

Submission to the

Artificial Intelligence: Australia's Ethics Framework Discussion Paper

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Submission to the Artificial Intelligence: Australia's Ethics Framework Discussion Paper

The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering¹ (the Academy) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the discussion paper developed by CSIRO's Data61: *Artificial Intelligence: Australia's Ethics Framework* to inform the government's ethical approach to artificial intelligence (AI) in Australia.

The Academy recognizes the importance of discussing the ethical issues related to the existing and upcoming AI technologies that have enormous potential to impact every facet of our lives. The discussion paper is an excellent piece of work that explores the issues Australia faces in its path towards progressive development and use of AI. It needs active participation from stakeholders across government, industry, academia and broader society if we aim to achieve positive outcomes from the rapidly evolving AI technologies.

The Academy has recently undertaken substantial research into understanding AI as part of an ACOLA committee developing an AI report that is due to be launched soon. The report, titled *The effective and ethical development of artificial intelligence: An opportunity to improve our wellbeing*, covers technology and theoretical matters, as well as the ethical, social and legal aspects associated with development and uptake of AI in Australia. ACOLA will forward a copy of this report as soon as it is available, which will complement the framework developed by Data61.

The Academy has some concern that there are multiple AI ethical development initiatives underway, particularly in government, industry and academic institutions, and would like to emphasise that the government should take the lead in coordinating these and developing a legislative framework for AI systems. To achieve this, the government should create an AI advisory panel that assembles a wide range of key stakeholders from business leaders, researchers, social scientists, and legal professionals. This could include representatives of the learned Academies and the Australian Human Rights Commission. The AI ethical development advisory panel should be led by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet or the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science. The Academy recommends this panel be chaired by Australia's Chief Scientist Dr Alan Finkel given his leadership, insight and public statements on AI.

¹ The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering is a Learned Academy operating as an independent, non-political and expert think tank that helps Australians understand and use technology to solve complex problems. We bring together Australia's leading experts in applied science, technology and engineering to provide impartial, practical and evidence-based advice on how to achieve sustainable solutions and advance prosperity.



The role of the AI advisory panel would be to:

- Assess and coordinate the complex areas addressed by various groups currently working on AI, including the AI reports by Data61 and the ACOLA
- Conduct a series of inclusive analytical contestability workshops to test the suggested AI ethics framework in extant real world scenarios and in potentially emerging future scenarios
- Review the outcomes of the workshops and make decisions in an organised and inclusive manner about the best practices to implement appropriate and ethical AI

The Academy acknowledges the excellent initiative of the consultative workshops held by DIIS to discuss the core principles and toolkit developed in the Data61 AI ethics framework and strongly recommends that this be continued through the suggested advisory panel. The workshops would bring out more clarity on the concerns related to data integrity, accountability, risk assessment and other emerging ethical issues.

It is important to identify and address the critical ethical issues in this framework before legislation is developed. Appropriate and robust legislation is key to community confidence, and clarity will support industry and research development in AI.

The Academy and its Fellows would be pleased to further assist DIIS and Data61 in this process as appropriate. The contact at the Academy is Ms Riajeet Kaur, Policy Analyst (riajeet.kaur@applied.org.au or 03 9864 0942).



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