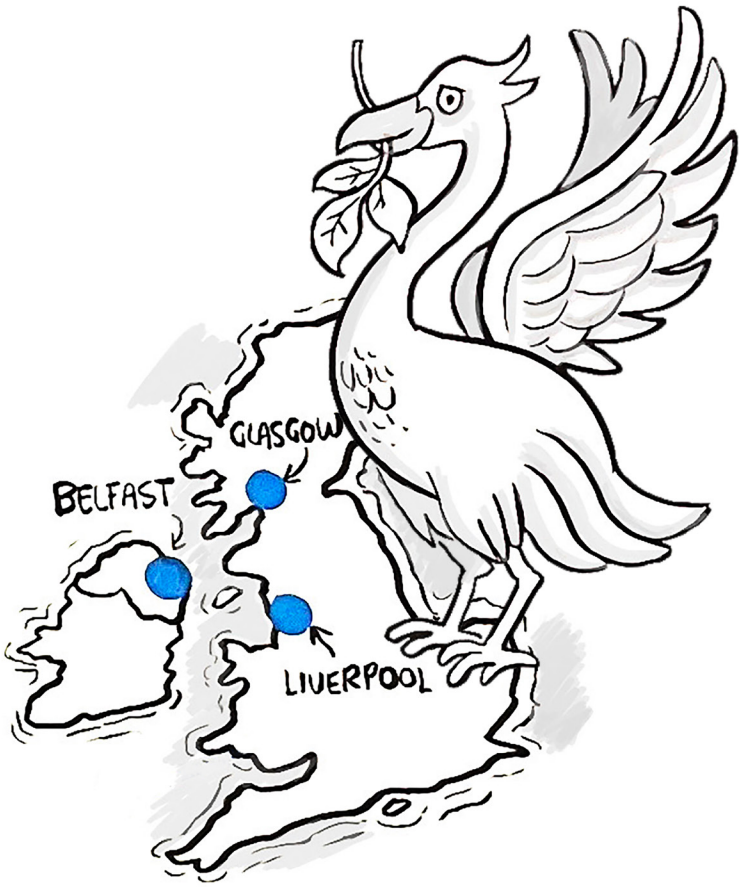
# People's AI Stewardship Summit

Liverpool, January 30th, 2025

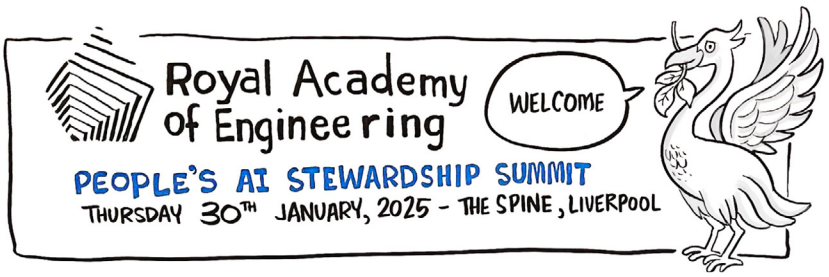



**Scribe Capture Document**

Captured by

We are Cognitive

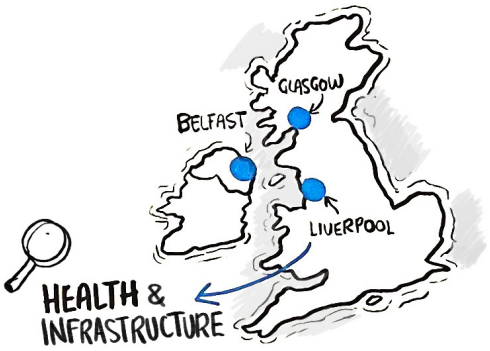
Royal Academy of Engineering




# People's AI Stewardship Summit

Liverpool, January 30th, 2025

The third People's AI Stewardship Summit (PAISS) brought together the public with leaders from the public sector, industry, policy, and academia to explore the impact of AI on Liverpool's future. Like previous summits in Belfast and Glasgow, the event aimed to foster dialogue between the public and those designing, building, researching, regulating and implementing these technologies.



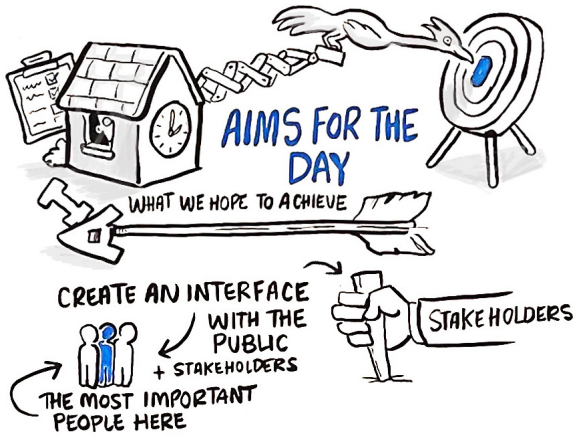

The event focused on the opportunities and challenges AI poses, particularly in health and infrastructure—salient issues for Liverpool and the broader Northwest.

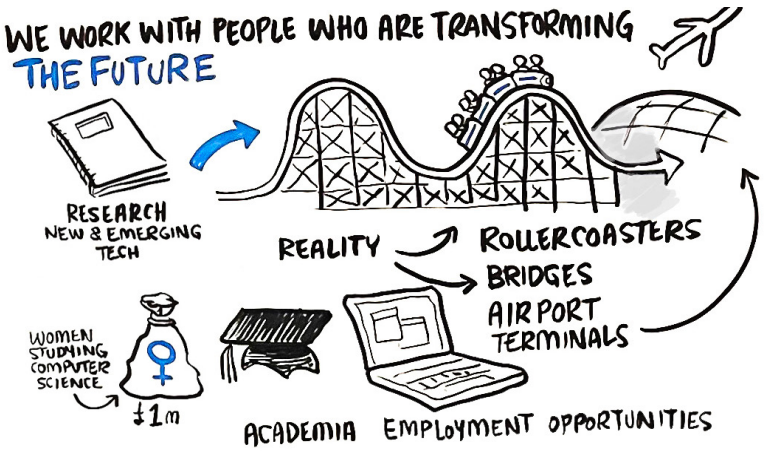
*"What makes you excited? What makes you worried? Where do you see the real opportunity?"*- Dr. Natasha McCarthy

## Welcome from the Academy

The summit was organised by the Royal Academy of Engineering, known as "The Academy." As Dr Natasha McCarthy, Associate Director of Policy, explained, The Academy recognises leading engineers (Fellows), funds pioneering research—from next-generation batteries to advanced computing—and advises policymakers on engineering-related challenges.

Liverpool is set to welcome a new Academy Enterprise Hub, designed to support engineering and technology startups and scaleups, helping innovators translate ambitious ideas into tangible impact.



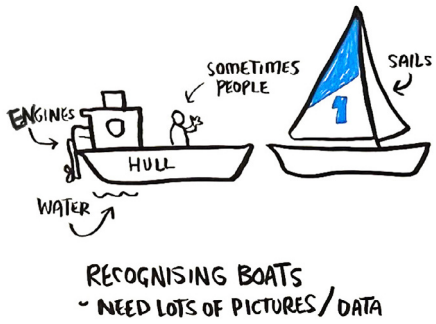

*"We specifically chose Liverpool because we know there's creativity, innovation and determination in the city, but that it's quite a tough business environment as well."*
- Ben McAlinden, Senior Enterprise Manager, Liverpool

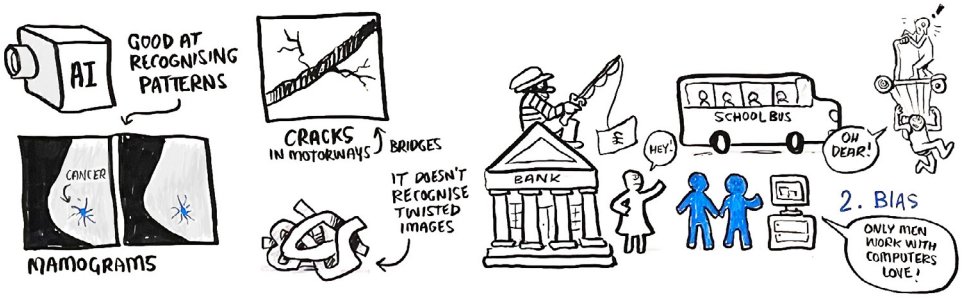
# Expert Insights: Framing the Discussion

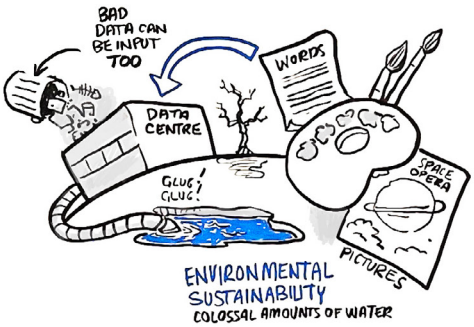
## AI: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
**Professor Michael Fisher, Professor of Computer Science**

Professor Michael Fisher from the University of Manchester set the stage by addressing the complexities of AI: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

He explained the difference between AI types with an analogy: teaching a friend to recognise boats. One method is by giving rules—boats are found on water, for example. Another is by showing many photos until they learn intuitively. The latter reflects the AI he intended to focus on.




### The Good
This kind of AI demonstrates significant potential in pattern recognition. Professor Fisher showcased its efficacy in detecting cancer in X-rays and identifying fraudulent banking transactions.

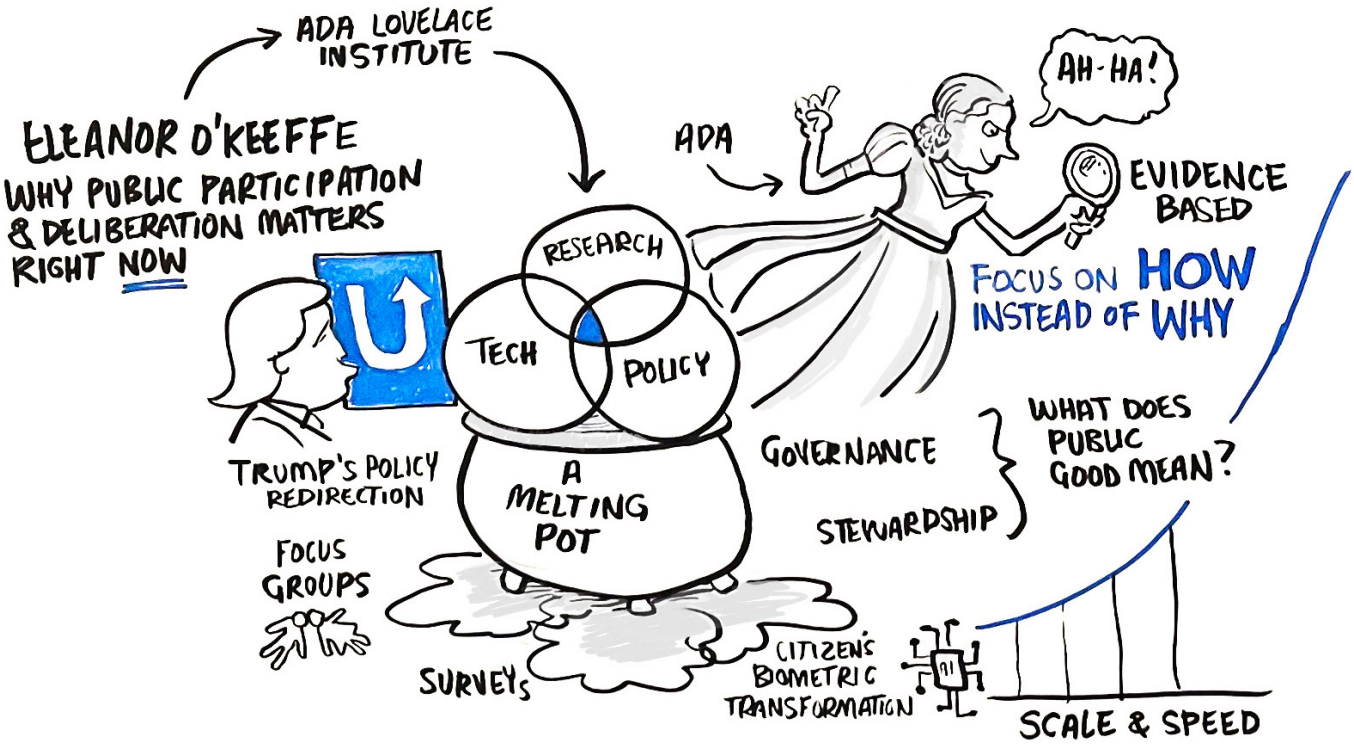
### The Bad
Yet, AI is fraught with limitations. It can inherit biases from training data (like the assumption that a person at a computer is a man), and its performance can falter with unexpected inputs, such as unusual object orientations.

### The Ugly
He concluded with the ugly side of AI: its environmental toll, the dangers of bias or data manipulation, and accountability issues when AI systems make consequential decisions.

## The Importance of Public Voice in AI
**Eleanor O'Keeffe, Public Participation and Research Practice Lead, Ada Lovelace Institute**

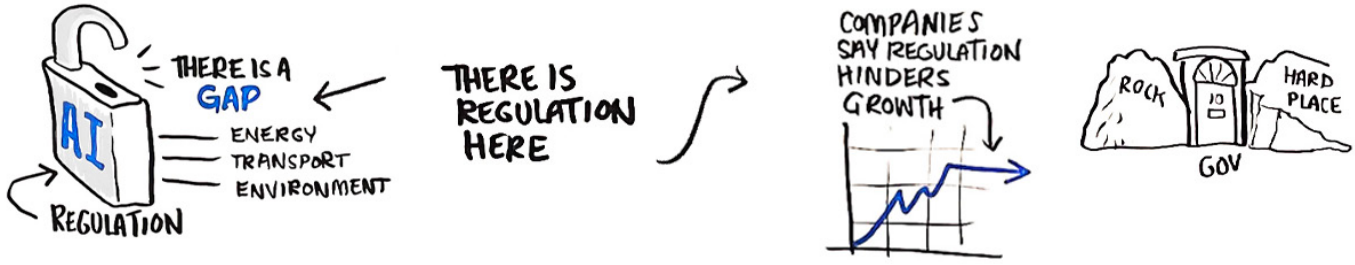
Eleanor O'Keeffe emphasised the urgency of public deliberation in AI policy, especially given the rapid pace of technological and regulatory change.

Rather than debating why public input matters, she focused on how practitioners can make it matter. The Ada Lovelace Institute integrates public attitudes, lived experience, and deliberative reasoning with legal and policy analysis to build stronger, evidence-based recommendations. A positive case study is the Citizens' Biometric Council, which explored public concerns about technologies like face recognition concurrent with a review of governance and policy gaps. Together, these efforts directly influenced the EU's AI Act.



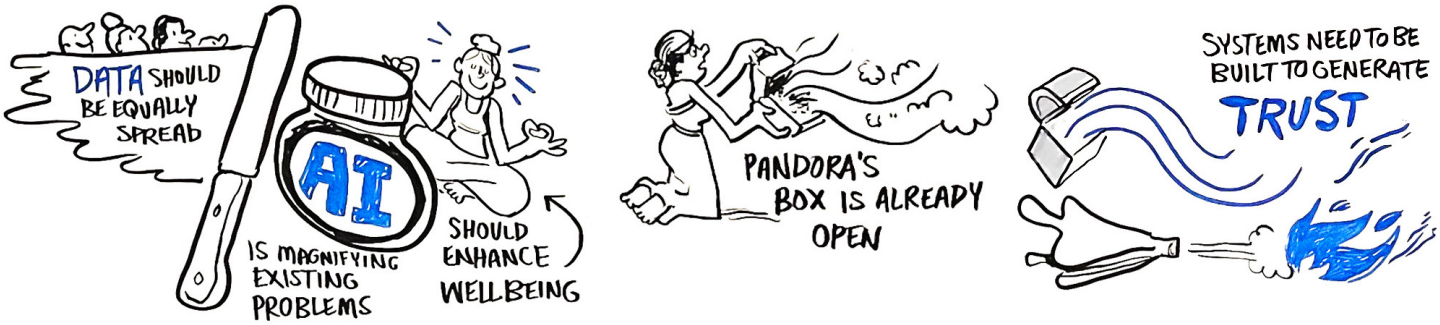

## Q&A

A Q&A session revealed unresolved concerns regarding AI's rapid expansion.



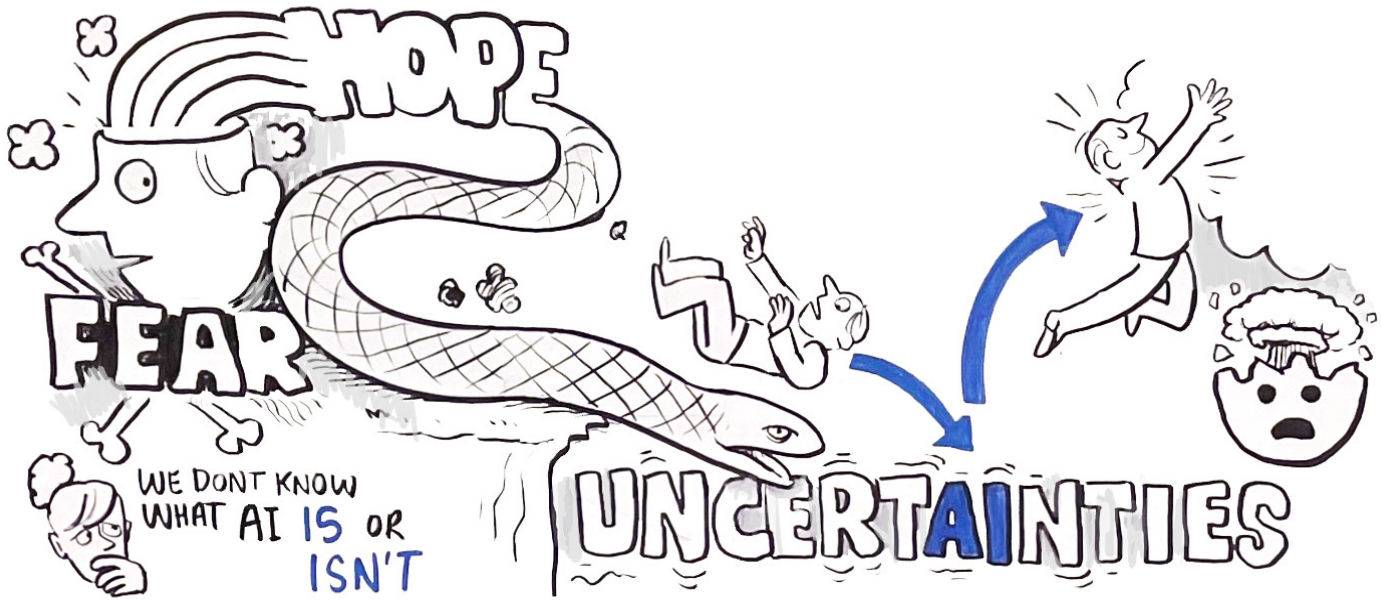

Some participants argued that the government must intervene more decisively. Attendees voiced worries about individuals' limited control over their data, who owns it, and the self-regulation of major technology companies. Policymakers face pressure from the public for stronger safeguards, yet they also fear stifling innovation.

> *"The government is between a rock and a hard place."*



# Exploring Hopes, Fears, and Uncertainties Surrounding AI

A collaborative Post-it note activity captured perspectives on AI's role in healthcare and transport.

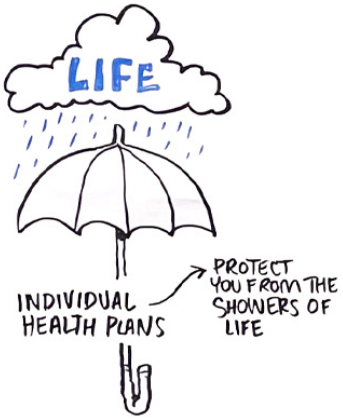



## AI in Health, Wellbeing & Medical

Participants expressed **hope** that AI will enhance healthcare efficiency, free medical professionals' time, and improve access to services—especially for those less proficient with technology. AI was lauded for its potential in detecting diseases early and improving diagnostic accuracy, especially in complex cases requiring input from multiple specialists.


However, **uncertainties** lingered about the security of medical data and trust in AI-driven diagnoses—would people trust an AI to make decisions about their health-care? What if a system failure led to critical errors?

> *"What if the power goes out?"*

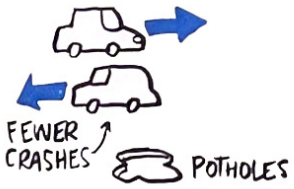



**Fears** included healthcare job losses, uneven government investment across regions, and misdiagnosis if treatment decisions lack human oversight.

> *"I don't want AI to have the final say."*

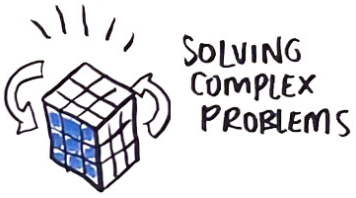
### AI in Transport & Infrastructure

In the transport sector, **hopes** revolved around AI's capacity to bolster safety and efficiency. There was a sense that existing traffic systems in Liverpool were wasting valuable time. Participants saw promise in smarter AI-powered traffic lights and optimised routes to reduce congestion. They also hoped AI could help with crash detection and identify infrastructure issues early, such as potholes and bridge damage, preventing more significant problems.




Despite the potential benefits, **uncertainties** lingered. How reliable are AI-driven transport systems? Would essential skills be lost in the process?


As with the topic of health, job losses were mentioned as a **fear**. Some worried that scheduling errors could result in accidents, while others feared AI could become a tool for control—used by influential figures, governments, or even criminal networks to manipulate or exploit people.




## Expectations For AI

In the second activity, the focus shifted to expectations. Participants discussed how government, industry, and civil society could ensure AI serves the public good, ensuring benefits while minimising risks.


### AI in Healthcare: Strengthening Oversight and Trust

Participants advocated for an independent regulatory body with real authority, alongside an organisation to oversee intellectual property rights and tighter legislation to protect patient data.

> *"Regulation must protect both consumers and patients."*

Participants called for a cohesive approach to policy and funding across government agencies to prevent fragmented decision-making.

Transparency and public trust were central. One idea was to widely publicise success stories of AI in the NHS to build confidence in its benefits.

There was a consensus that AI should be a tool to assist healthcare professionals, not replace them.

### AI in Transport: Building a Fair and Safe System

A key concern in transport was ensuring equitable access to AI-driven advancements. Participants stressed that public benefit should take precedence over profit, echoing the need for regulations and rigorous testing before AI systems were widely deployed.


Public engagement was a central theme. Participants emphasised the need for open discussions, town hall meetings, and participatory decision-making.

Finally, maintaining individual choice was a priority, with calls for opt-out options for AI-driven transport services.

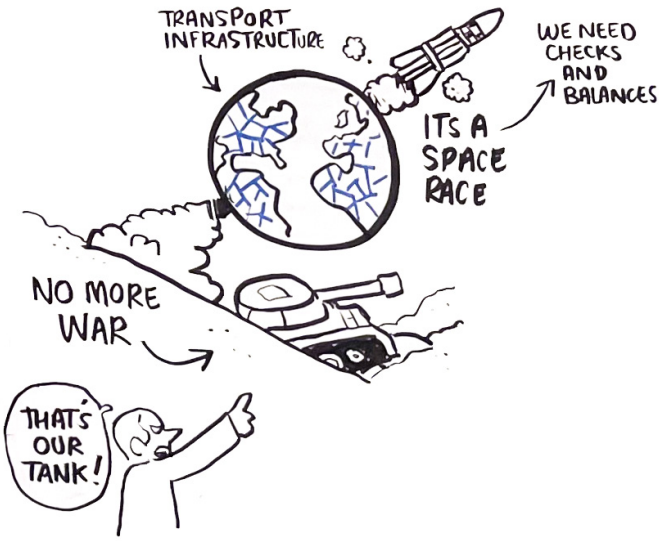
## Poster Presentations: Positive AI Visions


A poster session displayed participants' optimistic visions for AI in Liverpool and the Northwest. Several themes emerged:

### AI for Global Good

Participants envisioned AI as a unifying force, catalysing international cooperation to address shared challenges such as climate change, healthcare, and poverty.

They expressed hope for fair policies and access to ensure that AI doesn't widen the gap between different areas of the UK or between developed and developing nations.



## Balancing Innovation and Regulation

Participants expressed a desire for oversight without stifling progress. One group depicted a precarious tower of eggs, symbolising that we need to balance the drive for innovation with the risks of loss of control, bias, and misuse.

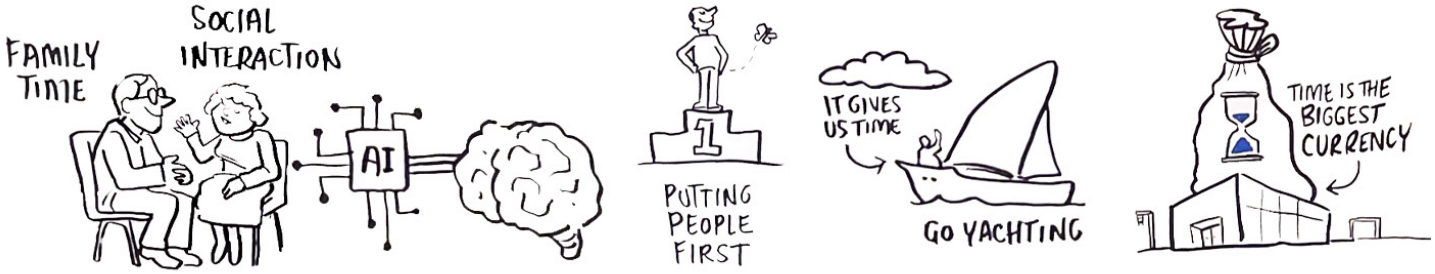

## Keeping Humanity at the Center

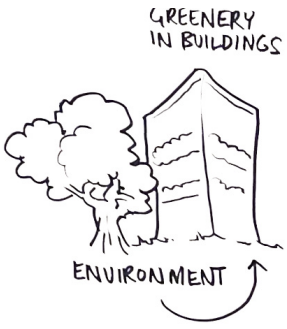
A priority for many participants was the impact of AI on human autonomy, identity, and relationships.

Participants hoped that AI could free up time for human pursuits, such as hobbies and spending time with family.

Some stressed the importance of human judgement, empathy, and ethics in AI applications, particularly in healthcare and hiring and firing decisions, where ethical guidelines are needed to prevent bias. The underlying message was that AI should complement human decision-making.

> *"Going out and speaking to a real doctor can make a big change in someone's life."*




## AI for a Sustainable Future

While AI's environmental footprint was acknowledged, posters focused on its potential to drive sustainability through, for example, optimising energy grids, facilitating precision agriculture, and monitoring pollution.

The takeaway: AI should be a tool for environmental progress, not harm.

## Building Trust Through Public Involvement

Several groups addressed trust and accountability in AI systems, which are essential for public confidence. They conveyed hope for early-stage education and literacy as well as widespread public involvement in shaping AI policies.

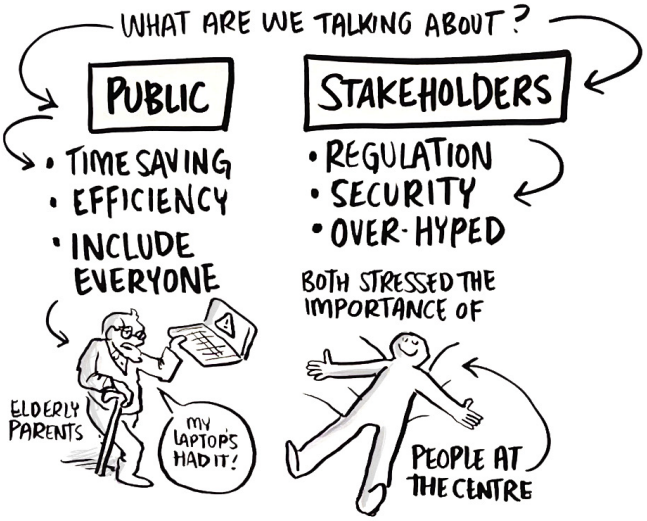
> *"If a bank's AI rejects your loan, they should have to explain why."*

One group mentioned that they would like to see local people developing AI systems. They don't want AI to be exclusively designed by people who don't understand their specific local needs.

> *"Someone in Silicon Valley is not thinking about the problems of the Northwest."*

The poster session highlighted the visions of both the public and stakeholders. The public spoke more about the need for AI to benefit all, not just a select few, emphasising fairness and inclusivity. Stakeholders were especially concerned with ensuring that AI is developed with proper regulation and ethical guidelines. Both groups shared a focus on keeping humans at the heart of AI.

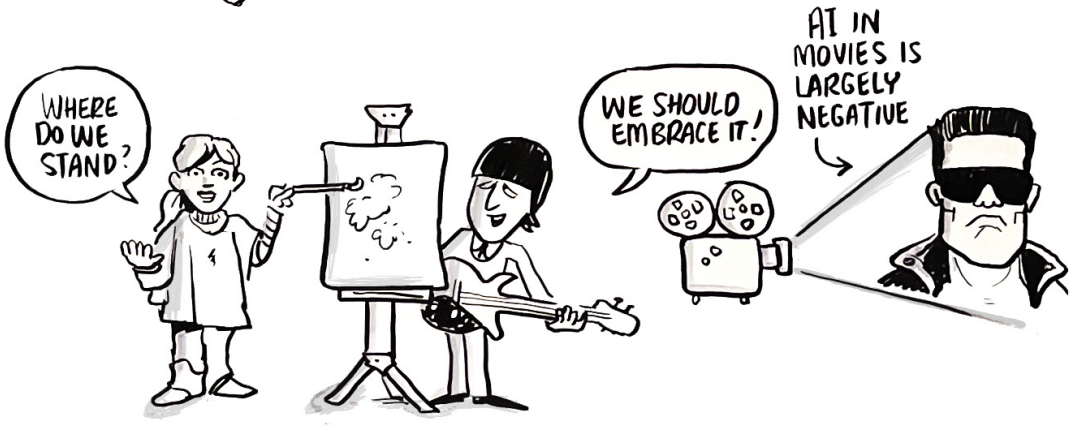
## Open Discussion




Personal stories added a relatable dimension to the conversation.

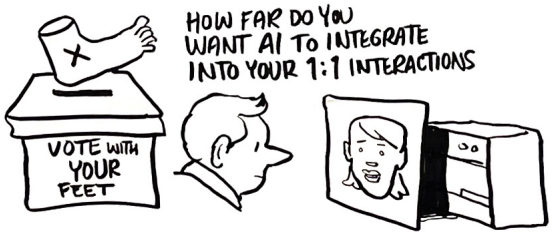
Some in the room eagerly anticipated AI's growth. A software programmer, initially worried that AI might replace their job, shared excitement about how AI tools had transformed tasks that used to take months into days.

*"It's absolutely amazing. Embrace it! "*




Participants were asked to place themselves in the room according to how comfortable they felt with AI taking over one-on-one human interactions. Interestingly, nobody wanted no AI involvement at all. Most clustered towards AI playing a supporting role rather than making all the decisions. The consensus was that it depends; for example, one participant felt that AI should never be used in mental health support, which requires empathy, but they would be comfortable with driverless cars.

Next, the group was asked whether AI-driven decisions should always be clearly labelled. Almost everyone shuffled in the same direction, indicating that knowing when AI is used is important to them.



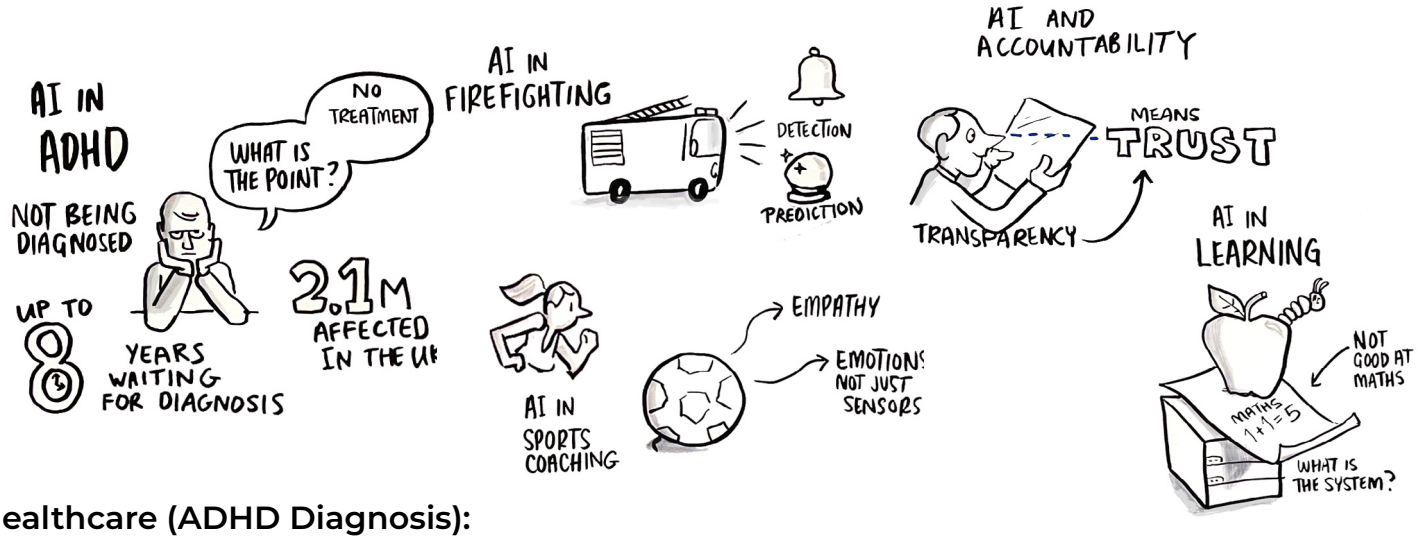

Concerns stemmed from negative first-hand experiences with AI-generated content. A legal professional recounted a troubling incident in court where an AI research tool had yielded inaccurate information.


Experiences with deepfakes have generated alarm, with some worried that they could incite violence. One participant shared a distressing experience involving the creation of a fake adult content account using their image. Even seasoned AI practitioners acknowledged that detecting AI-generated content is increasingly challenging.

The discussion points to the need for transparency and media literacy to help manage this rapidly developing technology.

## AI Scenarios: Case Studies Across Sectors

Over lunch five Enterprise Hub members held focus group discussions providing an opportunity for them to hear what the public felt about their specific AI applications. Later they shared some of the insights they received with the room.




**Healthcare (ADHD Diagnosis):**
While appreciating AI's potential to improve ADHD diagnosis rates, participants were concerned about bias. Unease about data privacy, equitable access, and a lack of empathy were also voiced.

**Emergency Services (Drones):**
Significant enthusiasm for AI-powered drones in emergency response was tempered by ethical reservations about AI making life-or-death decisions. Participants felt there is a need for human oversight and careful integration with existing emergency response systems.

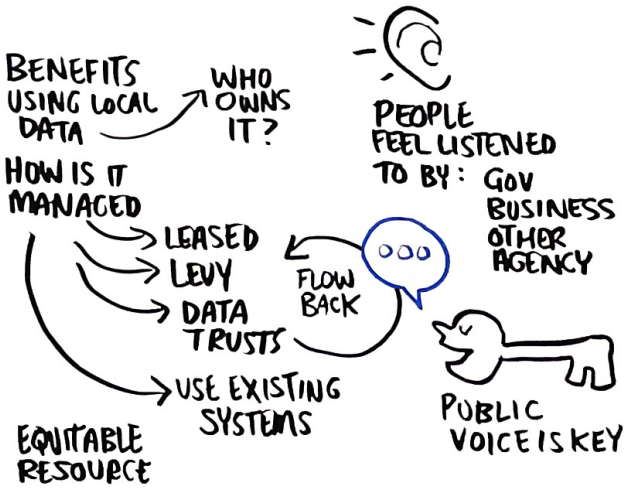
**Sports Coaching (Performance Analysis):** Although AI tools were regarded as beneficial for athlete performance, participants stressed the irreplaceable value of human aspects of coaching, like an ability to notice emotions.

**Education (AI and VR in Learning):** Participants discussed the need for AI literacy programmes to equip future generations with the skills to be involved in building AI systems and use AI responsibly.

**Accountability (AI Across Sectors):**
Participants expressed concern about bias in AI-driven decision-making and called for clear lines of accountability when AI systems produce unfair outcomes.

## Three Final Questions

For the final discussion, participants formed new groups to discuss the following questions:



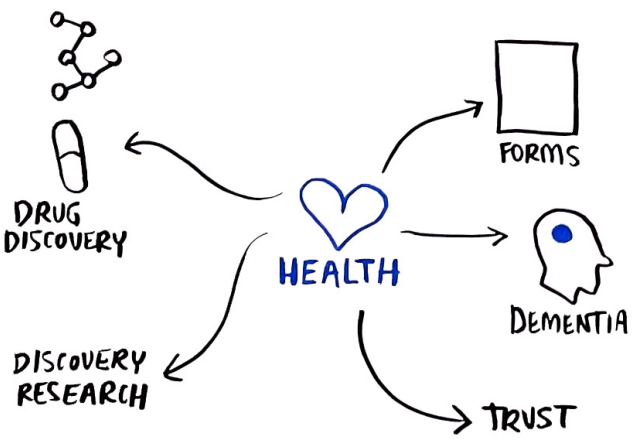

**First, how can we ensure that the benefits from AI developed in the Northwest and using local resident data have a visible and tangible impact on local communities?**

A primary concern was the unclear ownership of local data. Participants proposed establishing cooperative data trusts, allowing residents to collectively manage and benefit from their data. A suggestion for local levies on AI developers was also put forward.

Existing local authorities, town hall meetings and parish councils could play a role in facilitating democratic engagement, letting residents speak up about how their data is used by, say, Mersey Transport or the local NHS.

**Second, focusing specifically on AI in health and care, what sort of help or information would be needed to define other patients' needs and ensure that AI-driven health and care services meet the community's specific requirements?**

Participants stressed the need for faster diagnoses, particularly noting that lengthy waits for scan results can exacerbate health problems, especially in elderly patients. Many expressed a desire for AI to provide more personalised care, which some felt is currently lacking due to limited data sets in health research. Additionally, they discussed how AI could enhance social care, pointing out its potential to help identify and prevent critical issues like child criminal exploitation.

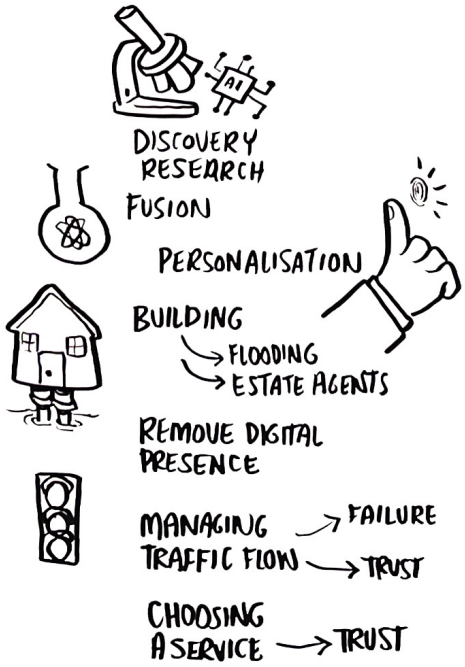


## Finally, considering AI's broader applications, what other opportunities or problems in the Liverpool City Region could AI help to address, what are the priorities, and why?

Participants expressed interest in using AI to solve challenges like the energy crisis, advancing fusion technologies. They discussed the potential for AI to improve public services, optimising travel routes or identifying whether building sites are at risk of flooding.

The group considered whether AI could or should be directly involved in moderating balanced views on global issues and politics.

They also expressed concerns over selecting trustworthy AI systems; could brand recognition, peer reviews, and tools like Trustpilot play a role in establishing confidence?



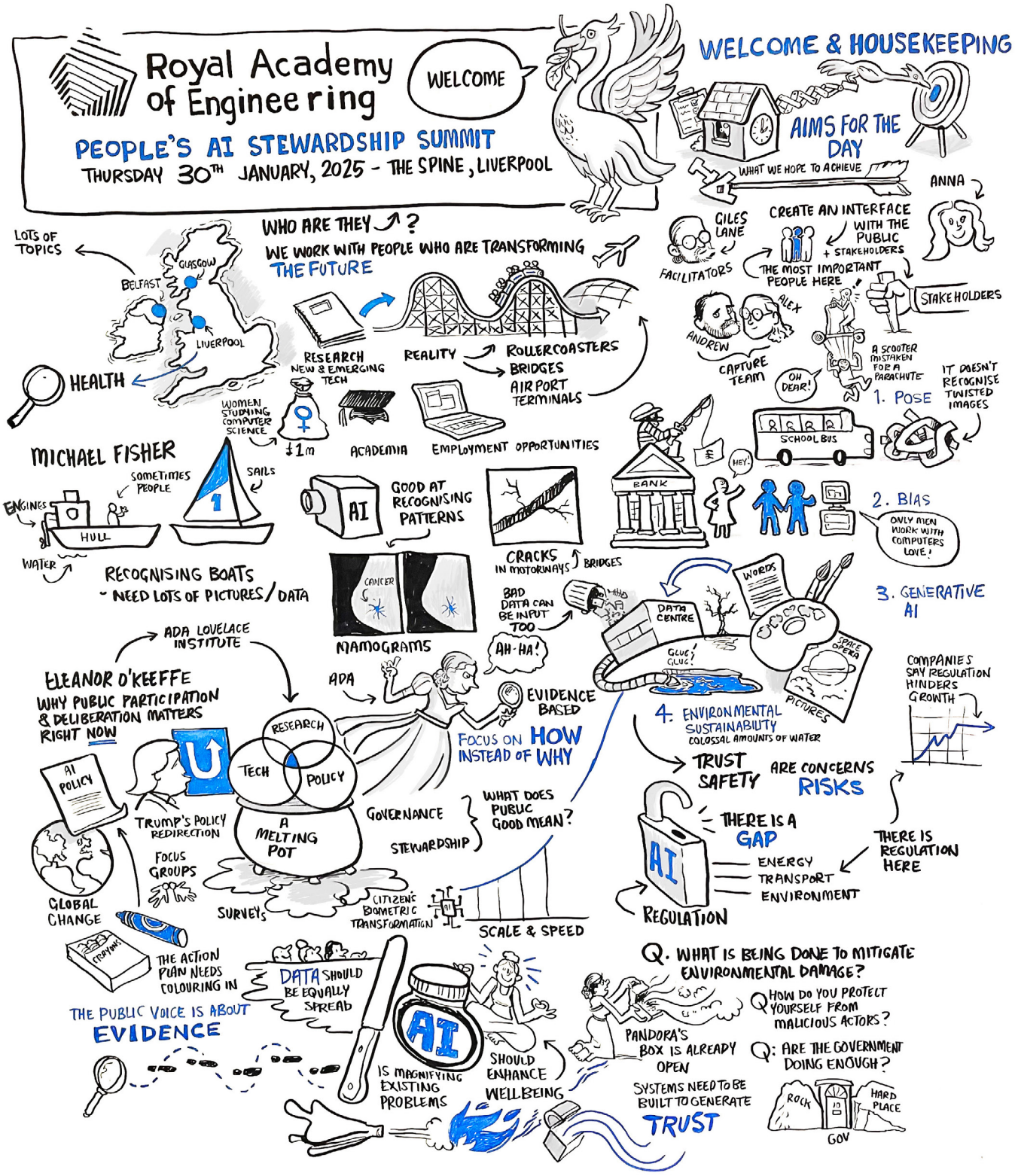

## Closing Remarks

Thank you for your participation in the People's AI Stewardship Summit. This summit has been an invaluable opportunity to hear your ideas for AI in Liverpool and the Northwest. Your hopes, fears, uncertainties, and positive visions have been heard. They will be shared with stakeholders and decision-makers, shaping the future of AI in Liverpool and beyond.

Captured by
We are Cognitive
www.wearecognitive.com

Royal Academy of Engineering

# The Big Picture

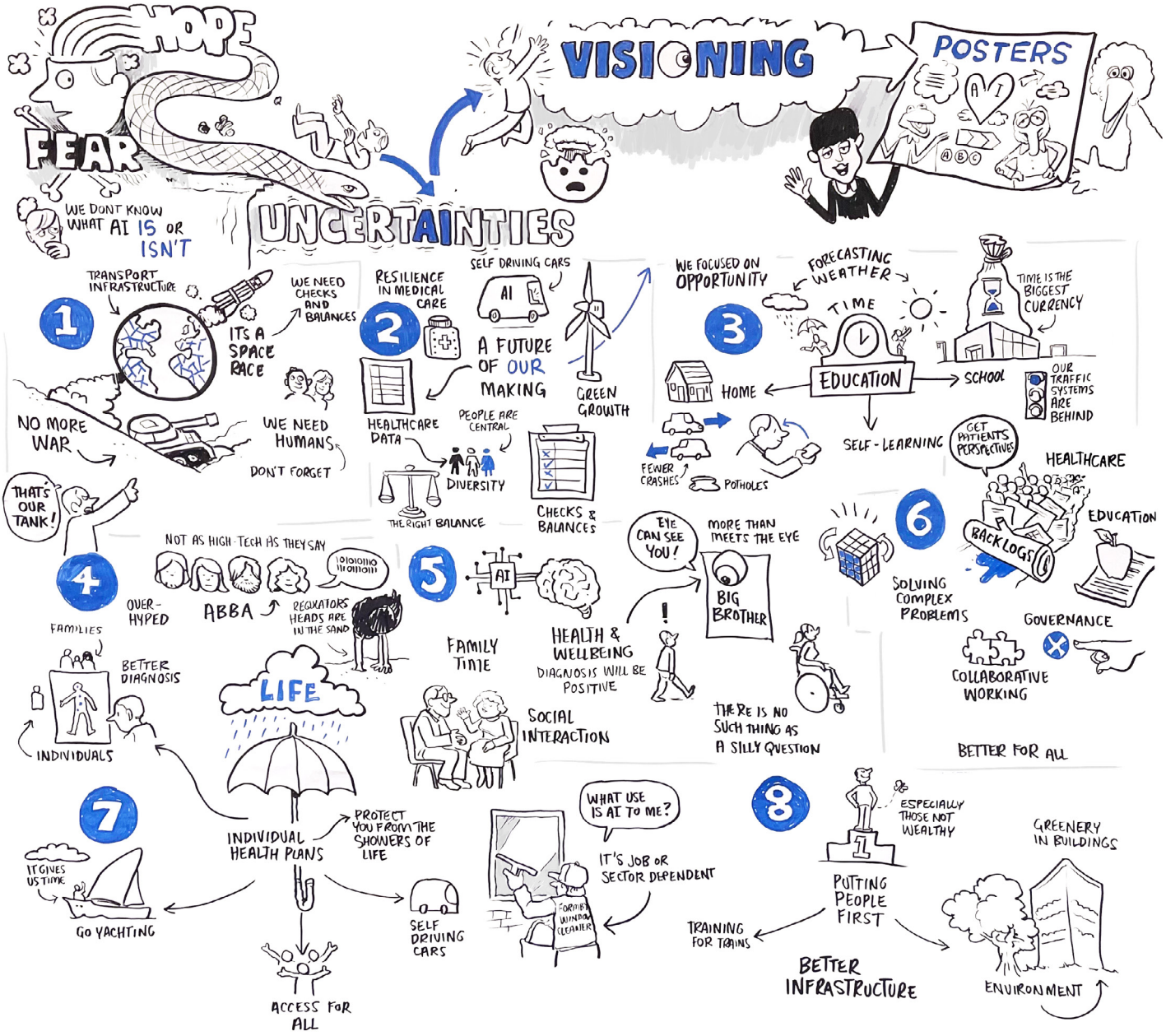



**Captured by:**

*We are Cognitive*
wearecognitive.com

**The People's AI Stewardship Summit**
January 30th 2025

# The Big Picture



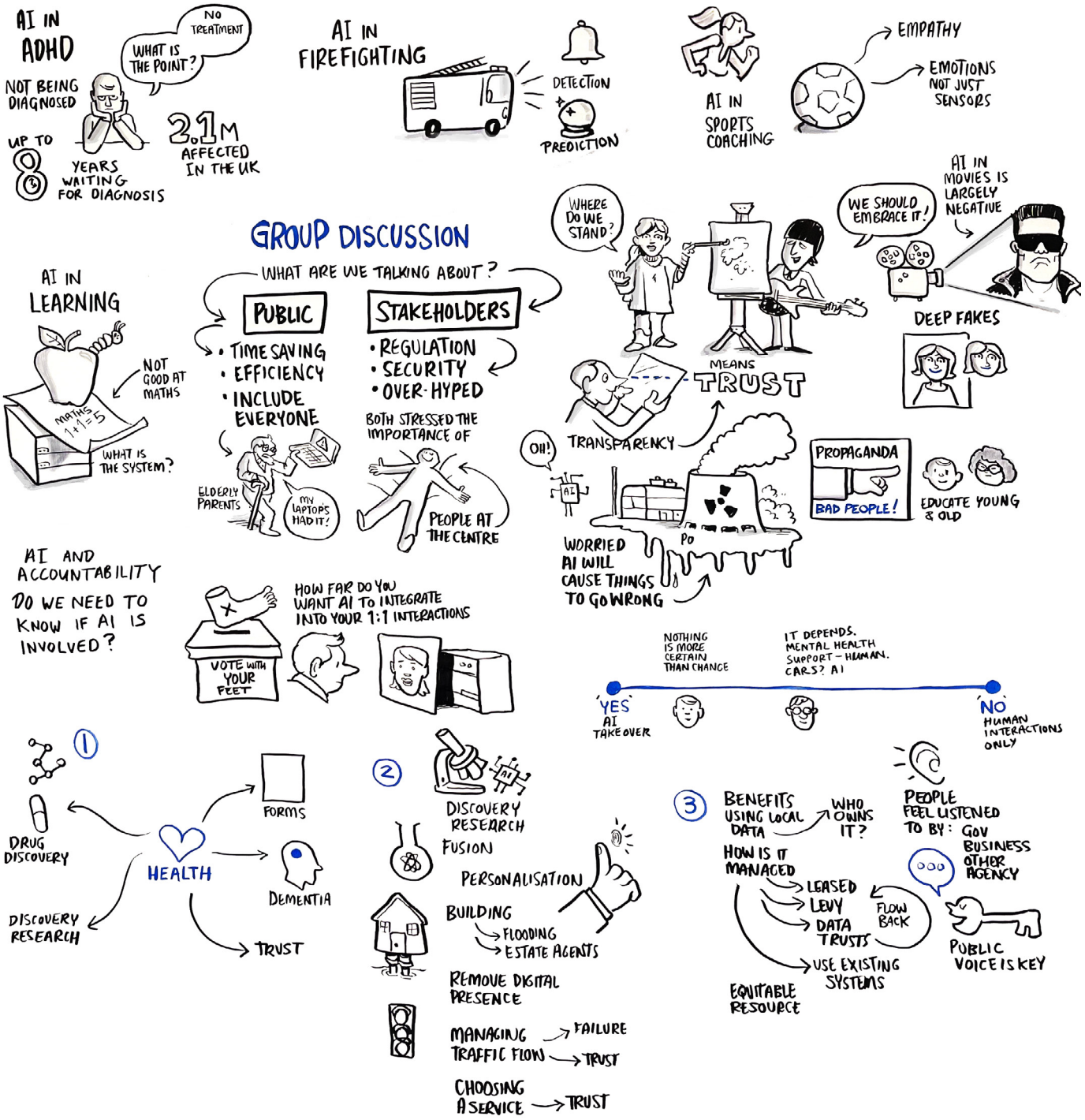

**Captured by:**

We are Cognitive
wearecognitive.com

**The People's AI Stewardship Summit**

January 30th 2025

# The Big Picture




**Captured by:**
*We are Cognitive*
wearecognitive.com

**The People's AI Stewardship Summit**
January 30th 2025