

UK Pledges AI Training for 10 Million Workers by 2030

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The government's new initiative directly confronts the UK's digital skills gap, a multi-billion-pound problem that is particularly acute for the future of project delivery.

The UK Government has announced a significant expansion of its national AI Skills programme, a bold initiative aiming to provide free, foundational AI training to [10 million workers by 2030](#).

We feel this is a direct and necessary response to the growing realisation that artificial intelligence is no longer a niche technology but a fundamental economic and social force.

For the project delivery sector, which is grappling with its own digital transformation, this is a critical development, an opportunity to bridge a skills gap that is costing the UK economy billions.

The £63 Billion Problem: Confronting the UK's Digital Skills Chasm

The digital skills gap is one of the most significant economic challenges facing the UK. It is estimated that the digital skills gap currently costs the UK economy a staggering [£63 billion per year](#) in lost productivity and competitiveness.

This is not an abstract number; it represents delayed projects, missed opportunities, and a workforce that

is not equipped for the demands of the 21st century. While this is a national issue, the construction and infrastructure sectors are feeling the impact with particular severity.

The Construction Skills Network UK estimates that the industry needs to recruit over 250,000 new workers by 2028 just to keep pace with demand, and a significant portion of these roles will require digital skills that are currently in short supply.

For those of us in project delivery, this initiative is both welcome and long overdue. The rapid adoption of AI in design, engineering, project management, and surveying has created an urgent need for upskilling.

A recent survey by the [Association for Project Management \(APM\)](#) found that the use of AI in projects has nearly doubled in just two years, a clear indicator of the direction of travel.

We believe this programme provides a vital opportunity for individuals and organisations to develop the AI literacy and technical skills that are now essential for professional survival and success.

Inside the AI Skills Boost: A National Mission

The government's "AI Skills Boost" programme is a collaborative effort with industry partners like Google, Microsoft, and techUK to provide free, accessible training to every adult in the UK.

The courses, available through a new AI Skills Hub, are designed to be practical and work-focused, covering topics such as using AI tools for drafting text, generating content, and handling administrative tasks.

The aim is not to turn everyone into an AI developer but to create a baseline of AI literacy across the workforce, enabling people to use these new tools confidently and effectively in their day-to-day roles.

"Every company is now an AI company. The question is whether every worker will be an AI worker." - [Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft](#)

This quote from Satya Nadella perfectly captures the mindset we must all adopt. The goal is not for every project manager to become a data scientist, but for every project professional to become confident and competent in using AI tools to enhance their work.

The government's own research acknowledges that there have been significant gaps between the supply and demand for AI skills for several years, and this initiative is a direct attempt to address that imbalance.

From Project Manager to AI Strategist: The Transformation of a Profession

At Project Flux, we have consistently advocated for a proactive approach to AI adoption. We see the immense potential for this technology to unlock unprecedented levels of efficiency, innovation, and value.

To realise this potential, we must invest in our people. The government's AI Skills programme is a

significant catalyst, but it is only the beginning. The real work happens within our organisations.

The conversation around AI's impact on jobs is ongoing, with some fearing displacement.

However, the emerging consensus is that AI will transform, rather than eliminate, the role of the project manager. [Gartner predicts that by 2030](#), 80% of the tasks traditionally performed by project managers will be handled by AI.

This does not make the project manager redundant; it elevates their role.

By automating routine administrative tasks like scheduling, resource allocation, and progress tracking, AI frees up project managers to focus on the uniquely human skills that drive project success: strategic thinking, stakeholder engagement, complex problem-solving, and team leadership.

The Lifelong Learning Imperative: A New Social Contract

The rapid pace of technological change means that the concept of lifelong learning is no longer a luxury but a necessity.

A recent report from the CIPD highlights how trends like generative AI are reshaping job markets and skills needs, making continuous upskilling essential for career resilience.

The government's programme is a step in the right direction, but it must be complemented by a cultural shift within our industry. We need to move towards a model where learning is an ongoing part of the job, not a one-off event.

This means:

- **For Individuals:** Taking ownership of your professional development, actively seeking out opportunities to learn new skills, and embracing a mindset of continuous improvement.
- **For Organisations:** Creating a culture that supports and encourages learning, providing access to training resources, and building career pathways that reward skills development.

From Training to Transformation: Building Organisational AI Capability

The government's AI Skills programme is a necessary first step, but it is not sufficient on its own.

Providing 10 million workers with foundational AI training is valuable, but it does not automatically translate into organisational transformation. The real challenge lies in translating individual learning into collective capability.

We believe organisations that want to truly harness AI need to think beyond training and towards building a culture of continuous learning and experimentation.

This requires:

- **Leadership Commitment:** AI adoption must be championed from the top. Leaders need to articulate a clear vision for how AI will transform the organisation, allocate resources to support the transition, and model the behaviours they want to see.
- **Experimentation and Learning:** Organisations should create safe spaces for teams to experiment with AI tools, learn from failures, and share insights. This might involve dedicated innovation teams, hackathons, or pilot projects that explore new applications of AI.
- **Organisational Structures:** Some organisations may need to restructure to support AI adoption. This might include creating new roles, such as AI champions or data stewards, who can help teams navigate the transition.
- **Continuous Upskilling:** The initial training provided by the government programme is just the beginning. Organisations need to commit to ongoing learning and development, keeping their workforce abreast of new capabilities and emerging best practices.
- **Metrics and Accountability:** Organisations should establish clear metrics for measuring the impact of AI adoption, holding teams accountable for delivering value, and using these metrics to guide ongoing investment and development.

The organisations that will thrive in the AI era are those that treat AI adoption not as a one-off initiative, but as a fundamental transformation of how they work.

The government's AI Skills programme is a catalyst, but the real work of building organisational AI capability falls to individual organisations and their leaders. We feel that this is where the real opportunity lies for competitive advantage and long-term success.

Seize the Opportunity

The AI revolution is here. The UK Government's commitment to upskilling 10 million workers is a clear sign that the future of our industry is inextricably linked with artificial intelligence.

Now is the time to embrace this change, to invest in your skills, and to position yourself for success in the new era of project delivery.