



* Required

Participant Information

You are invited to take part in a research project being conducted at the University of Bristol. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important that you understand why the research is being carried out and what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to contact the research team.

1. What is the purpose of the project?

The aim of this research project is to explore the barriers students face when thinking about/applying to undertake studies in Artificial Intelligence (AI). In addition, the study examines whether and how participants' attitudes towards studying AI change after attending AI-related training sessions. The findings will be written up in a report intended to inform future AI training provision and university policy development. This project is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and is being undertaken by researchers at the University of Bristol.

2. Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you are registered to attend the Jean Golding Institute's **Getting Started in AI** sessions. We are interested in understanding how this training impacts students' knowledge of and attitudes towards AI studies. All individuals registered for the training sessions will be invited to complete a pre-training survey, and all individuals who attend both sessions will be invited to complete a post-training survey.

3. Do I have to take part?

No. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At the start of each survey, you will be asked to confirm that you have read and understood this Participant Information Sheet. If you choose to proceed, you will be asked to provide informed consent before completing the survey. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time **before your data are anonymised on 31/03/2026**, without giving a reason. After this date, withdrawal will no longer be possible, as it will not be feasible to identify your data. Your decision to take part or not will have **no impact whatsoever** on your academic progress, assessment outcomes, or your relationship with teaching staff. The training sessions are not part of any university course, assessment, or degree requirement.

4. What will happen to me if I take part and what will I have to do?

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete **two online surveys**:

- One before attending the first training session, and
- One after attending the first training session.

The pre-training survey will take approximately **15-20 minutes** to complete, while the post-training survey will take approximately **10-15 minutes** to complete. Both surveys can be completed on a computer or mobile device.

As part of the above surveys, you will be asked:

- To provide basic background information (e.g. your programme of study, age, ethnicity, gender).
- To answer multiple-choice questions about your current knowledge of AI, and
- To respond to questions about your attitudes towards, and awareness of, careers and further study in AI, including both multiple-choice questions and free-text responses.

You do not have to answer all the questions provided. Your responses will be used solely for research and evaluation purposes. They will not be used to inform the delivery of the above training and will not affect your academic attainment in any way.

5. Optional follow-up interview

Participants who have completed both the pre- and post-training surveys may also be invited to take part in an **optional online interview** lasting approximately **45–60 minutes**. Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to take part will not affect your participation in the training or surveys, nor your eligibility for survey vouchers. Each interview will involve **one participant and two researchers**. One researcher will lead the interview, while the second researcher will act solely as an observer and note-taker. This approach is used to enhance data quality and reduce interviewer bias. Interviews will be conducted on Microsoft Teams and will be audio-recorded and transcribed with your explicit consent. Recordings will be deleted within one week (seven days) of data extraction but you can still request to withdraw your data until 31/03/2026.

6. Are there any disadvantages or risks?

We do not foresee any risks to you with taking part in this study. The survey and interview questions are not intended to elicit sensitive or personal information. If you experience any discomfort or distress as a result of participating, you may stop at any time, without giving any reason and without any consequences. Support services are available through University of Bristol wellbeing services (www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/wellbeing/emergency-help).

Because we are collecting information on your ethnic group(s), which is a type of "special category data" (see the URL below for more information), we will aggregate the results when reporting on the responses from this survey. This means that your individual response will not be reported and so this eliminates any risk of you being identified based on this information in the results of this study. Please also note that this question is not compulsory.

More information on Special Category Data: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/lawful-basis/a-guide-to-lawful-basis/special-category-data/>

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

As a thank-you and compensation for your time:

- Participants who complete both surveys will receive a **£10 Love2Shop voucher**.
- Participants who also complete the optional interview will receive an **additional £20 Love2Shop voucher**.

While there may be no direct personal benefit beyond this compensation, the findings of this study aim to inform future AI training and university policy, with the goal of improving equity and accessibility in AI education.

8. **Will my participation in this project be kept confidential?**

Yes. All data collected in this study will be treated as confidential.

Survey responses will be anonymised using a unique identifier code. No names will be attached to the research data. Anonymisation will take place on **31/03/2026**.

Participants will be asked to provide an email address **solely for the purpose of distributing survey links and vouchers**. A purpose-created University of Bristol research project email address will be used for all correspondence. Email addresses will be stored separately from survey responses, will never be linked to research data, and will be deleted once all vouchers have been distributed.

Anonymised data will be stored securely on the University of Bristol OneDrive, in accordance with institutional data protection and security policies. Access will be restricted to the research team only, under the oversight of the project lead (Professor Flavia de Luca). Data will be retained in line with University of Bristol data retention policies (up to 20 years), after which it will be securely deleted.

9. **Limits to confidentiality**

All information you provide will be anonymised in any reports or publications arising from this study. The research does not ask you to disclose sensitive or distressing information.

However, if you choose to share information indicating that you or someone else may be at risk of harm, the research team has a duty of care to act. In such cases, the project lead may share relevant information with appropriate support services or authorities. You will be informed if such a referral is made, unless doing so would increase the risk of harm.

10. **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

Findings will be compiled into a comprehensive report for EPSRC and may contribute to future AI training provision and university policy discussions. Results may also be disseminated through academic or policy-related outputs. No individual participant will be identifiable.

11. Who is organising and funding the research?

The Principal Investigator for this project is **Professor Flavia de Luca** (University of Bristol). The project team includes six postgraduate researchers (Rosalba Castiglione, Erin Brady, Jana Alloush, Weilin He, Sven Hollowell, Adrianna Jezierska) and a Bristol Doctoral College Scholarship Coordinator (Emily Wride). The research is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and conducted at the University of Bristol.

12. Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Bristol Workstream 1 Research Ethics Committee (Ethics approval code: 29619).

13. Further information and contact details

If you have any questions about participating, please contact the project team at: uob-aibarriers-project@bristol.ac.uk

If you have any concerns related to your participation, you may contact the University of Bristol Workstream 1 Research Ethics Committee via the Research Governance Team, research-ethics@bristol.ac.uk

14. Have you read all of the information in this section? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Consent Form

Please read the following and respond as requested.

15. Can you confirm that: *

Yes

I am a student
at the
University of
Bristol.

☐

I am aged 18 or
over.

☐

I have been
accepted to
attend the AI
training course.

☐

16. Have you: *

Yes

read and understood the information in the Participant Information section that explains about the study?

☐

had an opportunity to ask about the study and received satisfactory answers to them?

☐

received enough information about the study for you to make a decision about your participation?

☐

17. Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study, and free to withdraw your data prior to anonymisation *

Yes

by the date of 31/03/2026?

☐

without having to give a reason for withdrawing?

☐

18. Please type your name in the box below to confirm you wish to participate in this survey (this will not be included in the analysis of your responses). *

In this section, you will be asked about your background.

19. Please write your course and year below:

For example, "Year 2 Politics and International Relations", "Year 3 Modern Languages (French and Portuguese)" or "Year 4 Mechanical Engineering with a Year in Industry"

20. What is your age?

21. What is your ethnic group? Please select all the options that best describe your ethnicity or background (e.g. you could select "Any other Black Background" and "English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British" if this best reflects your identity.)

☐ Bangladeshi

☐ Chinese

☐ Indian

☐ Pakistani

☐ Another Asian background (please describe in the next question)

☐ African

☐ Caribbean

☐ Any other Black / African / Caribbean background (please describe in the next question)

☐ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller

☐ Irish

☐ Roma

☐ Any other White background (please describe in the next question)

☐ Arab

☐ Hispanic

☐ Latina / Latino / Latinx

☐ Any other ethnic group (please describe in the next question)

22. If you selected any of the "Any other Asian/Black/African/Caribbean/White background" or "Any other ethnic group" options in the previous question, please write your ethnic background here:

23. Which of the following best describes your gender?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe

24. If you selected "Prefer to self-describe" in the previous question, please write your response here:

25. What is the highest level of education of any of your parents or guardians? Please select all options that apply.

- ☐ Degree level or above
- ☐ Further education below degree
- ☐ A level and equivalent
- ☐ O level, GCSE and equivalent
- ☐ Lower level (below GCSE grade 1)

26. What are your current occupations? Please select all options that apply.

- ☐ Full-time student
- ☐ Part-time student
- ☐ Higher managerial and professional (e.g: CEOs; senior government officials; doctors; lawyers; clergy; officers in armed forces)
- ☐ Lower managerial and professional (e.g: journalists, newspaper editors; musicians; nurses; paramedics; school teachers)
- ☐ Intermediate occupations (e.g: graphic designers, clerical, sales and service, police officers; non-supervisory positions)
- ☐ Small employers and own account workers (e.g: farmers; hotel managers; product designers; roofers; taxi-cab drivers)
- ☐ Lower supervisory and technical (e.g: bakers; electricians; gardeners; road construction operatives; train drivers)
- ☐ Semi-routine occupations (e.g: dental nurses, farm workers; housekeepers; scaffolders; traffic wardens)
- ☐ Routine occupations (e.g: butchers; cleaners, domestics; furniture makers; labourers in building and woodworking trades; waiting/ restaurant/bar staff)
- ☐ Never worked or long-term unemployed

AI Knowledge

The following questions have been adapted from Hornberger et al. (2025). They ask about your current knowledge of AI as we want to explore how this changes with you completing both training sessions. Because of this, it is essential that you do not use any additional materials to answer these questions. Also, you will not be shown the correct answers.

27. In which of these areas is AI typically applied?

- ☐ Detecting credit card fraud
- ☐ Cryptocurrency mining
- ☐ Web tracking
- ☐ Encryption for instant messaging services

28. Which of the following interdisciplinary research fields is also a subfield of AI?

- ☐ Blockchain
- ☐ Natural Language Processing
- ☐ Psychology of Learning
- ☐ Bioinformatics

29. For which task was AI first shown to be superior to human experts?

- ☐ Detecting tumours
- ☐ Conducting software projects
- ☐ Translating novels
- ☐ Designing cancer therapies

30. How does supervised learning differ from unsupervised learning?

- ☐ In supervised learning, the output values of the training data are known.
- ☐ In supervised learning, humans must supervise the AI during learning and intervene if necessary.
- ☐ In supervised learning, all computational steps are documented.
- ☐ In supervised learning, stricter legal regulations apply.

31. Sort the process steps in supervised learning into the correct order by dragging and dropping:

Train model with training data.

Predict test data with the model.

Collect and prepare data.

Divide data into training and test data.

Calculate accuracy of prediction.

32. How do AI developers most typically shape the results of the machine learning process?

- ☐ Through calculation of the accuracy of the prediction.
- ☐ Through randomised division into test and training data.
- ☐ Through selection of the model.
- ☐ Through abstraction of the model.

33. What primarily determines the behaviour of AI systems?

- ☐ AI systems strive for autonomy.
- ☐ AI systems pursue a goal that has been given to them by humans.
- ☐ AI systems perform behaviours randomly.
- ☐ AI systems seek out goals independently and pursue them.

34. You are testing a machine learning model that is supposed to classify images of animals. You notice that the model is better at recognising cats than dogs. What could be the reason for this?

- ☐ Dogs are more difficult to recognise than cats since there are fewer images of dogs on the internet.
- ☐ Small objects (cats) are better recognised than large ones (dogs).
- ☐ Most models are generally better at recognising cats than dogs.
- ☐ The training data of the dogs were not representative of all dog breeds.

35. What is the black box problem?

- ☐ AI entails a residual risk that is hard to calculate.
- ☐ It is often difficult to determine how an AI system makes decisions.
- ☐ Users are often not informed that an AI system is being used.
- ☐ Many users have little knowledge about AI.

36. What is a central risk in using AI for predictive policing?

- ☐ Vulnerability to hacking
- ☐ Discrimination against suspects based on origin and status
- ☐ Lack of legal certainty in the event of an AI failure
- ☐ Undermining the authority of police officers

This section will ask about your interest in and awareness of AI

37. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
I am confident that I can hold an informed conversation about AI.	☐	☐	☐
I am concerned about the ethics of AI.	☐	☐	☐
I think I would be offered a place to study a PhD in AI if I applied.	☐	☐	☐
I am satisfied with the number of people within the field of AI who are like me.	☐	☐	☐

38. At this stage, would you consider studying AI in a specialised master's course, short course or other professional course?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

39. At this stage, would you consider applying for a PhD in AI?

By this, we mean whether you would consider applying for study of a postgraduate research or postgraduate taught degree which focuses on the applications, development and understanding of AI.

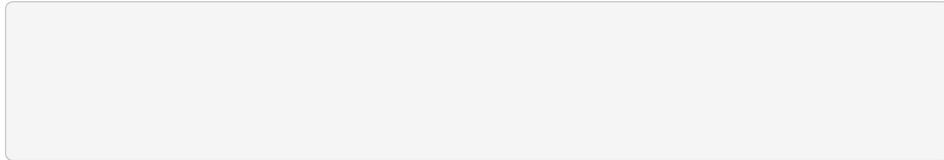
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

40. Please list up to three things that interest you in studying AI.

41. Please list up to three things that interest you in undertaking a PhD.

Your motivation to participate in the training.

42. Please write up to 100 words about what has motivated you to take part in the AI training offered by the Jean Golding Institute.



Thank you for completing the survey.

We are very grateful for you taking the time to respond.

43. Please write your email address below: *

This is so that we can link your responses from this pre-training survey to the post-training survey. Once you have completed both surveys, we will send the Love2Shop voucher to this email address to thank you for participating.

Thank you for your interest.

If you wish to proceed with taking part, please read through the participant information before restarting this survey.

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