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PEOPLE'S PANEL FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Building trust and giving people a voice:
A showcase of the experiences of Greater
Manchester citizens, businesses and researchers
involved in The People's Panel for AI.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Alan Turing Institute

The project is funded by The Alan Turing Institute, the UK's national institute for data science and artificial intelligence (AI), through its Public Engagement Grant award 2022. These projects form part of the Turing's vibrant public engagement programme and empower researchers across the UK by enabling them to connect with the public in accessible and engaging ways on a range of themes relating to data science and emerging AI technologies. Many thanks to The Alan Turing Institute for making this important work possible.



Project Partner: Hannah Berry, GMCVO



Hannah Berry is based at GMCVO and works as the part-time Project Officer for the Greater Manchester Equality Alliance (GM=EqAI). GM=EqAI is a coalition of organisations and individuals drawn from a wide range of communities of experience who act as a reference group for strategic equality and diversity work within the sub-region. We take a pan-equalities approach, focusing on the intersections between different forms of inequality, channelling multiple perspectives and developing solutions through dialogue.



<https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/GMEqualityAlliance>



Project Advisor: Edwin Colyer, Scientia Scripta



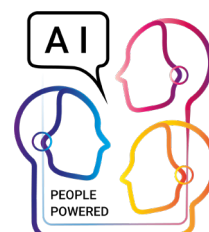
Edwin Colyer is Founder and Impact Lead at Scientia Scripta, a research support agency with a mission to democratise science and innovation, for good. The agency provides public sector and private clients with creative services and consultancy on strategic communications, ethical engagement and impact management.

We would like to thank Edwin Colyer, Director at Scientia Scripta for his help and support.



www.scientiascripta.co.uk

The People's Panel logo and this booklet were designed by Regina Jedrzejek



FOREWORD



Citizen trust in Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications and data driven technologies is at the forefront of ethical guidelines, principles, and future AI legalisation. The creation of successful products and services that benefit people and society requires many diverse citizen voices which are often absent from R&D processes and wider public discourse. Citizens need to have the opportunity and confidence to engage with researchers and innovators through a shared language and understanding of the relationship between data and AI.

Funded by the Alan Turing Institute, the UK's national institute for data science and artificial intelligence (AI), through its Public Engagement Grant award 2022 we established a Greater Manchester (GM) People's Panel for AI (PPfAI) to empower traditionally marginalised communities to contribute to AI research and development. We reached out to two GM communities: The Tatton in Salford and Inspire in Levenshulme. Neither community had previously engaged with the research and development sector. A key motivation for this project was to build people's confidence question how their data and AI is being used by businesses through an increased understanding of data and AI technology.

Starting in July 2022, we ran three interactive community roadshows that explored how AI impacts people's everyday lives, debated technology use over a range of applications, and heard very diverse opinions. During the AI Roadshows we recruited nine citizens to join the People's Panel. The People's Panel recruits then completed two days of training about key aspects of data, AI and ethics, including learning the Open Data Institutes Consequence Scanning toolkit. Four GM People's Panel for AI sessions were held where tech businesses and researchers pitched their ideas/products and

were subject to intensive questioning by the People's Panel.

To sustain the panel, we have co-developed with panel members, businesses and the Greater Manchester Equality Alliance (GM=EqAI) (which works with marginalised communities to influence regional policy making) to develop a People's Panel for AI Terms of Reference which is freely available.

After taking part, panel members reported an increase in confidence in being able to question businesses and researchers. Businesses heard a diverse stakeholder voice on the ethical impacts of their products / services which have and are leading to changes from product design considerations to ethical practices.



Annabel Latham

Annabel Latham is a Senior Lecturer in Computer Science in the Department of Computing and Mathematics at Manchester Metropolitan University.



Keeley Crockett

Keeley is a Professor in Computational Intelligence in the Department of Computing and Mathematics at Manchester Metropolitan University and an EPSRC Public Engagement Champion

FOREWORD

This booklet showcases the experiences of the citizens who were trained and took part in the People's Panel for AI and also the Businesses and Researchers who see building trust in AI as fundamental in building responsible tech. Most importantly, these case studies give people a voice.

We hope these stories will inspire other businesses and researchers in Greater Manchester and beyond on their own ethical data and AI journeys.

We also hope it encourages more citizens to consider training up to be a part of future People's Panels for AI. There are no barriers to participation.



PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

JANET HIGNETT

PROFILE Happily retired

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



JANET HIGNETT

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

"It's important to keep your brain active as you get older – as important as keeping your body active."

"My view is AI is here, it's not going away, so hopefully we will use it for the best."

Janet Hignett was born and has lived all her life in Manchester, moving to Levenshulme in 1987. Janet has always worked with people and is a firm believer in keeping her brain active by learning new things.

Before retirement, Janet worked for the mobile blood transfusion service as part of the blood collection team and moved to Levenshulme to be nearer to her team's base. Since moving to Levenshulme in 1987, Janet has seen some big changes in the community – it's a lot more diverse now.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

I didn't know much about Artificial Intelligence, and when I saw an opportunity to find out more, I grasped it. It's important to keep our brains active – use it or lose it!

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

Although I had used a computer at work to record donor details, I wasn't at all sure what AI was before joining the People's Panel.

There's an assumption that older people don't want to know or learn new things, but that's wrong – just as there are young people who don't want to learn, there are old people who do.

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Yes, I think everyone should be. We give our information out so easily without even thinking about how it is going to be used and why it is being collected – sometimes for convenience and sometimes because we have to. I was aware of this before the panel but I'm much more alert to it now – for example, I don't use online banking – I like to talk to people.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

Definitely yes, and I really enjoyed learning about the AI systems pitched by the researchers and businesses as part of the panel, and how they worked.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

I have been made more aware of data and AI, and how it can be used. I've always been cautious, but now I've learned more about data and its use I am a lot more wary of giving out information.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes definitely. As part of the group, it helped build my confidence in questioning the businesses. Learning about AI and data gave me confidence to ask questions if I don't understand – I didn't feel stupid doing this when part of the Panel.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

Yes, I did feel my opinions were valued. It was interesting to hear all different points of view from people's different perspectives – we all have different levels of technical expertise and different experiences of life.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

Hearing other people's experiences of AI and picking up questions from other panel members that I hadn't thought of. I enjoyed the food and the vouchers too!

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

It has made me more aware of AI and the different ways it is used, as well as the potential of AI – there are more ways it can be used for good than for dodgy things. People will always find a way to use technology for crime and to make money. Getting the benefits from AI depends on how comfortable people feel about using new technology – it's not inherently a right or a wrong thing. My view is it's here, it's not going away, so hopefully we will use it for the best.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

It's always good to hear from different people, so it was nice to meet the other community. I've always worked with people, so I have no problem talking to new people – maybe your openness to meet others depends on what you did in your job.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Yes definitely, because you learn new things and because it's something different to do, instead of the same thing every week. That keeps your brain active and it's important as you get older – as important as keeping your body active.

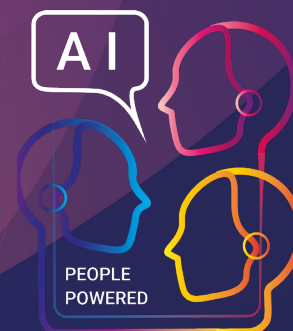
PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

PAUL BELFIELD

PROFILE Project Manager at Levenshulme Inspired Taskforce and technology/AI enthusiast

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



PAUL BELFIELD

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

“Having an opportunity to speak to developers of AI was an eye opener”

“AI will go beyond even more than I can imagine in the future.”

Paul Belfield has always lived in Levenshulme and has worked with community groups at Levenshulme Inspire for 12 years. Paul has been interested in computers and AI since the age of 10, taking apart computers and building them back up for fun.

As a young boy, Paul taught himself how to use and build computers and how software works. This led to Paul starting work at Levenshulme Inspire Community Hub as a Digital Officer, helping older people to use devices such as computers and mobile phones. Now Paul continues to support the older community at Inspire as Project Manager and tries to help reduce people's fear and stress about using technology in a world where it's increasingly unavoidable.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

I have always been interested in AI, but having a say in it, and how it's being used, is what drew me to the project, so I was very interested to be part of the Panel and learn more.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

As a long-term hobby of mine, I was very aware of AI. What comes to mind is the new NHS app that has been forced on people – you have to go on it to get your prescriptions, etc. Having a programme that helps understanding of data and AI is a good thing. I believe AI will go beyond even more than I can imagine in the future.

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Yes and no. No in the sense that I am very trusting of certain organisations, and I have never had any personal problems when sharing my data. Although I have not had issues, for example I haven't visited unethical websites, I do know that others have been affected by data being passed on. I don't worry that much as

there have been no personal discussions and I am not putting my bank details all over, so I feel secure.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

I would say yes – because I have never before had the opportunity to speak to the developers of AI software. That was an eye opener. Speaking face to face is better than seeing information on a screen, so I am more aware. I particularly enjoyed hearing other people's perspectives and other people's bias about AI - it is different from my perspective. Having a balanced panel has been useful for the project but also for me to hear other perspectives.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

I have been given a better understanding of other people's perspective. This is helpful as I teach these things (digital) in my job, and it has helped me to see how I can use this view when I teach this topic.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes. I think for a lot of people AI can be big and scary, but because of the panel, it allows more people to ask questions and be aware. Being able to see the human behind the software has opened up the ability to ask more questions.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

Yes, everyone got a fair share of say. The developers took away quite a lot from us as a panel and I hope they make changes based on our comments. I do feel we have been heard.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

Being able to put a face to the software. When you see AI you think of a computer or machine out to destroy the world. Putting a face to it makes it more interesting.

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

Personal development in being able to understand how others perceive AI. One panel member was very against facial recognition technology, but I am not too fussed. Also being to be able to absorb their opinions into my own perspective.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

It was an interesting and was again a chance to see more people's perspectives.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Absolutely. Being someone who works with older people and AI, the AI Panel and training is something that can relieve the stress of technology in people's life as they can learn it is not scary. There is a lot of fear in people – for example, by owning any form of smart device you should be able to improve your quality of life, but people are afraid of them. Connecting to other people is another good example of the benefits of technology – especially during the pandemic – but I have examples of people who will use Facebook to connect but will not use their debit card for purchases online. So, I would recommend the panel, firstly to relieve stress, fear and panic and secondly to help people understand more and share their perceptions.

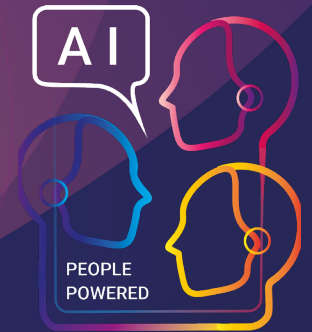
PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

MARK LUCAS

PROFILE Busy community worker who is cautious of sharing data

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



MARK LUCAS

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

"It was useful to see what AI companies are doing in the real world"

"The People's Panel should be part of the UK's AI Strategy"

Mark has lived in South Manchester for 30 years, and since achieving a BSc in Computer Science and working as a computer engineer, Mark has done lots of community work. Mark thinks critical thinking is essential and always asks "What is the organisation doing with my data?".

For the past few years, Mark has enjoyed working for the community by maintaining Greenbank Park, being a steward at the Covid-19 vaccination centre and volunteering at Levenshulme Inspire to maintain the garden, deliver Meals on Wheels and works at the Bread and Butter food bank.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

I have always been interested in technology and computers, so thought I'd come along and find out more about AI.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

I wasn't massively aware of AI, I knew bits from the news and Internet, but doing a degree in computer science has given me know-

ledge of databases so I have always been aware of collecting data. I knew about the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the use of AI influencing our decision to leave Europe and its use in Trump's election

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Sort of. I have always been cautious of sharing data (e.g., on Facebook) – I don't understand why people do this. We don't know exactly what is happening with all the data that is being captured and we are never informed of exactly what data has been stolen. For example, Google timeline knows everywhere you have been, what shops you have visited, whether you were driving or using public transport, etc. Does Google sell this data? Does it get deleted?

Another example is the app Strava. I cancelled my subscription, and I don't use the extended features they add because I don't want to give them any extra data, like finding out who your friends are. It's like a spider web when they link you and your data to your friends and their data. What is in it for the business? I don't know what they are doing with the data.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

Yes, I thought consequence scanning was good to get into the nitty gritty of the AI and think about what questions to ask.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

I am a little more wary of apps on my phone. There's a lot of companies that use data and we're sleepwalking using apps, giving away our data every day though we don't know the detail of how it's used. You have to pay by apps, but it's good to know the data is secure.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes definitely, I did not know what sort of questions to ask. It was useful to see what AI companies are doing in the real world – I did not realise that there are so many companies in the North West using AI.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

Yes, I felt like we were being valued. For example, HD Labs gave us great feedback so we're

making an impact already. I think we need to get more companies to come to the People's Panel, and it should be part of the UK AI strategy.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

Meeting the other panel members and people taking part.

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

It's been a confidence builder for me, I feel more confident. Also, it has given me something to focus on, especially since the pandemic, it's given me an outlet.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

It was good to meet some characters! It would be good to meet more people like this.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Yes – I think it was good. You just need critical thinking; you don't need computer knowledge. When we did the community launch, I was surprised how many turned up to listen.

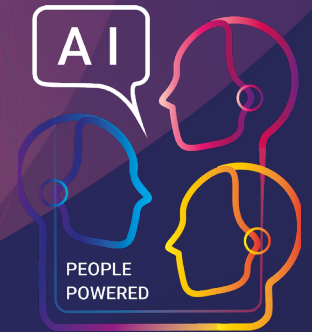
PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

PATU BHATT

PROFILE A fan of science who is interested in how other people think

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



PATU BHATT

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

“Science helps you progress”

“I am still learning and when someone comes out with new technology or ideas that help – I really appreciate AI as I think how wonderful and helpful it is!”

Patu has lived in the South Manchester area for around the past 50 years. He really appreciates the clever use of technology and AI to help people but thinks more can be implemented to improve society.

Patu learned to use computers in his work as a clerk. He started as a correspondence clerk for a football pools company, then worked as a stock control clerk for a thread manufacturing company and then as an accounts clerk at a computer repairs company. He became quite savvy with computers during his job as an accounts clerk where he learned how to use word processing software and spreadsheets. After some years he achieved an AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians) certificate. Patu is interested in new technology and how it can further improve things for people.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

I'm interested in how things are progressing and how they can be improved further. AI can sort out many problems especially where data and statistics are involved,

and my observation has shown that this is important in almost any area of governance, business and management.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

I was aware of the use of AI in factories that reduced the working people to a minimum. I remember in the 90s speaking to a person working nightshifts in a bakery – he said “we only have 7 people working in the factory with one person in particular using robotics to do almost everything involved in the production process and the other 6 involved in one or two other manual tasks”. So in some cases technology is a good thing for productivity but not for creating jobs. Another good example is supermarket self-checkouts.

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Overall, if there is an oversight but the AI system was being created for the overall general benefit of the community then I wouldn't mind my data being shared. For example, the NHS app knows about my prescriptions and my health conditions – but as long as it helps me and helps with research into medical conditions then I have no objection.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

Yes, my awareness has increased from the training. The Deep Fake video presentation during one session featuring Barack Obama was amazing to view as it showed how a lie could be presented as the truth!

Also, I'm still learning – when someone comes out with some energy saving application using AI, or an application that helps a person with a speech impediment speak via some device or the other is when I really appreciate AI as that's good. In many things we do now, there is some element of AI in it – e.g. machines that take measurements for the spectacles that I wear.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

It made me happy to hear that some of these AI technologies are being implemented but also a bit fearful as things could go wrong e.g. as in the post office scandal where many small independent post office owners/managers got accused of fraud due to the fault of the computer system and not because of anything the post office managers had done.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Definitely – as we can see where we may be going.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

Perhaps, but I'm not sure – I think this depends on who would be looking into my suggestions. Some of the points I think may have been taken on board.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

Listening, contributing and giving my input. I enjoyed the company of like-minded people, learning and contributing with others.

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

I feel I was a valued part of the community. The fact that my opinions were welcomed meant I was considered important, and I felt heard.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

It was interesting to know how other people think – the more people that contribute towards AI the better it is for AI.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Yes, but it would also depend on the type of outlook they have. Some people are not interested in computing technology – as it does not interest them. I feel that we may not have a good discussion with them – but if they see the good points of AI through the People's Panel then they may be able to take some interest afterwards.

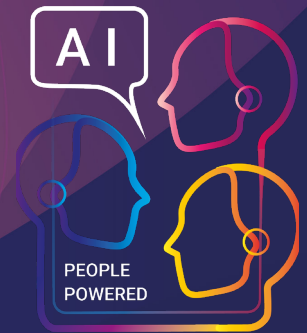
PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

JAY QUINCEY

PROFILE Photographer, community member and volunteer

COMMUNITY Ordsall Community

LOCATION Salford



JAY QUINCEY

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

"I think I was put on this earth to help people"

"I have come to the realisation that we are never going to be able to live without AI"

Jay Quincey has always lived in Ordsall and is a strong supporter of maintaining a community spirit. Jay can regularly be found talking to people at The Tatton Community Café.

Jay has volunteered over many years, working with the homeless, at Ordsall Community Arts Centre, Talk about it Mate! men's group and is about to volunteer on the reception of Basic (Brain and spinal injury clinic). The team at BASIC got Jay up and running after his stroke using technology and really helped him so much. Jay is a photographer and a member of a camera club in Sale.

Jay reflects – "As a kid, I was living in the slums, we did not have a lot of money. I have seen and contributed to a lot of change over the years. I was a chainman helping to build the canal between 8 and 9 dock and my dad was an engineer. It was an important job. I am a very non-judgemental person. I don't believe I am powerful enough to judge anyone."

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

I heard about the roadshow event about AI in The Tatton Café. I have

been interested in AI for the past 6 years. The more I listened the more I was intrigued – it sparked me. I went home that night [after the roadshow] and started looking online at AI.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

Quite, my phone amazes me, it's a mini computer. I have been interested since the early days in how things work. I am inquisitive, I like the latest gadgets. I have come to the realisation that we are never going to be able to live without AI. In some places AI is required when you need precision such as car building. The bad side is that some people will lose their jobs - that's the way the mop flops. However, I don't believe it has any place in education.

Are you concerned about how your data could be

shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Yes. As far as I know, it could be AI systems that put my phone number out there leading to junk calls. I also believe there are companies that want and do sell our data – GDPR is out of the window. With any AI there is always a programmer. I don't think we will ever stop it but we might make AI a bit safer.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

Absolutely. I felt like I gained a lot of knowledge. I enjoyed meeting other people, and I am quite shy as a person.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

Speaking to HD labs, when I met Mel from HD Labs at the University launch event they said they changed everything we suggested. They listened to us and that made me feel massive.

You normally only get feedback when you are young when you do something wrong, but when you get positive feedback, you should celebrate it. We got positive feedback from the businesses and researchers.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes, absolutely. Because it is something I believe in. I believe if we get it wrong it can have serious consequences - there should be more panels to look at all new applications of AI.

For example, I was in Asda, the self-service till looked at my face and it quizzed me about my age. The till flashed red for someone to come over. I was buying Alcohol-free beer!.. It was the system that got it wrong.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued

Yes it did. I enjoyed talking to people.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

It got me out of the house and gave me something to look forward to. It gave me structure in my day. I knew I was coming to something where I could make a real difference.

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

It has made me more confident in meeting other people, especially the other community group. Also meeting the academics.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

Very nervous, but I felt at home with them. I was feeling worried but I helped calm another member from my community who was also worried. My nerves settled once I met them. I was ok about coming into the University.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Absolutely. I think people will enjoy it. When I explain to people how AI works and why it's better if we have a panel to check it and question the business to make sure that it gives the benefits they say it does when it is released to the public. I have explained the Peoples Panel to the men's group, Talk About It Mate! which I volunteer in.

PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

LINDA DAVIES

PROFILE Jewellery maker and knitter who is comfortably wary of AI

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



LINDA DAVIES

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

"The panel gave me a basis for my suspicion and more confident in my argument"

"People need to have their eyes open and an awareness of what's being thought about"

Originally from Surrey, Linda Davies has lived about two thirds of her life in Levenshulme. Linda is concerned about the lack of interest in privacy and how much information people routinely expose to others.

Linda started her life in Surrey before moving to Manchester. Linda has three children and six grandchildren and enjoys crafts such as making jewellery and knitting. Linda has a healthy distrust of technology that listens in to us, like phones and Alexa, and thinks young people should take more interest in privacy.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

It was just up my street because I thought I needed to know more about AI. I am extremely suspicious. My daughter gave me an Alexa but I never used it – it is a sensible thing to have but I don't like the way it listens and spies on you. "If you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear" seems to be the mantra of the young, but they should have more interest in privacy.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

I wasn't very aware of AI, but I was wary. When there is a crisis, someone creates a solution, but when there is a solution someone creates a crisis. I wanted to know more.

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Most definitely – my data is none of their business. I don't want Alexa listening to me – they are not entitled to know about me. What is the point, for example, of bringing your loved ones back from the dead in AI videos? Is it for entertainment purposes? It seems

creepy – people are not going to move forward if they have their late loved ones to talk to.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

Yes, I liked all of it – it was extremely interesting “food for thought”.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

I am now watching more programmes that feature AI and this is making me more worried. The panel reinforced my arguments and made me feel that it is OK to be skeptical – it gave me a basis for my suspicion and made me more confident.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes I enjoyed hearing from the businesses and asking questions along the lines of “have you thought about this, how does it work” – I like the nitty gritty bits.

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

Yes. We were all able to say our piece and felt we all have equal value. It was especially good when we gave our opinions, and we had positive feedback from the businesses and researchers - “we never thought of that”.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

I enjoyed all of it – the pitches, the chat, making the brain work and the time and space to do it.

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

It made me more aware of things, more interested in AI and more wary. I am now more aware that people are actually working on ideas to put AI into systems – sometimes they are useful things and sometimes not. Just because you can do something – should you do it? For example, I watched a programme on AI and the workforce, replacing people at supermarket checkouts. They said that if this continues in other areas of work, mundane jobs would go but people would have more leisure time – but who would pay them? Jobs give people a purpose.

How did you feel about meeting and working with panel members from different communities?

Great – the more the merrier!

Would you recommend the People’s Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Absolutely because everyone needs to know about this sort of thing – the upsides, the downsides – people need to have their eyes open and an awareness of what’s being thought about. The Little Britain sketch where “computer says no” is what’s happening already.

PANNELLIST AT A GLANCE

BOB SMITH

PROFILE Keen science fiction reader and semi-professional musician who worked in electronics

COMMUNITY Inspire Community Hub

LOCATION Levenshulme, Manchester



BOB SMITH

**Panel Member -
People's Panel for AI**

"It was good to get in a discussion with like-minded people about the future"

"Before getting involved, I didn't know that governments were looking into safeguards for AI"

Originally from Brentwood in Essex, Bob Smith moved to Levenshulme in 2012. Bob is very interested in AI, having worked in electronics, and read science fiction widely.

Bob worked in electronics as an engineer, tester, and trouble-shooter – a career that led on to working with computers. When in Essex, Bob was a semi-professional musician, playing the double bass in an orchestra. One gig led him to the West End, where the orchestra played at The Globe Theatre on Drury Lane for a show put on for Elton John's charity. Bob enjoys science fiction and travels to Science Fiction conventions – the next one being in Sweden.

Why did you decide to be part of the People's Panel for AI?

It sounded interesting. I am a very keen reader of science fiction and have been talking about AI for a long time. I like Iain Banks' Culture novels – there's lots of AI in that.

How aware of current AI systems were you before taking part?

I was well aware of AI before the panel – for example in the medical field looking for faulty cells and performing minor and some major operations.

Are you concerned about how your data could be shared and might be used in building an AI system?

Yes, I think you should be. If you were looking to buy life insurance, they have access to information about you and your family history and can pick and choose who to insure and charge a person more.

Did the roadshow and training make you more aware of AI systems that are currently being used?

They made me aware that there are safeguards to AI – I did not know that anyone like the government or Europeans were looking into it before.

What was the most important thing you learned that changed your thinking or actions?

I went in knowing a little bit, but my ideas about AI were not the same as what we ended up talking about. Does AI self-learn? Is it AI in that respect? Is it more than just data and algorithms? It would be good to have more of an oversight to understand the difference between types of AI.

Did the training and panel sessions make you more confident in asking questions about AI?

Yes

Did taking part in the panel sessions make you feel like your opinions were valued and may make a difference?

I felt that my opinions were valued – but will they make a difference? I don't know.

What were the best things about being part of the panel?

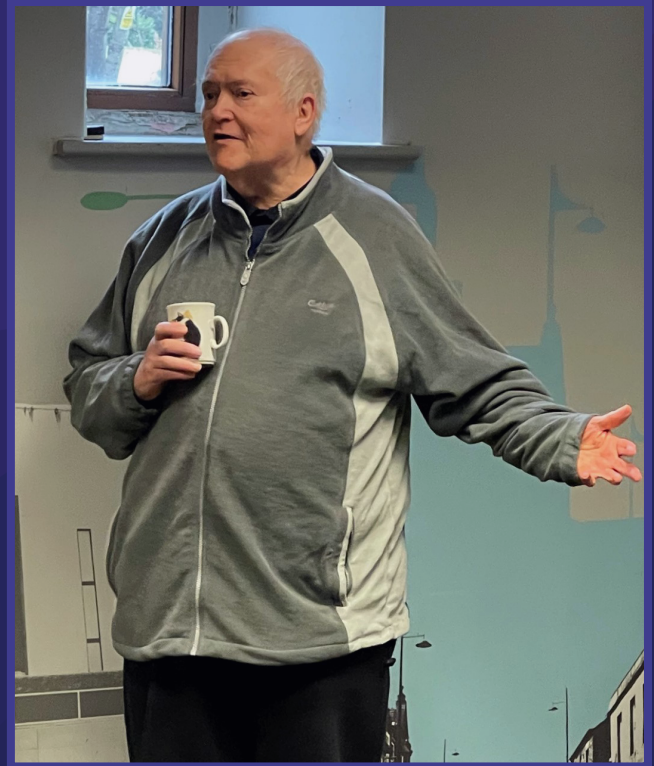
The food!

What has been the main impact of being part of the panel on you personally?

It was good to get in a discussion with like-minded people about the future.

Would you recommend the People's Panel for AI to other people in your community?

Yes, because it was good socially, to get out. It is not just good for older people – the SMEs looked like they were getting on board too.



BUSINESS AT A GLANCE

MELISSA WOOD

COMPANY Hilltop Digital Labs (HD Labs)

PROFILE Healthcare-focused AI company focusing on population health and personalising the citizen experience of accessing public services

PRODUCT PITCHED Compassionate Appreciator - a decision support tool for healthcare professionals



Melissa Wood

**Technology Consultant,
HD Labs**

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“The level of engagement from the panel was just incredible”

“It’s got the potential to be a little bit of a disruptor to software development life cycles”

Melissa Wood is a Technology Consultant who is interested in research insights in terms of new technology and the impacts that it has on both organisations and different populations of people.

Melissa Wood has worked as a front end developer since graduating in 2005 and is working on a new Ethical Digital service line at HD Labs which is currently in BETA. HD Labs want developers and adopters of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop ethical assurance for AI models. HD Labs are a supplier to the NHS within the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS region, and believes that when public services improve, the user experience also improves. Services should positively impact people’s lives.

HD Labs have three service lines: Data Orchestration, Smart Interventions and Ethical Digital. Data orchestration moves data around at the right time and the right place, and because it can offer data enrichment and transformation, it can provide a richer picture with the person at the centre. Smart Interventions allows for a more personalised experience from really understanding a person and how they can be helped via natural language processing.

service known as the Compassionate Appreciator - a decision support tool for healthcare professionals - that can scaffold peer and professional health coaching responses.

Biggest Challenge in Explaining Your Idea

The most difficult part was explaining the technology - we would normally talk about the technology first and then the benefits but we reversed the order for this audience. We explained the benefits first and demonstrated the benefits using the tale of two stories method. We could then look at it and show where the tech is - so where the benefits come from. It was important to explain the complex technology to any level of technical consumption and without leaving assumptions. There was definitely a fine line between explaining and patronising.

We used a lot of visuals to keep us on track when we were talking, because it’s easy to run away with yourself when you’re

AI Product Pitched to the Panel

We pitched one component of the Smart Interventions multimodal

so close to the technology. We did not want to talk at people. Even though there's quite a lot to say, trying to reduce content whilst remaining inclusive was quite difficult, so we put a lot of information on the slides so people could read at their own pace.

How does your business use data in the context of AI model building?

We don't believe necessarily in using open-source data to train models because we believe that the kind of bias and potential harms that can come from that will be much more of a higher risk. We embed ethics in what we do, so we have developed relationships with organisations and use their data under a secure environment and contract.

Why did you get involved with the People's Panel?

The founders of the company have very much wanted to develop an ethical company culture right from the very start so we all share the same vision. We embed ethics into our company culture in terms of how we work, how we present ourselves and how we work with others. At the core we all want to do better for citizens, so the concept of the People's Panel was really interesting. To have people that are disconnected from the development explore the idea - they might not be engaging with the service that we're working towards at the moment, but that doesn't mean that their values and concerns are not valid.

What did you learn from the experience?

One of the things that really stood out to us was the quality of the feedback that we were getting, the quality of the questions that were asked and the level of engagement from panel was just incredible. You know, explaining relatively complex technology can get really dry and boring. Having questions from another perspective, definitely introduced some learnings for us.

What will be the impact of taking part in the panel on your business?

We have already actioned one point from the panel with regards to the Compassionate Appreciator. We also have looked at the right to be forgotten and the impact of removal of datasets from training lifecycles. The feedback has filtered down through the team in terms of how we're talking about risks and mitigations and what that might all look like. It has given us an expanded language.

What do you see as the barriers to adoption of the People's Panel?

Time. Taking out time to commit to something like this is going to be a big ask for some organisations. I think smaller organisations might not see it as problematic though. It could provide smaller organisations that competitive edge. I also think that businesses need more time to explain or demonstrate their product in the Panel schedule - it would be a shame if companies felt that the time was too restrictive for them to explain a bigger, multimodal service for example.

Do you see the People's Panel as a mechanism towards building trustworthy and ethical tech?

I think it's got the potential to be a little bit of a disruptor for software development life cycles and I totally welcome that. If you imagine what the start-up and SME scene looks like, it is quite a rapid development life cycle and there's a lot of models that already exist or open models, or things that you can build upon, there's the danger to just rush through. However, for an organisation of a certain size, it's difficult to engage with users - you might not have means and you might not have the key relationships. If you had a service where you can just book and go pitch an idea to gain feedback from real citizens, then I think the People's Panel has a place and can go a long way, definitely.

Whether the People's Panel is a way to build trust for AI or data-driven tech in general is a broad question with a multifaceted answer. The benefits of AI are clear, I think, but it's how risk and harm are identified and mitigated. It's about understanding what the user values and concerns are that underpin any kind of risk or harm. Then the next part is OK, well, how do we mitigate whilst also delivering against business objectives? It's an interesting grey area that I think still needs to be properly explored by those who position themselves within an emerging Ethical AI Market.

Would you recommend the panel to other AI businesses?

Absolutely. Within the NHS landscape you already have patient and public engagement and involvement which is usually a cohort of lived-experience patients for a specific pathway that you're working on. But there is nothing equally this robust that exists beyond public service, so to have the People's Panel as a service for the private sector is really important and a great next step towards developing ethical AI. So, I'm a big supporter and big advocate and yes, I will definitely be recommending it.

I'm interested to see how we could tie this service in with part of the Ethical Digital service that we're developing.

BUSINESS AT A GLANCE

LUKE ABBERLEY

COMPANY Synectics Solutions

PROFILE Synectics Solutions create bespoke solutions that enable private and public sector organisations to truly understand their customers, manage risk and prevent fraud.

PRODUCT PITCHED Precision, AI models to support fraud detection in finance and insurance sectors.



LUKE ABBERLEY

**Senior Data Scientist,
Synectics Solutions**

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“There were no pointless questions... it was nice to get someone else’s perspective and thoughts”

“I didn’t expect the panellists to be as knowledgeable”

Luke has always had a passion for machine learning and data science. His PhD used AI to predict the types of urban congestion occurring in Greater Manchester. Luke studied for his PhD whilst being a Dad of two and working a full-time job as a Senior Data Scientist developing award-winning fraud prevention systems.

Synectics Solutions was established in 1992 and had a turnover of £24.3 million in 2022. Since 2017 they have seen a 46.8% increase in turnover.

AI Product Pitched to the Panel

We pitched a product called Precision that uses a supervised approach for predicting application fraud within the financial and insurance sectors. Precision is applied on many product lines, such as policies, claims, loans, credit cards, current accounts, and mortgages, for the purpose of detecting fraud. In addition to fraud detection, we have produced predictive models to try and reduce bad lending and can apply our approach to anything you can think of in the finance and insurance sectors. The Precision product is mature (7 years old) but under constant improvement.

Biggest Challenge in Explaining Your Idea

The most difficult part was trying to explain in layperson’s terms what we actually mean by building predictive models and machine learning as a whole. I know the panellists went for training in advance, but you never can gauge how much people understand about the technology or the reason we use so much personal information, because obviously that can be a touchy subject. However, I feel they appreciated why we needed sensitive information and large quantities of data. Our prime goal is in reducing fraud. Fraud impacts all people, regardless of whether you’re making the application or not.

We did adjust our communication from how I would typically

present to a client. If I was talking to our clients, I would deal with it differently and I like to feel that I took into consideration the breadth of experience and the different types of people in the audience. I assumed that they were laypeople from different backgrounds, so I changed how I would typically communicate and used more visual aids rather than just words and statistics.

How does your business use data in the context of AI model building?

We use personal data such as the name, date of birth, addresses, etc. to match people who have previously been found to be fraudulent by companies. We then create rules, and we share knowledge from the rules with clients, but we don't share the raw data. We use supervised machine learning and have explored the use of anomaly detection. We ensure that public sector data and private sector data is kept separate.

Why did you get involved with the People's Panel?

I always feel like AI has a bad reputation and people always put in the news about how AI is impacting and infringing on their rights. AI has previously been found to be biased towards people (age, colour, ethnicity for instance), but then there's a lot of good things that it does. So, I like to try to put out a positive image that AI, although it can be bad in the wrong hands, can actually be really useful and helpful to everyone too. Additionally, I'm quite ethical. Let's understand and conceptualise what data we should be using rather than just say "we've got all this data let's throw it in and build a model".

What did you learn from the experience?

The perceptions people have. The People's Panel asked a couple of questions that even I didn't think about. One of the questions someone mentioned was how do you handle data from deceased people, which I've never really considered. We went back after the Panel and checked and found that we have a process, but it's something I never truly thought about, so it was nice to get someone else's perspective and thoughts and that obviously helped me too.

I don't think there's any questions that I thought, oh, this is a pointless question. There were one or two questions which I took away as interesting thoughts that I needed to look into, so it was really helpful in that aspect.

What will be the impact of taking part in the panel on your business?

Not much impact on Precision as the product is already established. From a Marketing perspective it is very good that we took part: we go above and beyond our ethical requirements.

I didn't expect the panellists to be as knowledgeable or to ask certain questions. Maybe I would have presented it with a more technical approach than keeping it high level if I was to do it again.

What do you see as the barriers to adoption of the People's Panel?

The challenge is in the representation on the People's Panel. How do you get people together for the panel with the various ranges of ethnicities, different ranges of knowledge and understanding especially when they may be retired, at university, work shifts in a supermarket, etc. all in the same room at the same time.

Do you see the People's Panel as a mechanism towards building trustworthy and ethical tech?

At Synectics Solutions, we already follow an ethical approach as part of our culture. For example, we build explainable models and we remove data values that shouldn't be in there that we deem as unethical or unnecessary.

I think the People's Panel is really good for the concept you're trying to achieve.

One of the limitations is it not being all inclusive and getting different people's perspectives and opinions. I therefore think you should consider having a range of experts within the field as well within that panel because even as an expert I learn from the laypeople, as the laypeople will learn from the experts. You've got that scale of knowledge, and everyone can learn from each other. You have different nationalities, you have different age ranges, you've got people with disabilities. Why shouldn't expertise be incorporated as well? They have opinions on learned life lessons over the years. But overall, I think the concept of the panel is really good and would benefit a lot of companies that are concerned.

Would you recommend the panel to other AI businesses?

Yes, as mentioned before, I think it could be beneficial. I mentioned what I think its limitation is: not having the full range of expertise within the panels. Again, you might struggle to get someone with expertise willing to give up their time. I think overall it could be beneficial if this was a new product, I could see how it could help people starting up as well.

RESEARCHER AT A GLANCE

NGOZI NNEKE

PROFILE PhD Researcher, Manchester Metropolitan University

RESEARCH Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI)

**IDEA
PITCHED** ActiveX App, an explainable AI-powered App for maintaining a healthy lifestyle



NGOZI NNEKE

**Early Career
Researcher, Department
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“A good experience for co-designing with the general public towards the development of AI systems”

“It is important to seek the advice of the public to validate AI ideas”

Ngozi Nneke is a wife and mother of four who enjoys coaching and mentoring younger generations to find their voice and fulfil their destiny. Ngozi’s research focuses on Explainable Artificial Intelligence – developing AI systems that can explain their conclusions to ordinary people.

Ngozi is a PhD researcher at Manchester Metropolitan University and also a Computer Science lecturer. Ngozi’s research area of Explainable AI is of increasing importance as new policies and laws are developed to govern the use of Artificial Intelligence. As part of her PhD research, Ngozi is designing explainability evaluation methods that can assess automatically generated explanations to make sure that the explanation given meets the needs and objectives of relevant stakeholders. Explainable AI could have considerable impact for the general public, especially as a solution to ‘black box’ AI systems whose decisions are not transparent or understandable. The adoption of explainable AI systems would increase transparency and offer the opportunity for the citizens to ask questions about how decisions were made, the kind of data used and how their own data is being used and stored.

AI Research Pitched to the Panel

I pitched an idea called the ActiveX App, which is an explainable AI-powered App that helps users to maintain a healthy lifestyle by tracking their daily food intake and exercise, then makes recommendations for changes that support a healthier lifestyle.

Biggest Challenge in Explaining Your Idea

The most challenging part was to explain the technologies used in the app to the audience who were not technical and had little knowledge of AI. I was able to adjust my communication to be able to explain the importance of the technologies.

Why did you get involved?

At the heart of explainable AI is the idea that AI powered decisions can be understood by the public. I am developing an explainable AI product, which is meant for the public, so it is important to seek the advice of the public to validate the idea. As it's now a mandatory obligation in our society that any automated systems has to be transparent to the end-users, the best way to do that is through a panel discussion like PPfAI.

What did you learn from the experience?

This was good experience for co-designing with the general public towards the development of AI systems. Also, learning how to communicate my AI idea in layman's language to the panel.

What will be the impact of taking part in the panel on your research?

The panel discussions have led to actions. One of the recommendations of the panel is that the sample data used so far for the system is quite small. As a result I have been looking for more volunteers to participate in the ongoing training of the AI system. Other ideas suggested were to look for funders for the app so that it can be offered free, and to look for various ways to make the ActiveX App work offline, for example when in supermarkets or gyms.

What do you see as the barriers to adoption of the PPfAI?

I think it is important to have a more diverse panel. Finding a way to attract more panel members from different communities, especially the under-represented groups.

Do you see the PPfAI as a mechanism towards the goal of building trustworthy and ethical tech?

Yes, the initiative is very good in bringing developers and general public together for better understanding of AI products and services which helps to build Trust.

Would you recommend the panel to other AI researchers?

Of course, I would recommend the panel to any AI researchers that want to test the validity of their idea or product.



RESEARCHER AT A GLANCE

JOHN HENRY

PROFILE Early Career Researcher, Manchester Metropolitan University

RESEARCH Serious games, games for emotional wellbeing

IDEA PITCHED Exergames – controlling gameplay with exercise



JOHN HENRY

Senior Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics

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 [linkedin.com/in/drjohnhenry/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/drjohnhenry/)

“Going forward it’s helped me really think about how I explain that type of idea”

“An interesting thing would be for nearly completed PhD students to present their idea to the panel”

Dr John Henry applies the immersive power of serious games to tackle societal challenges, such as health and mental well-being.

John Henry has a background in serious games, gamification and the Internet of Things. Having spent time in industry as a web developer, John now teaches web and games development at Manchester Metropolitan University and has developed his research from using games to measure student engagement within education to applications for health and wellbeing. The impact of his research is tied in to the mainstream acceptance of games by the younger generations, and how they can be a medium for serious games and not just entertainment. This builds on years of existing research that has found that the massive nature of games can be used to tackle serious topics. John works with groups of psychologists and healthcare researchers, for example recently leading the technical development of a game for emotional wellbeing that has led to very positive feedback from the audience and from experts, and much interest for its use in schools. John sees this as evidence that if you take your time to create a meaningful

game experience that also tackles a serious goal, this leads to societal impact, whether it’s education, healthcare or other challenges.

AI Research Pitched to the Panel

I pitched a prototype Exergame – the goal of exergames is to promote physical exercise using an immersive game experience. My prototype uses AI to show how you can use your heart rate to control a 2D platformer game. The idea is that a machine learning algorithm uses the gameplay and heart rate data to personalise the experience to allow you to manage physical training during the immersive game.

Biggest Challenge in Explaining Your Idea

The most challenging part was that presenting to the panel, with a non-technical background, was very different to

presenting to academic peers, conferences or even students. It became clear that there was a lot of ambiguity with some of the terminology I used, for example when mentioning sensors, I meant smart watches but I think people's minds went to examples of healthcare visits and heart monitors. The panel had a different level of understanding, so I had to take a step back to adjust to the audience and allow a process of exploration through discussion of technologies that weren't directly related. I wasn't fully prepared for that level of discussion and had to adjust on the fly.

Why did you get involved?

At the heart of applied games is doing these projects for the benefit of society, so it felt sensible for me to present this early stage idea and see what a wider demographic of people thought. The panel has been beneficial in two ways - developing the Exergame research idea, and also for personal development in consulting with a wider group of the public. As my research progresses, it will be important to consult the wider public, so pitching to the panel was an important step in understanding how to do that.

What did you learn from the experience?

I've not had much opportunity to engage with the general public, so for me it has helped me think about how to communicate the idea. Just to have a discussion with a more generic audience about my research has highlighted their concerns, it's definitely something I'll be taking forward for my other research.

What will be the impact of taking part in the panel on your research?

Going forward it's helped me really think about how I explain a technical type of idea in general. How do I make it really easy to understand for everyone in the room? How can I be more concise with that pitch? With this specific project, it has already benefitted me by helping me think more widely about explaining the exclusion criteria and risks (e.g., people with heart conditions).

Another great side effect of being involved in the project and launch event is that it's helped me grow my network and meet different people involved in responsible tech.

What do you see as the barriers to adoption of the PPfAI?

I think a genuine barrier is people being scared of speaking to that kind of audience. I think you need to have a certain level of bravery to say I'm going to put myself out there and allow people to shoot me down. That said, there is a good level of esteem that comes from engagement, and that in itself will attract more people to be able to say 'Well, actually I've gone through the panel', so it's almost a level of peer review that I can now use to support bids for funding for example. I think another barrier could be time available to devote to getting involved with this panel.

Do you see the PPfAI as a mechanism towards the goal of building trustworthy and ethical tech?

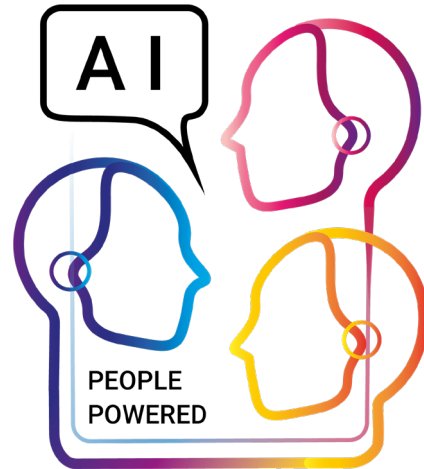
I absolutely think so – and this was evident in the conversations at the launch event, where the value of having completely different and non-expert views was clear from the talks. Having that 'expert bubble' burst by questions that you have not considered because they seemed like common sense is really important to the adoption of your idea. It makes a lot of sense to maintain that conversation as we go forward and the panel is something that has an important place in building trust. It also helps researchers think about how to explain the technology and make things transparent – and I think this is important not just for applied AI but also for core AI research.

Would you recommend the panel to other AI researchers?

The simple answer is yes. As AI researchers, whether applied research or not, it's useful and important to interact with the demographic that may well be users of your ideas. It's not something we naturally do as part of our research process, but it's a great tool for discussion and getting other ideas. I think a good question would be 'is there a value to doing this type of activity for a PhD student about to complete?', because if you can stand your ground, relatively speaking, and be confident and comfortable in discussing that topic, then surely you're ready for your viva I imagine.

THANK YOU

People-powered AI:
responsible research
and innovation through
community ideation and
involvement



Our SME partners involved in the People's Panel for Artificial Intelligence



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Alan Turing
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This work was supported by




FIND OUT MORE

For more information about this booklet and our work in ethical AI at Manchester Metropolitan University, please email ai.ethics@mmu.ac.uk

Find out more:

-  The Alan Turing Institute: <https://www.turing.ac.uk/>
-  GMVCO: <https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/>
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