

## Leading corporations call for artificial intelligence (AI) to empower women and women to empower AI

*AXA, FTI Consulting, L'Oréal, Microsoft, Publicis Groupe and UNESCO unite to launch a Call to Action for gender-inclusive AI.*

**A group of leading global corporations, led by Microsoft Corp. alongside AXA, L'Oréal and Publicis Groupe, and supported by FTI Consulting as Knowledge Partner and UNESCO as Institutional Partner, have united to call for the building of an inclusive AI ecosystem. Known as [the Women & AI Daring Circle](#), the group today launched a two-phased Call to Action at the Women's Forum for the Economy & Society Global Meeting in Paris (20-22 November) that calls on governments, academic institutions, corporations, and private and public sectors to work together to build an inclusive AI ecosystem that empowers women and all people and is empowered by women.**

Paris, 20 November 2019 – AI is one of the most disruptive technology areas of our age and promises to provide unprecedented opportunities to solve some of the world's most pressing societal issues, from improving the way we detect and treat diseases such as cancer to upskilling employees in the digital economy. At the same time, it also carries risks if not developed and deployed responsibly. Because AI is based on existing data, its deep learning algorithms already exhibit gender and racial biases that could, if not addressed, amplify discrimination.

This is a crucial time in the history of AI, and our impact in shaping its future has never been greater than now. Driven by this important window of opportunity, leading corporations have united under the banner of the Women's Forum to launch a Call to Action to help drive positive conversations on gender inclusivity within the AI ecosystem.

Known as the [Women & AI Daring Circle](#), the expert working group is committed to inspiring and encouraging private and public-sector stakeholders to increase the participation and visibility of women who influence AI systems, as well as to capitalise on AI's potential benefit to women and all of humanity.

Shelley McKinley, Head of Technology and Corporate Responsibility, Microsoft said: *“As an industry and a society we have a shared opportunity and responsibility to influence how technology, and specifically AI, accelerates our efforts to empower every person and organisation on the planet to achieve more. We must address the need to deploy technology in a responsible and inclusive way.”*

The Call to Action will be launched in two phases; the first of which, today, is the result of ongoing research and consultation on gender bias in AI across different organisations.

The first phase calls on organisations to make a one-year commitment to building a gender-inclusive AI ecosystem in their organisation and share back to the Women's Forum the nature of, and learnings from, the actions they have taken. A summary of these actions will be shared

by the Daring Circle on a quarterly basis with the aim of catalysing widespread action in the AI ecosystem.

The second phase, which will be launched in the first quarter of 2020, will call on all key stakeholders to commit to working with each other on specific challenges that women face which can be addressed by AI, shifting the debate to the transformational potential this technology has to address gender and other inequalities.

Through this Call to Action, the Women & AI Daring Circle is committed to outline concrete steps for public authorities and businesses to adopt a gender-lens in the development and deployment of AI initiatives and technologies.

### **Our Call to Action**

The Women and AI Daring Circle partners call on other organisations, institutions and academia to sign the Call to Action and contribute to combined efforts to unlock the potential of AI to create a more inclusive world for all.

Research led by the Women & AI Daring Circle, of different organisations, including the Women's Forum ecosystem of partners, has identified a striking implementation gap in organisations between the perceived importance and presence of practices to ensure gender is considered in AI development and the existence of those initiatives.

In the first phase of the Call to Action, the Women & AI Daring Circle is committed to closing this implementation gap by further researching and regularly taking stock of the measures needed to drive further positive change. The Call to Action can be viewed [here](#). We invite partners of the Women's Forum, as well as other organisations, to join the Daring Circle.

The Women's Forum and partners will also be working with the French government in the hope to drive real regulatory change and to appeal to other governments to do so too. Chiara Corazza, managing director of the Women's Forum for the Economy & Society, said: *"We have been working closely with the French government to provide policy recommendations and a national action plan in order to foster the attractiveness of STEM- and AI-focused studies and careers for women."*

### **About the Women's Forum**

The Women's Forum for the Economy & Society is a global platform committed to bringing a gendered perspective to the social and economic issues affecting all people around the world. Its ambition is to drive new, innovative solutions at scale and at pace through three key initiatives: the CEO Champions and Rising Talents, as well as through the Daring Circles on several themes including Women & STEM, Women & Climate, Women & Access to health, Women & AI and Women & Business. The Women's Forum is based in Paris and owned by Publicis Groupe.

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