Evidence Meeting 4 | Citizen Participation: Diversity is a Parliamentary Brief based on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Artificial Intelligence (APPG AI) evidence meeting held on 3 June 2019 at the House of Lords.

This meeting was chaired by Stephen Metcalfe MP and Lord Clement-Jones.

We would like to express our appreciation to the following people for their oral evidence: Sarah Rench (Ernst & Young), Maria Axente (PwC), Kriti Sharma (AlforGood), Josie Young (Methods), and Sara Conejo Cervantes (Teens in AI).

We would also like to acknowledge the APPG AI Citizen Participation Task Force for the input and feedback: James Hadlow (NHS), Robert Aitchison (Automated Markets), Dr. Blay Whitby (Ethicist), Dr. Andy Pardoe (Informed.AI Group), and Rajinder Tumber (Cybersecurity Specialist).

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APPG AI | Evidence Meeting 4 Parliamentary Brief | Citizen Participation
EVIDENCE MEETING 4 OVERVIEW

Details

- Date: 3 June 2019
- Time: 5:30 – 7:00 pm
- Location: Committee Room 2, House of Lords
- Participants: 122 registered attendees

Speakers

- Sarah Rench, Advanced Analytics, Robotics and AI – Senior Leader, Ernst & Young
- Maria Axente, AI Programme Driver, PwC
- Josie Young, Lead Consultant for AI Strategy & Ethics, Methods
- Kriti Sharma, Founder, AI for Good
- Sara Conejo Cervantes, Ambassador, Teens in AI

Questions

- Which demographics are underrepresented in AI?
- Does AI reinforce or narrow inequality gaps?
- What are the practical steps of ensuring decision-making around AI is inclusive and diverse?
INTRODUCTION

Context

AI technologies do indeed promise us many opportunities on a national, social, and individual level; but they also have a set of complications and hazards embedded within. To create a future in which the benefits are distributed fairly and evenly, and the risks are mitigated, all of society must work as one. Together, we must co-create a future of an AI-filled world, designing the opportunities and de-risking the risks.

This means we need to engage industry, civil society, academia, regulators and the public in the conversations around what is AI, what is it not, how is it being used, what is its potential, and what are its implications. As AI is impacting all of us – regardless of our demographics, background, region, or other category we might fit to – the decision-making around these technologies must ensure a diverse set of voices. This has been repeatedly stressed throughout APPG AI’s evidence gathering.

Certainly, a big part of this is awareness building and public engagement. Once citizens are aware of AI and its consequences, they will also be empowered to engage in making decisions around it. In 2019, APPG AI launched the Citizen Participation Pillar to better understand how to raise awareness around AI’s impact and encourage diversity and inclusivity in the decision-making around AI governance. Specifically, we focus on:

- Understanding which demographics are currently underrepresented in the development and deployment of AI technologies
- Raising awareness of how AI impacts the daily lives of individuals
- Promoting public engagement across sectors, industries, and regions
- Empowering the youth to participate in the debates

Although the primary audience for APPG AI are members from the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the group also aims to inform the general public and key stakeholders across business, academia, and civil society.

Skeleton

This Parliamentary brief is broken into two parts, highlighting the main takeaways from APPG AI’s first evidence meeting under the Citizen Participation AI Pillar. The meeting, held 3 June 2019, was chaired by Stephen Metcalfe and Lord Clement Jones, and orchestrated by the Secretariat of APPG AI, Big Innovation Centre. It brought together key stakeholders to gather and share evidence on the need for diversity in the development and deployment of AI technologies.

First, the brief focus on why diversity and inclusion are important in an increasingly AI-filled world, looking specifically at gender and race implications.

Second, the brief explains the need for diversity in skills and backgrounds in the decision-making around how AI is developed, deployed, and governed.

Finally, the brief ends with an appendix with the written evidence provided by Sara Rench (Ernst & Young), Maria Axente (PwC), Josie Young (Methods), and Sara Conejo Cervantes (Teens in AI).
DIVERSITY IN DEMOGRAPHICS

Why Diversity Matters
Diversity and inclusion are important not only for the design and development of AI technologies but also for the decision-making around how they are deployed and governed. There are many socio-economic benefits to realise by promoting diversity but also adverse consequences if we don't and the current state flourishes.

One of the biggest concerns for policymakers is how lack of diversity in AI may potentially deepen existing biases. If AI provides significant socio-economic benefits to those who can commercialise and use it, this means that those who don’t will fall further behind. Currently, already advantaged groups of society (white middle-aged men) are those primarily engaging with AI and, hence, they will be the ones to benefit from its opportunities. On the other hand, the disadvantaged groups or minorities not involved in the deployment and development of AI are likely to miss out on the benefits.

Also, the diversity problem is embedded within the existing datasets which AI systems rely on. The datasets being used are accused for not being representative of the diversity in the real-world and for embedding several human biases and stereotypes within.

Teams that lack diversity are not likely to spot these ingrained biases within datasets and hence let them affect an AI’s output. Specifically, the predominantly racially homogenous staff are criticised for not thoroughly and sensitively testing their work on images of people more diverse than themselves. Therefore, results are often skewed, and this is increasingly problematic as AI technologies are now being used to make decisions about an individual’s financial, health, security, and other important matters.

As a result, there is a risk that lack of diversity can contribute to a world where select groups are even more marginalised and excluded from society.

Diversity, according to Kriti Sharma, should be considered and promoted in two dimensions: diversity of individuals currently developing and deploying AI (those already in the labour market) and diversity of talent that has not yet entered the workforce. For those already working, diversity is important to ensure AI technologies reflect the differences embedded in our societies and that the solutions these technologies offer are genuinely beneficial for the whole.
For children who have not yet started working, the public and private sectors both can work together to proactively ensure the pipeline of talent in the future is made up of the diverse set of voices needed. This means bringing in demographics, disciplines, and backgrounds that are currently underrepresented.

Gender and race are not the only two demographics that matter in the diversity problem but the fourth APPG AI Evidence Meeting chose to dive into these two areas to illustrate the dangers if certain groups are excluded.

**Gender**

In April 2019, the AI Now Institute launched a paper called ‘Discriminating Systems: Gender, Race and Power in AI.’ Within, many of the issues around lack of gender diversity surface. Specifically, the paper finds:

- only 18% of authors at leading AI conferences are women and more than 80% of AI professors are men
- women comprise only 15% of AI research staff at Facebook and 10% at Google.

The panel at the APPG AI Evidence Meeting highlighted the findings of this report and called for the need to encourage more women in AI.

EY’s Sarah Rench argued that companies that enjoy greater levels of gender diversity end up progressing faster and yielding better results than their less diverse counterparts. Therefore, promoting gender diversity will bring about social benefits as well as economic ones, studies repeatedly showing that gender balanced companies are the best financial performers.

**Race**

The diversity problem goes beyond just gender, as Sara Conejo Cervantes noted at the APPG AI Evidence Meeting. Racial diversity in AI technology is also poor. The same paper highlighted above (by AI Now Institute) shows that only 2.5% of Google’s workforce and 4% of Microsoft’s and Facebook’s workforce is black.

Policymakers, business leaders, and the society as a whole must proactively encourage races currently underrepresented in the world of AI – to not only ensure they receive AI’s benefits but also to help guarantee AI reflects the complexity of our modern, diverse world.
DIVERSITY IN SKILLS AND BACKGROUND

Complex Implications and Multidisciplinary Solutions

The complexity of AI’s implications means solutions must be multidisciplinary by nature. It is not enough to rely on just technologists, just policymakers, or just managers. Addressing these complexities will take much more than technically driven skills, it will require a unity of people with different capabilities and skills. Different disciplines offering different perspectives and views must come together so a holistic solution can be constructed.

AI which is designed and developed with the help of diverse skills is more likely to be successfully commercialised and deployed in society. Diverse teams are better at problem-solving because they incorporate a wider array of perspectives. More and more unusual ideas can be incorporated into the design process allowing for greater innovation – a quality critical in a space as fast-changing as AI. According to PWC’s Maria Axente, companies across the UK are starting to realise this and managers are increasingly building teams made up of ‘not the typical data scientist.’

Awareness Building

To encourage diversity and inclusion thoroughly, stakeholders must put significant effort on building awareness around AI’s impact on our economies and our societies. Educators, policymakers, industry, and the wider society must work together to ensure a level playing field is created for individuals to reap the benefits and protect themselves from the risks.

As AI will ultimately impact all of us, it is important for all citizens to be empowered with the basic skills to build and work with AI but also the literacy to navigate in an AI-filled world.

Those who are currently underrepresented in AI’s development and deployment must be specifically targeted in order to promote their engagement in these conversations. Several of the existing initiatives target individuals who are already associated in one way or another with the space of AI, but more has to be done to reach those who aren’t.

Ideally, awareness building should start for all at a young age, through a structured educational agenda that reaches all demographics, backgrounds and regions. However, it should also continue throughout one’s lifetime - especially given how quickly these technologies are progressing and developing.

Framing

Framing, according to the panel at the APPG AI Evidence Meeting, could potentially be the solution to attracting a diverse set of voices.

Stakeholders must work together to ensure the framing of these issues attracts as diverse groups of individuals as possible. Joysy Young provided the example of how job descriptions might attract a certain group over another. If HR departments experiment with writing a role in different ways, the candidate pool will automatically increase in diversity. For instance, women tend to be attracted to roles that focus on purpose and public impact over numbers and managerial activities. Therefore, to attract more women to apply for a role, organisations can reframe their profiles, shifting the language from technical to contextual.

Framing alone isn’t the solution but it is one step towards the right direction. According to the stakeholders at the APPG AI Evidence Meeting, a joint effort made up of several initiatives like this can help address the lack of diversity and ultimately bridge existing inequality gaps.
WRITTEN EVIDENCE APPENDIX

Sarah Rench, Advanced Analytics, Robotics and AI – Senior Leader, Ernst & Young

Biography: At EY, Sarah is responsible for delivering the Data Quality Machine Learning Tool which is part of the ‘EY Appstore’: a set of algorithms using machine learning and cloud based technologies to solve client data quality problems.

She has a background in delivering virtual agent technology utilising machine learning, NLP, RPA and big data technologies for banks and insurance companies, also local government.

Sarah recently won the Tech Women 50 Award 2017, has a Masters in Computer Science and Executive MBA. She is also a TEDx speaker for City, University of London.

She has previous built mobile apps, responsive websites, online trading systems, CRM and CMS systems and implemented analytics software and analytics dashboards. She is ‘technology agnostic’ and utilises the appropriate technology to deliver the best value for her clients.

Written Evidence

How can we build trustworthy AI that supports diversity and inclusion?

- We have seen many examples where artificial intelligence (AI) has had unforeseen negative impacts on diversity and inclusion (D&I) in the workplace and society.
- Examples include AI using biased data sets or poorly-designed algorithms, resulting in discrimination against certain groups, for example, in the justice system and recruitment.
- At the same time, AI is having a positive impact on D&I.
- For example, a start-up software company has developed technology to help people see the hidden gender bias in their writing, suggesting gender-neutral alternatives and so helping employers to recruit from a wider talent pool.
- Other examples where AI is positively supporting D&I include solutions that:
  - Filter out biases in data to encourage recruitment of more diverse candidates
  - Provide feedback on whether a data set of pictures of faces is appropriately diverse
  - Help visually-impaired people understand the world around them using an intelligent camera and audible descriptions
- Now is a good time to discuss AI in the context of D&I following the April 2019 publication of the European Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI.
- These guidelines call for a human-centric approach to the development of AI.
- They specifically highlight the need for AI to avoid unfair bias, both in the development of AI and in its outputs, to prevent discrimination or prejudice against certain groups, including women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities.
Call for research

- Statistics indicate the current lack of D&I in the technology sector:
  - two-thirds of UK digital companies have no female directors on their boards – and 75% have no directors from ethnic minorities
  - although the total US workforce is approximately half male, half female, within STEM jobs, men outnumber women four to one.
- We call for more research to gather data on D&I in the technology sector and specifically in relation to the development of AI.
- This is important for considering whether lack of representation of groups such as women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities increases the likelihood of bias in AI.
- Any such data and research can be used to encourage change within organisations in order to use AI to maximum capacity to improve D&I.

Three actions to take now

We suggest three actions organisations can take now to improve D&I through AI:

1. Identify processes where AI may be having unintended consequences for D&I, e.g., in recruitment and progression and performance.
2. Assess external communications and marketing, e.g., use image recognition software to scan across external communications to check for diversity in the faces of the people representing the firm.
3. Support inclusive workplaces, e.g., review opportunities to use AI solutions such as voice recognition technology and audible descriptions of visual images to enable people with disabilities to contribute fully to the workplace.

Maria Axente, AI Programme Driver, PwC

Biography: Maria is currently the AI Programme Driver for PwC UK, and is responsible for helping clients to define their digital vision, and meet the challenges digital brings around mobile, social media, analytics and the cloud. Her consulting engagements have included leading the innovation and mobile work streams in a digital transformation programme for a leading UK media company and a large retailer, and design enhancement solutions for data intelligence and publishing products.

She is an advocate for ResponsibleAI and empowering youth with a voice to shape their futures.

Written Evidence

The first industrial revolution has given us much more than the economic growth and progress we enjoy, it has given us the social structure of our society as well. With the rapid growth of industrialization and growing productivity, the most valued members of society were those of working age, as they create growth. Slowly, we started to marginalise those either too young or too old to work. This created a growing separation between generations, and created patterns of behaviours we inherit today. Fast forward to 2019, ageism is yet another form of inequality and exclusion, alongside gender, race or sexuality. At a time when AI adoption is
on the increase, some have said it is set to trigger a profound social revolution for humanity, but the jury is still out on who will benefit from those opportunities.

In day to day life, we have a flurry of examples of AI reinforcing those historic inequalities. From tools used to assess a defendant’s risk of committing more crimes in the US discriminating against people of color\(^1\) to the AI powered recruiting tool biased towards male candidates, AI tools are shedding light on where inequality exists in our society, deeply embedded in our culture and norms. As Pedro Domingo, the author of Master Algorithm says: ‘We see AI not as it is, but as we are.’ And while some have jumped to describe AI as a ‘black mirror’ we owe it to ourselves to have a more optimistic view, an opportunity to focus our actions to address inequality meaningfully, in a holistic way, extending focus beyond data and algorithms, through the value chain, into the business processes and culture.

But how do we address it in a meaningful way? Lyndon B. Johnson, the 36th president of the United States said in 1969 “Great social change tends to come rapidly, in periods of intense activity and progress before the impulse slows. We must open the doors of opportunity. But we must also equip our people to walk through those doors. ” A statement more relevant than ever half a century later, but also a great example to follow.

To achieve meaningful and long term diversity for and in AI, we should approach it as cultural transformation effort, with formal actions, indicators to measure success and a roadmap, following the Top Down – Bottom UP methodology. Leaders need to co-create the opportunities alongside diverse groups while equipping them with the right skills to get there. But we also need everyone’s participation, especially those who are now coming of age in the age of AI to be agents and promoters of diversity.

Decision makers involved in AI should aim to create participatory decision making at all levels, from strategic to operational, from policy-making to AI product development. The Pineapple Report\(^2\) authored by Jonnie Penn for the European Youth Forum, presents a set of concrete actions for citizen participation and engagement. Digital-Participatory tools like digital field hearings or citizen juries can be used to welcome citizens of all walks of life into the AI design and deployment process. In the UK, citizens’ juries have already been used to develop policy on ethical artificial intelligence. We would also benefit from having young people part of advisory boards or other leadership groups on AI. The appointment of Kriti, the Advisory Board of the Centre for Data Ethics and AI Council, is an example we should follow.

Once opportunities are created, we need to empower and support participation, through AI literacy. The specific elements of AI should be reflected in the formal education curriculum, but also via support of alternative forms of education like grants for online courses and funding for those programmes. An excellent example of such a programme is Elements of AI\(^3\), a free online AI beginner’s course to educate an increasingly inquisitive global audience on AI and the technology’s potential impact on society, careers and their everyday lives. Students enrolling in the course come from all age groups, with 140,000 students completed the course from 80 different countries in less than a year from its launch. The programmes is the result of a successful partnership between the University of Helsinki and Reaktor, a technology consulting firm.

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\(^2\) [https://www.youthforum.org/new-pineapple-report](https://www.youthforum.org/new-pineapple-report)

\(^3\) [https://www.elementsofai.com/](https://www.elementsofai.com/)
Another great initiative aimed to address both gender and age diversity in the tech industry is Tech She Can charter\(^4\) backed by over 100 organisations including PwC, JP Morgan, British Science Association, Tesco and the UK Government. The charter, a cross-society collaboration aimed to support and inspire more young girls to consider a tech career, helps address two United Nation Sustainable development Goals – number 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and number 5 on gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls.

Lastly, diversity and inclusion should be fostered at a global level. The AI community has a duty of care to encourage and support meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange between all countries, with AI missions to those who are just embarking on the AI journey. AI event\(^\) organisers, play an important role in encouraging this dialogue by actively promoting diversity beyond gender and race, to include age and nationalities. This was something that was evident at the recent AI for Good Global Summit\(^5\), event that boosted speakers and attendees from 90 countries and all ages. Organisers should work with governments to provide visas and financial support for young researchers and entrepreneurs from developing countries to attend events like NeuRIPS.

But ultimately, for those recommendations and case studies to have a positive and profound impact on diversity and inclusion for truly Responsible AI\(^6\), they should be regarded holistically and flexibly, with ideas adapted to fit local contexts and then piloted before being rolled out. What they all share in common is a view, as Jonnie Penn points out\(^7\), of co-designing and co-creating of AI solutions, towards the same goal of inclusive, sustainable and socially just data economies, where we all have the opportunity to create and share the benefits and protect the planet.

**Josie Young, Lead Consultant for AI Strategy & Ethics, Methods**

Biography: Josie Young advocates for designing Artificial Intelligence (AI) products and systems using ethical and feminist principles. In 2017, she developed and tested a design process for building feminist chatbots. In 2018, Josie contributed to a research project with Charisma.AI and King’s College London to identify ways to deal with bias in large word libraries used for Natural Language Processing. Josie works in London at Methods, leading work to understand the most ethical and appropriate ways to deploy AI in the public sector. Josie is also the Co-Chair of YWCA, a charity dedicated to supporting young women’s leadership in Great Britain. Josie’s professional background is in digital transformation and public sector reform. She has also attended and held facilitation roles for a number of international conferences focused on human rights.

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4 https://www.pwc.co.uk/who-we-are/women-in-technology/tech-she-can-charter.html
5 https://aiforgood.itu.int/
7 https://news.itu.int/how-can-ai-influence-your-values-interview-with-jonnie-penn-video/
Written Evidence

At Methods, our Emerging Technology practice approaches Artificial Intelligence (AI) as an exciting new technology that, if we think creatively enough, can be used to transform government services. It is from the perspective of using AI to prioritise improvements to public services and center on citizens’ needs that this evidence is provided.

The lessons and recommendations provided below are based on what we’ve learned through projects with clients and internal prototyping exercises. I also offer reflections from my research into building ethical and feminist chatbots.

Takeaway 1: The lack of diversity in AI teams blocks innovation

- In the case of AI, where the potential social impact of AI systems is far greater than previous technologies, it’s important to have teams which are equipped to identify the ways in which their product will have positive and negative impacts. This requires a mixture of skills and backgrounds within the team.
- We have found that homogenous teams are prone to participate in ‘group think’, leading to technology solutions that reinforce the dominant views held by that team.
- Homogeneity also blocks innovation - new perspectives and ways of doing things are less likely to be embraced, and so the opportunity for innovation decreases.
- We consider that diversity, in this context, encompasses demographic markers as well as skills and experience. In our work with public sector clients, we strongly advocate for including the policy and customer experts on client-side as well as equipping our own teams with a healthy mix of computer science, user research and social impact skills.
- However, we have also encountered challenges around creating a safe and productive space for all voices to be heard equally, and where the mixture of views were able to improve the project outputs as a result.

Takeaway 2: Practical approaches are still being developed

- We have observed that a new toolkit is required for designing and deploying AI products or systems. The current Agile/Scrum processes or ways of running digital/technology projects don’t explicitly take into account the need for (1) a diverse team, which is (2) able to think critically about ethical and social impact consequences of their products.
- To address issues (1) and (2), we are amending our internal approach to resourcing and running Agile projects. Based on what we’ve learned from projects with clients, we are developing approaches for our day-to-day delivery of AI projects that require a diverse team (skills and demographic profile) and embed the use of existing ethical and social impact-oriented tools and processes.
- To address issue (2), tools like my Feminist Chatbot Design Process have been proven useful in other contexts for facilitating critical thinking throughout the design process. It’s also proven to support more innovation in how AI-powered products can be designed (see Feminist Internet’s ‘Designing a Feminist Alexa’ program).

Resource list

- Summary of Josie Young research and Feminist Chatbot Design Process - bit.ly/designingfeministchatbots
- Feminist Internet ‘Building a Feminist Alexa’ program report - bit.ly/feministalexa
Sara Conejo Cervantes, Ambassador, Teens in AI

Biography: Sara Conejo Cervantes, 17. Having graduated from Coloma Convent Girls' School with GCSEs in the core subjects, Computer Science and Economics, Sara is currently studying for her A Levels in Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Computer Science, continuing on from GCSE, at King’s College London Mathematics School. With two years of experience in coding, Sara regularly takes part in Hackathons and has she won a number of them. She recently took part in Alexa Bootcamp where she led her team to develop and publish an Alexa skill called Optimus Maths. She did a two-week placement at Codex, a city-based data analytics firm where she wrote a piece of code used now in the platform. As well as this, Sara has accreditations from the Royal Institution in both Maths and Engineering. She has taken part in many MUN conferences and debates in and out of school. Her background of coding in Python and other languages has helped her to complete the task of building an AI with the ability to play smartphone games.

Written Evidence

Takeaway 1: Ensure that no one is left behind.

Youth:
- ICT/Computer Science could be taught on the same significance as Maths and English.
- Transform the education system to make it more about learning rather than playing a memory game.

Elderly:
- Encourage families to connect using technologies.
- Have tech classes available to learn about how technology can be helpful to them.
- Show that technology is not scary.

Takeaway 2: Teaching people the importance of diversity

Schools:
- Schools should be encouraged to use technology in all subjects starting with primary.
- Show the importance of everyone having an interest in technologies.
- Teach how technology is revolutionising all industries.

Companies:
- Have responsibility to have diversity within the workplace.
- Create diverse products (which is achieved by having diverse teams).
- Are having diversity for the best interest of the company not just to tick HR boxes.
- Ensure that the board of the company is being changed every year or so.
- Encourage women to go into STEM as well as encouraging men to go into Humanities.

Society:
- Role Models
ABOUT APPG AI

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Artificial Intelligence (APPG AI) was set up in January 2017 with the aim to explore the impact and implications of Artificial Intelligence.

The APPG AI is co-chaired by Stephen Metcalfe MP and Lord Clement-Jones CBE.

The Group Officers are Chris Green MP, The Right Reverend Doctor Steven Croft, Baroness Kramer, Lord Janvrin, Lord Broers, Lord Holmes of Richmond, Lord Willetts, Baroness McGregor-Smith, Justin Madders MP, Mark Hendrick MP and Carol Monaghan MP.

The Group supporters – Accenture, Blue Prism, British Standards Institution, CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang, Creative England, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, KPMG, Megger Group Limited, Microsoft, Osborne Clarke, Oracle, PwC, and Rialto – enable us to raise the ambition of what we can achieve.

Big Innovation Centre is the APPG AI Secretariat.