

## A National Conversation on Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both profound opportunities and complex challenges. While AI's integration into society is accelerating, public dialogue about its development and use lags behind. Ireland's national AI strategy, *AI – Here for Good*, identifies the critical need to involve citizens in shaping AI development. However, most people remain excluded from AI policy and research discourse.

To address this gap, the Research Ireland ADAPT Centre launched *#DiscussAI*, a national conversation on AI in Ireland, in summer 2021. Since then, over 85,000 people from communities nationwide have engaged with more than 170 researchers through dialogue-driven events and learning activities. Many of these events were co-created with groups historically underrepresented in science and technology conversations.

**By fostering AI awareness, literacy, and trust, #DiscussAI is helping to ensure that public voices actively shape the future of AI innovation and policy in Ireland.**



## Aims

*#DiscussAI* aims to enable people in Ireland to:

- Learn about AI and develop core AI literacy skills
- Contribute to a national dialogue on AI
- Have a voice on this vital area of research

It also aims to strengthen citizens', scientists' and policymakers' familiarity with diverse points of view related to AI.



HOST INSTITUTIONS



Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



Óilíocht Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS



MTU  
Múinteoirí Teicneolaíochta na hÉireann  
Munster Technological University



TUS  
The Technological University of the Shannon  
Múinteoirí Teicneolaíochta na hÉireann  
Ulster Technological University



Maynooth  
University  
National University  
of Ireland Maynooth



UCD  
University College Dublin  
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath  
Ireland's Global University



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#DiscussAI works with diverse communities to co-create engagement formats that genuinely speak to their experiences and interests

Core #DiscussAI initiatives include:

### Citizens' Think-In Series

Inclusive forums for public discussion and deliberation on AI.

### AI in My Life

Transition Year workshop programme exploring ethical AI.

### Art or AI?

Pop-up interactive museum encouraging critical engagement with AI creativity.

### AI Literacy in the Classroom

Blended AI literacy training for post-primary educators, supported by Google.

### The Bigger Picture

Artist call focused on creating more accurate visual portrayals of AI.

### Age-Friendly AI

National AI literacy initiative for older adults.

### BETA Festival

Research partner for Ireland's first festival of art and technology.

### AI Art Assembly

Stakeholders exploring the impact of AI on the arts and cultural sectors.

## Inclusive Dialogue and Learning

Partnerships with community stakeholders around Ireland are instrumental in ensuring diverse voices are represented in the dialogue. Core partnering organisations include Age Action, Age Friendly Ireland, Deaf Village Ireland, Google, National Disability Authority, Oide, Web Wise, and multiple public libraries, science and cultural festivals, and university Access services around Ireland.

More than 170 researchers from eight Irish third-level institutions have contributed to the dialogue and AI literacy education activities.



## Results Delivered

Evaluation of the #DiscussAI programme shows clear AI literacy benefits for participants, who reported:

- A deeper understanding of AI and its societal impact
- Greater confidence in engaging with public discussions about emerging technologies
- A stronger sense of agency and feeling that their perspectives on AI were acknowledged
- Improved overall AI knowledge and skills

All participating researchers agreed or strongly agreed that the insights from public participants were “relevant”, “inspiring”, “valuable” and “useful” for their research. These insights have helped shape multiple ADAPT research projects and research funding proposals, leading to new areas of research and societal collaboration on AI



## Impact

#DiscussAI is helping ensure that diverse public perspectives shape AI research and innovation in Ireland:

- Informed the Government's Creating Our Future report, elevating 'Safeguarding Public Interest and Trust in the Digital World' as a national research priority
- Cited in Ireland's national AI strategy progress report (2023) and strategy refresh (2024) for advancing Ireland's 'AI and Society' goals
- Awarded 'Best General Media Literacy Initiative' at the Media Literacy Ireland Awards 2025
- Recognised by the European Commission as a science engagement best practice (May 2025)

## Conclusion

#DiscussAI is a model of engaged research in action, an innovative programme made possible by strategic research management. It highlights how public dialogue can influence science policy, enrich academic research, and foster a more inclusive digital future.





## #DiscussAI: Inclusive Innovation

#DiscussAI is an international best practice model of engaged research in action.

It highlights how public dialogue can inform and support science policy, enrich academic research, and foster more inclusive digital futures for all.

### Contact

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## Coordinating Team

#DiscussAI is coordinated by ADAPT's award-winning core Education and Public Engagement team.



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