

Dear Rt Hon Chloe Smith MP Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology

Thank you for the meeting yesterday, I am delighted to see the Government's ever increasing commitments to driving progress in artificial intelligence. As we all know, AI continues to be one of the most exciting and challenging technology domains and although my two terms as Chair of the council is complete I remain supportive of this crucial work and committed to the ecosystem.

By connecting expert technical advice to policy development, the AI Council has played a vital role in shaping the UK's AI policy foundations to date and I strongly believe the Council had a crucial role in the future. This letter sets out my thoughts on how the Government can get the broadest and best advice to advance the UK's agenda as an AI superpower.

Appointed by Secretaries of State in 2018, the AI Council is an independent expert group that represents many aspects of the ecosystem and brings a breadth of connections across the devolved nations and AI landscape alongside a depth of individual expertise. The Council has been a driving force behind the UK AI strategy including (1) delivering the UK's AI roadmap, based on engagement with over 400 members of the AI community (2) providing independent, expert advice across government, informing policy development in national security, defence, data ethics, skills, and AI regulation (3) facilitating rapid intelligence-gathering from the start-up community that directly shaped the Government's support offer for the tech sector in its COVID-19 response.

With the pace of change rapidly advancing, now is the time for a new Chair and to reset both the work of the AI Council and the connections between Government and the AI community. This is vital in enabling delivery of the Foundation Model Taskforce and Regulation White Paper, alongside the other many priority policy commitments in the National AI Strategy like the skills agenda and ensuring the general public have the tools to benefit from AI.

We propose appointing a new chair and completing a refresh of the Council's Terms of Reference to enable a more agile approach to getting a broader set of experts' advice on an ad hoc basis. Working across Government, the Council can galvanise action from the AI community, anticipating emerging technology issues, facilitating rapid policy response, and supporting policy implementation.

A core council would be able to take a focused approach to bringing together the appropriate industry, civil society, and academic experts around the most pressing topics as and when they arise as well keeping an eye on the complete picture spotting opportunities and gaps. A representative and inclusive group with the ability to convene the whole of the AI community in this targeted 'as needed' basis will enable insights from the frontiers of AI to reach policymakers at speed. By engaging across sectors, the Council can build the profile of the UK's AI strategy and help develop new partnerships. Feedback mechanisms between the Council and Government can support policy implementation, enhancing the effectiveness of policy interventions.

I'd welcome the opportunity to discuss these ideas with you further and ensure my departure from the role captures the spirit in which I approached the role. I believe that if responsibly deployed AI innovation can serve the citizens in this country and that in order for everyone in the UK to benefit from the advancements of AI it is important to have an inclusive coherent approach to the way experts are involved in policy making.

Yours truly,

Tabitha Goldstaub