Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources

# National AI Plan

## 2025

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The National AI Plan takes a whole-of-economy approach and complements, but remains distinct from, ongoing work and dedicated arrangements on AI development, adoption and use by Australia's national security, defence, intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

All financial figures in this document are in Australian dollars (AUD), unless specified otherwise.

# Acknowledgement of Country

Our department recognises the First Peoples of this Nation and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters, seas, skies, and communities.

We acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Lore Keepers of the oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.

**Artwork credit:**

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# Ministers' foreword

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the global economy and transforming how Australians work, learn and connect with one another. The Albanese Government's ambition is to harness AI technologies to create a fairer, stronger Australia where every person benefits from this technological change.

AI should be used to help close service gaps in health, disability and aged care, improve education and employment outcomes; and create secure, well-paid jobs in future industries. Our National AI Plan is a whole-of-government framework that ensures technology works for people, not the other way around. The plan will guide government, industry, research and communities to work together so that no one is left behind.

This government's approach to the transformative technologies of today is grounded in timeless Labor values: fairness, inclusion and opportunity. Success will rightly be measured by how widely the benefits of AI are shared, how inequalities are reduced, how workers and workforces can be supported, and how workplace rights are protected. AI should enable workers' talents, not replace them. We are committed to a consultative approach to AI adoption in the workplace, and we will bring together government, unions and business, on issues including uplifting the AI skills and training of all Australians.

This plan is a key pillar of the government's Future Made in Australia agenda. By building sovereign capability in AI, supporting local innovation and ensuring that Australian workers and businesses are equipped to lead in the global digital economy, we are laying the foundations for a more resilient and competitive Australia. The National AI Plan complements our broader efforts to revitalise Australian industry, create high-value jobs and ensure that the benefits of technological progress are realised here at home.

The government is acting decisively to manage risks and keep Australians safe, with regulation that recognises the rapid pace of technological change, and the need for legislation to keep up. This plan reflects our enduring commitment to dignity at work, equality of opportunity and a future where technology strengthens communities.

This plan marks the beginning of the government's vision for AI in Australia.
As technology evolves and confidence in its use grows, we will continue to refine and strengthen the plan to seize new opportunities and address emerging risks.
Our commitment is clear: Australians will share in the benefits of AI while remaining protected in a fast-changing world.

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Science

**The Hon Dr Andrew Charlton MP**

Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and the Digital Economy

# Introduction

Australia is an active and influential player in the global AI ecosystem, consistently punching above our weight in research and innovation:

- Australia ranks highly in AI use by consumers. After adjusting for population size, Australia ranks third globally in the use of Claude, a popular AI tool developed by leading technology company Anthropic (Appel et al 2025).
- Australia attracted $10 billion in data centre investment during 2024, making it the second-largest destination globally that year for this asset class after the United States (Knight Frank 2025).
- Our AI industry is thriving, with more than 1,500 companies driving growth and innovation nationwide (Bratanova et al. 2025).
- Australia produces 1.9% of the world's AI research publications, far exceeding our share of global population and GDP. Our research extends beyond core computer science and into practical, discipline-specific applications including in medicine, environmental science, agriculture and the social sciences (Bratanova et al. 2025).
- In 2024, Australia attracted $700 million in private investment in AI firms, reflecting increasing momentum in developing and deploying Australian AI solutions (Bratanova et al. 2025).
- Demand for AI-skilled workers has tripled since 2015, underscoring Australia's position as a hub for cutting-edge technology and talent (Bratanova et al. 2025).

AI is already shaping our economy and society, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Realising the full benefits of AI will not happen by chance – it requires deliberate, coordinated action to seize the potential of AI while managing its risks.

This plan sets out the steps the Australian Government will take to support Australia to build an AI-enabled economy that is more competitive, productive and resilient.

With significant private sector capital ready to invest in AI technologies, our role is to ensure settings are fit for purpose to attract and direct investment, enable successful adoption and proactively identify and address harms as appropriate.

Guided by the plan, the government will ensure that AI delivers tangible benefits for all Australians. In this National AI Plan, references to artificial intelligence refer generally to AI systems. The OECD defines an AI System as 'a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment' (OECD 2023).

# Our goals

The National AI Plan is anchored in 3 goals:

- **Capturing the opportunity**: We are fostering investment in world-class digital and physical infrastructure, supporting local capability and attracting global partnerships. By expanding high-speed connectivity, attracting investment in advanced data centres, and backing our researchers and businesses, we aim to lead in AI innovations and applications.
- **Spreading the benefits**: Our goal is to ensure that all Australians, regardless of background or location, shares the advantages of AI. We are supporting small and medium enterprises, regional communities and groups at risk of digital exclusion. Australian workers must share fairly in the potential productivity benefits of AI. Building digital and AI skills, growing and protecting jobs, supporting workforce transitions, and improving public services are central to this effort.
- **Keeping Australians safe**: We are committed to robust legal, regulatory, and ethical frameworks that protect rights and build trust. This includes ongoing review and adaptation of laws and establishing an AI Safety Institute. We are engaging internationally to manage risks such as bias, privacy breaches, and emerging threats, while promoting responsible innovation.

This plan is a starting point for the government's vision. As technology develops and confidence in AI use becomes more widespread, we will adapt and evolve the plan to capture emerging opportunities and manage new risks. This will ensure that Australians continue to benefit from AI and remain safe in a rapidly changing world.

# The government's role

As the steward of the National AI Plan, the government will:

- **Provide national leadership and coordination** to shape the direction of AI development, adoption, and governance to ensure Australia has the right policies, infrastructure, skills and capabilities to lead in AI innovation.
- **Establish the right settings** to attract domestic and global investment, in collaboration with state and territory governments.
- **Promote responsible practices** to ensure Australians and organisations have the confidence to adopt AI.
- **Coordinate action** with unions, businesses and civil society to improve workers' standard of living, protect jobs, and ensure the benefits of AI are equitably distributed across Australian society.
- **Partner with industry, unions, and the tech sector** to equip Australians with the skills, training and credentials needed to develop and use AI technologies.
- **Engage internationally** to strengthen Australia's innovation capability, support adoption of trusted technologies with a focus on our region and promote international norms in line with our interests.

# Implementing the plan and measuring success

The National AI Plan sets out the government's direction on AI and is designed to support iterative, adaptive action to reflect the dynamism of AI technologies.

We will track progress under the plan using a flexible, evidence-based approach, factoring in the evolving nature of AI and its impacts across the economy and society.

We will draw on national data sources, sector-specific reporting and stakeholder feedback to monitor adoption, skills development and responsible AI practices. Data sources may include, but are not limited to:

- the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- Jobs and Skills Australia reports.
- tools such as the National AI Centre (NAIC) AI Adoption Tracker and National AI Ecosystem Report.

This evidence base will guide ongoing refinement of the plan and help identify gaps and priorities. Updating frameworks will ensure we can respond flexibly to urgent issues.

# Our National AI Plan on a page

## Our vision

> AI for Australia: capturing the opportunities, spreading the benefits, keeping us safe.

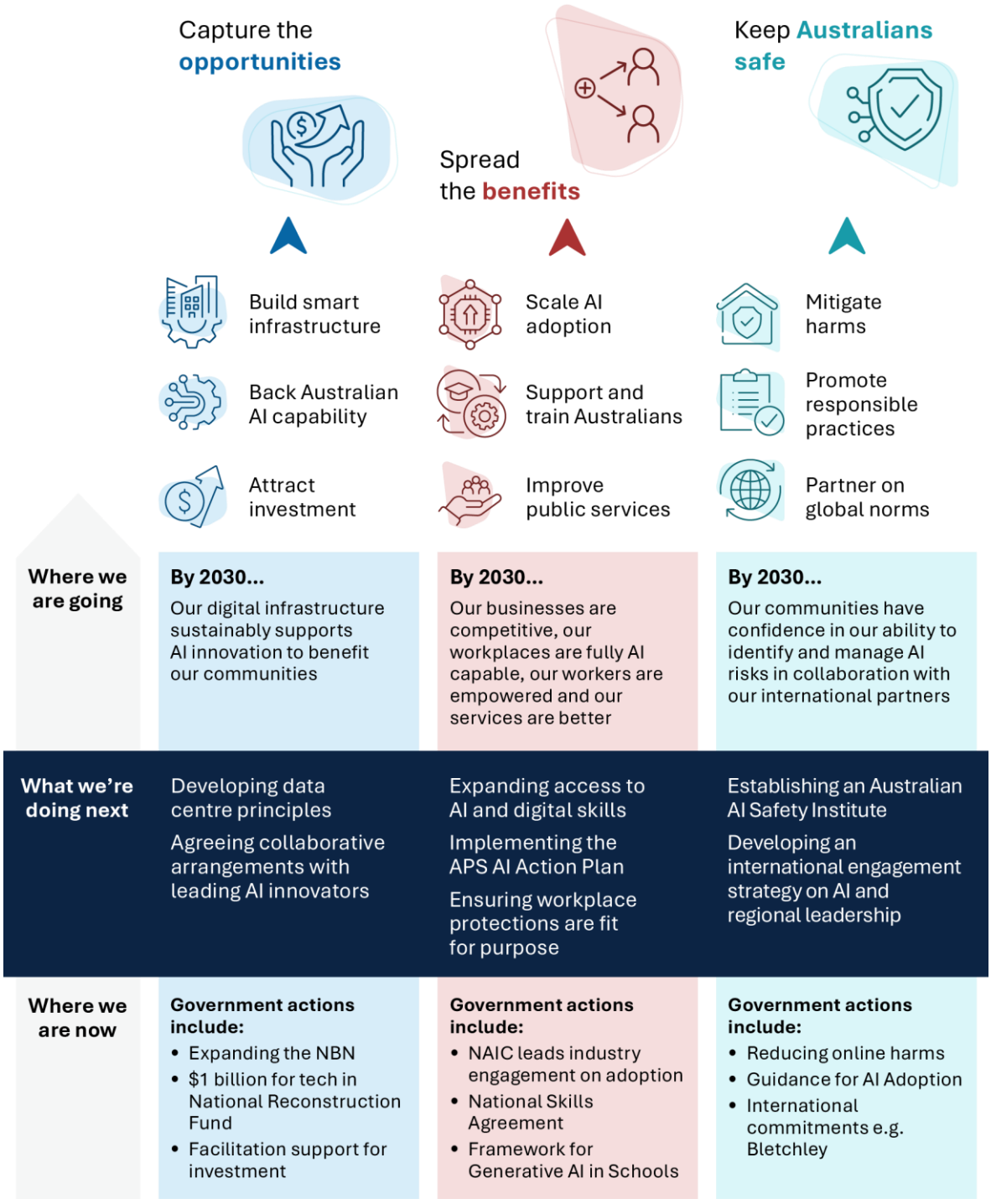



**Figure 1: Our National AI Plan on a page**

# Capture the opportunities

Australia's success in capturing the opportunities of AI depends on equipping our people to get the best out of AI in their jobs, communities and their personal lives.

The government is supporting Australia to build the foundations for a world-class AI ecosystem. We are prioritising smart infrastructure and strengthening local tech capability so Australian businesses and researchers can lead in innovation. We are setting clear and stable conditions to attract domestic and global investment.

Australian workers across all industries are pivotal to capturing the opportunities of AI. A workforce equipped to build the necessary infrastructure, develop AI solutions, and apply them effectively across industries is essential to unlocking the full economic and social opportunities of these technologies. For workers to effectively adopt AI technologies, they must have confidence that AI will enhance their jobs and skills.

Capturing the opportunities of AI will help industry to scale, create high-quality jobs, and position Australia to compete successfully on the global stage.

## Action 1: Build smart infrastructure

Realising the opportunities of AI requires reliable and extensive digital and computing infrastructure, such as data centres.

Smart infrastructure is essential not only to build local capability but also to secure Australia's position in the region. Australia is a leading destination for data centre investment in the Indo-Pacific. We offer a stable operating environment, clear legal protections, abundant renewable energy potential, available land and proximity to growing economies. These factors, combined with Australia's access to advanced chips vital for AI development, and connectivity through international submarine cables, make Australia uniquely placed to attract investment.

Between 2023 and 2025, companies announced plans to make investments in Australian data centres that could scale up to more than $100 billion. Both international and domestic data centre operators have been investing heavily to expand Australian capacity. Investor enthusiasm is high. As Knight Frank reported, in 2024 Australia ranked second globally (after the US) as a data centre investment destination (Knight Frank 2025).

Two components are critical to support AI at scale: high-quality computing power (compute) infrastructure and robust digital connectivity. Compute infrastructure provides the processing power required to run advanced AI models and data-intensive applications, ensuring development and deployment can happen domestically. The second component is the digital backbone, which includes high-speed networks, fibre-optic connectivity and resilient telecommunications systems. These enable rapid data transfer and distributed processing across the country.

Australia is connected to the global internet primarily through 15 international submarine cables. Australia plays an important role in connecting other states in the Indo-Pacific region to the international network. Investment in the subsea cable network is continuing, with Google announcing investments to build two further cables.

## Our commitment to AI infrastructure

The Australian Government is already investing in Australia's digital and physical infrastructure nationwide to support widespread AI development and adoption. Examples of actions already underway include:

- **Expanding the NBN**: Upgrading the National Broadband Network to deliver fast, reliable connectivity nationwide, including to regional and remote areas. Low Earth orbit satellites and expanded mobile coverage are also supporting greater access to AI services.
- **Cybersecurity and secure critical infrastructure**: Coordinating cross-government efforts, led by the Department of Home Affairs, to uplift cybersecurity and safeguard Australia's critical infrastructure.
- **Enhancing regional leadership and partnerships**: Coordinating government efforts, led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to become the partner of choice in the Indo-Pacific region on trusted critical digital infrastructure.
- **Mapping compute**: The government is undertaking work to assess the landscape of available compute infrastructure to identify gaps and guide future investment opportunities. This will ensure that Australia's research infrastructure keeps pace with technological advances and supports our world-class research system to remain competitive globally.

## Data centres

We are positioning Australia as a leading destination for data centre investment while ensuring growth is sustainable and secure. The government is developing a set of national **data centre principles** in partnership with the states and territories, to clarify what it looks like for investment in data centres to align with Australia's overall national interests. These principles will set clear expectations for sustainability and other factors, including bringing new renewable energy online and adopting efficient cooling technologies. Where investments align with the data centre principles, the government is exploring opportunities to coordinate data centre approval processes with states and territories, as part of our broader efforts to make it easier to develop major, transformational projects and invest in Australia.

Australia's robust infrastructure planning processes will support growth in datacentres in a way that supports affordability and reliability for all infrastructure users. For example, data centres are significant energy users and consumed around 4 TWh of electricity across the National Electricity Market in 2024, about 2% of grid-supplied power. Australia's Energy Market Operator is monitoring data centre demand and accounting for electricity demand from these users to triple by 2030 (AEMO 2025). The government is working with the states and territories, energy market bodies, network service providers and the data centre industry to harness opportunities from the growth of data centres to promote investment in renewable energy and maintain affordable energy for households and businesses.

Data centre operators have demonstrated interest in investing in Australia in ways that manage these impacts. For example, conventional data centre cooling systems can consume tens of millions of litres annually, but Australian operators are adopting innovative solutions such as highly efficient liquid cooling to significantly reduce water consumption. Many operators are already contributing to additional renewable energy generation and storage as part of their projects.

By setting strong principles and encouraging best practice, the government is ensuring data centre growth supports sustainability, strengthens energy security, and drives investment in clean technologies.

**CDC: Driving data centre sustainability**

CDC Data Centres is an Australian provider of secure, sovereign digital infrastructure with an emphasis on sustainable practices.

CDC offers its customers across Australia 100% net zero carbon electricity. CDC is also a leader in water conservation, with its closed-loop LiquidCoreTM cooling system consuming near-zero water, saving billions of litres of water annually across 16 CDC-operated data centres in Australia and New Zealand.

Approximately 47% of CDC's ownership is linked to Commonwealth entities through the Future Fund and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC).

**Inbound investment in Australia's next-generation AI infrastructure**

Recent announcements of multi-billion-dollar investments in data centres include:

- **October 2025**: Firmus announced plans to expand Project Southgate with an initial $4.5 billion investment, with potential to scale up to $73.3 billion.
- **June 2025**: Amazon announced plans to invest $20 billion to expand data centre infrastructure in Australia.
- **October 2023**: Microsoft announced it would invest $5 billion in expanding its hyperscale cloud computing and AI infrastructure in Australia.

Australia has the opportunity to take advantage of ambitious AI infrastructure initiatives in ways that accelerate our renewables transition and drive investment in skills, research and sustainable technologies.

Our abundant renewable energy potential, robust privacy protections and strategic Indo-Pacific location can make Australia an AI hub for the region. Working closely with international partners, Australia can capture economic and social benefits that advance digital sovereignty, sustainability and innovation.

It is in our interests to ensure that AI development happens locally, where it aligns with our national priorities, social and economic interests. It positions us to lead in shaping ethical standards, secure technologies and competitive industries, and ensures that AI serves Australian communities and businesses first.

# Action 2: Back Australian AI capability

Australia's competitive edge in AI is in developing targeted, high-value AI products and services for sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, resources and advanced manufacturing. Australian companies are already building world leading applications to help doctors diagnose disease and undertake surgery remotely and improve the way farmers manage their land and crops.

Building on this strength requires the right conditions for innovation. This includes the robust digital infrastructure referenced in Action 1.

The government is also considering the role of Australian-developed models within this landscape. Locally developed models may provide benefits such as reflecting unique cultural context or language, supporting innovation and mitigating risks around data security.

The government is backing local capability through significant investment in sovereign AI for the public service. GovAI will act as a centralised AI hosting service, providing a secure, Australian-based platform for agencies to develop customised AI solutions at low cost. AI use in government can help deliver clearer, simpler services for Australians, and GovAI will ensure government departments can innovate responsibly while maintaining sovereignty, security, and cost-efficiency when deploying AI technologies.

Access to diverse, high-quality datasets from government, Australian companies and research institutions is an important foundation of AI models. Unlocking Australia's data potential requires robust data governance, privacy protections, documentation, human oversight and legal compliance.

By combining infrastructure, data, and targeted investment, Australia can accelerate the development and application of AI models. This will empower local businesses and researchers to deliver world-class solutions that make Australians' lives better, help businesses be more efficient, and position Australia as a trusted AI provider in global markets.

## Australia is investing in AI

The government is backing this ambition with more than $460 million in existing funding already available or committed to AI and related initiatives. The National AI Plan brings this investment together in a cohesive strategy to maximise benefits and manage risks for all Australians. The funding includes:

- over **$362 million** in targeted grants from the Australian Research Council, Medical Research Future Fund, National Health and Medical Research Council, and Cooperative Research Centres
- **$47 million** for the Next Generation Graduates Program
- **$39.9 million** to strengthen Australia's AI ecosystem, which includes expanding the NAIC
- **$17 million** for the AI Adopt Program to support SMEs.

These investments are complemented by broader technology investments that can support AI and related technology development, including:

- a further **$1 billion** commitment for critical technologies in the national interest, such as AI, under the National Reconstruction Fund
- **$950 million** registered by businesses for activities associated with AI under the Research and Development Tax Incentive Program, across the 2022–23 and 2023–24 income years.

The government is also helping Australia's leading AI firms to expand internationally and compete on the global stage. Initiatives such as Austrade's Landing Pads program provide international co-working space, networking opportunities and tailored advice.

## Accelerating AI innovation

The government will build on these foundations by launching an **'AI Accelerator' funding round** of the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) program to accelerate the development and commercialisation of AI by businesses and researchers across Australia and turn innovative ideas into real-world solutions.

Australia can be a leader in AI innovation and a trusted exporter of AI computing power, not just a consumer of AI technologies built elsewhere. With the right conditions, significant homegrown global businesses can emerge to create bespoke models and applications for both businesses and consumers. To make this happen, we must connect talented researchers with real-world challenges faced by industry and the community. The new CRC will strengthen local capability by incentivising partnerships between businesses and research organisations. It will help Australian ideas to scale and compete on the global stage.

**Harrison.ai: Transforming medical diagnostics**

Harrison.ai is a Sydney-based healthcare technology company that enhances clinician capacity and patient care through AI automation. Harrison.ai is developing world-leading diagnostic tools that use AI to improve radiology services. They are helping to address the global shortage of radiologists by providing early diagnosis support, increasing diagnostic accuracy and improving efficiencies. They have AI solutions for chest X-rays, chest CT scans, and brain CT scans.

South Australia Medical Imaging (SAMI) is now using the Harrison.ai chest X-ray solution that detects up to 124 findings in under 20 seconds. SAMI has rolled out the solution across all locations to enhance the accuracy, expertise and efficiency of their radiologists.

In January 2025, the National Reconstruction Fund Corporation made a $32 million equity investment in Harrison.ai.

## Australia's data assets and AI

Data is a critical driver of modern economies, enabling innovation, efficiency, and informed decision-making across industries. AI models are only as good as the data they are trained on. Australia has high-quality and comprehensive data sets that could support AI innovations that create value for the AI sector, can deliver public goods, and that better reflect the Australian context. Both government and the private sector hold high value data sets which can support a globally competitive Australian AI sector.

The government is exploring opportunities to unlock high value datasets for pilot AI use cases, from both public and private sources. This work complements and builds on the existing program of work to improve APS data and data maturity. This includes work on consistent data standards and metadata, building trusted and secure approaches to data sharing, and identifying high value, non-sensitive datasets.

The government will also build on previously released resources by exploring ways to expand access to certain government datasets. This may include making the Australian Bureau of Statistics' economic datasets available in ways which support AI training. In addition, large, unstructured datasets could be made accessible for AI system training. The government will work with industry to unlock private sector data for AI applications that deliver benefits to Australians. These initiatives will help develop and train AI models that are locally relevant.

**AI and Indigenous Knowledge: Managing Kakadu's wetlands**

In Kakadu National Park, Bininj Traditional Owners, CSIRO, Parks Australia and partners are using AI and drones to control invasive para grass, restore wetlands and protecting animal habitats. Machine learning (Microsoft Custom Vision) analyses drone imagery to guide targeted conservation and land management actions, blending Indigenous knowledge with advanced technology.

This project shows how Australia can capture AI opportunities and back local capability through government, industry and Indigenous ranger partnerships. Cultural protocols are central. Traditional Owners govern data use, rangers operate drones to avoid sacred sites, and information is shared under Indigenous data sovereignty principles. The approach shows AI can create environmental and economic benefits while respecting culture and empowering Traditional Owners.

# Action 3: Attract investment

We are positioning Australia as a leading destination for AI investment. Building domestic capability and attracting foreign investment are critical for economic security, job creation, and national resilience. A stable and transparent environment ensures investment delivers strong returns while supporting world-class AI solutions.

## Australia is an attractive AI investment destination

Australia is already attracting large investments relating to AI, showing growing investor confidence in our market. In 2024 alone, over $700 million in private investment flowed into AI firms (Bratanova et al. 2025). This is in addition to plans announced by various companies to make investments that could scale to more than $100 billion in Australian data centres, and to make significant investments in domestic and international cables and energy projects.

Australia welcomes global investment to support local capability to build resilience in our AI, data infrastructure and energy sectors. Some investments into the sector may be subject to Australia's foreign investment framework to ensure they are not contrary to the national interest and national security

Australia has large domestic capital pools, such as superannuation funds, alongside strong foreign direct investment. Both forms of investment have an important role to play in growing the AI sector. Supporting national AI capabilities helps keep local innovations in Australia and deliver broad national benefits.

## Supporting future AI investment

Our balanced approach will help secure Australia's place as a trusted partner in the global AI landscape. To this end, the government is already:

- **Facilitating investment in AI projects**: through the Investor Front Door, actively working with states and territories, to identify and address barriers to approvals that would impact AI investment, particularly in relation to data centres. The Investor Front Door as well as the Major Project Facilitation Agency is available to actively work with proponents to enable private investment that is nationally significant.
- **Promoting AI investment**: Austrade is attracting foreign direct investment to support the development of Australia's AI ecosystem. This includes investment to support development of innovative industry applications of AI in Australia and addressing gaps in Australia's digital infrastructure footprint.

The government will build on initiatives to ensure that investment flows into critical infrastructure and innovative AI ventures. This includes supporting significant data centre projects and their associated energy sources navigating regulatory approvals.

Australia is attracting major projects, such as Project Southgate and multi-billion-dollar investments from Microsoft, Amazon and others (see Action 1).

Australia is working towards collaborative arrangements with leading international and domestic AI companies. The goal is to signal our willingness to partner with innovators, improve our national AI capabilities, and uphold Australian standards.

# Building on Actions 1–3: What's next

The National AI Plan is closely aligned with the Future Made in Australia agenda. Investment in new data centres and other digital infrastructure will help secure Australia's place in a rapidly changing world. Capturing the full spectrum of the AI opportunity – in terms of productivity, innovation and improved living standards – will ensure Australia can turn the changes and challenges of the present into the opportunities of the future.

Capturing the opportunities of AI requires sustained investment in data centres and the broader digital infrastructure that underpins them. Ensuring that local companies and researchers have access to the high-performance computing power they need for AI development is critical to building a strong, local technology sector.

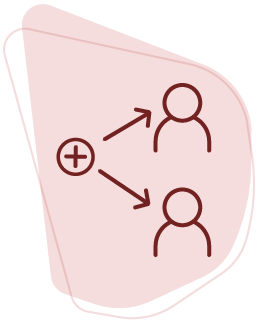
As AI adoption increases across the economy, our digital infrastructure must keep pace. Growth must be managed responsibly, expanding capacity without placing unnecessary strain on existing resources.

Advances in AI are accelerating the development of quantum technologies. As quantum computing capabilities mature, they have the potential to power faster and more efficient training of AI models. Australia's strengths in quantum position us well to capture these opportunities in the future.

Securing resilient supply chains will be vital to Australia's global competitiveness, supporting the development of local capability. Unlocking sources of domestic capital will be crucial to backing homegrown AI ventures and infrastructure, to keep the benefits of innovation in Australia. By tackling these challenges, we can secure a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive AI future.

This plan should give the global investment community the confidence and certainty that it needs to back in an AI future in Australia. The successful adoption of AI in Australia will help Australians maximise existing competitive advantages in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, advanced medical and defence technological capabilities and high-quality service provision for the benefit of all Australians.

# Spread the benefits



Every Australian should be able to benefit from AI, regardless of age, location or gender. Achieving this outcome requires a broad approach to building capability across all workplaces, including in not-for-profits, universities, schools, TAFEs and community organisations. It must elevate suburban and regional voices and ensure that local businesses and communities are not left behind.

We need to give particular consideration to cohorts already disadvantaged by digital and economic gaps, as well as those in roles at higher risk of AI and automation-driven disruption. This includes First Nations people, women, people with disability and remote communities.

Beyond the current labour force, AI will also shape opportunities for jobseekers and those engaged in unpaid work. Ensuring these groups share in AI-driven improvements to services and support, while addressing risks of exclusion, is essential.

AI adoption has the potential to improve business productivity and deliver better wages, job satisfaction and stability for workers. Adoption can also enhance public services through faster processing, personalised support and stronger protections. To realise these benefits, we need to ensure workplace rights are fit for purpose. Australia must support digital and AI skills uplift across all levels of the education pipeline, improve connectivity in remote areas, and build a resilient workforce that can adapt to technological change.

## Action 4: Scale AI adoption

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of Australia's economy – supporting innovation, creating jobs, and contributing significantly to national productivity. Supporting SMEs to adopt AI is essential to ensure they remain competitive, efficient, and well-positioned to seize emerging market opportunities in an increasingly digital landscape. Businesses need to optimise operations and encourage responsible AI innovation, supported by high-quality, trusted data.

### AI adoption will be vital for business success

Many Australian consumers and businesses are fast, early adopters of new AI technologies. Over one third of SMEs have adopted AI (NAIC 2025) and, after adjusting for population size, Australia ranks third globally for consumer use of Claude, a popular AI tool (Appel et al 2025).

However, current adoption rates show a clear regional–metro divide: only 29% of regional organisations in Australia are adopting AI compared to 40% in metropolitan areas. Regional businesses also have a higher proportion (26%) that are not aware of AI opportunities (Fifth Quadrant 2025). Addressing this gap is critical to ensure inclusive growth and equal access to AI benefits, as existing digital divides exacerbate barriers to AI adoption. Notably, around 40% of First Nations people, and one in 5 Australians

broadly remain digitally excluded. This highlights the urgency of closing these gaps (Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025).

## The National AI Centre

The **National AI Centre (NAIC)** is the government's lead body supporting industry to unlock the economic benefits of AI. The NAIC provides tailored guidance and direct engagement to help SMEs, not-for-profits, social enterprises and First Nations businesses adopt AI responsibly.

The government has invested $17 million in the **AI Adopt Program**, which provides tailored assistance for SMEs implementing AI. To further align and strengthen government support for industry adoption, we will bring this program into the NAIC's remit.

## Practical support for AI adoption

The government is already reducing barriers and building confidence through practical support:

- **Guiding safe AI adoption**: The NAIC released the *Guidance for AI Adoption* (NAIC 2025) on 21 October 2025 to support effective adoption practices by business. The guidance includes a suite of practical resources to make AI adoption widely accessible, including editable AI policy templates. NAIC resources have been simplified in partnership with business.gov.au, ensuring even the smallest organisations can benefit.
- **Supporting not-for-profits**: A collaboration between NAIC and Infoxchange will see the creation of tailored AI adoption resources and templates for the non-profit sector, as well as new training and advisory services.
- **Providing tailored support**: The AI Adopt Program offers SMEs consultations, training and tools to support responsible AI development and use nationwide. For Australian small businesses, the Digital Solutions Program also provides tailored advice on how to adopt digital tools including AI capabilities to increase business productivity.
- **Boosting First Nations digital inclusion**: The First Nations Digital Support Hub and Network of Digital Mentors will enhance digital skills and connectivity.

Data relating to First Nations Peoples, their lands, and knowledge is subject to Indigenous Data Sovereignty. In any actions taken relating to this plan, the Australian Government is committed to upholding principles of the Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data (NIAA 2024) ensuring that First Nations communities have control over the collection, access, use, and sharing of their data.

**Building AI capability in the not-for-profit sector**

The Infoxchange Digital Transformation Hub and AI Learning Community was developed to accelerate the safe and responsible adoption of AI in the not-for-profit sector.

The platform is supported by cross-sector partners including the National AI Centre, philanthropic funders, corporate partners and government. So far, it has helped over 20,000 not-for-profits on their digital transformation and AI journey. Platform services include training, development of policies, roadmaps, and AI certifications for staff and volunteers.

Not-for-profits receive hands-on support through an 'expert bar' and advisory services to create tailored AI action plans and solutions that advance their mission and impact.

The AI Learning Community has recorded an average 70% increase in confidence and 30% increase in skills by training participants. It has enabled thousands of organisations to increase efficiency, enhance service delivery and improve data-informed decisions.

As a collaborative model, it demonstrates how scalable digital training and AI resources can empower not-for-profits to deliver better outcomes for Australian communities.

# Action 5: Support and train Australians

AI adoption could bring significant changes to Australia's labour market, creating major benefits if managed fairly and inclusively. Workers and those seeking to enter the workforce must be at the centre of this transition.

The government is supporting lifelong learning through skills and training, embedding digital literacy across education, and addressing digital literacy gaps to prevent deepening inequalities. Industry, employers and unions will play a critical role ensuring that workers are prepared for and benefit from AI-driven shifts. Where AI reshapes tasks rather than entire jobs (Jobs and Skills Australia 2025), reskilling, career support, and workforce mobility will be essential. Employers should support workers to access training and skills development in AI technologies. This is particularly important for groups at higher risk of disruption, including women, First Nations people, mature-aged workers, people with disability, and those in regional areas. Workers' voices and union engagement must guide decisions on technology adoption to ensure fairness and protect rights. The government will ensure that workers' rights are fit for purpose to deliver these outcomes.

AI tools used in workplaces, from task allocation to hiring, can boost productivity but also pose risks like surveillance, bias, discrimination in rostering, and reduced autonomy. To be effective in practice, deploying these technologies should involve meaningful consultation with workers, including into the design of AI systems. Deployment should protect workers' privacy and ensure they are working in a safe environment, including addressing potential psychosocial risks. It is important that there is transparency with affected workers about how algorithmic tools are used to manage work performance, work standards or engineered standards, including the data used.

Australia faces both challenges and opportunities in preparing workers with the skills needed for future industries, particularly in digital skills and AI. Industry, government, and the skills and education sectors all have a vital role in equipping students and the workforce to seize the opportunities AI presents. Broad AI skills and credentials are essential across the workforce. Specialised AI expertise is critical to ensure Australia has the advanced technical capability required for AI development and deployment (Jobs and Skills Australia 2025).

## Action to support Australian workers

The Australian Government is taking early action to build a workforce that can thrive in an AI-enabled economy. Initiatives are underway to boost digital skills, expand training access, and grow an inclusive pipeline of AI-ready workers. These include:

- **The National Skills Agreement (NSA)** is about ensuring the national vocational education and training (VET) sector provides high-quality, responsive and accessible education and training. The NSA will boost productivity, deliver national priorities and support Australians to obtain the skills and capabilities they need to prosper. Ensuring Australia's digital and technological capability is an agreed national priority under the NSA.

- **The Future Skills Organisation 'FSO Skills Accelerator – AI'** brings together the VET sector and industry to connect, collaborate, and share best practices. This program expands access to AI skills for VET learners, educators, and administrators. It aims to mobilise the VET system to upskill teachers and trainers, provide training to learners, and collaborate with training providers. The long-term goal is to ensure a sustainable approach to AI skills development across the national skills and training system.
- **Digital Knowledge Exchange** is a national collaboration platform, developed and coordinated by FSO. The platform facilitates the sharing of knowledge and scaling of best practice digital skills and training initiatives across state and territory governments.
- **Developing future AI talent**: The Next Generation Graduates Program is building a pipeline of highly skilled professionals in AI and emerging technologies through industry-linked postgraduate scholarships.
- **Aligning workforce development with industry needs**: Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) work in partnership with industry, government and training providers to identify sector-specific AI -related skills gaps and develop responses, including nationally accredited training products.
- **Providing labour market insights**: Jobs and Skills Australia provides evidence-based analysis of labour market trends and skills needs. This includes studies on how generative AI is reshaping job roles and informing workforce planning.
- **Improving AI and digital skills**: TAFEs deliver digital and AI training through targeted initiatives. The Institute of Applied Technology offers several AI microcredential courses, such as the Responsible AI microcredential. These courses have attracted more than 150,000 enrolments to date.
- **Building a skilled workforce for priority sectors**: The Key Apprenticeship Program supports apprenticeships in priority sectors to build a pipeline of skilled workers. This includes in sectors required for AI infrastructure, such as clean energy.
- **Responsible AI skills partnerships with professional associations and unions**: NAIC will continue to engage with key professional associations to ensure AI and responsible AI learning are available through their membership networks.
- **Reviewing Work Health and Safety laws**: Safe Work Australia have received feedback and submissions through the best practice review relating to AI and included a section on the potential impact of AI in the initial discussion paper for the review.

## Building an AI-ready workforce

To build an inclusive AI-ready workforce, the government will work to help Australians gain the skills needed to thrive in an AI-enabled economy. Employers should support workers to access training and skills development in AI technologies. Guided by Jobs and Skills Australia's Generative AI Capacity Study (August 2025), actions led by

government and the Jobs and Skills Councils, alongside unions and employers, will support this effort. The Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations will also explore ways to equip learners with the skills and credentials to participate in an AI-driven workforce and ensure a strong pipeline of AI-ready school leavers and graduates.

FSO plays a critical role in ensuring the skills and training system is responsive to the digital and AI skills needs of the future. It will continue to:

- undertake workforce planning that identifies the digital and AI skills needs and strategies that support and respond to the workforce challenges.
- develop generalist and specialist digital and AI units of competency across Australian Qualifications Framework levels.
- research barriers to AI adoption for SMEs and diverse worker cohorts.

Workers and unions must have a strong voice in how AI is adopted across workplaces. The government will work with unions and industry representatives to ensure workplaces introduce AI technologies transparently, safely, and in ways that allow workers to share in the benefits. This includes embedding foundational digital literacy and ensuring that workplace relations settings promote fair, balanced, and collaborative environments. It also includes meaningful consultation and co-design with workers to improve outcomes of AI systems in the workplace.

This effort will include a focus on:

- enabling an AI-ready workforce by ensuring Australians have the employability, skills, training and education to thrive in an AI-enabled economy and meet Australia's workforce needs.
- the cooperative adoption of AI technologies in the workplace, so that new technologies are safely and transparently introduced allowing for workers to share the benefits.
- collaboration with employers and workers to navigate AI's effect on the labour market, including fostering worker adaptation to changing roles and future work opportunities.
- progressing an analysis of workplace relations regulations frameworks with a focus on making sure settings are responsive to the risks of AI and ensure they continue to create fair, safe and cooperative workplaces.

## Every Australian can benefit from AI

A focus on inclusion will ensure all Australians, including First Nations peoples, women, people with disability, and regional communities, can benefit from future economic growth. In line with the **National Agreement on Closing the Gap** (Joint Council on Closing the Gap 2020), the government is committed to carrying out actions in this plan, including to support and train Australians, in genuine partnership with First Nations communities. This includes supporting community-led and community-controlled approaches to digital skills and workforce development, and the governance of Indigenous data as it relates to AI in the workplace.

Reducing the gender gap in technology and addressing skills shortages, especially to bridge gendered differences, will continue to be a priority for Australia, in line with the objectives of the government's Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 2024) and the National Skills Agreement.

**AI for Good: Building and embedding AI literacy**

Good Things Australia, in partnership with Telstra, Microsoft and LinkedIn, is expanding the successful Digital Sisters: AI for Good program to boost AI and digital literacy across diverse and underserved communities.

Delivered through 10 community based and virtual AI Literacy Hubs, the initiative will combine in-person support from digital mentors. A dedicated learning site will collate practical and accessible learning content. AI literacy content and training will integrate into existing national digital literacy programs. The program will focus on building the confidence of community members to use AI tools for everyday life, learning and pathways to work.

The National AI Centre will work alongside Good Things to publish an AI Literacy Impact Report, showing the economic and social value of inclusive AI upskilling across Australia.

# Action 6: Improve public services

AI can improve the delivery of public services in Australia, making our services more effective, efficient, accessible and responsive to the needs of Australians. With appropriate human oversight, AI can enhance the capabilities of government agencies and public servants and enable them to operate more efficiently. By leading the way in adopting AI transparently and responsible, the government can build public trust in the technology and ensure its benefits are shared widely across society.

## AI can drive better services

AI is already having a positive impact in healthcare. For example, combined with the National Lung Cancer Screening Program (NLCSP), AI triage could lift lung cancer detections at stage 1 from 16% to 64% (Tech Council of Australia 2025). In education, AI offers opportunities to reduce teacher workloads and improve student outcomes.

The Australian Government is taking practical steps to integrate AI into public services, making them more efficient, accessible, and responsive. The following actions are already underway:

- **Embedding AI in government operations**: The GovAI platform offers secure, whole-of-government tools that streamline processes and enable more personalised, connected services.
- **Piloting generative AI in schools**: States and territories are funded to trial GenAI, reducing workloads for teachers and exploring safe classroom use. The Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools (Department of Education 2023) supports the responsible and ethical use of GenAI tools.
- **Lifting public service capability**: The Data and Digital Government Strategy (Digital Transformation Agency 2023) strengthens APS digital and data skills, leveraging AI for seamless, secure, inclusive services.
- **Providing trusted environmental data for AI**: Through Geoscience Australia's Earth Observation Program and the Australia-United States Partnership in Landsat Next, over $440 million will be invested to enable access to next generation satellite missions. These missions include work with global space agencies on new standards for verification of Earth Observation data for AI applications in sectors like agriculture and mining.

The Australian Government is working to expand the safe and responsible use of AI to all government agencies to help create consistent, high-quality services for people. The government aims to lead by example, lifting the productivity of the public sector and providing better job satisfaction.

## The Australian Government will use AI to better serve the public

The **AI Plan for the Australian Public Service** (APS) was released on 12 November 2025. The plan will improve government service delivery, policy outcomes, efficiency and productivity through substantially increasing the use of AI in government. Every public servant will have the training and guidance required to use generative AI safely and responsibly, alongside secure access to generative AI tools. Every agency will have a Chief AI Officer to drive adoption, with AI use tracked and reported on.

The government is also focused on a consistent legal framework for supporting government use of automated decision making (which may include AI) in service delivery to the Australian public. This includes ensuring that human decision makers remain accountable for key decisions made with the assistance of AI tools.

The Australian Government has developed the Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data (NIAA 2024) which guides its use of AI systems with First Nations data in public services. This recommends that Indigenous communities are engaged on the collection, access, use and sharing of data, in partnership and with respect for cultural protocols and collective rights.

To support the provision of efficient and accessible services, the Attorney-General's Department is also considering options to harness AI to improve access to justice and reduce the cost of legal services to vulnerable and low-income Australians.

**AI use in the Australian Government**

The **Department of Finance** created GovAI to allow APS staff to work more productively and efficiently.

The **Department of Veterans' Affairs** has launched an AI-enhanced search tool on its external website that delivers plain-English summaries and direct links to trusted content, improving access to support for veterans and their families.

The **National Library of Australia** is using AI to preserve Australian history and culture through transcription of 58,000 hours of interviews in its oral history collection.

The **Tiwi Islands Ranger Ghost Nets Program** uses AI and drones to identify and remove ghost nets and plastics threatening marine ecosystems.

# Building on Actions 4–6: What's next

The government is committed to ensuring no one is held back and no one is left behind as AI technologies become widespread across the economy.

To ensure the widespread benefits of AI across Australia, it will be crucial to improve digital access and inclusion for all communities, particularly in regional and remote areas. Addressing gaps in digital literacy will enable Australians to confidently navigate and participate in an increasingly AI-driven society. This will require strategic investment in connectivity and collaborative efforts from government, industry, civil society and local stakeholders, ensuring that no one falls behind as technology evolves.

Beyond access and literacy, supporting SMEs to overcome resource limits and upskill their workforce will foster innovation and economic growth. As labour market dynamics shift with the adoption of AI, proactive measures – such as reskilling programs and flexible career pathways – will help workers adapt and thrive. In the Australian Public Service, the government's AI Plan for the APS will address barriers like risk aversion, long-term contracts and institutional inertia. By tackling these challenges together, Australia can spread the benefits of AI more equitably and ensure a resilient future for all Australians.

# Keep Australians Safe

The government's regulatory approach to AI will continue to build on Australia's robust existing legal and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that established laws remain the foundation for addressing and mitigating AI-related risks. These frameworks are actively enforced and continuously adapted to emerging risks. Agencies and regulators will retain responsibility for identifying, assessing, and addressing potential AI-related harms within their respective policy and regulatory domains.

To support this approach, the government is establishing an AI Safety Institute (AISI). The AISI will monitor, test and share information on emerging AI capabilities, risks and harms. Its insights will support ministers, portfolio agencies and regulators to maintain safety measures, laws and regulatory frameworks that keep pace with rapid technological change. The Institute will support existing regulators with independent advice to ensure AI companies are compliant with Australian law and uphold legal standards around fairness and transparency.

The government is committed to upholding international obligations, promoting inclusive governance and maintaining a resilient regulatory environment that provides certainty to business and responds quickly to new challenges.

Managing AI risks requires a whole-of-government approach. Every organisation developing and using AI is responsible for identifying and responding to AI harms and upholding best practice. A proactive approach to harms as they emerge ensures that government is continuing to update and introduce targeted laws where needed. This approach allows us to respond quickly and effectively to emerging risks and keep Australians safe.

Our approach focuses on harnessing the opportunities of AI while taking practical, risk-based protections that are proportionate, targeted and responsive to emerging AI risks. By applying fit-for-purpose legislation, strengthening oversight and addressing national security, privacy and copyright concerns, we will work to keep the operation of AI systems responsible, accountable, and fair. This gives businesses confidence to adopt AI responsibly while safeguarding people's rights and protecting them from harm.

## Action 7: Mitigate harms

Mitigating the potential harms of AI is essential to maintaining trust and confidence in AI applications and upholding Australians' rights. We cannot seize the innovation and economic opportunities of AI if people do not trust it.

Australia has strong existing, largely technology-neutral legal frameworks, including sector-specific guidance and standards, that can apply to AI and other emerging technologies. The government is monitoring the development and deployment of AI and will respond to challenges as they arise, and as our understanding of the strengths and limitations of AI evolves.

The approach promotes flexibility, uses regulators' existing expertise, and is practical and risk-based. It supports government in targeting emerging threats such as AI-enabled crime and AI-facilitated abuse which disproportionately impacts women and girls. AI has manifested harms to First Nations people, including through perpetuating harmful stereotypes and the use, misattribution and falsification of First Nations cultural and intellectual property. Genuine engagement with impacted First Nations communities, including alignment with Closing the Gap reforms and Indigenous data sovereignty principles, is vital to understanding and managing these risks.

Australia has strong protections in place to address many risks, but the technology is fast-moving and regulation must keep pace. That's why the government continues to assess the suitability of existing laws in the context of AI. We are taking targeted action against specific harms, as outlined below.

## Action on AI risks and harms

The government is taking action to identify and understand AI risks and deal with AI harms, including:

- **Advancing the science of AI safety**: AI safety research underpins the reliability and trustworthiness of AI systems. The government is engaging domestically and internationally to build expertise and understanding of the capabilities and risks of advanced AI systems, to inform when and how to respond.
- **Consumer protections for AI-enabled goods and services**: The Department of the Treasury's *Review of AI and the Australian Consumer Law* found that Australians enjoy the same strong consumer protections for AI products and services as they do for traditional goods and services, including safety protections. The Government will consult with states and territories on minor opportunities to clarify existing rules that the review identified and progress the changes when appropriate.
- **Reducing online harms through reforms, codes and standards**: The government addresses AI-related risks through enforceable industry codes under the *Online Safety Act 2021* and by criminalising non-consensual deepfake material. Further restrictions on 'nudify' apps and reforms to tackle algorithmic bias are also being considered.
- **Reviewing application of copyright law in AI contexts**: The Attorney-General's Department is engaging with stakeholders through the Copyright and AI Reference Group to consult on possible updates to Australia's copyright laws as they relate to AI. The government has provided certainty to Australian creators and media workers by ruling out a text and data mining exception in Australian copyright law.
- **Reviewing AI regulation in healthcare**: The *Safe and Responsible AI in Healthcare Legislation and Regulation Review* (Department of Health, Disability and Ageing 2024) is assessing the impact of AI on healthcare regulation.
- **Reviewing AI regulation in medical device software**: The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) oversees AI used in medical device software and led the review on *Clarifying and Strengthening the Regulation of Medical Device Software including Artificial Intelligence* (TGA 2025).

- **AI security**: The Department of Home Affairs, the National Intelligence Community and law enforcement agencies will continue efforts to proactively mitigate the most serious risks posed by AI. As the national security policy lead on AI, Home Affairs has contributed to the uplift of critical infrastructure, international collaboration on AI security, and coordinating a multiagency group on synthetic biology and AI. Home Affairs also oversees the Protective Security Policy Framework (Department of Home Affairs 2025), which details policy requirements for authorising AI technology systems for non-corporate Commonwealth entities.
- **Updating Australia's privacy laws**: the Attorney-General is leading work to develop a modernised and clear *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), which achieves the right balance between protecting people's personal information and allowing it to be used and shared in ways that benefit individuals, society, and the economy. This will help to underpin trust in digital services.

## Responding to AI harms

The Australian Government continues to support regulators and law enforcement in countering AI-enabled non-compliance and crime. The government is considering preventative measures for harms such as child abuse material and infringements on Indigenous data sovereignty. The government is also developing AI-driven fraud detection and prevention capabilities to strengthen policies and outpace malicious actors.

Keeping Australians safe also means recognising that AI is likely to exacerbate existing national security risks and create new and unknown threats. To keep Australians safe, the government is taking proactive steps to prepare for any potential AI-related incident. The Australian Government Crisis Management Framework (AGCMF) provides the overarching policy for managing potential crises. For major AI incidents, our responses will continue to be guided by existing processes and frameworks, including the AGCMF. The government will consider how AI related harms are managed under the AGCMF to ensure ongoing clarity regarding roles and responsibilities across government to support coordinated and effective action.

**Keeping Australians safe: The mission of the AI Safety Institute**

The government is establishing the AISI to strengthen its ability to respond to AI-related risks and harms, and to help keep Australians safe.

The AISI will focus on both upstream AI risks and downstream AI harms. Upstream AI risks are the model capabilities and ways AI models and systems are built and trained that can create or amplify harm. Downstream AI harms are the real-world effects people may experience when an AI system is used.

The AISI will generate and share technical insights on emerging AI capabilities and upstream risks, working across government and with international partners. It will develop advice, support bilateral and multilateral safety engagement, and publish safety research to inform industry and academia.

The AISI will engage with unions, business and the research sector to elicit expert views, inform broader engagement and ensure its functions meet the needs of the community.

The AISI will also support a coordinated response to downstream AI harms by engaging with portfolio agencies and regulators. It will monitor, analyse and share information across government to allow ministers and regulators to take informed, timely and cohesive regulatory action, including by supporting existing regulators to ensure AI companies are compliant with Australian law and uphold legal standards of fairness and transparency. Portfolio agencies and regulators remain best placed to assess AI uses and harms in their specific sectors and adjust regulatory approaches and the law if necessary.

The AISI will operate with transparency, responsiveness and technical rigour, reinforcing public confidence in both AI technology and the institutions responsible for its governance. It will collaborate with domestic and international partners, including the National AI Centre and the International Network of AI Safety Institutes, to support the global conversation on understanding and addressing AI risks.

# Action 8: Promote responsible practices

Businesses need to do their part in adopting AI responsibly. Promoting responsible AI practices is central to building public confidence and supporting safe, ethical innovation. To support this, the Australian Government is encouraging the development and use of systems that are transparent, fair, and accountable, with consistent governance and compliance with relevant laws. This also includes promoting responsible practices by organisations throughout their development, including in relation to high-quality data, robust stewardship and clear documentation of how a system has been built.

The government will work with industry, unions, civil society and standards bodies to explore practical ways to support responsible deployment, including through voluntary measures and shared guidance. Businesses often express uncertainty about liability when adopting AI, which can undermine confidence and slow responsible innovation (Fifth Quadrant 2025). The government is responding by clarifying how existing laws apply to AI and supporting compliance, including workplace, consumer protection, product liability and competition laws.

## Support for responsible AI adoption

By fostering responsible practices, Australia aims to deploy AI in ways that are safe, inclusive and aligned with the public interest, supporting economic growth and national resilience. Examples of actions underway include:

- **Encouraging responsible AI adoption by organisations**: The Guidance for AI Adoption (NAIC 2025) provides 6 essential practices to embed safety, transparency and ethical conduct into AI development and deployment.
- **Promoting transparency measures for AI-generated content**: The *Being clear about AI-generated content* guide (NAIC 2025) advises businesses on how they can improve trust by clearly signalling when AI has been used to create or modify content. The recommended transparency measures include labelling, watermarking, and metadata recording.
- **Clear governance for government AI use**: The Policy for the Responsible Use of AI in Government (Digital Transformation Agency 2025) promotes transparency, accountability and oversight, positioning government as a leader in ethical AI adoption.
- **Guidance for AI in schools**: the Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools (Department of Education 2023) provides nationally consistent guidance to students, teachers, staff, parents and carers on the opportunities and challenges presented by AI.
- **Aligning with international AI standards**: Australia is actively participating in global standards development to reflect national values and industry interests, and to promote shared understanding of responsible AI practices.

- **Supporting responsible AI use by regulators**: Regulators such as the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission provide guidance for AI use in banking, insurance, and financial services, including operational risk and governance standards.

**Being clear about AI-generated content: Guidance from the National AI Centre**

As everyday AI use accelerates, Australians need to feel confident that they can recognise when digital content has been created or changed using AI.

Developed by the **National AI Centre**, *Being clear about AI-generated content* provides best-practice approaches to help Australian business show clearly when they use AI to create or modify digital content. Transparency around AI use can help business to reduce regulatory and reputational risks, build confidence in their digital content, and gain a competitive advantage in the digital economy.

The guidance outlines practical steps to make AI-generated content easy to identify, including how to choose the right level of transparency for their context:

**Labelling**: Adding a visible notification to show AI-generated content, and the source.

**Watermarking**: Embedding information within digital content to verify authenticity and trace its origin.

**Metadata recording**: Including descriptive information within the content file.

This voluntary guidance is based on industry best practice and developing global standards. It will be updated as technology and international standards change.

## Simplifying responsible innovation

The NAIC will launch a dedicated online platform to consolidate guidance, training and use-case examples, supporting SMEs and end-users with regular updates to keep pace with industry change and complement existing cybersecurity resources. The 6 essential practices in the Guidance for AI Adoption will underpin new tools and resources, offering a coherent framework adaptable to different audiences and aligned with international standards.

Australia aims to promote both innovation and responsibility, supporting local adoption while shaping global standards for safe, fair and transparent AI. The government will actively participate in major international forums and trade partnerships to promote interoperability and best practice. We will periodically review and update guidance and standards to reflect evolving global norms and certification schemes.

# Action 9: Partner on global norms

Shaping global governance of AI is vital for Australia's economic prosperity and national security. Australia can use its role as a responsible middle-power to embed our values of safety, transparency and inclusion in international AI norms and standards.

## Australia as an international AI leader and partner

Through our deep and longstanding engagement in international AI governance Australia has already cemented itself as a reliable, responsible and trusted leader in our region. Australia can build on this leadership to ensure that we are the partner of choice for the adoption of safe, secure and responsible AI and digital infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific. We will expand our capacity building efforts and work with partners to ensure the benefits of AI reach across the region and to share trusted and secure digital infrastructure. We are supporting this work with efforts to understand and address the risks and harms related to AI, informed by our engagement in the International Network of AI Safety Institutes and with our Five Eyes partners informs this.

Our goal of keeping Australians safe will continue to drive our international advocacy and collaboration on AI safety. The AISI will continue working with international partners to advance global understanding of AI risks and safety, while national security agencies collaborate with partners to address emerging threats, such as the future prospect of AI systems achieving Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). We will keep examining new technologies and be proactive about evolving our approach to keep Australians safe as new capabilities emerge.

Our ambition is to align international frameworks with domestic approaches, reduce regulatory friction and support innovation. This will position Australia as a trusted partner in global supply chains and a leader in secure, responsible adoption of trusted AI technologies across the region.

Through foundational **multilateral commitments and engagements** Australia has signalled its dedication to advancing AI safety, ethical standards and trustworthy development on the world stage.

- Australia is a signatory to the Bletchley Declaration, the Seoul Declaration and the Paris Statement, which emphasise inclusive international cooperation and coordination on AI governance.
- Australia participates in the UN Global Digital Compact and the Hiroshima AI Process, which promote digital inclusion, human rights and collaborative approaches to AI risk management.
- Australia's membership of the Global Partnership on AI supports and promotes conversations across the diverse OECD group on advancing safe, secure and trustworthy adoption of AI.
- Australia has endorsed the G7 Energy and AI Work Plan, which aims to proactively manage energy demands from AI and data centres.

Australia has **strong bilateral relationships** that are essential for supporting Australian industry and ensuring national resilience.

- The MoU on Cooperation on AI with Singapore demonstrates Australia's commitment to joint initiatives that promote ethical AI development and knowledge sharing.
- Strategic partnerships with the United Kingdom and Republic of Korea in cyber and critical technologies advance Australia's capacity to innovate securely and collaboratively.
- Australia's Framework Arrangement with India supports joint research, standards development, and improved market access for AI technologies. This strengthens Australia's role as a trusted partner in the region and supports the growth of a robust, globally connected AI ecosystem.

We have also agreed to develop and launch a bilateral Technology Prosperity Deal with the United States to establish joint initiatives on cooperation and investment in AI, quantum, and other critical technologies.

## Australia's role in promoting AI safety

Australia is also playing a pivotal role in **advancing global AI safety science**. By participating in the International Network of AI Safety Institutes, Australia shares expertise and collaborates on the safety testing of advanced AI systems, helping to develop international best practice. Australia's involvement in the International AI Safety Report (UK Government 2025) lets us offer evidence and insights that inform global efforts to understand and prevent AI-related harms. Through these contributions, Australia is helping to shape a safer, more transparent and more accountable AI landscape, both domestically and internationally.

Through multilateral and bilateral engagement, we will deliver on our existing international commitments. We will collaborate with like-minded countries and regional partners to strengthen digital and data governance and promote the adoption of trusted technologies, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific. Strategic relationships, such as the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with Singapore, under which both nations have agreed to set up a Cyber and Digital Senior Officials Dialogue, and initiatives like the Australia–UK Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership create a strong foundation for future cooperation on AI. Our agreement to develop and launch a bilateral Technology Prosperity Deal with the United States will see us deepen cooperation on building a trusted and secure global AI ecosystem.

## Australia's leadership on AI in the region

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, will lead on developing an Australian Government Strategy for International Engagement and Regional Leadership on Artificial Intelligence. The strategy will align Australia's foreign and domestic policy settings on AI. It will also establish our approach to opportunities and the priorities of our bilateral partnerships and our engagement in international fora.

# Building on Actions 7–9: What's next

As AI advances at pace, Australia faces a rapidly shifting landscape of opportunities and risks. The government is actively monitoring emerging risks. Where necessary, we will take decisive action to ensure safety and accountability as new technologies and frontier AI systems emerge. Existing regulators will continue to identify and manage harms and report any gaps in laws to the AISI. We will respond to emerging risks including bias, privacy breaches, disinformation and cyber threats. If more regulation is needed to address bad actors or broader harms, the government will not hesitate to intervene.

The rights and data sovereignty of First Nations peoples and other vulnerable groups are increasingly at risk, as AI systems process and generate data in ways that do not always respect cultural protocols or individual privacy. Possible divergence of the global regulatory environment could lead to different countries and industries adopting varying standards, regulatory regimes and expectations. To keep Australians safe, we will continue to foster collaboration across government, industry, and communities, and to remain agile in the face of evolving global and technical challenges.

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