Digital UK

A Blueprint for the UK's Digital Economy and AI-Powered Public Sector Transformation

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Digital Government UK - A Vision for Ai-Powered Public Sector Transformation

As UK Authority reports the UK Government has set out its plans for a new centre for digital government based in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

It is publishing a blueprint for digital government with the aim of making better use of the £23 billion a year spend on technology to improve public services, and launching five accelerators to kick start progress.

GDS, the central team for government technology, is to be expanded through being remerged with the Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) and two other teams, the Incubator for AI and the Geospatial Commission, will also become part of GDS.

Digital Government Efficiencies and AI Innovations

The ultimate goal is to more effectively utilize these technologies such that they deliver a further £45 billion in cost efficiency savings across the whole of the UK public sector.

This follows an intense review of Digital Government capabilities where a multitude of possible improvements were identified.

A headline theme is the pioneering adoption of AI as a key technology for realizing these types of improvements. Keir Starmer announced an ambition to "mainline AI into the veins of the UK", to leverage its vast potential for rejuvenating UK public services.

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These technologies will be applied to key use cases and sector requirements such as for the NHS, where they are deploying apps like "Humphrey" to streamline public services, eliminate delays through improved data sharing, and reduce costs, including consultant spending.

Speaking with PublicTechnology last year Feryal Clark the Minister for AI and Digital Government responsible for overseeing this transformation described Labour's ambition to completely transform the way that public services interact with citizens, achieved through most significant revamp of the Whitehall tech scene since the Government Digital Service was launched 13 years ago.

At the Future of Britain Conference 2024, Matt Clifford, Co-Founder and CEO of Entrepreneur First, discusses how Britain can drive the change and become a world leader in AI.

This ambition headlines the recent announcements from Keir Starmer, stating he intends to 'mainline AI into the veins of the UK', radically transforming the public sector and driving massive economic growth.

These goals headline the strategy to build 'Digital UK', a world leading digital nation, and the UK boasts a wealth of expertise and thought leaders who can realize this vision for the UK and with it deliver the massive economic benefits.

The first ventures living this potential are taking shape, demonstrating the staggering scale of the opportunity: Synthesia recently raised a $180m series D funding round, NScale a £155m series A round, and the Founders Forum is joining forces with Techspace and European AI group Merantix to launch the London AI Hub.

There is a multitude of scenarios where this technology can be applied in innovative ways, that the public sector can provide the context for. For example Education is one of many, where ventures like 'Teacherbot' are paving the way for disruption in the sector.

AI Action Plan

Matt has outlined key strategies for Britain to establish itself as a global leader in AI. Writing on Linkedin he sets the scene for his strategy that forms the basis of the new AI Opportunities Action Plan, to build a UK AI sector that can scale and compete on the global stage.

How Britain Can Become a Leader in AI

This will set out how to boost take up of the technology across all parts of the economy, and consider the necessary infrastructure, talent, and data access required to drive adoption by the public and private sectors, covering:

- **Foster Innovation Ecosystems:** Clifford emphasizes the importance of creating vibrant innovation ecosystems that bring together researchers, entrepreneurs, and investors. By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, Britain can accelerate AI development.
- **Invest in Research and Development:** To stay ahead in the AI race, Britain must allocate significant resources to research and development. Funding breakthrough technologies and supporting academic institutions can drive innovation and attract top talent.
- **Develop Talent Pipeline:** Building a strong talent pipeline is crucial for AI leadership. Clifford suggests investing in education and training programs to nurture the next generation of AI experts. Encouraging diversity and inclusivity in the tech sector is also vital.

- **Support Startups and Scaleups:** Startups play a pivotal role in driving AI innovation. By providing funding, mentorship, and regulatory support to emerging companies, Britain can cultivate a thriving ecosystem of AI startups and scaleups.
- **Create Ethical Frameworks:** As AI technologies advance, ethical considerations become increasingly important. Clifford advocates for the development of robust ethical frameworks to ensure responsible AI deployment and safeguard against potential risks.
- **Collaborate Globally:** Collaboration with international partners is essential for Britain to stay competitive in the AI landscape. By fostering global partnerships and knowledge exchange, the country can leverage diverse expertise and stay at the forefront of AI innovation.
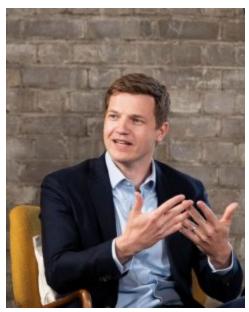
By following Matt Clifford's strategic roadmap, Britain has the potential to emerge as a world leader in AI. Through a combination of innovation, investment, talent development, ethical governance, and global collaboration, the country can harness the transformative power of AI for the benefit of society.

Microsoft

A key vendor playing a central role in advancing these goals is Microsoft. Their UK Ai hub offers the solutions needed for UK businesses to adopt AI, and recently they launched their 'GenAI Accelerator', to develop the UK's brightest and best AI-focused start-ups and springboard them to future success, announcing twelve companies.

In partnership with tech leader NVIDIA and Microsoft-owned developer platform GitHub, the Microsoft GenAI Accelerator will provide exclusive resources and opportunities to companies looking to build, market, and scale up their generative AI products and services.

This Accelerator, which will run from January 2025 to early March 2025, is specifically tailored for UK AI start-ups that have secured seed funding and are looking to take their products to the next level. Microsoft is seeking companies whose innovative AI-powered products have the potential to change people's lives for the better, create jobs, and have significant economic impact.

Darren Hardman, CEO, Microsoft UK
Darren Hardman, CEO, Microsoft UK, said:

"By supporting local AI start-ups and providing them with the resources they need to succeed, Microsoft and our partners are helping to build a vibrant and sustainable AI community in the UK and create the tech powerhouses of tomorrow.

"These fast-growing companies will create jobs, boost UK economic growth, and create products that make a positive impact on people's lives."

"NVIDIA will support Microsoft GenAI Accelerator participants through the NVIDIA Inception programme for cutting-edge start-ups," said Serge Palaric, NVIDIA's Vice-President Hyperscaler Alliance, EMEA.

"This collaboration will provide start-ups with access to NVIDIA Deep Learning Institute (DLI) training sessions and a network of experts. By using NVIDIA's accelerated computing platform, start-ups will be able to accelerate their AI development and enhance performance."