

Chair's report

I have been proud to serve as the first Chair of the Institute's Board of Trustees.

It has been a privilege to work with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), our founding and new university partners, our strategic partners, and others to build a thriving, world-class research institute.

Our unique view of data science and AI is based on the breadth of expertise available to us at the Institute, stretching from the computational sciences, to engineering, to social sciences and beyond. As I reflect on my seven years at the Institute, it is clear to me that there has been rapid progress, underpinned by unstinting support from across the UK's data science and AI community. This impact has included playing an important part in responding to the pandemic, leading in areas such as data safe havens and helping to drive the emergence of exciting areas such as digital twins. Elsewhere, we have brought together some of the top data science talent in the UK through our Data Study Groups, and launched AI UK, which has quickly become an inspiring showcase attracting the biggest names in the AI ecosystem.

The Institute has also built many exciting new partnerships and collaborations with industry and the third sector, and has played a pivotal role advising government bodies on challenges such as AI explainability, data ethics and online harms.

The UK has continued to establish itself as one of the world's key research hubs and has done remarkably well to maintain its reputation for groundbreaking research, innovation, and borderless collaboration.

I have seen the Institute launch a range of research projects and interest groups, and establish a diverse range of programmes with our strategic partners. We are now seeing the impact of this research emerge: the Institute has become an innovator in the analysis and application of data science and AI. We have laid the foundations for a future of world-leading academic excellence by convening academia, industry, the government and the third sector on a truly national scale.

We are now at a critical time as the government has launched its first **National AI Strategy**, and the Institute is playing a leading role in its implementation while developing its own strategic response.

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I am delighted to welcome our new Chair **Douglas Gurr**. Under his leadership, I am confident that the Board of Trustees will ensure the continued success of the Institute during this important stage in its development.

Finally, my thanks go to Adrian Smith, the Board, everyone at the Institute, and our vibrant network of partners and community of collaborators.

I look forward to seeing the Institute continue to drive the kind of research and innovation that will be vital to the future of our environment, security, wellbeing, society, and our economy.

Howard Covington
Chair of the Board of Trustees
2015–2022

