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UK Research and Innovation Partners Deliver UK AI Research Symposium

The inaugural [UK AI Research Symposium](#) (UKAIRS) took place at Northumbria University 8-9 September 2025 – the first event to bring together researchers from a variety of academic disciplines, all working within the AI community. The event forged links between theoretical research and real-world applications to benefit society.

Up to 350 AI researchers and academics from 59 institutions; industry; and government partners attended the event, celebrating the diverse work of individuals and research teams across the UK, focusing not only on

technological advancement but also on the critical examination of AI's impact on society.

Areas of focus included innovative technical subject matter, citizen-centred AI, AI in law enforcement, public sector governance and digital education, as well as emerging areas of research in environmental impacts of AI, educational use of AI, and the impact of AI on the creative sector.

James Dracott, Deputy Director with responsibility for AI at UKRI's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) said: "It's great to see UKAIRS bring together such a wide mix of people working at the forefront of AI research. The event really showed the strength and diversity of the UK community, the value of connecting across disciplines, and the impacts that this research is having on driving AI adoption to improve people's lives.'

Professor Gopal Ramchurn of the University of Southampton and General Chair of UKAIRS said: 'UKAIRS has been a tremendous success, bringing together the UK AI research community from across diverse disciplines including Computer Science, Social Sciences, and the Arts and Humanities. Not very often do we all get together under the same roof to share our latest research. This event has allowed researchers to both build networks and understanding; and also showcase their latest achievements across a broad range of real-world applications.'

The decision to hold the conference in the North East is recognition of the strength of cutting-edge AI innovation taking place within the region. It also came just a week before the North East Combined Authority (NECA) announced a new [AI Growth Zone for the North East](#) is set to unlock more than 5,000 new jobs in the years to come and bring in £30 billion in investment as the region becomes a hub for AI development.

In May this year the [Northumbria Centre for Responsible AI](#) was launched, bringing together leading academics, policymakers, and government and industry experts to advance AI education, research, and policy solutions.

[Professor Marion Oswald MBE](#), Professor of Law at Northumbria and academic lead for the Centre, said: "AI is now part of our lives, and is being rolled out at pace by businesses and the public sector alike. So it's essential that we evaluate the science behind these AI tools, and understand whether

AI is making things better or worse. We need to think about whether we should use AI, not just whether we can. This is why the conference is so important, as it brings together people with different expertise and perspectives to consider these issues."

UKAIRS is organised by Responsible Ai UK (RAi UK), and the UKRI National Research Hubs in AI for Collective Intelligence (AI4CI), and Edge AI for Real Data, with support from the UKRI funded AI hubs and CDTs, reflecting £200mn of investments. Responsible Ai UK (RAi UK), a national network dedicated to fostering responsible AI research and development across the UK. RAi UK brings together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to ensure that AI development serves the public good and addresses societal challenges responsibly.

Last year RAi UK announced significant funding for [PROBabLE Futures](#)– Probabilistic AI Systems in Law Enforcement Futures – a project led by Professor Oswald in collaboration with a team of multi-disciplinary co-investigators from Northumbria, Glasgow, Northampton, Leicester, Cambridge and Aberdeen universities, as well as law enforcement, commercial technology, third-sector and academic partners. The PROBabLE Futures team presented a panel at the conference, showcasing their law enforcement AI mapping research.

Professor Ramchurn added: 'UKAIRS has addressed a pressing need to cohere the UK AI research community that includes researchers from diverse disciplines including Computer Science, Social Sciences and the Arts and Humanities. Not very often do we all get together under the same roof to share our latest research. This event has allowed researchers to network and also showcase their latest achievements across a broad range of applications.

The symposium represents a key moment for the AI community to unite, share knowledge, and forge new collaborations that will shape the future of AI research in the UK. By bringing together diverse perspectives from across disciplines and regions, UKAIRS aims to ensure that AI development remains both innovative and responsible.

The conference's focus on impact alongside technology reflects a growing recognition that the most meaningful AI research considers not just what we can build, but how it affects communities, economies, and society as a whole.

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