

Call to Action

The case for change is clear: AI is widely recognised as a transformative technology across sectors, and more organisations need to take steps to implement best practice for its responsible application, in ways that will empower and benefit everyone inclusively.

Under the auspices of the Women's Forum, as a coalition of partners, we call for organisations of all sizes, sectors, and from all countries, to apply a gender lens to their AI development and implementation:

- (1) To include women and diverse viewpoints in AI development and deployment, to mitigate the challenges of gender bias and other societal concerns.
- (2) To explore opportunities for AI to address barriers to women's advancement in society globally.

This call builds on existing initiatives in this space, including the EU Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI and the OECD Principles on Artificial Intelligence, with a specific focus on women's empowerment.

Through a survey of different organisations, including the Women's Forum ecosystem of partners, we have identified a striking awareness and implementation gap between the perceived importance of initiatives that ensure gender is considered in AI development and deployment, and the existence of those initiatives. The areas which emerged with the most pressing need for action were:

1. Responsible AI training for all functions.
2. Formal assessment of the impact of AI practices in relation to gender, including through analytics.
3. Procedure and governance of responsible AI within the organisation.

We call on organisations to make a one-year commitment to address the implementation gaps above and other issues of choice, ensuring that gender is considered in AI development and deployment within their institutions. Signatories commit to share back to the Women's Forum the nature of, and learnings from, the actions they have taken. A summary of these will be shared by the Daring Circle on a quarterly basis with the aim of catalysing widespread action in the AI ecosystem.

We believe that women's increased participation, visibility and influence in AI systems, will benefit society at large – and we undertake to share evidence and examples of the nature of this impact. We are committed to exploring the ways in which AI could be deployed to address barriers to women's advancement in society, and to working together with organisations across the AI community in 2020 to develop solutions to achieve this goal.

Background to the Call to Action

- We want to encourage tangible action to make progress towards an environment where women are empowering AI to its full potential, and AI is empowering women to their full potential, driving greater societal benefits for everyone.
- We envisage a two-phased approach:
 - o Phase 1 – in signing the Call to Action, the partners of the Daring Circle commit to take action to ensure gender is considered in AI development and deployment within their institutions. Signatories commit to share back to the Women’s Forum the nature of, and learnings from, the actions they have taken. A summary of these will be shared by the Daring Circle on a quarterly basis with the aim of catalysing widespread action in the AI ecosystem.
 - o Phase 2 – a follow-up call for organisations to collaborate to address specific challenges that women face in society through the application of AI.
- We want to spark a public conversation around the role of women in driving inclusive AI and mitigating the risk of unfair gender bias in its application. We also want to open the opportunities to empower women and all people through AI.

The signatories:

- Organisations of all sizes around the world that are using AI services now or will in the future.
- Phase 1 will be soft-launched at the Women’s Forum Global Meeting 2019, 20-22 November in Paris. We aim to have all members of the Daring Circle be founding partners of Phase 1, and commit to take action over the course of the next year.
- Phase 2 will be launched in 2020, in conjunction with the Beijing+25 commitment to gender equality. During Phase 2 we will seek signatories from the Women’s Forum community and the broader business and multi-stakeholder community.

The process of building this call:

- The content and form of the call are informed by interviews conducted with partners and experts, and an ongoing high-level survey of AI professionals and industry leaders.