



## ***The Role of Universities in Advancing AI*** **G7 Communiqué from the U7+ Alliance of World Universities**

### **Preamble**

*We, the Presidents of the U7+ Alliance of World Universities, representing over 50 universities on five continents, are dedicated to addressing global challenges. We are committed to working with the G7 leaders to develop AI to benefit societies worldwide.*

*Our Alliance includes leading universities in G7 nations and in 12 Global South countries. We value collaboration across diverse perspectives and cultures. As universities, we are at the intersection of generations, where knowledge is generated, and new, bolder visions for the future are imagined.*

### **Universities' leading role in Advancing AI**

Universities are key contributors to the successful digital transformation of all sectors of the economy and in the wider society. Universities are the main actors in preparing a highly skilled workforce, and in driving innovative solutions based on research. In the face of the rapid advancement of AI-driven technology, universities, **as independent actors guided by research, education, and service to our communities, can support governments to navigate this radical change and increasingly uncertain political context.** Universities have large, multidisciplinary, networks of experts who can provide valuable insights for policymakers in all aspects of AI: the technology itself, its socio-economic embedding and impact, as well its governance. Maintaining collaborations between university AI leaders, government and industry stakeholders is crucial to making the best use of AI technologies, while minimizing some of their anticipated risks, including finding new ways to ensure AI technologies are more energy efficient.

Many key figures in the development of AI come from U7+ universities, and we host many of the hubs where the algorithms and tools underpinning commercial GenAI products were originally developed. Given this expertise, we can work effectively with G7 governments and other stakeholders to develop a more inclusive ecosystem **to train and nurture the next generation of AI leaders.**

As it becomes increasingly pervasive, AI will bring improvements including opportunities to address global challenges rapidly and effectively, in areas such as climate change, health, energy transitions, the integrity of democratic institutions, and the future of work. To leverage these opportunities, we would like to ensure a broad ecosystem of innovative AI companies that span the globe. Universities, and the startups they often engender, are essential elements in such a vibrant innovation ecosystem. **Governments have a key role to play in supporting universities through investments in AI development, deployment, and implementation.**

AI's impact on the nature of work and the labour market is unprecedented. Governments are faced with a seismic shift in employment patterns and skill requirements across all sectors due to the integration of AI into the workplace. This will continue to raise challenges for governments to ensure there are fair opportunities for all, as well as a high quality of life and well-being. **Our institutions' extensive educational expertise and existing infrastructure can help governments create successful AI transition strategies across all sectors, and support workforce preparedness, through upskilling/reskilling programs both in the public and private sector.**

The successful deployment of AI hinges on whether people trust it to deliver its benefits safely and securely. This underscores the need to develop a balanced approach to AI governance, encouraging innovation while also ensuring safety and security. The International AI Safety Report (2025) establishes an internationally shared scientific understanding of risks from advanced AI and methods for managing them. The spread of misinformation, including the creation of deep fakes, will continue to adversely affect societies, particularly at election times, increasing misinformation and enabling disruption in political conversations. Additionally, the misuse of AI technologies such as Large Language Models without adequate understanding of their functionalities, for decision-making in critical fields like justice, healthcare, or public welfare, can create public mistrust in authorities and in policymakers. **Our institutions can play a crucial role in advising on clear guidelines to manage the risks of AI technologies, balancing innovation, and regulations to ensure the safety and security of their use.**

As an alliance of universities from both the Global North and South, we are committed to addressing the rapidly increasing global AI divide. AI has the extraordinary potential to support local needs, in alignment with diverse values, cultures, languages and jurisdictions. There are currently disparities in the concentration of skilled talent, which also contributes to the global AI R&D divide. To bridge this gap, we prioritize **strengthening and supporting North-South academic collaborations, developing training programs for capacity building, and enabling student exchange programs in AI.** This will ensure that we build a healthy AI ecosystem where innovation and novel technologies can emerge to serve local and global markets. By virtue of their national and international core mission of education and research with carefully managed conflicts of interest, our universities have successful working collaborations with both public and private sectors, including the AI technology giants. This makes us vital connectors that can help build equitable and more robust AI ecosystems for the benefit of nations.

#### **Commitments by U7+ Alliance members:**

- U7+ members commit to continuing to **update and upgrade training pathways for all our students, not only those engaged in AI development, to sensitize them to new opportunities for the application of AI technologies as well as to risks posed by AI in general.** Together we commit to sharing best practices and courses with one another so that we can build on our strengths as a global network.
- U7+ brings together Global South and Global North members; we commit to working across the Alliance to ensure that we are **creating opportunities for all universities in our networks to deepen their knowledge of and access to AI training and technologies,** so that innovations can be developed to benefit all nations.
- U7+ members commit to playing a role as trusted brokers for governments at all levels, bringing our research and training expertise to develop programs for governments to deepen their understanding of AI and its opportunities. By developing tailored programs, universities can **train civil servants on opportunities to innovate and increase efficiency of government processes.** Furthermore, working with governments, universities can contribute to mitigating risks to democratic processes and to individual/community rights and well-being by advising on appropriate policy and legal frameworks.

U7+ will continue to play a critical role in the responsible advancement of AI, by fostering innovation and creating opportunities to develop technologies that contribute to individual and population health, environmental sustainability, and socioeconomic prosperity, while also monitoring their adoption and implementation to ensure meaningful and equitable impact.

## Recommendations to G7 and other governments:

- Work with U7+ to **create an interdisciplinary network of U7+ scholars and policy makers working together on AI governance**. We envision this consortium as a trusted advisory body leveraging the knowledge of leading universities from across the globe **to achieve two interconnected roles**: first, it would **support policymakers and government agencies to implement the AI transition**. Second, it would address **AI safety and security** and would work closely with the emerging network of public-sector/hybrid AI Safety institutes.
- **Support the creation of an AI research and governance interface tool**: Develop a trusted portal to share credible and rigorous resources for AI research and governance to support the decision-making of policy makers. This portal will address the current fragmentation of initiatives by providing a single point of access and verification for public authorities. Working with governments on key resources they are seeking, the portal will increase transparency, build trust, and ensure that decision-makers have access to the latest research-based knowledge on the ethical, legal, and societal implications of AI.
- As governments, create funding support for inclusive innovation through **strengthened North–South collaboration on AI training, knowledge transfer, shared platforms, and the development of novel technologies**.

## Communiqué signed by 40 University Presidents:

- Aix-Marseille Université –Éric BERTON
- Ashesi University – Patrick AWUAH
- Bocconi University – Francesco BILLARI
- École Polytechnique – Laura CHAUBARD
- Freie Universität Berlin – Günter M. ZIEGLER
- Georgetown University – Robert GROVES
- Hitotsubashi University – Satoshi NAKANO
- Institut National Polytechnique Houphouët-Boigny (INP-HB) – Moussa Abdoul Kader DIABY
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay – Shireesh KEDARE
- Keio University – Kohei ITOH
- Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München – Bernd HUBER
- McGill University – H. Deep SAINI
- Politecnico di Milano – Donatella SCIUTO
- Politecnico di Torino – Stefano Paolo CORGNATI
- Sciences Po – Luis VASSY
- Seoul National University – Honglim RYU
- The University of Osaka – Atsushi KUMANOGOH
- Tohoku University – Teiji TOMINAGA
- Universidad de los Andes – Raquel BERNAL
- Université Cheikh Anta Diop – Alioune Badara KANDJI
- Université Côte d'Azur – Jeanick BRISSWALTER
- Université de Bordeaux – Dean LEWIS
- Université de Montréal – Daniel JUTRAS

- Université d'Ottawa – Jacques FRÉMONT
- Université Grenoble Alpes – Yassine LAKHNECH
- Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique (UM6P) – Hicham EL HABTI
- Université Paris Cité – Édouard KAMINSKI
- Université Paris Saclay – Camille GALAP
- Université PSL – El-Mouhoub MOUHOUD
- University College London (UCL) – Michael SPENCE
- University of Alberta – Bill FLANAGAN
- University of Bonn – Michael HOCH
- University of Calgary – Edward MCCAULEY
- University of Cape Town – Mosa MOSHABELA
- University of Edinburgh – Peter MATHIESON
- University of Ibadan – Kayode O ADEBOWALE
- University of Mannheim – Thomas FETZER
- University of Toronto – Méric GERTLER
- Università degli Studi di Milano – Marina BRAMBILLA
- Waseda University – Aiji TANAKA

This communiqué was drafted by an interdisciplinary group of academics who formed the U7+ Working group *Role of universities in the governance of AI* chaired by Professor Valérie Amiraux (Université de Montréal) and Professor Lamiae Azizi (Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique):

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