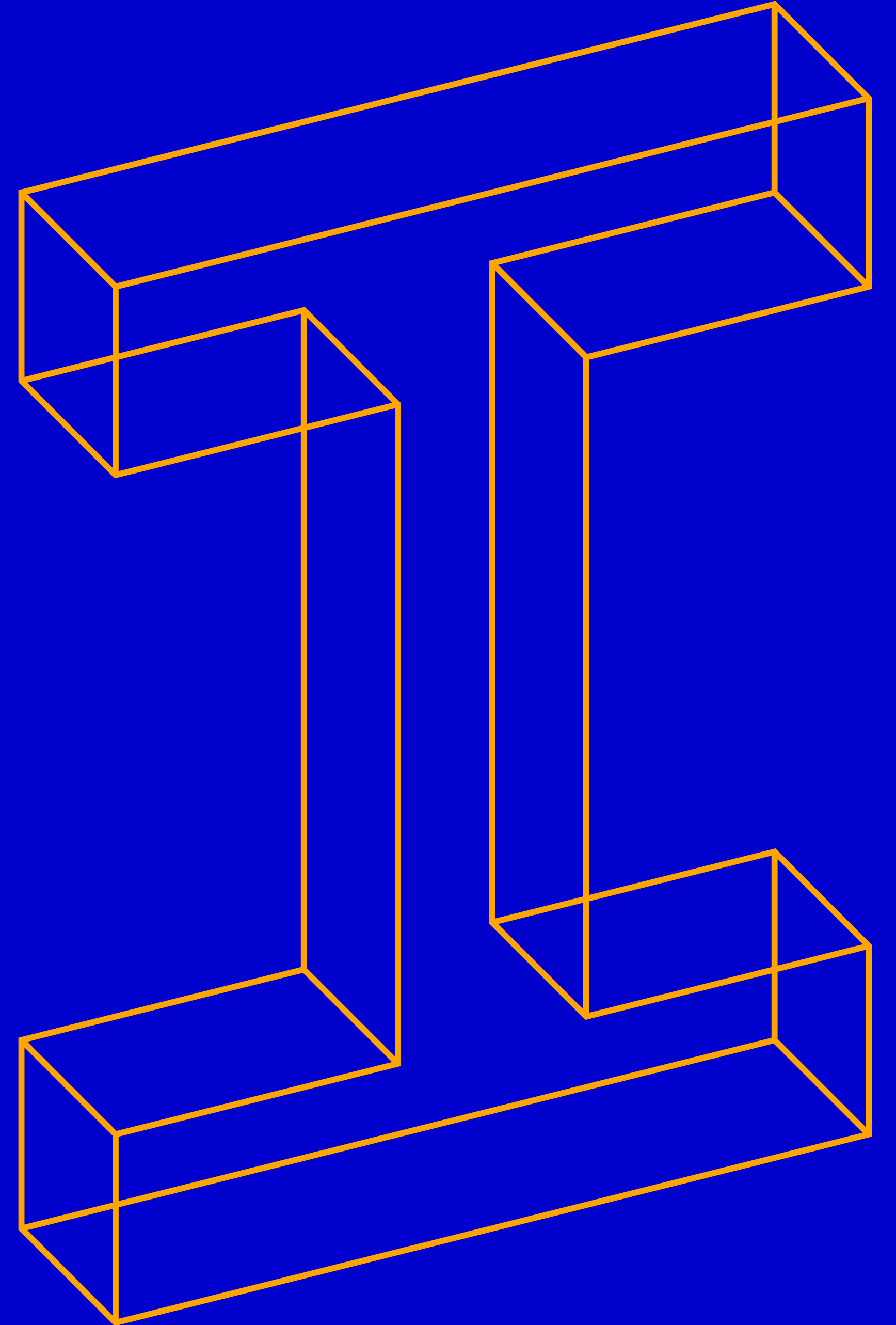


IMPERIAL POLICY FORUM

Imperial AI Policy Fellowship Programme 2026–2027



About the programme

The Imperial AI Policy Fellowship is a bespoke learning and development programme for senior civil and public servants seeking to strengthen their understanding of the role and impact of AI in the public sector. The programme combines theoretical learning with practical application, equipping Fellows with the knowledge, networks, and support to engage confidently with AI-related policy challenges. There are two parts to the Fellowship:

1) A series of in-person days at Imperial College London held throughout the year. These sessions provide structured opportunities for Fellows to build their understanding of the fundamentals of AI and to consider their implications for

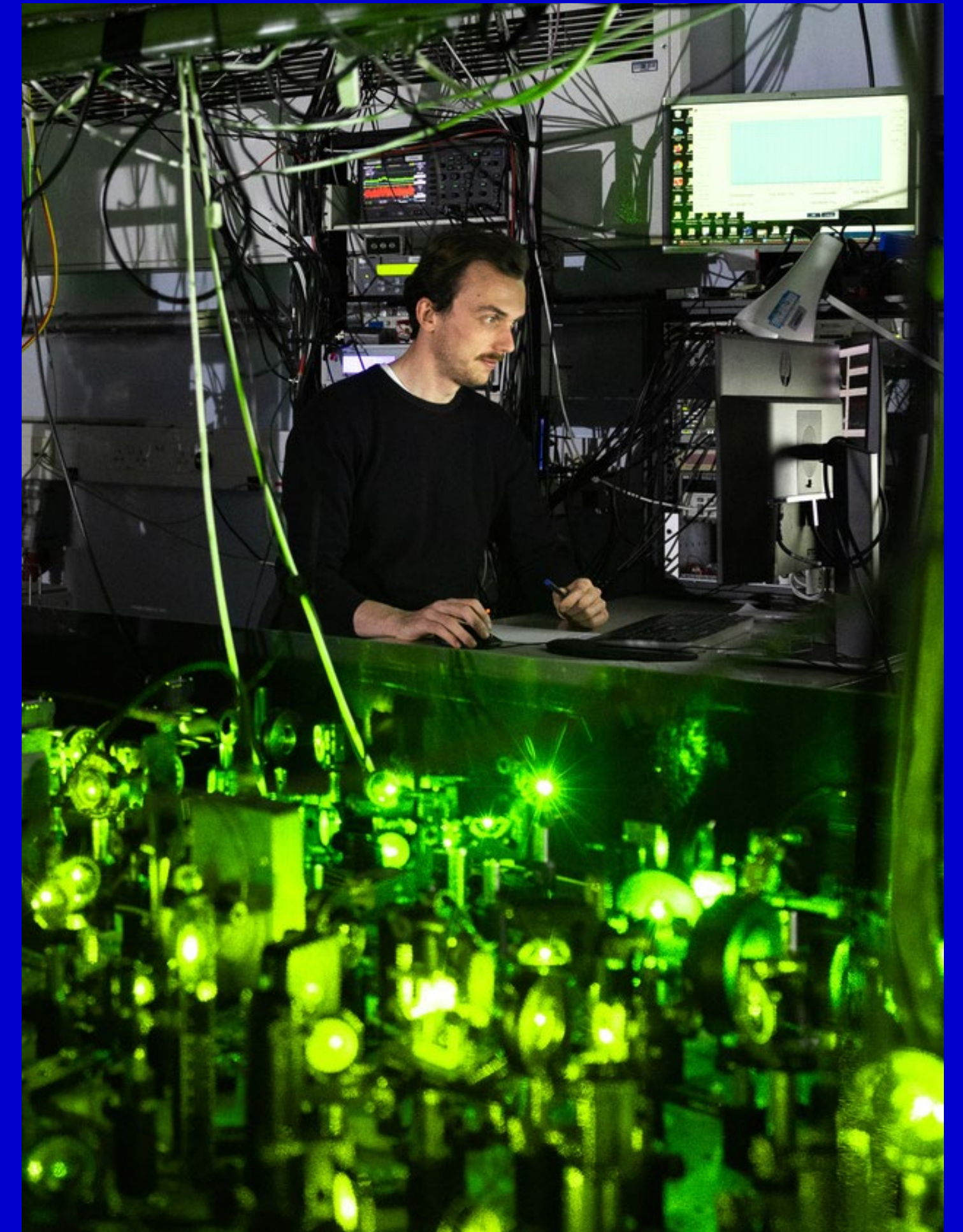
public policy, strategy, regulation, and delivery. Through expert-led lectures, workshops, and discussion, they are designed to deepen knowledge, encourage critical engagement, and create space for reflection and exchange with peers and specialists.

2) Fellows have the opportunity to explore specific AI policy challenges through a research project or guiding question. Each project is fellow-led and shaped by the Fellow's own policy priorities and objectives, with support from one or more academic mentors who provide expert guidance throughout the programme. This allows each project to be developed in a way that is most relevant and useful to the Fellow's area of work, while benefiting from ongoing academic and institutional support.

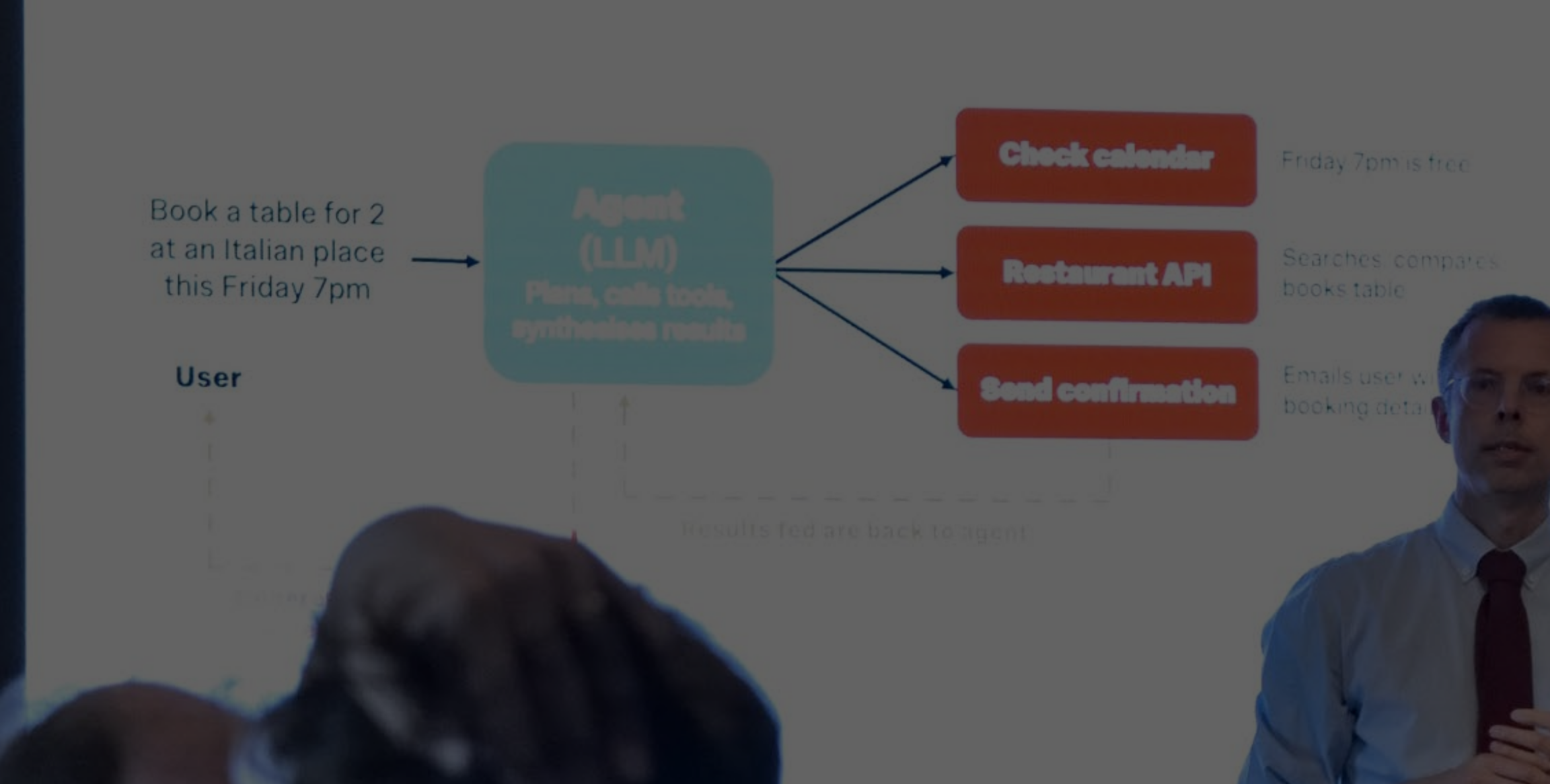


Benefits for Fellows

- **Tailored learning experience:** Fellows will receive a personalised programme, addressing their unique needs and interests, ensuring that the course is relevant and impactful to their roles.
- **Practical application through research projects:** Fellows engage in a research project with a mentor, enabling them to directly apply their learning to real-world issues and areas of interest within the public sector.
- **World-Class Expertise:** Learn from Imperial College London's globally renowned faculty, leaders in AI research and application across engineering, medicine, and science.
- **Networking opportunities:** Fellows can connect and collaborate with peers from across the civil service who share similar interests and challenges, fostering valuable knowledge exchange and a cohort community at Imperial.
- **Tailored for Public Sector:** Gain practical insights through a curriculum co-designed with civil servants to address the unique challenges of public sector AI deployment.



Why Imperial?



Pioneering Expertise: Imperial College London is one of the world's best universities in engineering, mathematics, medicine, and science and a globally recognized leader in AI research and education, offering unparalleled access to cutting-edge knowledge and innovative practices in AI. The institution's faculty includes some of the world's foremost experts in foundational and applied AI research.

Tailored Programmes for Public Sector Needs: The AI Fellowship programme is highly tailored towards the Fellows' interests and needs, bringing in relevant expertise to provide insights the unique challenges and opportunities faced by public sector professionals. This alignment with governmental needs ensures practical, applicable insights for policy and service delivery.

Interdisciplinary Approach and Real-World Application Imperial's interdisciplinary approach integrates AI with public policy, ethics, and governance, providing a comprehensive understanding of AI's impact on public services. Participants benefit from real-world case studies and practical applications, enhancing their ability to implement AI solutions effectively within their departments.

Case studies

These examples highlight the range of impactful and innovative research projects Fellows have undertaken during the programme.

Types of research projects could include:

- Written recommendations for adoption of AI in a particular part of your department
- Co-designing strategic planning or technical-level solutions for policy challenges
- Piloting innovative or experimental applications for AI in the public sector
- Improving systems and infrastructure including data storage and management
- Facilitated workshop for colleagues in your team/department
- Published white paper



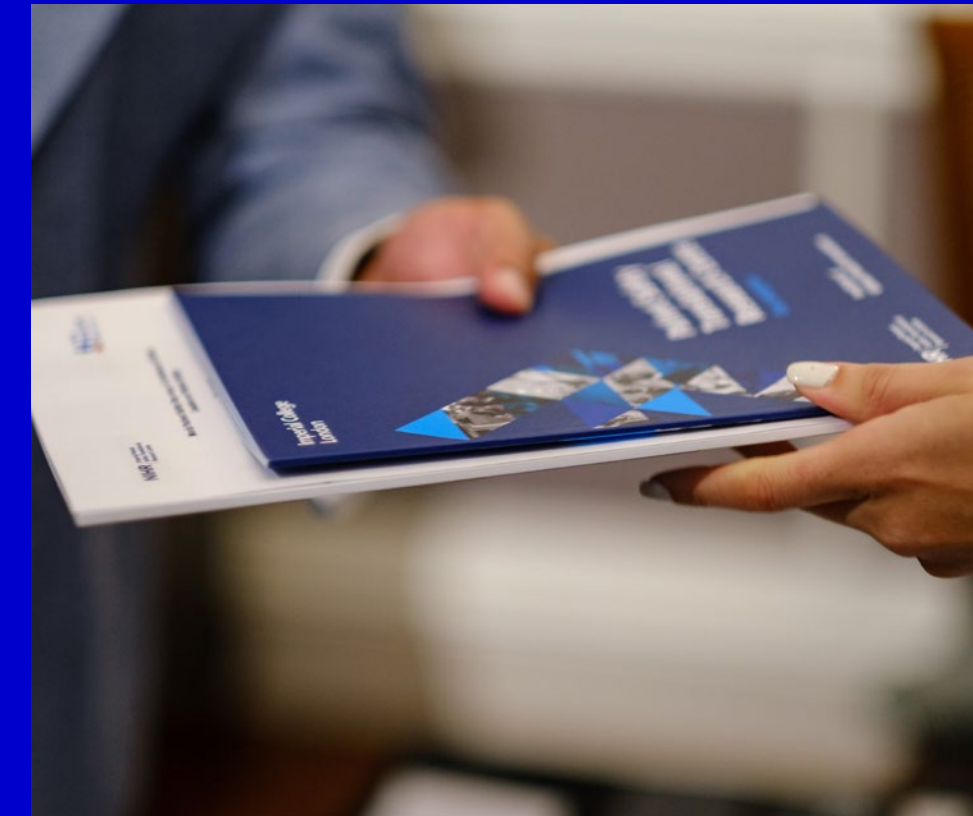
Case studies



How can AI help navigate regulation for new food products?

This case study highlights a pilot AI tool created for the Food Standards Agency in collaboration with Imperial's Bezos Centre for Sustainable Protein. Assessing a novel product can involve complex

guidance, multiple regulations and several relevant bodies. The pilot demonstrated how AI could help by searching key legal and policy sources, identifying the most relevant requirements, and signposting users to the right organisations and documents. The project provided a practical foundation for understanding how AI could be introduced into regulatory workflows, while supporting faster, clearer navigation of the approval landscape for emerging food innovations.



AI and the UK Healthcare System

Artificial intelligence is beginning to reshape the UK healthcare system, raising important questions about how existing legal, regulatory and clinical frameworks should respond to its growing use in practice. Two fellows — one from

the MHRA and one from the NHS — co-authored two papers on AI in healthcare. One examines the governance architecture for AI in the UK health system, highlighting gaps in regulation and deployment-stage oversight, while the other analyses emerging accountability challenges spanning clinical negligence and product liability. The papers set out practical, UK-specific reforms aimed at making the use of AI in healthcare safer, clearer and more accountable within the current regulatory framework.

Case studies



Sovereign AI in Defence: Strategic Autonomy and Collaborative Opportunity

As a result of one of our academic-mentor pairings, this paper was written in consultation with the UK Ministry of Defence. The paper, authored by Professor David Shrier and Professor Aldo Faisal, presents a strategic framework for achieving mission-driven and modular AI sovereignty. While the United Kingdom and its Ministry of Defence (MOD) are used as illustrative case studies in this paper, the frameworks and posture model outlined in this paper are globally relevant.

This project has led to further collaboration and ongoing engagement between the Trusted AI Alliance and the Ministry of Defence. Read the full paper here aicollab.org

Case studies



Exploring the Role of AI Across the Design Lifecycle: A Workshop with the Home Office

Can AI replace human interviewers?
Help teams converge faster on design problems?
How can we write better prompts to support our design work?

One of our Fellows from the Home Office collaborated with Imperial's Collective Innovation Lab from the Dyson School of Design Engineering on a workshop which brought both teams together to examine how generative AI could support the design lifecycle, from early-stage user research to problem framing and ideation. Dr Céline Mougenot, an academic mentor on the Fellowship programme, led the workshop together with her team.



Explainable AI (XAI) in energy systems

One of our Fellows from the Department of Energy Security & Net Zero collaborated with Assistant Professor Francesco Leofante to produce an exploratory paper for internal use within DESNZ to share learnings across teams. The paper looked at potential applications for

AI in the energy sector, the barriers which need to be addressed, the opportunity for explainable AI to help decision-making processes and mitigate risks and considered policy and regulatory frameworks.

This paper is reflective of the UK Government's drive to ensure the UK's energy infrastructure is ready for AI revolution, as demonstrated by the creation of the AI Energy Council in the AI Opportunities Action Plan in early 2025.

Peer Testimonials



“The fellowship was a really welcome opportunity to delve into the science that underpins AI and ground policy development in a deeper understanding of what the technology is capable of. It felt very hands-on and relevant, and I came away with a clearer sense of how AI is already being used across government and a more nuanced understanding of its potential.”

Rachel Kempsell, Cabinet Office

Peer Testimonials



“The AI Policy Fellowship was a genuinely unique opportunity to engage with, and build trusted networks across, a cohort of senior Government colleagues grappling with the disruptive technology of our time. That cross government, cross disciplinary perspective significantly strengthened my own understanding of the opportunities, risks, and trade-offs facing large public institutions adopting AI at pace.

The project work was particularly valuable. In my case, it enabled access to independent, expert research from world leading academics used to working beyond the Defence context. The quality of insight, combined with the practical policy focus of the Fellowship, has had a lasting impact on my role and thinking.”

Hugh Woodward, Head of HQ and Strategy, Defence AI Centre, Ministry of Defence



Who should apply?

This programme is for senior civil and public servants that are responsible for policy design or delivery in areas that are impacted by AI or are responsible for AI policy and strategy within their department.

Fellows must commit to four in-person days throughout the year and dedicate approximately 6-8 hours per month on their individual research project.

Application process

Please complete the application form on the website and return to the.forum@imperial.ac.uk

Successful applicants will be contacted by the Imperial Policy Forum team shortly after the deadline to schedule an initial call to understand more about your goals for the programme, and to ensure that we have the right expertise to support you.

The fee for the course is £1500 (no VAT to be added).

Please ensure that you have approval from your relevant budget holder prior to application.

Programme

Applications open (September – November 2026)

Onboarding (December – January 2027)

Fellows will have initial call with the Imperial Policy Forum team and will be sent onboarding information, including welcome pack, dates for 2027 and information on payment.

Workshop 1 (February 2027)

AI Fundamentals

The first in-person workshop will begin with an introduction to AI, including the foundations of the technology and the potential risks and opportunities it presents for government. This will be followed by a collaborative session focused on exploring and developing your research project.

Welcome Evening (end of January 2027)

The Welcome Evening will serve as your official introduction to the Fellowship programme and Imperial College London and offer a valuable opportunity to meet and network with the new cohort of Fellows from across the civil service and Parliament. It will also provide an opportunity to meet the Imperial academics who will be supporting the programme throughout the year.

Workshop 2 (May 2027)

AI Security

The second in-person workshop will feature a visit to Imperial's White City campus and presentations on the security risks to and from AI and what this means for government.

Workshop 3 (July 2027)

AI Applications and Infrastructure & Systems

The session will delve into the infrastructure and systems required to support AI, and the geopolitical implications of the various elements of the AI stack and supply chains. It will also involve group work exploring shared policy dilemmas presented by AI in different contexts, followed by a panel discussion.

Alumni Network (post-completion)

You will become part of the Imperial Policy Forum Alumni Network and will receive a quarterly newsletter which includes events and announcements, as well as opportunities to engage with other parts of Imperial and information on upcoming courses.

Workshop 4 (October 2027)

AI Assurance & Evaluation

The final session will see training on AI assurance and evaluation, followed by shared learnings of the course to date, presentations on Fellow research projects and a celebration for completing the course.

**Programme content subject to change, as it is reviewed throughout the year to ensure it reflects the rapid developments taking place in AI and government, and the priorities and interests of the cohort.*

Get in touch

If you would like to learn more about the Fellowship programme, or have any questions, please contact [Christina Taylor](#), or the.forum@imperial.ac.uk

