

AI, Digital Ethics & Policy: Governing AI in Context

Tadhg Hickey, Head of AI & Digital Ethics Policy at AICC

April 2026



The AICC

[Part 1 of 4]



aicc.co





A pro-active effort to
turbo-charge responsible
AI Adoption across
Northern Ireland



aicc.co

What is the AICC?

The most concentrated investment in AI skills capacity and SME capability in the UK - £16.3m from InvestNI & the Department for the Economy, funded to at least Aug 2029.

- ✦ We drive real-world impact through **collaborative AI innovation**.
- ✦ We offer **fully funded AI consultancy**.
- ✦ We upskill SMEs and professionals with **AI education**.
- ✦ We're building a **thriving AI community** across the region.
- ✦ We connect business with world-leading **AI research**.
- ✦ Guided by **Industry led Advisory Board** and **Technology and Skills Advisory Board** with industry representation.



The AICC is delivering...



postgraduate **scholars**
across **QUB** and **UU**, with
31% female representation
and **53** already graduated



SME collaborations.
28 completed with
39 in progress



**national and
international events
attended**, building
international networks



 New **AI Learning
Lab** launching
February 2026!



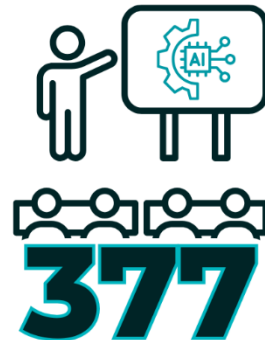
in collaborative
R&D funding
submissions. **6 won**
and **15 in progress**



high-quality
events delivered



new **academic-
industry
connections**



attendees at our
training workshops
across the region



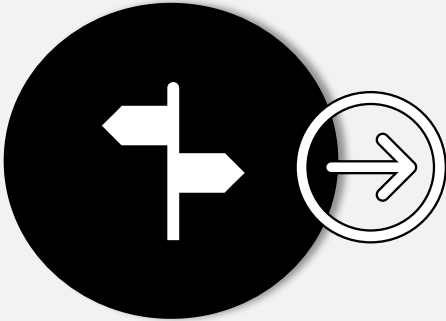
A thriving community
of **4,500+** LinkedIn
followers



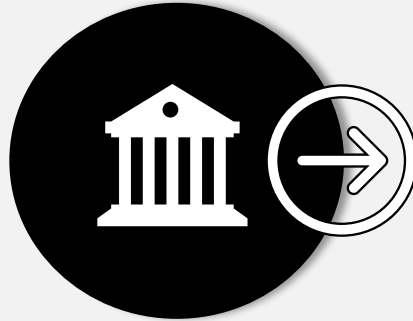
professionals provided
with **online AI skills
training**

AI as an Opportunity: Purpose

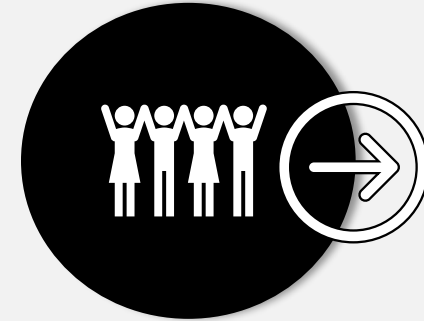
Mechanisms for recognising AI as an Opportunity



Purpose



Economic



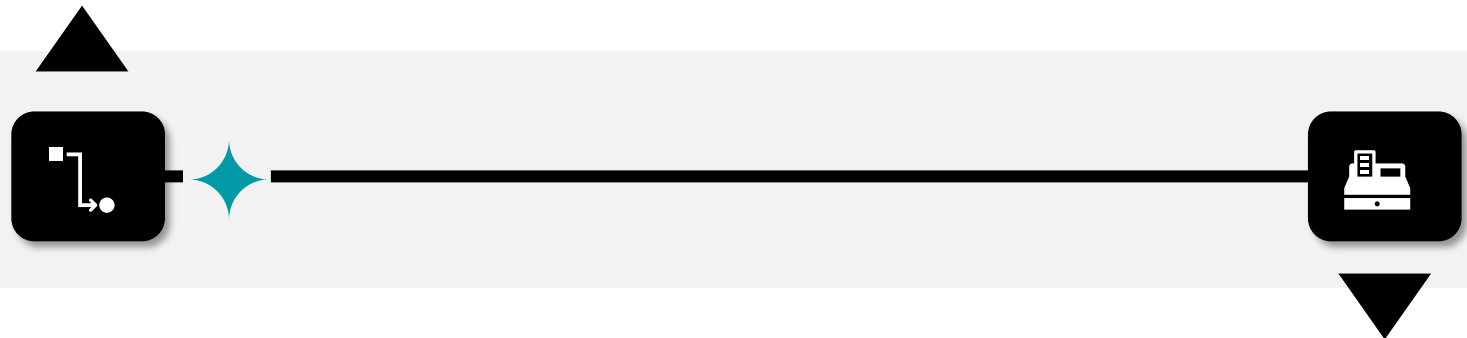
Public

AI as an Opportunity: Purpose

Using AI to improve how your business runs: increasing efficiency, reducing cost, and supporting better internal decision-making

Define what you need AI to support to understand your requirements

AI for Productivity and Operations



AI for Product or Service Delivery

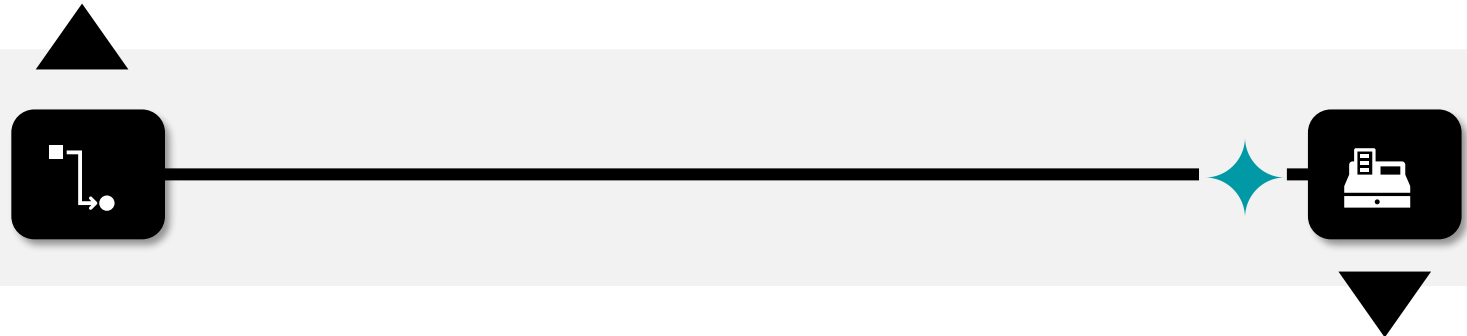
Reasons for using AI may shift between needs

AI as an Opportunity: Purpose

Using AI to enhance what your business offers: creating smarter products, improved customer experiences, and new sources of value.

Define what you need AI to support to understand your requirements

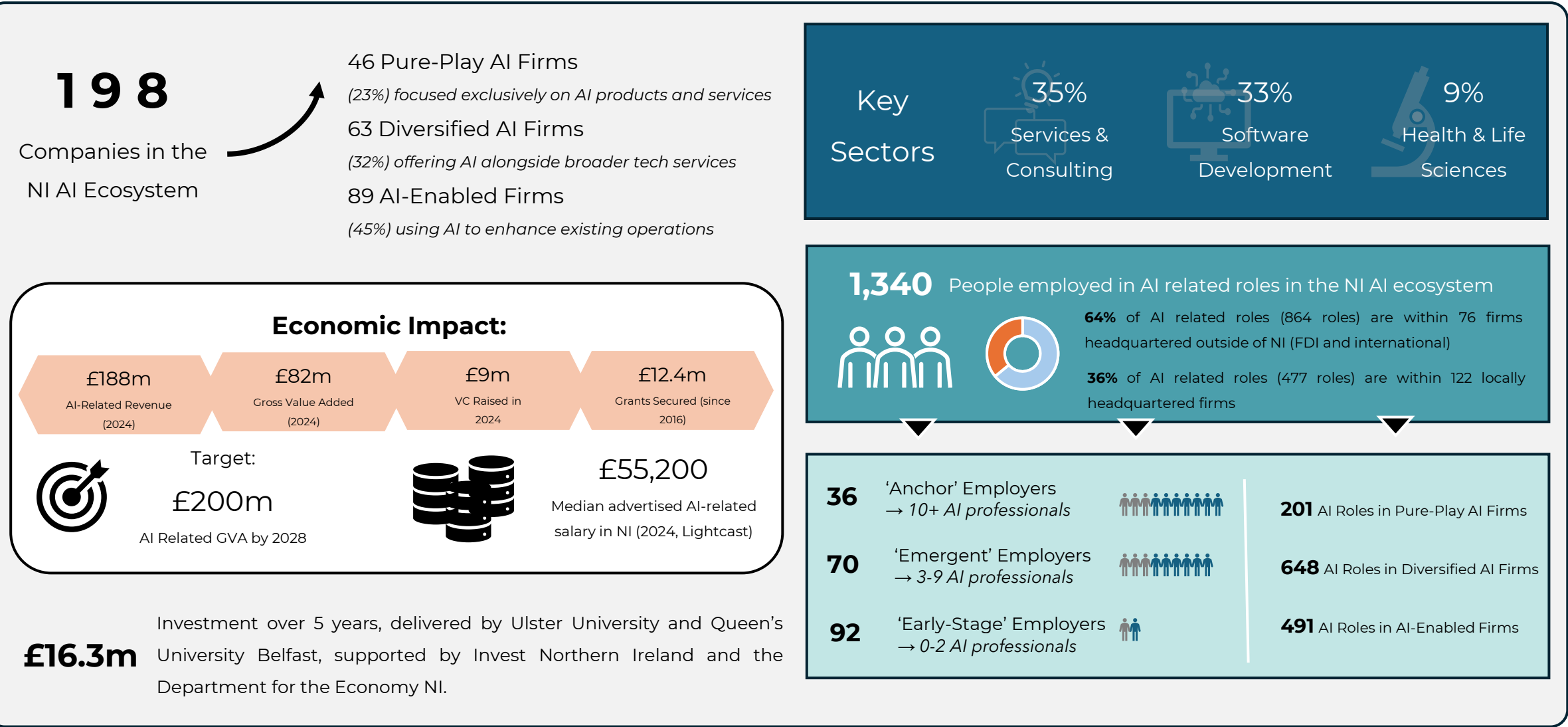
AI for Productivity and Operations



AI for Product or Service Delivery

Reasons for using AI may shift between needs

Northern Ireland: AI Ecosystem [Economic]



Northern Ireland: Public Pulse

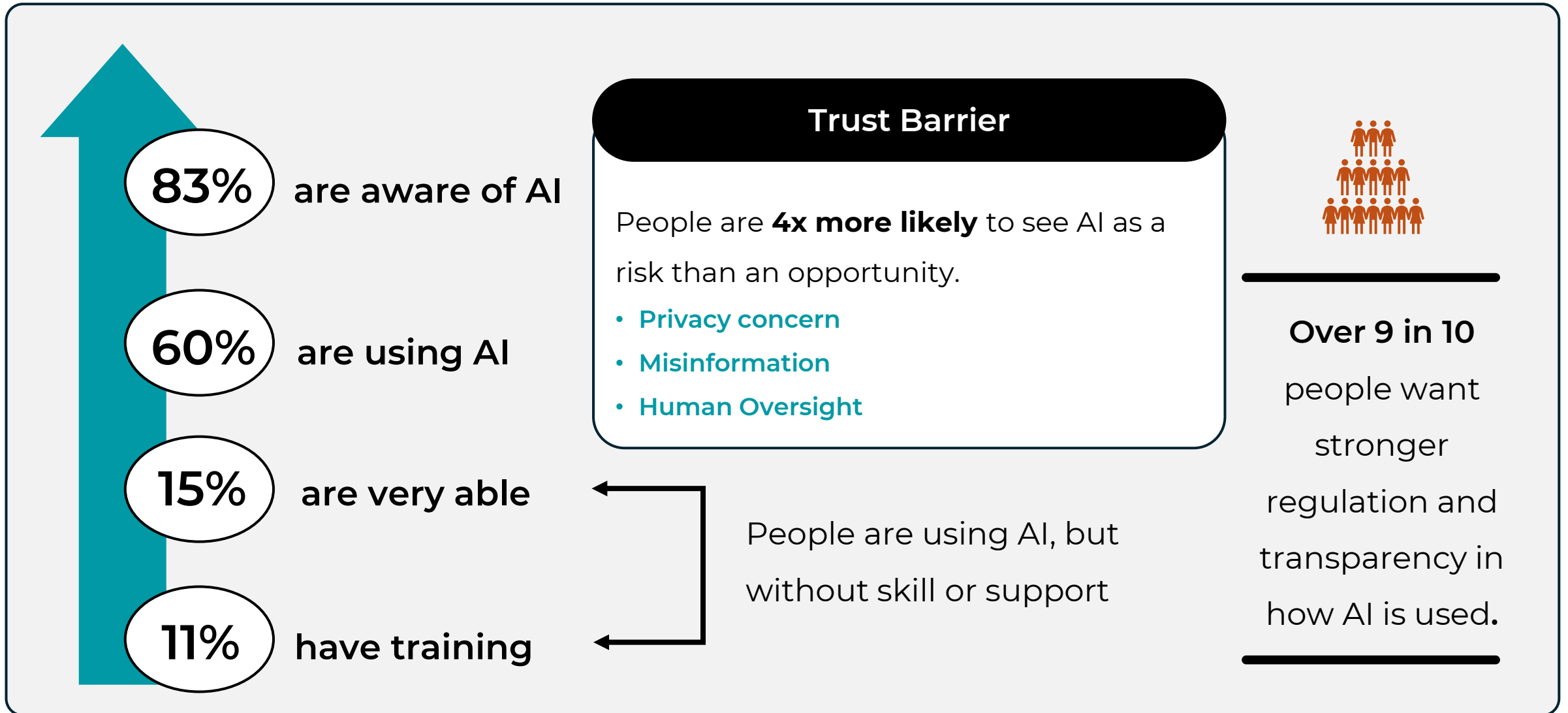


Figure – The AI Pulse: Public Sentiment in Northern Ireland on Artificial Intelligence 2025

Adaptive & Contextual Governance

[Part 2 of 4]



Innovation Engine → Governance Gap

AI capability is accelerating faster than our ability to stand over outcomes. This widening gap is not a failure. It's a signal that informal trust no longer scales.

Governance Gap

→ Closing the Gap

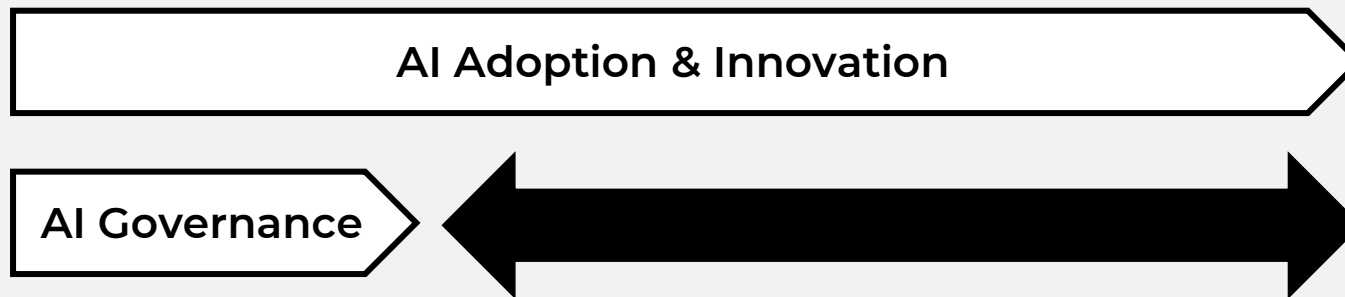
Innovation Engine

Innovation Engine → Governance Gap

AI capability is accelerating faster than our ability to stand over outcomes. This widening gap is not a failure. It's a signal that informal trust no longer scales.

Governance Gap

Scaling trust for a widening gap ...



→ Closing the Gap

Innovation Engine

Innovation Engine → Governance Gap

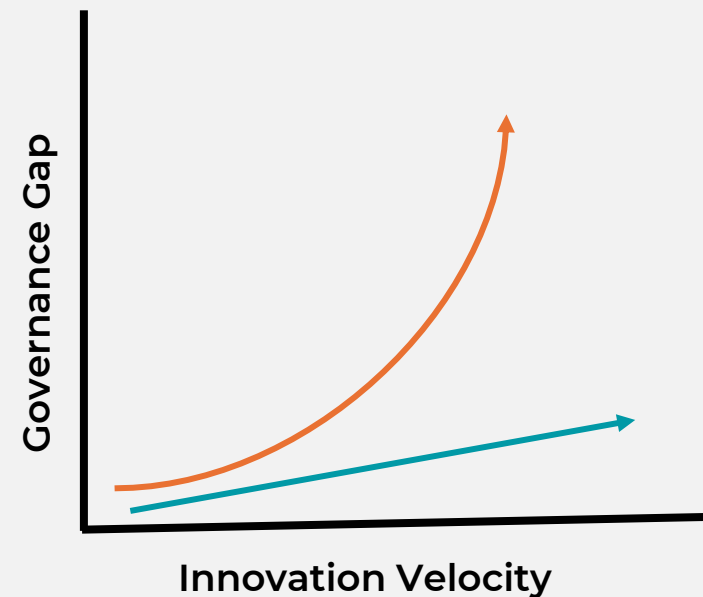
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Governance Gap

Innovation Engine

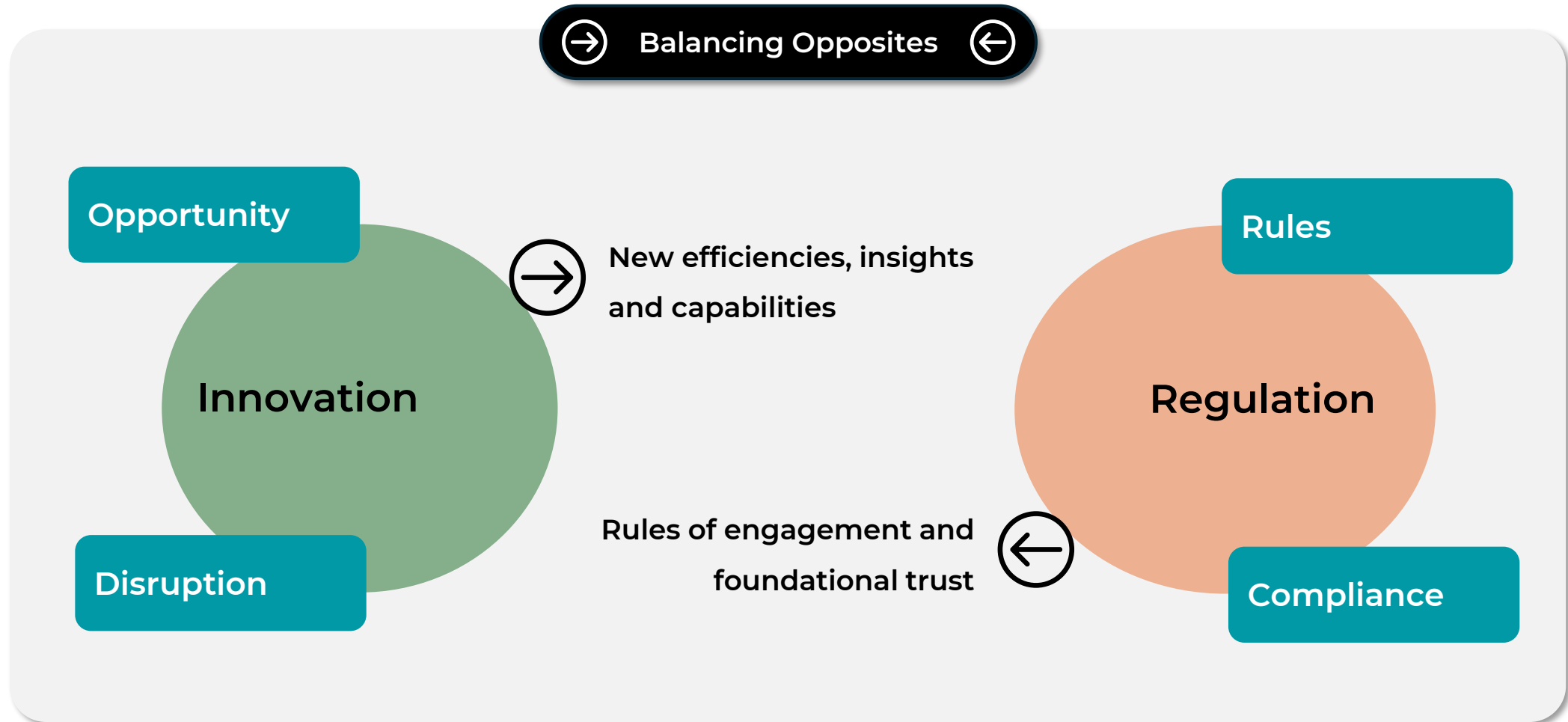
✦ Creating a bridge ...

Growth and Time

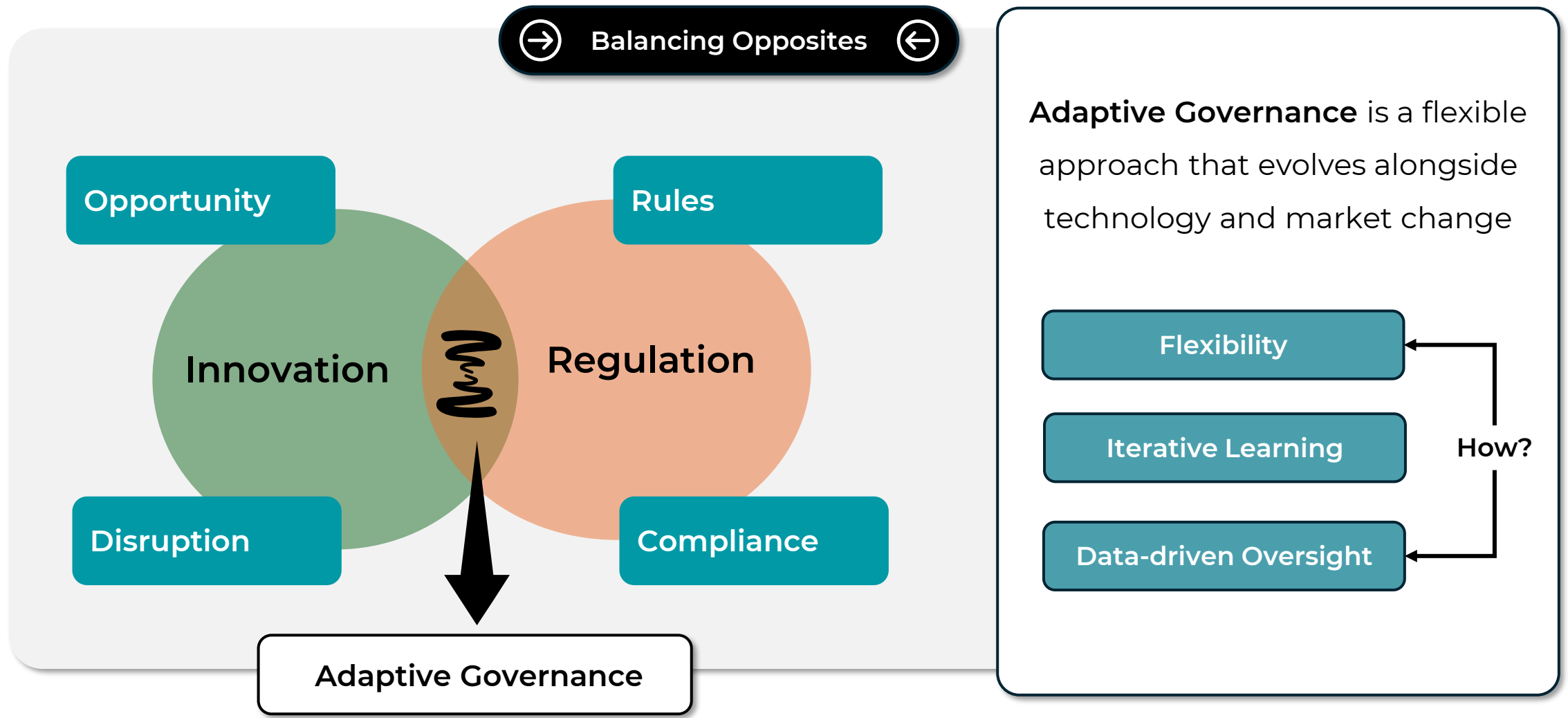


➔ Closing the Gap

Innovation → Regulation



✦ Innovation → Regulation





Contextual Governance



Growing Influence of Context

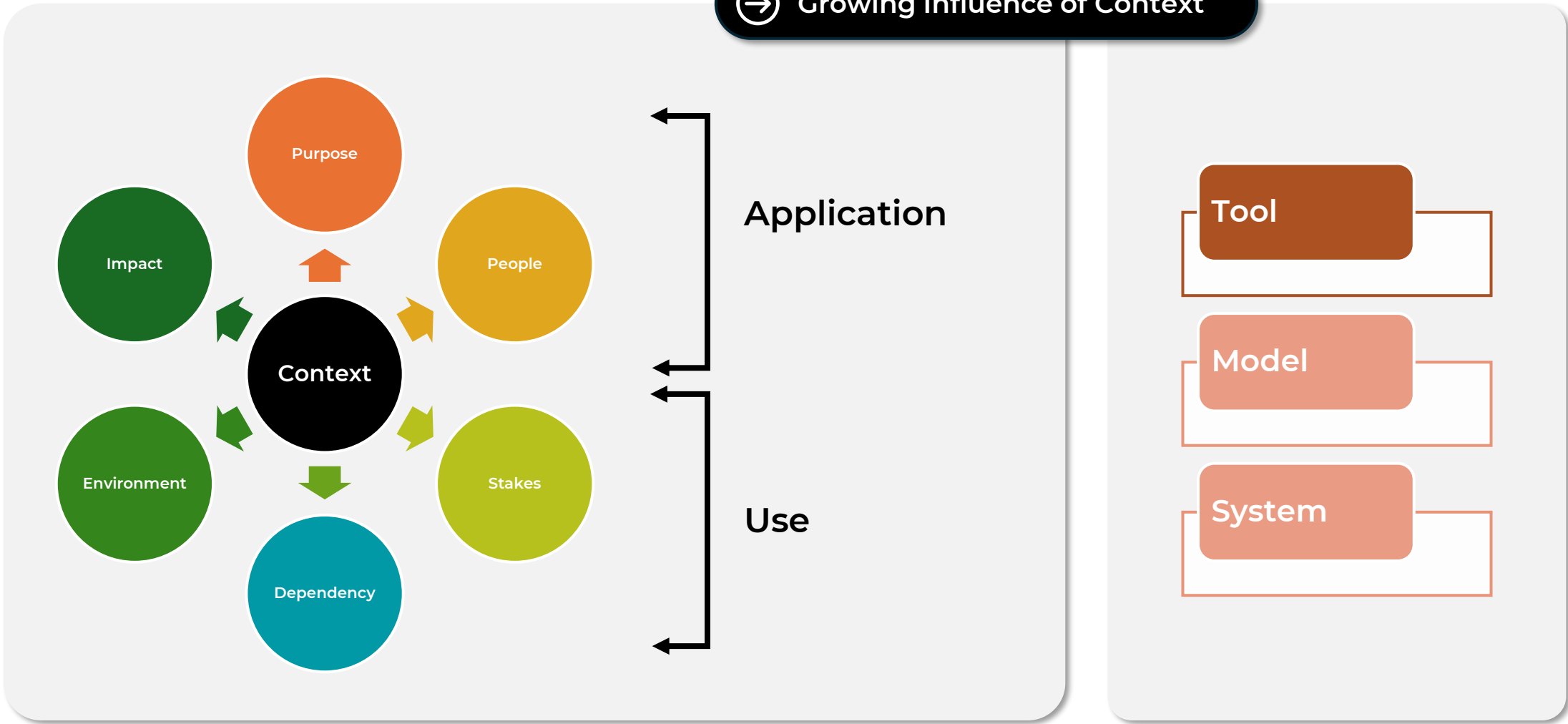
AI in Context

Technology



Contextual Governance

➔ Growing Influence of Context



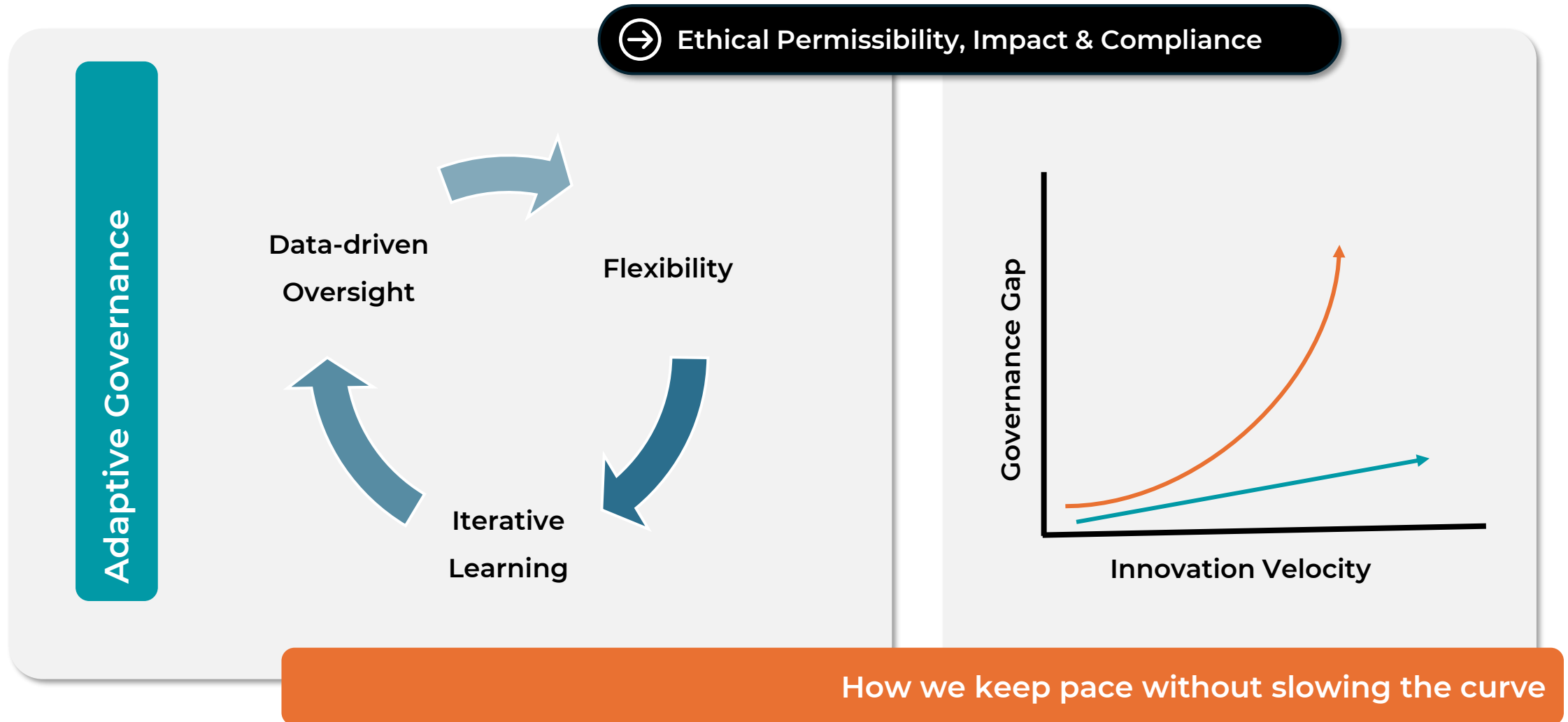
Adaptive Governance → Meeting the Curve

→ Ethical Permissibility, Impact & Compliance

Adaptive Governance

Curve Pace

Adaptive Governance → Meeting the Curve



Strategic Enabler

Risk Avoidance → Value Creation

Siloed Ethics → Embedded Culture

Reactive Audits → Continuous Assurance

Static Reporting → Predictive Governance

Lifecycle Stages & Ethical Integration

1

Design

- Purpose
- Fairness
- Human-Centred

2

Development

- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability

3

Deployment

- Transparency
- Explainability
- Informed Use

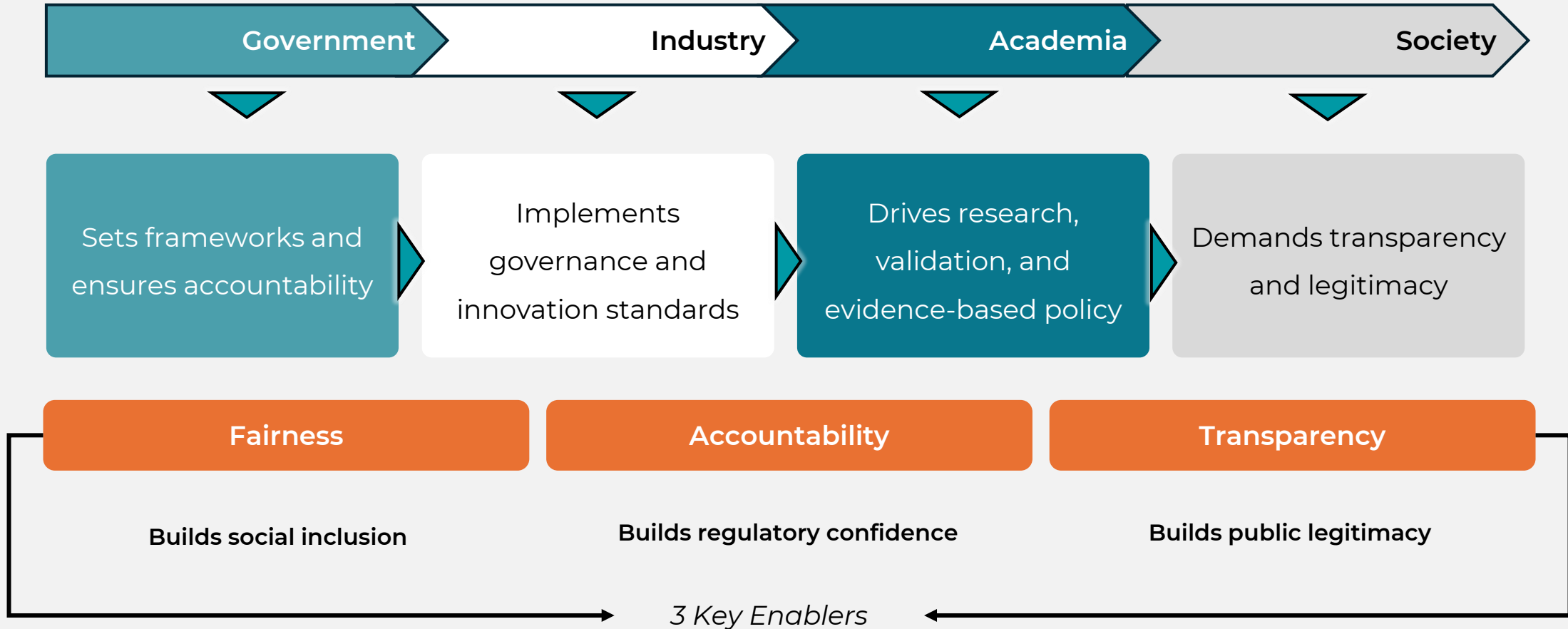
4

Oversight

- Accountability
- Continuous Improvement
- Address / Redress

Strategic Enabler → Relationships

Building an ecosystem to support a trust infrastructure



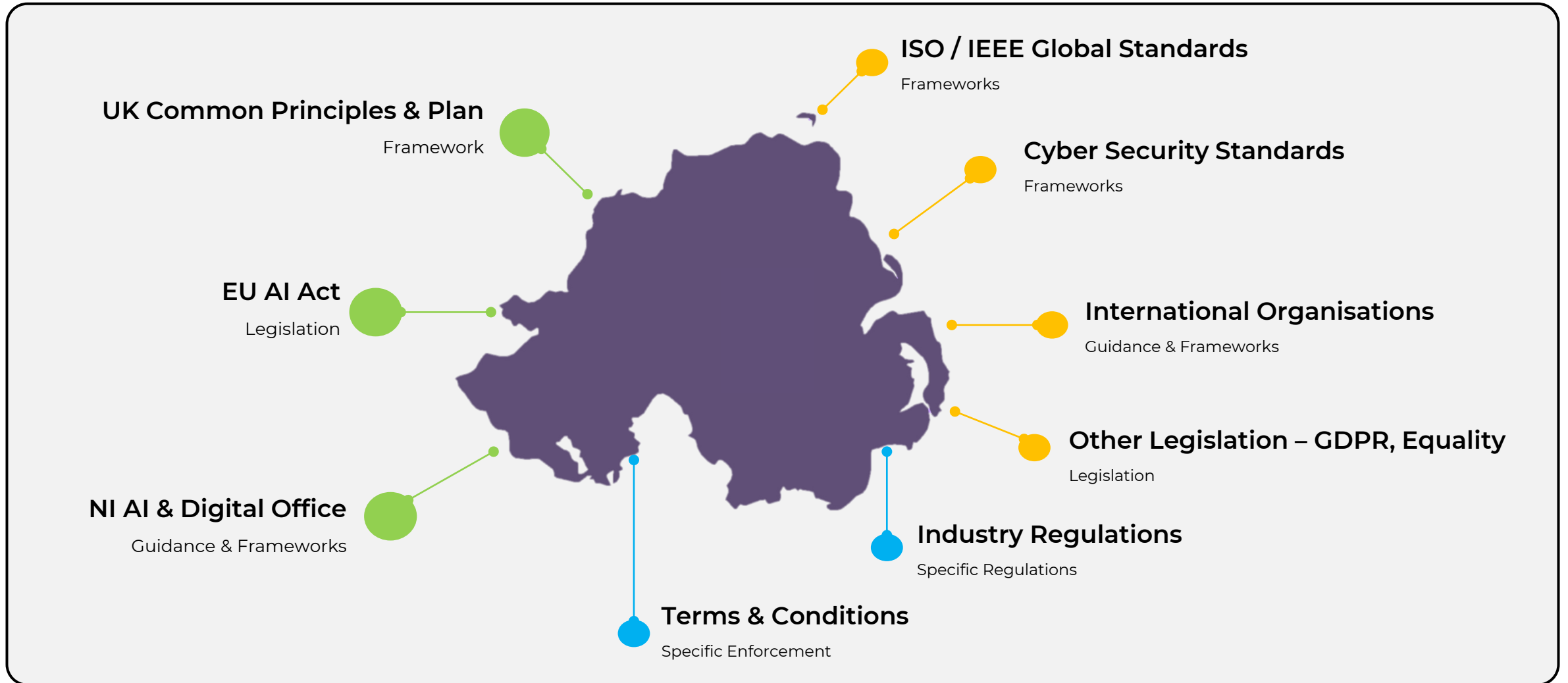
Influences & Impact

[Part 3 of 4]

Northern Ireland Landscape

Figure – Influential Factors for AI Governance in Northern Ireland

Index: ● Core Impact / Influence ● Other Impact / Influence ● Special Impact / Influence



Practical Governance in Practice

[Part 4 of 4]



Examples: ISO & AI

ISO/IEC 22989

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence –
Artificial intelligence
concepts and terminology

ISO/IEC 42001

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence –
Management system

ISO/IEC 42005

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence (AI) –
AI system impact
assessment

ISO/IEC 42006

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence –
Requirements for bodies
providing audit and
certification of artificial
intelligence management
systems

ISO/IEC 23984

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence –
Guidance on risk
management

ISO/IEC 38507

Information technology –
Governance of IT –
Governance implications of
the use of artificial
intelligence by organizations

ISO/IEC 5338

Information technology –
Artificial intelligence – AI
system life cycle processes



Examples: ISO & AI

ISO/IEC 22989

AI Concepts & Terminology

ISO/IEC 42001

AI Management System
Standard (AIMS)

ISO/IEC 42005

AI System Impact
Assessment

ISO/IEC 42006

Requirements for Bodies
Certifying AI Management
Systems

ISO/IEC 23984

AI Risk Management

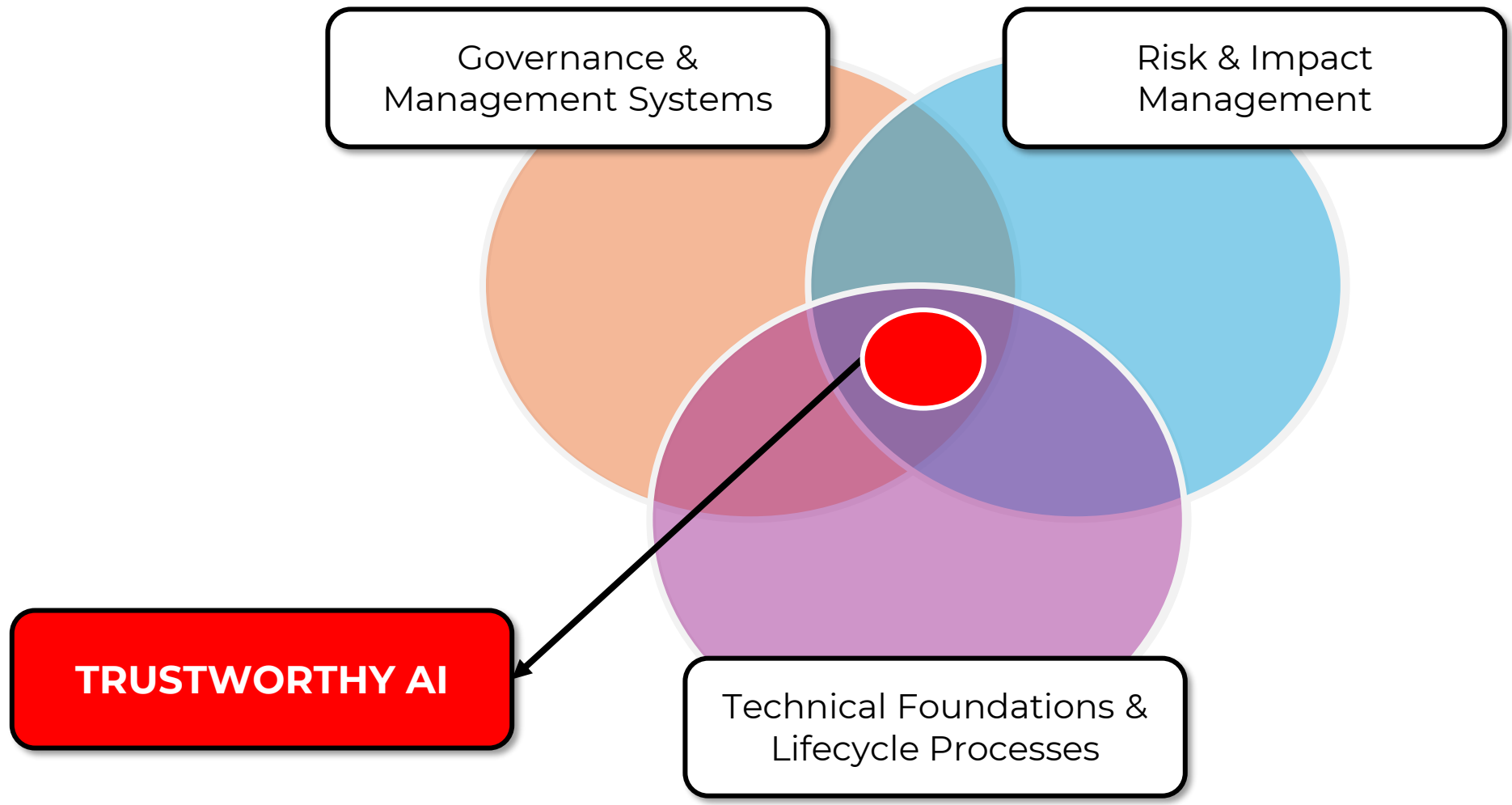
ISO/IEC 38507

Governance of AI

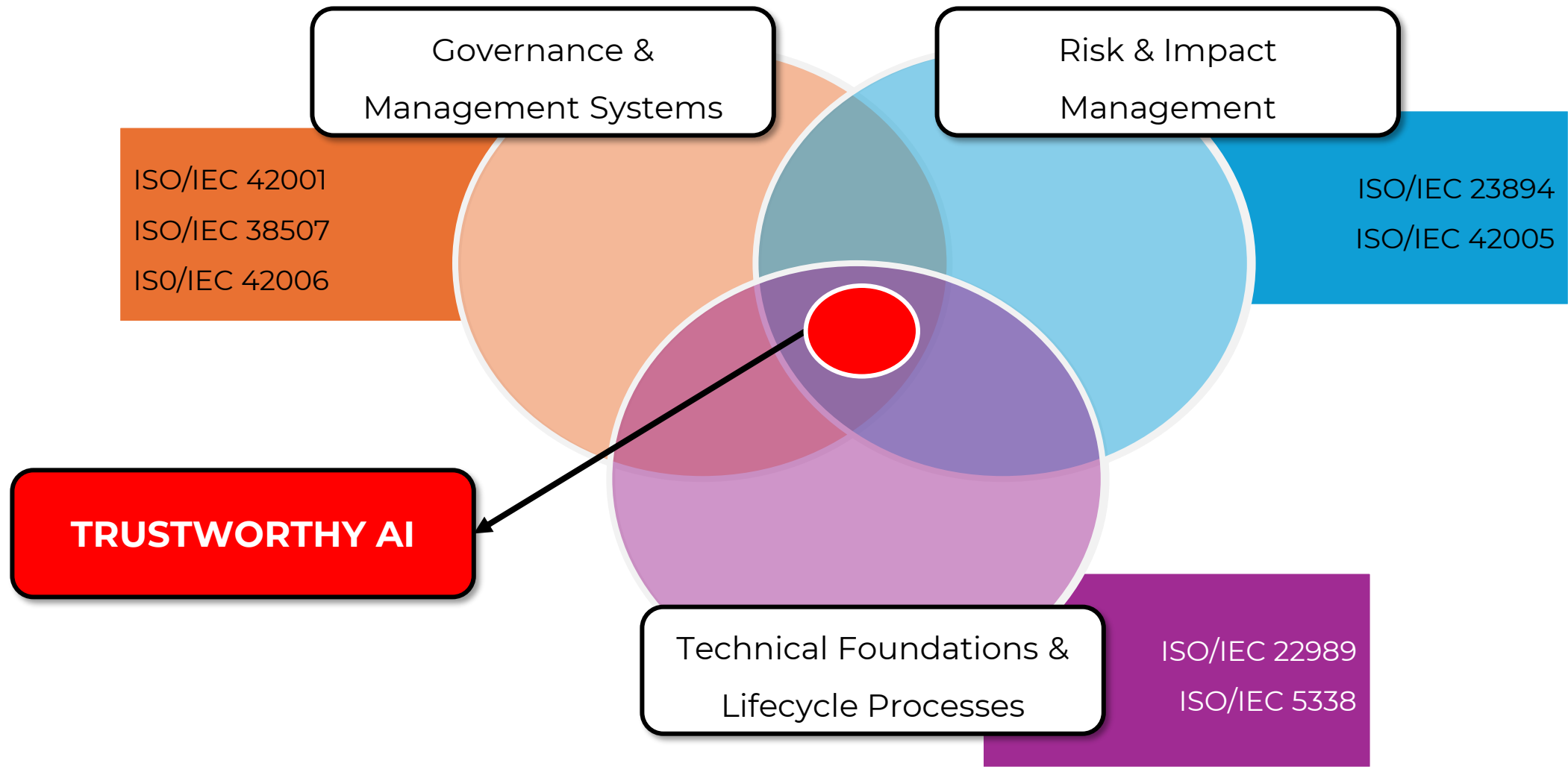
ISO/IEC 5338

AI System Lifecycle
Processes

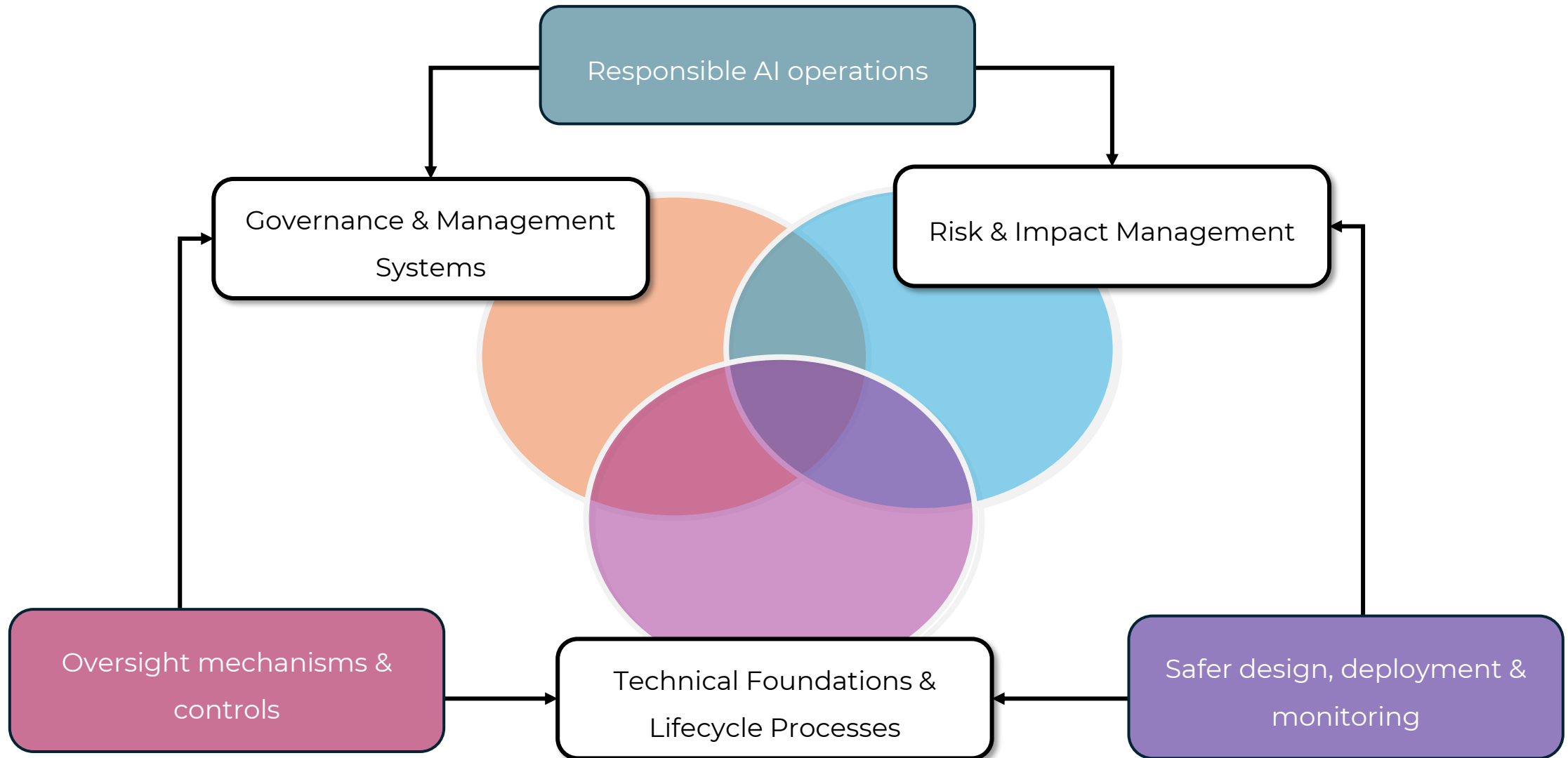
✦ Examples: ISO & AI



Examples: ISO & AI



Examples: ISO & AI



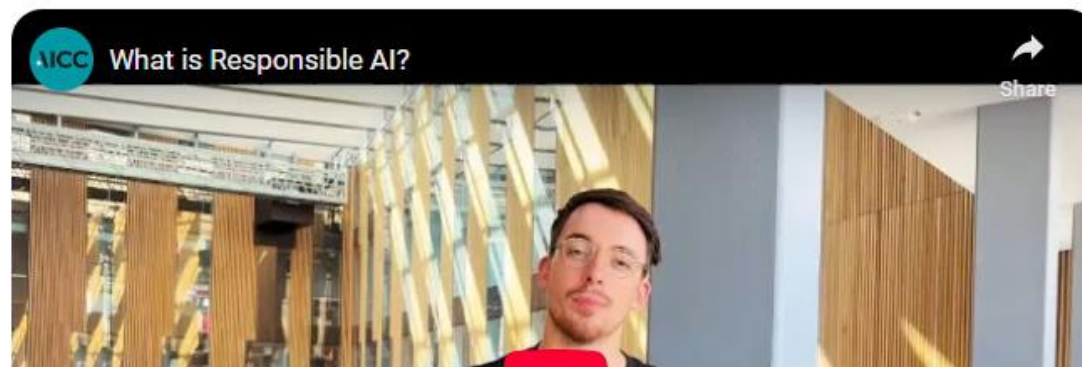
Responsible AI Fundamentals

Understand the core principles of responsible AI and why they matter for every organisation.

What is responsible AI and why does it matter?

AI is a powerful tool, and like electricity or fire, it can help or harm people depending on how it is used.

Responsible AI encourages people to use AI for good: to make life better, solve big problems and improve business. It makes sure AI is used responsibly.





Let's put ideas to the Reasonable Test

A summary result from the panel which identifies your AI idea as reasonable or not reasonable. Alongside the overview, the panel will give you a breakdown of each panel members' views.



Scan here

Using the Reasonable Test

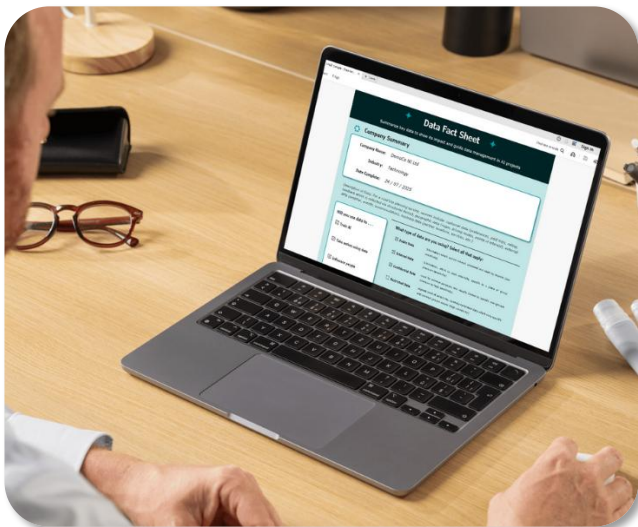
 Enter your idea

Describe your idea for AI

Submit

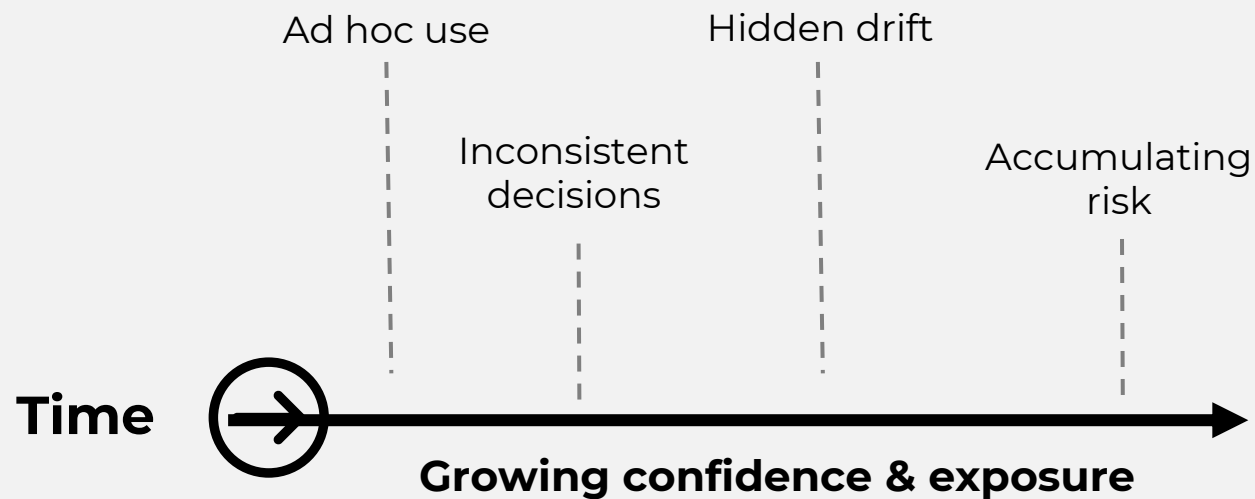
Underpinning **good ideation**

Permissibility is not immediate. It develops gradually as experience turns into evidence and confidence.



 *Getting the timing right*

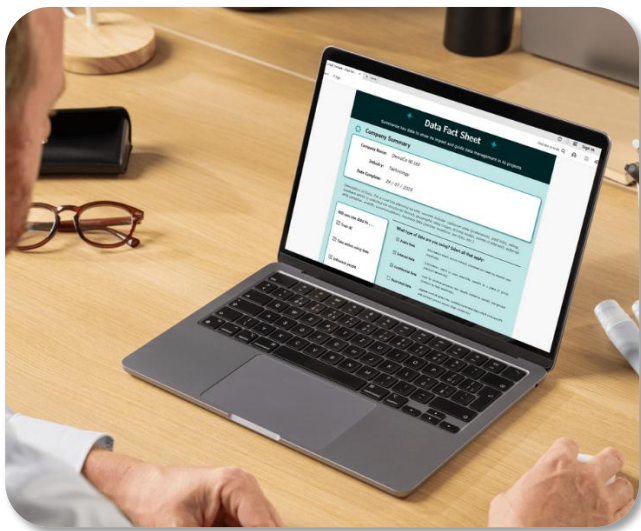
Integrating guardrails in time



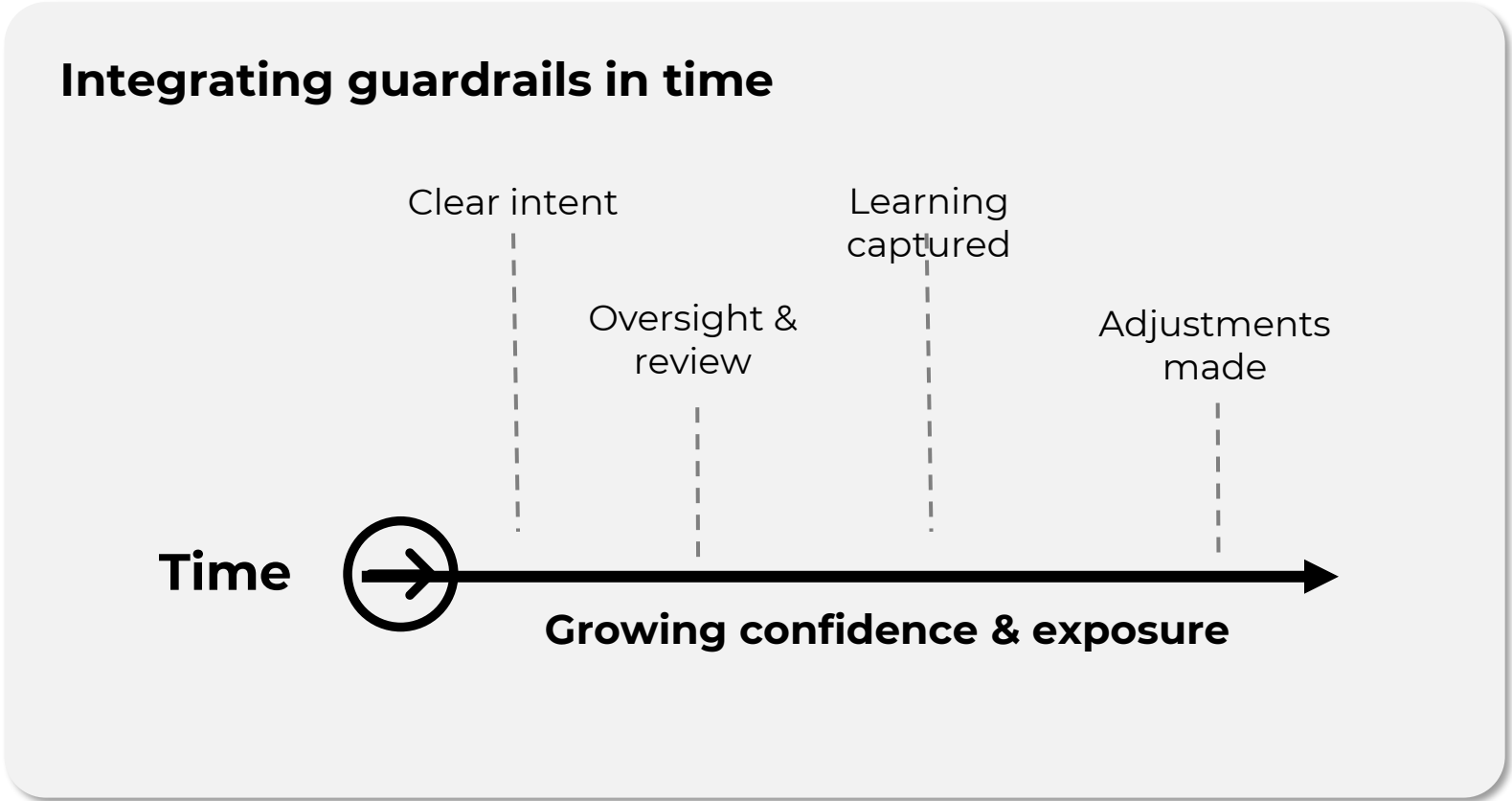


Underpinning **good ideation**

Permissibility is not immediate. It develops gradually as experience turns into evidence and confidence.



 *Getting the timing right*





Early Ethical Intervention in Industry

What is CAGE?

The Core Assessment of Governance & Ethics helps assess the governance and ethics of different AI projects.

You can use CAGE if you are procuring AI to use in your organisation, or if you are building AI for a specific reason.

★

Data Fact Sheet

★

Summarise key data to show its impact and guide data management in AI projects

🔄

Company Summary

Company Name:

DemoCo Ltd

Industry:

Food & Drink

Date Complete:

24 / 06 / 2025

Description of Data: Historic and active sales forecasting data, stock and demand data, pipeline data, inventory and other internal data

Will you use data to ...

☒ Train AI

☒ Take action using data

☐ Influence people

☒ Improve efficiency

☒ Unlock insights

☒ Predict something

☐ Make informed decisions

What type of data are you using? Select all that apply:

☐ Public Data

Information which can be viewed, accessed and used by anyone (low sensitivity)

☒ Internal Data

Information, which is used internally, specific to a place or group (medium sensitivity)

☒ Confidential Data

Used for internal purposes and usually limited to specific sub-groups (medium or high sensitivity)

☐ Restricted Data

Highest level of sensitivity, carefully controlled data which very specific and minimal groups access (high sensitivity)

☐ PII Data

Personally identifiable information includes any data that has the potential to specify an individual (high sensitivity)

Are you using any of the following? Select all that

☒ Primary Data

Data which has been collected for the first time through personal experience, research, evidence. It is first-hand information.

☐ Secondary Data

Data which has been collected by someone other than the party who is using it. It is second-hand data.

☐ Historical Data

Data which has been collected about past events, circumstances or experiences which apply to a particular subject.

☐ Yes

☒ No

Will you be storing data for the project / system?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Will a user be able to take data out of the project / system (i.e., export)?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Can the data the project / systems rely on become out-of-date?

Will the project focus on ... Select all that apply:

🌐

★

AICC

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COLLABORATION CENTRE

1

2

3

4



Early Ethical Intervention in Industry

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Harm Assessment

Identify possible harm and risks, real or hidden, from your use

Company Summary

Company Name: DemoCo Ltd

Industry: Food & Drink

Date Complete: 24 / 06 / 2025

Type of AI Being Used:

AI as part of a process

AI is used as a tool to help with certain parts of a bigger process that is still mostly controlled by people or other systems. It improves specific tasks but doesn't run everything by itself.

Which areas of Harm are relevant to your AI project?

Tangible Real-World Harm	Intangible Unseen or Hidden Harm
☐ Health & Safety	☐ Detrimental Content
☐ Infrastructure Damage	☐ Differential Treatment
☒ Financial Loss	☐ Human / Civil Rights
☐ Environmental Damage	☒ Reputational Damage
☐ Privacy & Security	☐ Personal Harm

1

2

3

4

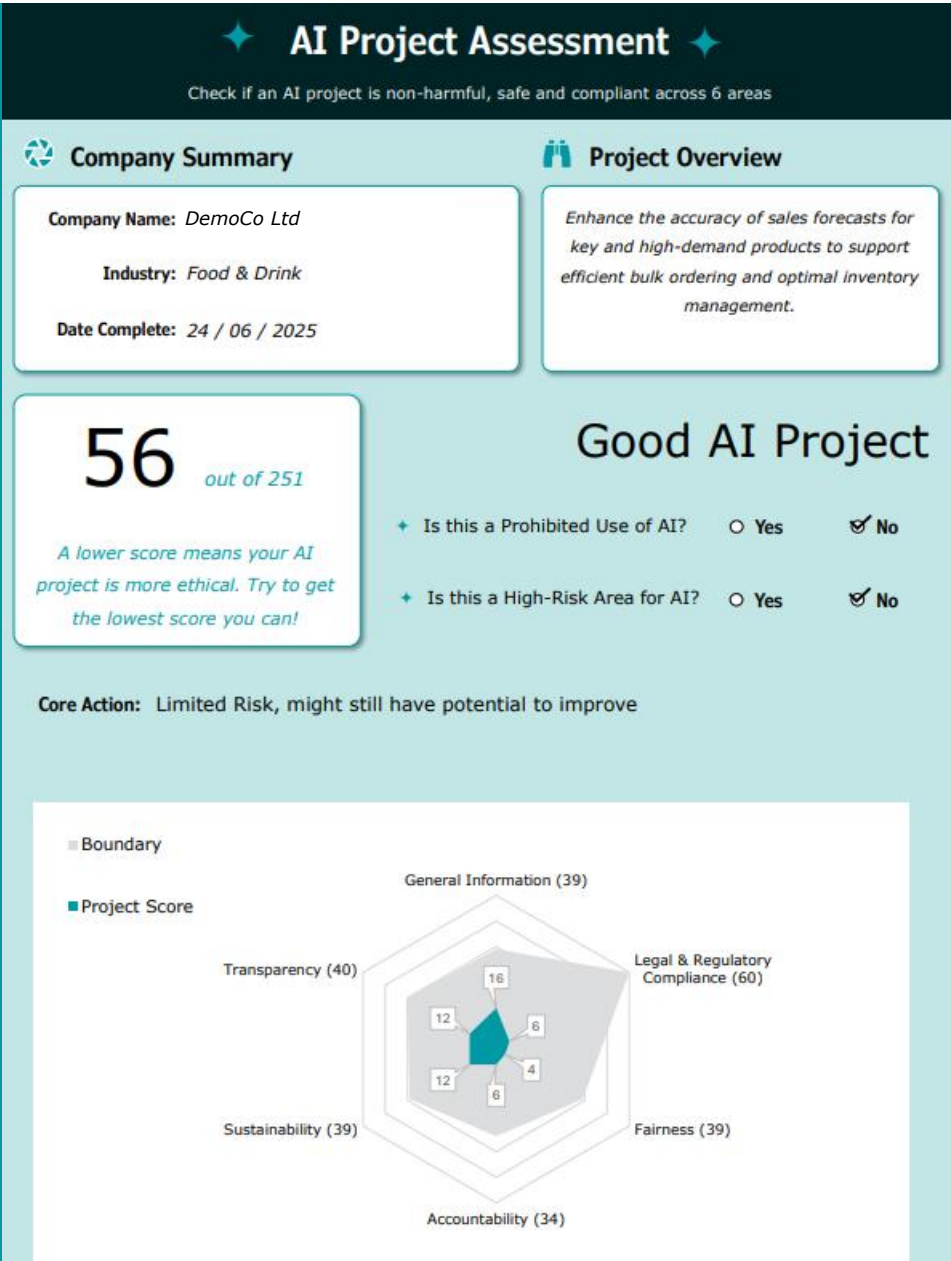


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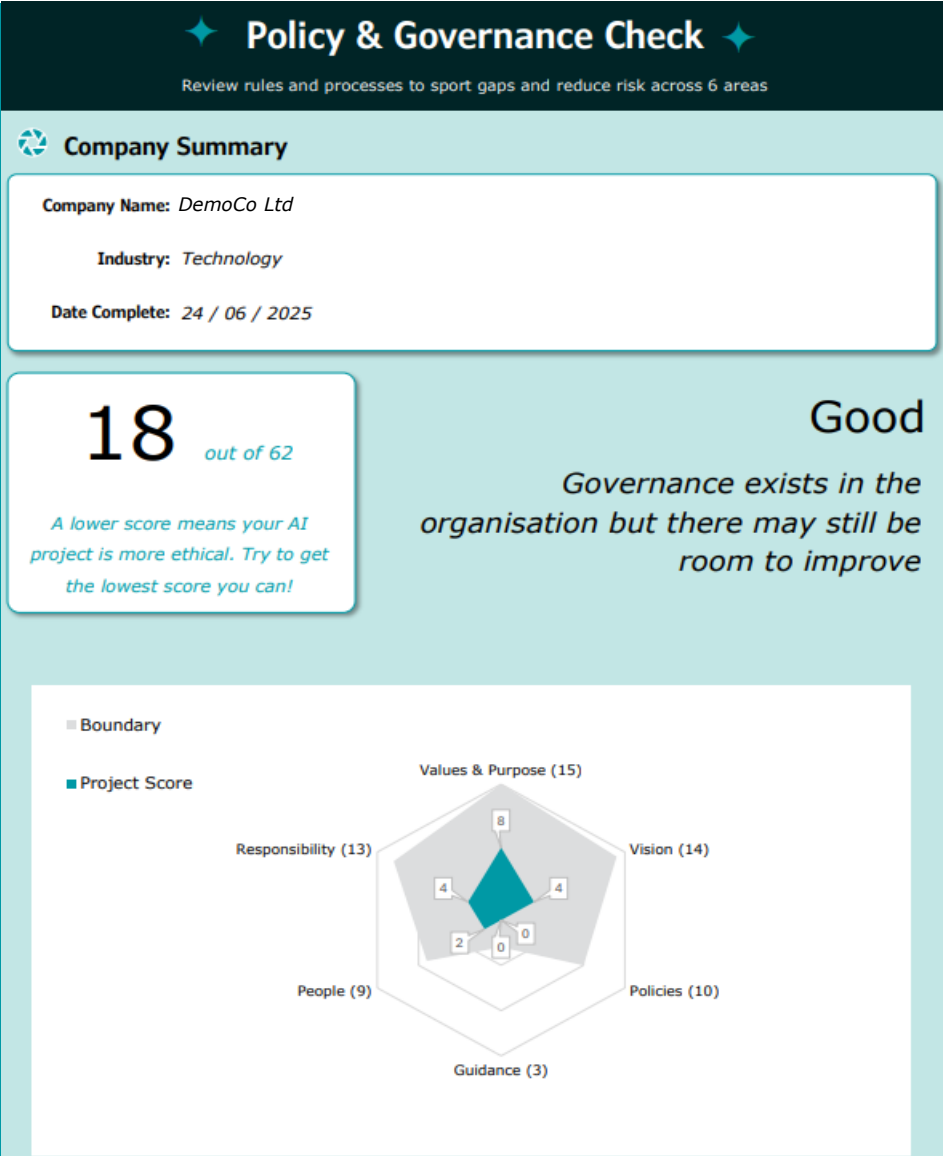


Early Ethical Intervention in Industry

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1

2

3

4

Q & A



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