The Scottish AI Strategy & Playbook Sessions Report

Scotland's AI Strategy

Scottish AI Playbook

This report is built from 3 feedback sessions

AI Strategy breakout sessions
Tues 18th May
DataTalks attendees - Active participants 21*
DataTech attendees - Active participants 13

MSc Innovation Week - AI Strategy session
Weds June 2nd
Masters students (& few tutors) - Active participants 41

Using Mentimeter and gathering information in world cafes and on docks allowed the participants to remain anonymous, this should enable some to speak up more, the verbal, zoom chat and menti allowed different voices to be heard, rather than simply the more confidant ones.

*Numbers for active participants taken from mentimeter

Breakdown of the design of the sessions

DataTech

The participants were greeted after the talks and entered a Menti poll. In the poll the were encouraged to answer a series of questions designed by the team (Snook & Data Lab)

Thoughts on Ai, from "Arghhh the robots are coming" to "Ohhh Ai is the future" - (This was more a loosening up question, get on and used to menti)

What were your key takeaways from Albert's keynote today?

What do you or your company (if relevant) use to guide your practice? Where do you go to gain insights, get guidance or gather advice from currently?

In a perfect world what would you want from the Scottish AI playbook?

What issues and areas would you like to see support and guidance for in the AI Playbook?

Wrap up & thank you

DataTalks

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Thoughts on Ai, from "Arghhh the robots are coming" to "Ohhh Ai is the future" - (This was more a loosening up question, get on and used to menti)

When I say "Playbook" what does that term mean to you?

Steph then gave an overview of the strategy for the Scottish Ai Playbook

What are your first thoughts/reactions after what you've just heard… what's the first word that comes to mind ?

What do YOU think the Playbook should do?

What challenges do you see with Scotland's AI Strategy and the AI Playbook?

What excites you about Scotland's AI Strategy and the AI Playbook?

Wrap up & thank you

Breakdown of the design of the sessions

MSc Innovation Week - AI Strategy session

Participants joined the session and were talked through the agenda. Steph Wright did a short intro on the Scottish Ai Playbook strategy.

The students were led through a Mentimeter echoing the questions from the sessions that had been run with Data Tech & Data Talks, after answering the questions (below) they were then shown word clouds and read a few sentences gathered from the previous session to help them think a little deeper with these as prompts or triggers.

Which of these describe your thoughts on AI?

What do you or your company (if relevant) use to guide your practice? Where do you go to gain insights, get guidance or gather advice from currently?

In a perfect world what would you want from the Scottish AI playbook?

What issues and areas would you like to see support and guidance for in the AI Playbook?

Once the Mentimeter was complete and the word clouds/sentences (found at end of this document with sentences pulled out) were shared the students were moved into rooms to engage on a world cafe style workshop.

Cafe Owners hosted the rooms and took notes from the groups on the 2 questions below.

1) **"In a perfect world what would you want from the Scottish AI Playbook? and why?"**

1) **"What issues and areas would you like to see support and guidance for in the Scottish AI Playbook?"**

The world cafe allowed 2 sets of peer groups to share and build on the questions. A comment from a facilitator was that

"It was interesting to see the second round gain confidence and there was a good debate around the question, they were comfortable to disagree"

Breakdown of the design of the sessions

MSc Innovation Week - AI Strategy session

After 2 rounds of world cafe the 4 cafe owners shared back a synopsis - notes can be found here, pg 1-7

Building on the finings the question

"How might we deliver on points you discussed?"

The students ideated in smaller groups to encourage more discussion and voices to be heard in the rooms
Notes can be found here Pg 9-13

The Final round was again in smaller groups
The question posed this time was

"What are your views on public sector data and how important it is that it's used for activities such as research and innovation?"

"Does your view change depending on who is using the data - e.g. a public body using the data internally or academia, third sector or private sector?"

Notes can be found here Pg 14 - 17

Where are they currently getting their information from?

Q - What do you or your company
(if relevant) use to guide your practice?
Where do you go to gain insights, get
guidance or gather advice from currently?

AI Strategy breakout sessions
DataTech attendees

- Stack flow was highly valued
- Internet (podcasts)
- Events, Workshops
- University SICSA
- Regulators (Fin Seervices
- Data Ethics, feedback from users

MSc Innovation Week - AI Strategy session Masters students

- Majority answered Google,
- Stack flow was highly valued (referred to as bible)
- Peers
- Peer reviewed and scientific journals
- PG Statistics

What are your first thoughts/reactions after what you've just heard... what's the first word that comes to mind ?

First word reaction from the Data Talks Participants (larger words were repeated)

Common themes through all 3 sessions

Ethics & Governance

There was a strong theme throughout all of the sessions towards ethics, it was mentioned throughout and within the students initial Q&A it was repeated numerous times and then echoed through the sharing sessions.

Ethical guides were asked for, along with some form of governance and how to hold people or companies to account, accountability was repeated in all the sessions.

Rules and clear enforced regulations were repeated, along with avenues to report companies/people on. Case studies on when it goes wrong were suggested (e.g. Cambridge Analytica) rather than just what goes right (survivor bias) Unintentional bias and bias rang through as a concern

"Reckless or careless applications of biased data/algorithms will continue to be used without some enforcement of these principles"
Student Quote

How can we foster a culture of creativity in using data while still doing so in a controlled way. It is too easy to crush creativity with governance
Data Tech Participant quote

What issues and areas would you like to see support and guidance for in the AI Playbook?

Ethics	Security	Ethics
Ethics	User engagement	Health
Ethics	Children and AI	industry standards

Example page from Mentimeter with Masters Students

Ethics was echoed on the following 3 mentimeter pages.

Common themes through all 3 sessions

Trust, transparency and understanding

Both in the public facing mentimeters and with the student feedback **trust** came through loudly. The Masters students within the group notes asked who would be enforcing, and how. They asked for **policy rather than principles,** this was echoed later in different groups. How can the people and team build trust in the Playbook? Will there be transparency on who is involved. This built from the ethics space in many areas. Making the Playbook clear, accessible to all (public) without buzzwords and jargon was clearly messages through all 3 sessions. Accessibility to all was important, that it involved the private and public sector and allowed citizens to be engaged.

"The Govt should enforce more transparency from technology company . That will raise more questions from the citizen about how data is used"
Student Quote

"Cut through the Jargon"
Data Talk participant Quote

> **"This needs to be more than a high level set of principles and guidelines. It needs to highlight practical steps that Scotland is taking to be an accountability trail"**
> Data Talks Participant quote

> **"What Impact does this have on the normal people?"**
> Data Talks Participant quote

> **"Should work on different areas, sectors that participate in the Scotland workforce and economy"**
> Data Talks Participant quote

Scottish Pride

There was a pride that came through in the written feedback and the verbal playbacks that this was originating in Scotland. It was seen as "an opportunity to lead the way, globally, setting USP around trust" that it gave an opportunity for 'Scotland to be the centre of excellence" that putting emphasis on ethics and trust would start "highlighting Scotland as a leader in this area". This held the hand of the issues they saw.

The students at the innovation week session wanted clarity on how the scottish government were involved, in one of the verbal feedback sessions with Frida there was excitement about the possibility of a Sandbox for Scottish Government. This was echoed in Rachanas group who talked through Sandbox rules, how companies and government could use it for a safe place for testing in a protected environment.

"Playbook' too wishy-washy"

Students Participant quote

"Reckless or careless applications of biased data/algorithms will continue to be used without some enforcement of these principles?"

Student Participant quote

You can ask " companies to challenge unfair bias etc by taking proactive steps, but lacks something that is enforceable Consensus so far seems to be that we need enforceable policy to follow rather than principles"

Student Participant quote

Issues

There were concerns about ignorance of Ai in the public, that it may not be accessed due to **"A lack of knowledge"** would there be a **lack of citizen confidence** (interestingly these comments mainly came from the Data Talks) They worry Ai sounded **"futuristic and expensive"** The masters students made a point on **"Leadership in terms of ensuring the benefits of Ai Understanding"** several commented on clarity of what Ai is & isn't with clear examples.

There was concerns from one group of students in the world cafe sessions that a playbook would be to "wishy washy" that it may not be robust in nature. They did not want it to look pleasant and patriotic "tartan & Haggis" at surface but lacking in guidance which is properly enforced. **Enforcement** came through strongly in the students feedback throughout and was echoes in the Data Fest attendees, there was a fear that without enforcement companies and individuals who do not care will carry on as normal. Gathering engagement and getting people on board was also ruminate around this subject.

Bias again was a recurring cause for concern, how to be aware of it, train people and create ways for people to implement into their practice and codes of conduct. Could the playbook help with this?

Common themes through 3 all sessions

Guidance & tools

Guidance was repeated in all the sessions. Wrapping around the above sections. Clear, actionable and backed up, with tools or ways to implement what is shared

Guidance in the following areas were noted on top of the areas mentioned on page 8 & 9

Guidance on:
- What lines not to cross
- Bias, feminism, anti-racism
- Legal matters
- Sector specific advice
- Human interaction
- Industry standards
- Security
- Working with different groups Eg Children

"Public sector skill building to avoid over-reliance on private sector"
Data Tech Participant Quote

"We need guidance for developers, where to use AI and to what measures, there is a need for a broad framework - how people use empathy AI, have accountability, it needs to have different levels & show bad uses of it occurring." {sic}
Student Participant

Themes that came through in the student session

The students had more time to deep dive so some subjects surfaced that did not arise in the other sessions. I have added these here, but the students words are as involved in the pages leading up to this one.

An emphasis of Ai for good

Looking at top priorities - tackling climate changes, pandemic and health

How to keep up with the "Arms race internationally facial recognitions"

Education, training, importance of literature, white papers, information sharing and workshops were mentioned more in these sessions, though mentioned in the others lightly.

Dynamic coverage and reporting and evolution
That the Playbook should be allowed to evolve

Sandbox rules- company can use as a safe place for testing (financial sandbox) - protected environment

That it is important that this is not **"just lip service"**

We asked the
Masters students

"How might we
deliver on points
you discussed?"

Answers follow

Education & retraining

Scottish Kaggle - all open data for developers to play with .

Three levels - School level , university level , expert level (companies)

Links to university to develop competitions with their Data Science Students - Courseworks , mini competition

School students as well - for bragging rights, STEM initiatives, Points systems

Universities to invest more in AI curricula

Job redundancies: retraining and re-skilling for people being left out

Ai strategy should stay open and collaborating academia and industry as well as the general public to gain consensus

Creating new jobs is the only way for the industry to be sustainable in the long term

(as it was students and some tutors it may explain the leaning towards more in the education sector)

Be Seen - Communicate

A new industry, to bring back the glorious past that Scotland has witnesses in the past century.

Regular updates, especially with AI being such a rapid growing industry

Ai strategy should stay open and collaborating academia and industry as well as the general public to gain consensus

Transparency to avoid abuse/misuse of AI. As well as steering clear of bias.

Complete openness of data and data availability

Who and how people/bodies are involved

Not a political, bureaucratic body. It should have the expertise to contribute. Also business partners to assess the value of emerging technology and imagine how to integrate that in the Scottish landscape. Driving the sector.

Clarity on structures from government -- who regulates/oversight
Include experts in oversight in addition to policy makers

Engage citizens with development

Sandbox approach with Gov involvement

The final task for the students was to consider in groups this question….

"What are your views on public sector data and how important it is that it's used for activities such as research and innovation?"

"Does your view change depending on who is using the data e.g. a public body using the data internally or academia, third sector or private sector?"

Good quality data is vital for innovation. People need to consent: opt-in or opt-out? Is everyone included and needing to opt-out or the opposite?

Data ownership: give people choice to agree about whom to share data with and how it's managed

Security measures and agency over the privacy of data. The risks associated to hacking are scary

Academia should have access to data (securely use data) for innovation

Public sector data can be curated and added to national kaggle (filtered datasets)

Public Data should be open - but the quality of dataset should be good as well - or you end up with GIGO (garbage in garbage out)

Awareness of risks. Staff needs to be trained on data security and data protection to provide their company with a first firewall against attacks.

Oftentimes data collected for research then goes into the private business sector

Resources to be allocated towards creating good quality datasets

These are a selection of comments from the 5 teams, the question did create more questions, which in itself is good.

One initial response - if we have data available or it can be made available then put it to use. There always some value to be extracted from data we collect so it should at least be subject to analysis. Due to constrained resources it may well be worthwhile making data available to academic institutions

Double standard scenario:

Very important with academia/research, to give access. For other things should be a different level of regulation: the rules are different so sth like GDPR could be more effective.

Unified scenario:

Needs to be unified as they oftentimes work together as funder/researcher. There would be less of a conflict of interest.

One public participant commented

"nothing for us without us!, get the right people involved from the start"

Think this was a great step in that direction with a lot of engaged and inspirational participants that gave invaluable feedback

Folders with all decks/recordings

Word Clouds from Data Tech & Data Talks

What do YOU think the Playbook should do?
Data Talks

Couple of verbatim quotes
to bring words to life in context
- Guidance
- It should be enforceable have accountability
  aid humans in decision-making
- Cut through the jargon
- importance of ethics and explainability

What do YOU think the Playbook should do?
Data Talks

What are your first thoughts/reactions after what you've just heard… what's the first word that comes to mind ?

They were generally excited, thought it was promising and respectful, wanted diversity and understanding boas, power and responsibility featured

In a perfect world what would you want from the Scottish AI playbook?
Data Tech

What issues and areas would you like to see support and guidance for in the AI Playbook? Data Tech

- Instructions on how to avoid hurdles that would lead to programmes that would increase inequality (e.g. how to choose correct proxies, how to implement diversity into code building teams and why it's important, etc.)

- Provide the national big picture with enough granularity

- Provide a way for smaller organisations to understand how and why to build their AI solutions

- This needs to be more than high level principles and guidelines - it needs to highlight the practical steps that Scotland is taking and be an accountability trail

snook

Thankyou
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