

AI ASIA PACIFIC
INSTITUTE

Year in Review ANNUAL REPORT 2025 AI



Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude and optimism for what we have achieved together. Our mission at AI-API—to strengthen developing economies through the responsible development and adoption of artificial intelligence—has never been more important.

What began as a turbulent year for our region, shaped by accelerating geopolitical shifts and economic realignments, ultimately revealed the resilience of Asia-Pacific stakeholders. ASEAN in particular demonstrated remarkable adaptability amid a rapidly evolving political and technological landscape.

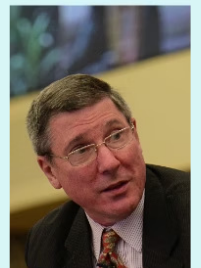
Artificial intelligence stood at the centre of these developments, becoming a clear strategic priority for governments across the region and a driving force behind new safety and governance initiatives. Malaysia launched the ASEAN AI Safety Network (ASEAN AI Safe) as the region's first coordinated mechanism to support AI safety, strengthen capacity, foster collaboration, and accelerate AI safety research and adoption. ASEAN adopted the ambitious Expanded ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics – Generative AI on 17 January 2025, during the 5th ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting. New Zealand released its first-ever national artificial intelligence strategy, setting a long-term vision for responsible deployment across the public and private sectors. Australia announced a new National AI Plan designed to accelerate AI uptake across the economy while continuing to rely on existing regulatory frameworks to manage emerging risks.

These milestones, among other national and regional efforts, underscore how deeply AI has become embedded in Asia-Pacific agendas as governments work to balance innovation with trust and safety. Looking ahead, we stand at a pivotal moment. AI continues to evolve at extraordinary speed, bringing with it unprecedented opportunities along with complex governance challenges. It is our responsibility—as a region and as a community—to guide this transformation in ways that are responsible, equitable, and culturally grounded.

On behalf of the entire AI-API team, thank you for your trust, partnership, and shared vision. Together, we will continue advancing responsible, inclusive, and impactful AI development across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Kelly Forbes
President and Executive Director

Dr Peter Brimble
Board Chair and Vice President



About AI Asia Pacific Institute

The AI Asia Pacific Institute (AIAPI) is an international organisation committed to strengthening developing economies in the Asia-Pacific region by facilitating the responsible development and adoption of artificial intelligence. We do this through **policy-engagement, research, international collaboration** and **capacity-building**. In 2025 the team has scaled its regional operations, delivering flagship working papers on workforce transformation, and hosting multiple high-impact workshops and forums across the region. The staff's ability to mobilise across research, outreach and policy frameworks is a key enabler of AIAPI's year-on-year growth.

Board & Advisory Board Composition

AIAPI is led by a Board of Directors and supported by an Advisory Board composed of expert practitioners from across policy, industry and academia.

Board of Directors

- Kelly Forbes (President & Executive Director)
- Dr Peter Brimble (Board Chair & Vice President)
- Luis F. Gonzalez (Director)
- Dr Wendy Bonython (Secretary)

Advisory Board

- Alex Toh
- Daniel Perera
- Dr David R. Hardoon
- Emma Johnson
- Janet Wong
- Leesa Soulodre
- Vincent Vuillard
- Dr William Stadden Cole
- Yaron Hazan

Research Adjuncts

AIAPI's interdisciplinary team supports AIAPI's research, policy and engagement programmes with diverse skills spanning technology, governance, economics and regional development.

Notable contributors include: **Dr Peter Leong, Hardeep Arora, Dr Marianne Winslett, Jose Luna, Dr Henry Dobson** and **Bryan Bramaskara** as adjunct researchers.

2025

At A Glance

2

Major Commissioned Projects

4

Flagship Projects

11

Events & Workshops Held

13

Publications & Thought Pieces

5

Strategic Partnerships



2 Major Commissions



UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)

Cadmus has commissioned AI Asia Pacific Institute (AI-API) under the £8 million UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to develop AI-driven digital financial literacy (DFL) tools for ASEAN, addressing rising digital financial use and scams that cost the region an estimated at US\$18 - 37 billion in 2023.

The initiative will create a multilingual AI agent that helps users understand responsible borrowing, assess credit options, and identify fraud, drawing on existing financial education materials from governments, NGOs, and financial institutions. Piloted with ASEAN central banks, fintech associations, and community organizations before scaling region-wide, the project aims to expand financial capability among women, low-income households, and MSMEs while showcasing responsible AI that protects vulnerable users.

AI-API is the project's governance party, ensuring that responsible AI safeguards are upheld.



Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

AI-API will be working with AIIB in the first half of 2026 towards the strengthening of inclusive and responsible AI capacities to meet the development goals of the Multilateral Development Bank. The project will leverage AI-API's expertise in developing AI understanding and policy frameworks on a regional level.



4 Flagship Initiatives



Workforce Transformation

AI-API's flagship initiatives cover workforce transformation, regional AI readiness in the Pacific Islands, and the impact of AI on online safety. Earlier this year, AI-API, in collaboration with **LinkedIn** released the paper "**2025 AI And Workforce Transformation: Unlocking Pathways to Inclusive Growth in ASEAN Developing Economies**" which examined shifting skills demands and the future of labour resilience in ASEAN.

The publication catalysed significant regional dialogue, of note being the roundtable on **30th September** co-hosted with LinkedIn, where **policymakers, industry leaders, and education partners** convened to discuss practical pathways for upskilling and inclusive workforce transition.



Pacific Islands AI Readiness

AI-API continues to be recognised for evidence-based insights on the Pacific Islands' readiness for AI. The research completed by the AI-API were cited in works published in the **Strategist, Fiji Times, Devpolicy Blog, and Montreal AI Ethics Institute**, showcasing its expertise in AI development in the region.



AI and Online Safety

The intersection of AI and Online safety remains a core pillar of AI-API's work. During **NetSafety Week 2025**, AI-API partnered with **Netsafe** to host a webinar on how generative AI is reshaping the online harm landscape —ranging from **deepfakes and misinformation to cyberbullying and tech-facilitated abuse**. The session underscored the need for coordinated, inclusive, and proactive responses to protect vulnerable communities as AI-driven risks continue to evolve.



AI in Education

Several governments are moving to integrate AI into school curricula starting in 2026, reflecting a regional push to build future-ready digital skills. Countries such as China, UAE, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and Australia are advancing national strategies that embed AI literacy, ethics and practical AI use into primary and secondary education.

This growing momentum highlights an urgent need for high-quality guidance, training and research across the region. Therefore, AI-API is planning to expand its work in AI-in-education, supporting policymakers, schools and teachers as they navigate responsible adoption and implement effective AI-enhanced learning.



Our Impact

AI Asia Pacific Institute 2025 Highlights

11

Events Attended / Hosted

Workshops, summits & conferences

4

Regions Reached

Expanding global influence

3

Key Collaborations

Driving shared initiatives

100s

Participants Engaged

Across diverse sectors & roles



Key Events from 2025

January

- YSEALI Regional Workshop

May

- Financial Times collaboration exploring AI in corporate compliance
- Partnership with CFTE and DIFC Academy on reimagining talent strategies

September

- AI in Finance session with DIFC Academy
- UNESCO's Global CSO and Academic Network on AI Ethics
- 5th Artificial Intelligence Innovation Summit, Jakarta
- LinkedIn roundtable on workforce transformation in ASEAN

December

- #RISK GCC conference

March

- Strategic Partnership with DIFC Academy

July

- Netsafe collaboration during Netsafety Week
- AIT Workshop

October

- ASEAN Green Jobs Forum
- Participating in Singapore Tech Week 2025
- GITEX Global 2025

Collaborations



March 2025

DIFC Academy × AIAPI Partnership



DIFC Academy and AI Asia Pacific Institute (AIAPI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 2025 to advance AI education and thought leadership across the region.

May 2025

Exclusive executive session titled "Reimagining Talent and Learning in the Age of AI"



AIAPI co-hosted event in partnership with CFTE – Centre for Finance, Technology and Entrepreneurship and DIFC Academy in Dubai. Board Advisor Emma Johnson joined a stellar panel alongside HE Saeed Al Dhaheri, Yasmin Al Enazi, and Huy Nguyen Trieu, author of *The AI-fication of Jobs* as they unpacked strategies to develop AI-supercharged talent and the need for lifelong learning.



Collaborations



July 2025

Empowering NREN Institutions: Generative AI Training for Network Monitoring and Cybersecurity



Workshop hosted by the AIT Artificial Intelligence Technology Center (AIT), with support from the European Union and Asi@Connect

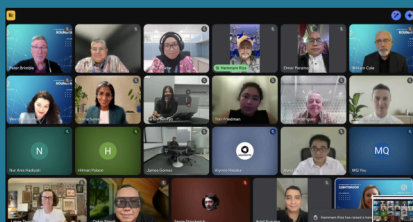
September 2025

AI in Finance



An interactive session organised in collaboration with DIFC Academy

LinkedIn Collaboration



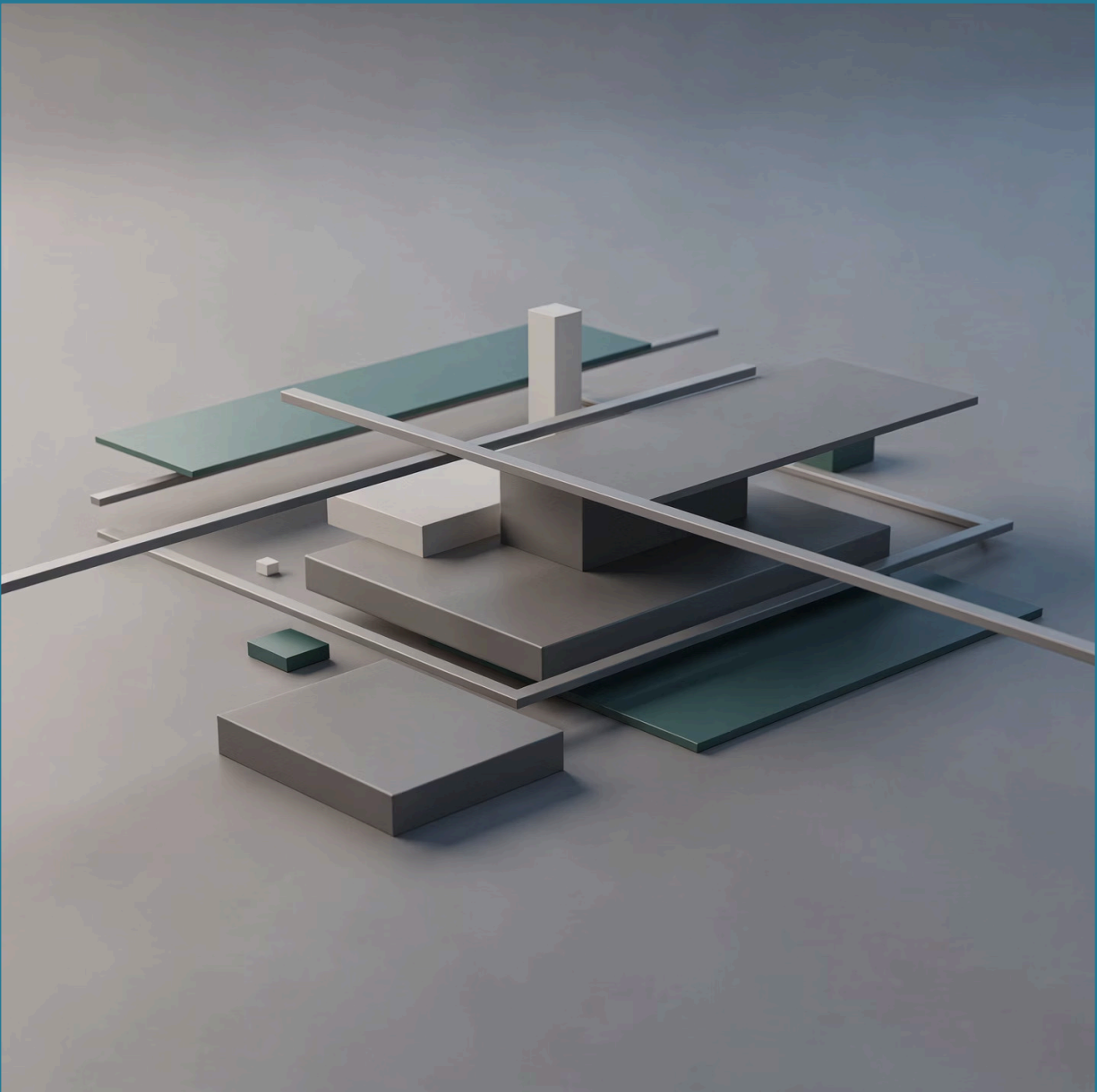
Co-hosting of the high-level workforce transformation roundtable in ASEAN.

Cadmus FCDO Project

Commissioned by Cadmus to work under FCDO on AI-driven digital financial literacy in Southeast Asia

STRATEGIC PILLARS

2025 Progress



Research

In 2025, the AIAPI focused its research on advancing **trustworthy, human-centred**, and **context-specific** AI across the region. Its work examines how algorithmic systems affect people and societies, with emphasis on equity, risk, and real-world impact.

The Institute prioritises strengthening regional AI governance and cross-border cooperation, alongside exploring human–AI collaboration models that enhance, rather than replace, human capabilities. It also investigates emerging security risks in AI supply chains and develops insights for underserved regions, including detailed assessments of AI readiness in Pacific Island nations.

Flagship Achievement: AI and Workforce Transformation

AIAPI's work on AI and Workforce Transformation in ASEAN has emerged as a flagship area of impact, addressing one of the region's most urgent economic and social challenges. In collaboration with LinkedIn, AIAPI released a major discussion paper and convened a high-level roundtable on 30 September 2025, bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, and labour-market experts to assess how AI is reshaping skills demand and job structures across Southeast Asia.

As highlighted in AIAPI's recent [**East Asia Forum Op-Ed**](#), the rapid adoption of AI presents both significant opportunities for productivity and complex risks, particularly for low-skill and informal workers, and for MSMEs that often lack the resources to adapt.

AIAPI continues to advocate for a responsible, inclusive transition, emphasising the need for coordinated upskilling, targeted support for vulnerable groups, and evidence-based policy frameworks that ensure the region's workforce can benefit from the AI revolution.

Capacity Building

AI & the Future of Work Forum



At the AI & the Future of Work Forum on 9 October 2025, hosted by Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, AIAPI President Kelly Forbes (2nd from right) spoke at a panel titled **"Brave New World: AI, Higher Education, and the Future of Work"** which emphasized the need for responsible AI adoption and aligning higher-education curricula with the demands of a rapidly evolving, AI-powered workforce.

Singapore Tech Week — "Cloud & AI-Ready Infrastructure"



AIAPI contributed to Singapore Tech Week on 8-9 October and in a keynote titled **"Driving the Responsible Development and Use of Generative AI in ASEAN,"** AIAPI President Kelly Forbes highlighted how the region needs to approach both the opportunities and challenges of AI.

Artificial Intelligence Innovation Summit (AIIS) — Jakarta



AIAPI joined government, academia and industry leaders to spotlight Indonesia's AI progress. The discussion highlighted Indonesia's advances; from its 2020 national AI roadmap and ethics guidelines to becoming the first Southeast Asian country to complete UNESCO's AI Readiness Assessment, while urging continued efforts in data governance, regulatory sandboxes, and regional cooperation for safe, inclusive AI adoption.

International Collaboration



ASEAN AI Safety Network

AI API participated in a consultative workshop for the ASEAN AI Safety Network feasibility study held on 5–6 August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The workshop focused on validating the Network's operational model, identifying regional capacity-building needs, and shaping ASEAN's international AI safety strategy. Contributions from partners including the Japan AI Safety Institute, ROK AI Safety Institute, Standards Australia, the World Bank, St. Gallen Endowment, and ERIA underscored strong momentum to co-develop context-specific tools and initiatives.



UNESCO Global Network

In 2025, AI API joined UNESCO's newly launched Global Civil Society and Academic Network on AI Ethics and Policy, a global platform designed to amplify civil society voices in the governance of artificial intelligence.

The Network brings together leading organisations, academics and policy experts to exchange knowledge, advance ethical standards, and strengthen inclusive, rights-based approaches to AI governance.

AI API contributed to the launch event, joining speakers from UNESCO, Umeå University, The Alan Turing Institute and the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.

Strategic Collaborations

**Building a Stronger Ecosystem
in 2025**



Strategic Collaborations in 2025

ASEAN Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation (COSTI)

At the 88th ASEAN COSTI Meeting, Dr Peter Brimble from AI Asia Pacific Institute presented on AI & Workforce Transformation: Unlocking Pathways to Inclusive Growth in ASEAN Developing Economies.

DIFC Academy (UAE)

DIFC Academy and AI Asia Pacific Institute (AI-API) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 2025 to advance AI education and thought leadership across the region.

Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) / EU-Asi@Connect

At an AIT-hosted workshop on 30 July 2025, AI-API advocated for responsible generative-AI adoption, presenting guidance on ethical use, cybersecurity risks, and institutional governance.

Artificial Intelligence Innovation Summit Jakarta 2025

AI-API joined a policy panel with leaders from government, academia and industry to spotlight Indonesia's progress and next steps toward responsible AI.

LinkedIn

On 30 September 2025, AI-API and LinkedIn co-hosted a high-level roundtable titled AI and Workforce Transformation—ASEAN's Defining Challenge and Opportunity with a broad coalition of stakeholders.

ASEAN AI Safety Network

AI-API contributed to the consultative workshop titled "Navigating AI's Regional Currents: AI Sovereignty, Workforce Safety & Institutional Readiness" in Kuala Lumpur. The workshop served as a feasibility study for the proposed ASEAN AI Safety Network

UNESCO

Global CSO & Academic Network on AI Ethics & Policy membership connects AI-API to global AI governance and ethics communities.

Netsafe (New Zealand)

During NetSafety Week 2025, AI-API, together with Netsafe, hosted a webinar examining how generative AI is reshaping the online harm landscape; from deepfakes and misinformation to cyberbullying and abuse, and underscored the need for coordinated, inclusive responses to protect vulnerable communities.



Publications

Thought Leadership in 2025



Publications

January 13, 2025

[The State of Artificial Intelligence in the Pacific Islands](#)

Published by the Montreal AI Ethics Institute, and written by by AI Asia Pacific Institute researchers Kelly Forbes, Dr Peter Brimble, Simran Singh and Ian Yihwan Cho, the article explores both the promise and the challenges of AI across the Pacific Islands. It argues that the region can leverage a "late-mover advantage" by adopting global AI best practices and tailored to local contexts. It calls for foundational AI strategies, capacity building, and a regional AI Technical Assistance Facility to help ensure sustainable, inclusive AI adoption.

March 17, 2025

[The Future of AI Security: Generative-Discriminator AI \(GAN\) Networks will revolutionize Cybersecurity](#)

This article published on the AI-API blog by Luis Gonzalez explores how Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) are reshaping cybersecurity by enabling both advanced offensive and defensive capabilities. It discusses how discriminator-generator pairs allow rapid simulation of attacks and defenses, accelerating threat detection and modelling. The piece argues that as GANs become more widely available, organisations across Asia-Pacific must adapt their security frameworks to handle AI-driven adversarial threats, emphasising governance, auditability and skills development.

April 16, 2025

[Uncovering Hidden Risks: Security in Large Language Model \(LLM\) Supply Chain](#)

Focusing on the upstream risks inherent in large-language-model development and deployment, this AI-API Blog article by Jose Luna highlights vulnerabilities in data sourcing, model fine-tuning, third-party libraries and operational infrastructure. It outlines how supply-chain weaknesses, such as unverified datasets, opaque model provenance and dependency chains, can lead to biases, manipulation, fraud or systemic failures. The article calls for regionally-relevant supply-chain audits, transparency standards and capacity building in Asia-Pacific to ensure trustworthy LLM deployment.



Publications

May 16, 2025

[Securing the Future: How Agentic AI Could Be Hacked and What We Can Do About It](#)

This piece on the AI-API Blog by Dr Peter Leong delves into the emerging category of "agentic AI", systems that autonomously carry out tasks across multiple stages and adapt over time, and examines how their autonomy amplifies attack surfaces. The article explains scenarios where such agents could be manipulated, chained, or repurposed maliciously, and what controls (sandboxing, human-in-loop, audit logs) are needed. It advocates that Asia-Pacific organisations preparing to deploy agentic systems must build pre-emptive governance, rigorous testing regimes, and threat modelling into their workflows.

May 28, 2025

[Symbiotic AI: The Future of Human-AI Collaboration](#)

AI-API's board director, Luis Gonzales, introduces the concept of Symbiotic AI, where machines and humans are deliberately designed to collaborate rather than machines simply replacing humans. This AI-API Blog piece argues that AI's highest value may lie in augmenting human work, embedding human intuition with machine precision. By examining representational frameworks, human-machine interface models and active learning systems, the piece makes the case that Asia-Pacific organisations should pivot from automation-first thinking to collaboration-first design, building systems that respect human values, context and agency.

June 11, 2025

[Australia and the EU should work with the South Pacific on AI](#)

Published in The Strategist, this commentary highlights how Australia and the European Union, each advocating different AI normative frameworks, could partner with South-Pacific nations to support inclusive, rights-based AI adoption. Drawing on AI-API's previous Pacific Islands readiness work, the article argues that Pacific states have a "late-mover advantage" and can adopt best practices from major AI players if supported appropriately. It emphasises how AI can help Pacific nations tackle climate, disaster-resilience and cultural-preservation challenges, provided local agency and governance are front and centre.

Publications

June 19, 2025

"Pacific island nations must reboot regional AI leadership"

This piece reflects on the findings from AI-API's 2024 State of Artificial Intelligence in the Pacific Islands report and warns that without strategic regional coordination, Pacific island states risk becoming passive recipients of external AI systems. The article identifies key gaps, digital infrastructure, regulation, data literacy, and proposes a Pacific AI technical-assistance facility to build local capacity, coordinate regional standards and advance inclusive AI adoption. It positions Fiji as an emerging leader but emphasises the need for broader collective action.

July 11, 2025

Bridging the divide: building Pacific agency in the AI era

This article on Devpolicy Blog written by Dr Peter Brimble and David Hua articulates the unique vulnerabilities and opportunities facing Pacific island nations as AI adoption accelerates. It highlights that geographic isolation, small populations and climate vulnerability amplify both benefits and risks of AI, and argues for locally owned strategies rather than top-down models. It calls for sustained regional collaboration, inclusive talent-development, governance frameworks attuned to Pacific realities, and regional mechanisms to elevate Pacific agency in the global AI ecosystem.

August 25, 2025

A Safety by Design Governance: Approach to Addressing AI-Facilitated Online Harms

This op-ed was published on Tech Policy Press by Kelly Forbes, David Hua, and Dr Peter Brimble. It argues that as generative AI accelerates online harms such as deepfakes, scams, and disinformation, governments and platforms need a broader "safety-by-design" approach rather than relying only on technical fixes. It introduces a three-part governance framework; Prepare, Curb, and Respond, that combines public awareness, built-in technical safeguards, and accessible victim-support and remediation mechanisms. The authors emphasise that human behavior is central to AI-facilitated harm and highlight the opportunity for the Asia-Pacific region to adopt coordinated, proactive governance to address these risks effectively.



Publications

June 19, 2025

[Charting a responsible AI transition for Southeast Asia's workforce](#)

The op-ed written by Kelly Forbes, David Hua, and Dr Peter Brimble on East Asia Forum highlights that while AI presents major economic opportunities for the region, it also poses risks of exclusion and inequality if not managed wisely. It emphasises that over half of the AI Asia Pacific Institute's estimate, 164 million workers across ASEAN, are likely to face disruption due to generative AI, either through automation of routine tasks or by augmenting more complex roles. The op-ed calls for coordinated regional action such as stronger lifelong learning systems, standardised AI-skill frameworks, and inclusive business models to ensure AI supports shared prosperity rather than deepening existing divides.

October 15, 2025

[AI Ethics in Healthy Longevity](#)

This AIAP Blog piece, written by research adjunct Henry Dobson, examines how AI is becoming foundational in the healthy-longevity industry, from biomarker analytics to personalised interventions, and explores how classic biomedical ethical principles (beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, autonomy) apply in this context. It flags risks including biased models, "longevity privilege," data transparency, and algorithmic opacity in health-driven longevity systems. The piece argues for region-aware frameworks in Asia-Pacific to ensure AI in longevity supports equitable health outcomes, not exacerbates disparities.

October 29, 2025

[From Prompts to Agents - Building Reproducible and Responsible AI Workflows for Asia's Digital Future](#)

This AIAP Blog piece written by research adjunct, Bryan Bramaskara, addresses the shift in Asia-Pacific from experimental AI use (ad hoc prompting) to production-grade workflows (agent-based, auditable, repeatable). It explains how organisations are moving from "one prompt, one output" to structured workflows with checkpoints, historical versioning, prompt chaining and validation. The piece argues that building responsible AI infrastructure means institutionalising these workflows, design, audit, traceability, so AI transitions from demo to mission-critical. It offers a roadmap for organisations in the region to manage governance, accountability and scalability of AI systems.



Publications

Pending Publication

Contribution to AI For Science Paper

AI-API researchers Dr Peter Brimble, Kelly Forbes and Hamzah Zaid produced two in-depth country case studies for the AI For Science Paper published by the International Science Council examining how small states are integrating AI into their national science, research, and governance ecosystems. The Fiji case study highlights the country's transition from donor-driven digital initiatives toward a nationally led approach, while underscoring persistent challenges in infrastructure, skills, funding, and AI governance alongside emerging applications in climate resilience, agriculture, health, and environmental monitoring. The Singapore case study documents a mature and system-wide AI ecosystem anchored by National AI Strategy 2.0, strong institutional leadership, large-scale investment in AI for science and workforce development, positioning Singapore as a regional and global reference point for responsible AI adoption.



Referenced in Other Publications

"Australia and the EU should work with the South Pacific on AI"

In this commentary published on The Strategist, AIAPI draws attention to the need for Europe and Australia to engage more deeply with the South Pacific on inclusive and sustainable AI-development.

"Fiji ranked 96 in AI Readiness Index"

This media feature on Fiji Times highlights AIAPI's report on AI readiness in the Pacific Islands, showcasing the Institute's research-impact and public-visibility. The exposure in national media underscores AIAPI's ability to shape public debate and policy awareness in the Pacific region.

Democracy in the age of AI: Towards ethical and inclusive electoral governance

The article published on IDEA explores the profound impact artificial intelligence is having on democratic processes and electoral systems worldwide. AIAPI is featured in the piece as a key partner in advancing this agenda with Dr Peter Brimble mentioned for his contribution. It is highlighted for its collaboration with International IDEA in promoting awareness and capacity building across the Asia-Pacific region, aiming to ensure that AI technologies strengthen democratic participation and electoral transparency.

International IDEA: Strengthening Democracy Through Ethical and Inclusive AI

Dr Peter Brimble was on a panel hosted by International IDEA at the Asia Centre's 10th International Conference, where speakers emphasised that artificial intelligence must be guided by ethical frameworks and inclusive innovation to support, rather than undermine, democracy in Asia.

"AI For All, Building an AI-Ready Workforce in Asia-Pacific"

The report AI for All: Building an AI-Ready Workforce in Asia-Pacific, published by AVPN, Google.org, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), offers a comprehensive analysis of how AI is reshaping work across the region while outlining strategies for an inclusive and equitable AI Just Transition. AIAPI President Kelly Forbes provided expert insights mentioning, "In these developing countries that are lagging behind in their efforts,... You currently have large amounts of the population who are sitting behind desks busy training AI systems. When we no longer need these roles and the systems become more and more automated and progressed, there will be a big question as to what these people in the workforce will do."



Acknowledgments

Our success in facilitating the responsible adoption and development of AI across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond is deeply rooted in the strength of our collaborations.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all our collaborators; academic institutions, industry leaders, government agencies, and non-profit organizations – whose unwavering support and shared vision enabled us to tackle complex challenges and foster impactful solutions in 2025.

Key Collaborations

CADMUS

DIFC Academy



AIT
Asian Institute of Technology



GITEX
GLOBAL

