



Professor Marion Oswald MBE, Professor of Law and academic lead for the Centre for Responsible AI at Northumbria University

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## Northumbria University launches Centre for Responsible AI

Northumbria University has launched a pioneering centre of excellence in responsible artificial intelligence (AI) research and expertise. The [Northumbria Centre for Responsible AI](#) is set to be a “go-to” trusted voice in the region for knowledge and advice on key aspects of AI deployment.

The Centre brings together leading academics, policymakers, government and industry experts to advance AI education, research, and policy solutions, with the aim that no one is left behind in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Building on Northumbria University's existing strengths in Responsible AI, the Centre's areas of focus include citizen-centred AI, AI in law enforcement, public sector governance and digital education. It will also cover emerging areas of research in environmental impacts of AI, educational use of AI, and the impact of AI on the creative sector.

Emphasising the importance of responsible AI, Professor Marion Oswald MBE, Professor of Law at Northumbria and academic lead for the Centre, said: "AI has the potential to drive innovation, economic growth, and societal change, but without responsible development and governance, it can also deepen inequalities and erode trust. Our Centre is committed to shaping a future where AI is designed and used responsibly, transparently, and inclusively.

"Our team already has considerable expertise in working with public sector bodies including the police to help them understand the technical aspects of AI and what factors need to be considered to decide whether or not to deploy AI. We are excited about the opportunity to expand the University's research into important issues around the environmental impact of AI, and the implications of AI for the education and creative sectors."

The Centre will also play a vital role in positioning the North East as a leader in AI-enabled economic growth. With the region's devolution deal including commitments to responsible AI use, Northumbria's expertise will help regional stakeholders navigate AI adoption effectively.

Dr Kyle Montague, Centre Co-lead (research) added: "The UK Government's AI Opportunities Action Plan highlights the need for collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers. Our Centre will help to ensure that the North East becomes a key player in this national strategy, equipping businesses, public services, and individuals with the knowledge and skills to harness AI responsibly and to maximise its benefits."

Beyond research, the Centre will lead on AI education and training, ensuring students, professionals, and policymakers develop AI literacy. The University's commitment to embedding responsible AI into education will provide future generations with the tools to navigate an AI-driven world.

Professor Graham Wynn, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) at Northumbria, said: "At Northumbria, we believe AI should be developed and applied in ways that are ethical, inclusive, and focused on benefiting people and

communities. The Centre for Responsible AI is about equipping our students, our region, and our society with the skills and critical understanding needed to ensure no one is left behind in an AI-powered future.”

The launch event for the Centre, which took place on Monday 19 May, provided an opportunity for attendees to hear from a range of Northumbria experts as well as Chi Onwurah, MP for Newcastle Central and West, Chris Zarraga, Director of Schools North East, Phil Witcherley, Director of Economy and Innovation at the North East Combined Authority and Cllr Karen Kilgour, Leader of Newcastle City Council.

Speaking at the event, Cllr Karen Kilgour, Leader of Newcastle City Council, said: "This new Centre at Northumbria University will play a lead role in shaping how we go about ensuring that we use AI in the right way. We've heard about the incredible opportunities that AI can bring to education, to public services and to our local economies. We have also rightly reflected on the responsibilities that come with that. I'm really proud that our region and our city is at the forefront of discussions which is reflective of what Newcastle stands for as a united, forward-thinking and inclusive city.”

In its first year, the Centre will establish key stakeholder partnerships and develop training and policy guidance for public sector and industry professionals.

Academics from the Centre are already working on a range of significant projects focused on ensuring that AI is applied in ways that are ethical, inclusive and socially beneficial, including:

- [PROBabLE Futures](#) – a 4-year Responsible AI UK (RAi UK)⌘Keystone Project examining probabilistic AI systems in law enforcement, funded by Responsible AI UK.
- [Generative AI: Building Young Refugees' Skills and Capacities](#) – exploring AI's role in education for displaced communities.

With its multidisciplinary expertise and strong regional and national partnerships, Northumbria University is set to lead the way in shaping AI technologies that are fair, transparent, and beneficial to all.

Northumbria University has a global reputation for research and teaching in AI. In 2023 The University was awarded £9 million by UK Research and Innovation to establish a Centre for Doctoral Training in the field of AI. Known as the [Citizen-Centred AI \(CCAI\)](#), it focuses on the inclusion of citizens in the design and evaluation of AI – helping to make the rapidly advancing technology work for ordinary people.

**ENDS**

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Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

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