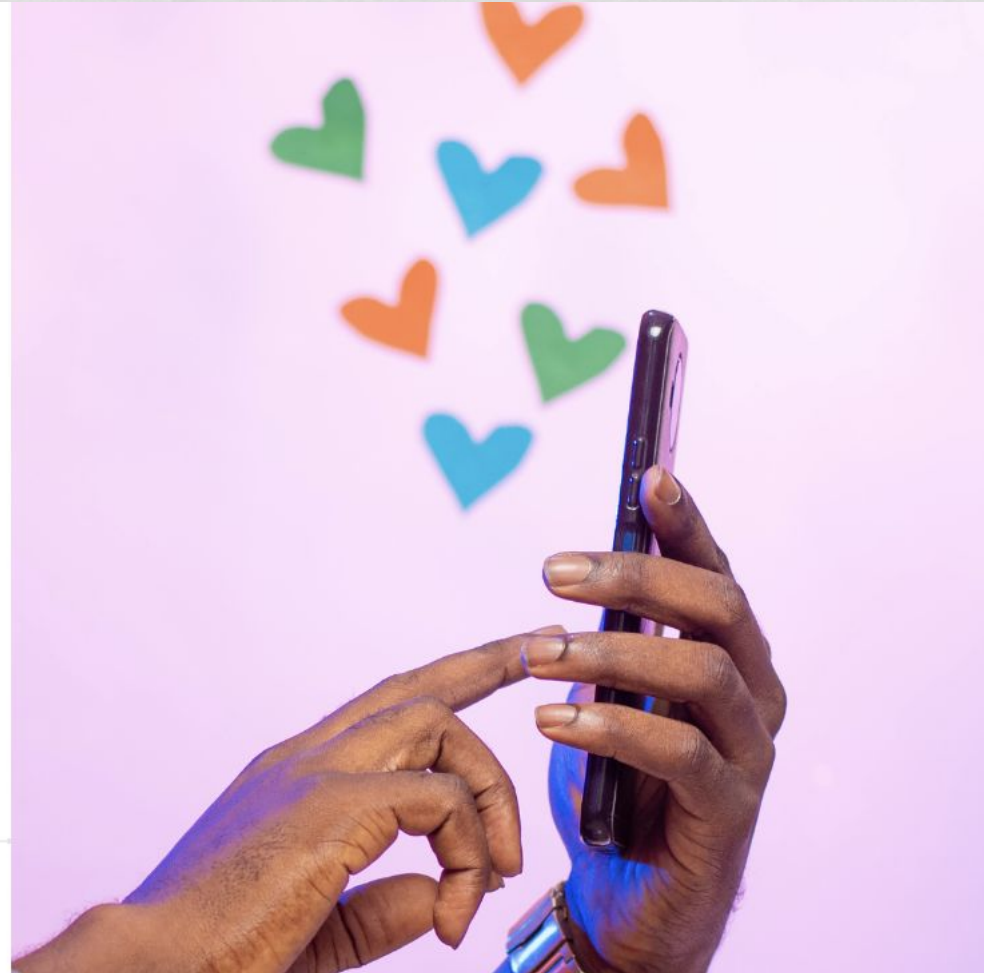
# RELATIONSHIPS WITH AI



As AI chatbots become increasingly human sounding, how should we think about relationships with them?

How should we think about the AI we interact with?

What might we need to know about interacting with AI characters, and maybe AI in general?





# AI OWNERSHIP AND POWER



What impact does the ownership of technologies have on those who are dependent on them? →

What type of people are currently making decisions about technology? →

Who has a right to own the data which AI models are built from? →





# AI BIAS



How are societal  
biases reflected  
in AI models? →

Are there  
opportunities to  
address these? →



# EXAMPLES OF ALGORITHMIC AND AI BIAS

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- Amazon's algorithm discriminated against women
- UK A Level results discriminated against pupils from more deprived areas
- US Justice system more likely to send people of colour back to jail
- People of colour more likely to be misidentified by facial recognition technology
- US healthcare algorithm underestimated the needs of black patients
- Pupils with English as a second language more likely to be flagged as cheating using AI Chatbots

# *What does bias look like?*



Table discussion

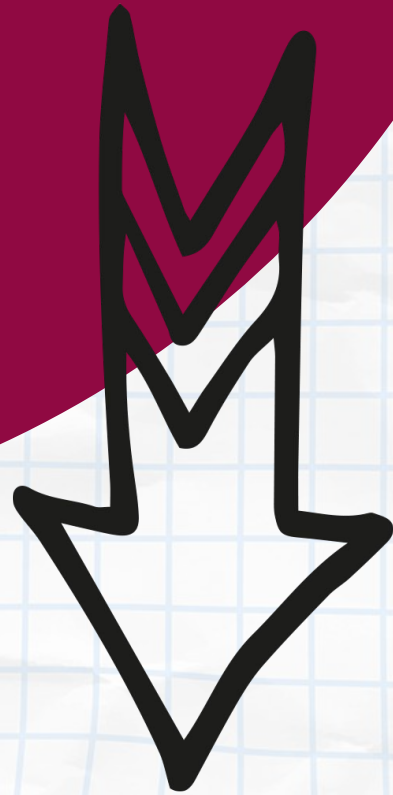


# PROFESSIONAL AI HEADSHOT





**EXERCISE:**  
**WHAT KIND OF BIASES**  
**ENCOUNTERED BY OUR**  
**COMMUNITIES COULD END**  
**UP ENCODED?**





# AI GOVERNANCE



What kind of oversight should the use of AI systems have? ←

How might we make people, organisations or nations accountable for the use of AI? ←

Will laws and regulation stifle innovation? ←





# AI FOR GOOD

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How can AI be  
used for purposes  
which help  
people?

Who is involved  
in defining what  
is helpful?

How can we be  
sure it is  
really helpful?



# AI ETHICS



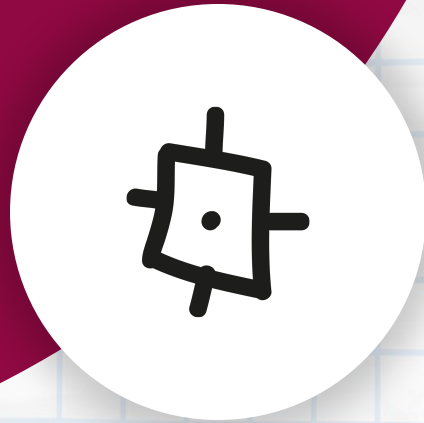
Is it possible to  
use AI ethically? →

Is it important  
to do so, and  
why? ←

Who should be  
responsible for  
defining what is  
ethical?

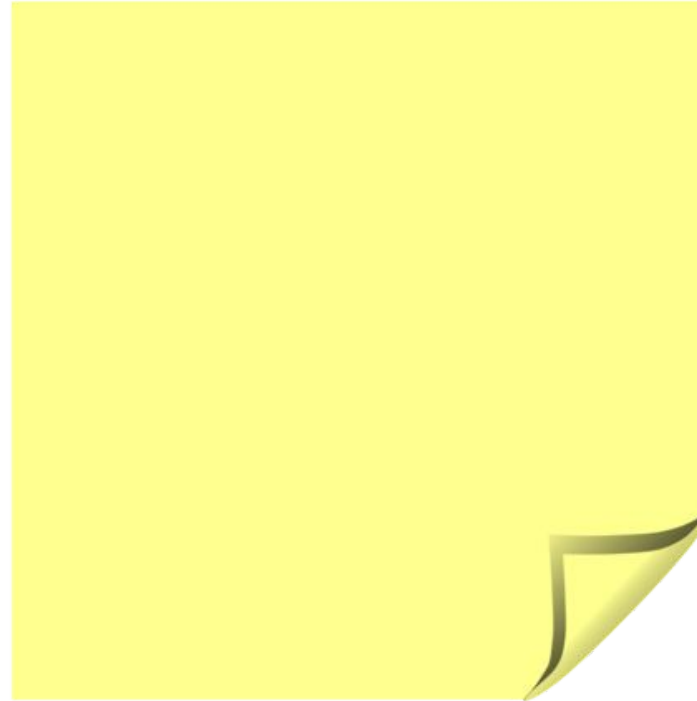






# HOW DO WE BALANCE AI USE AND OUR CHARITABLE VALUES?





**Revist: on a post-it, draw a picture of AI  
Is it different?**

# Better Images of AI A Guide for Users and Creators

Dr Kanta Dihal

Tania Duarte



HOME

TEAM

RESOURCES

EVENTS

BLOG

JOIN US

CONTACT



**For artificial intelligence to work  
for everyone, a greater diversity  
of people must be involved**

- [Betterimagesofai.org](https://betterimagesofai.org)
- [info@betterimagesofai.org](mailto:info@betterimagesofai.org)
- [@imagesofai](https://twitter.com/imagesofai)
- [Weandai.org](https://weandai.org)
- [hello@weandai.org](mailto:hello@weandai.org)
- [@weandai.org](https://twitter.com/weandai.org)