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Shaping society 5.0 Building trust in AI as a force for good

The invisible thread: How global collaboration and innovation can create a framework to build greater trust in AI

Foreword



**By Harold Pradal,
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2023 will be viewed as the point that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tipped into the mainstream, with a 286% rise in media coverage of the topic¹. And whilst headlines were grabbed by ChatGPT, the real AI story is much, much deeper.

This transformational technology is accelerating progress – and has the potential to go further as a force for good and move us towards Society 5.0, a ‘human-centered society that balances economic and technological advancement to solve society’s problems’². Importantly, it also raises questions around how we build trust in AI and what guardrails are needed to ensure AI shapes our future in a positive way.

In this collection we go behind the headlines to explore the real-world impact of AI through the eyes of BSI experts, drawing on the views of 10,000 people in nine countries. For anyone in doubt, AI is here and it’s here to stay – 38% of people use AI in their jobs daily, rising to 70% in China and 64% in India. By 2030, 62% expect their industry will use AI³.

At BSI we are committed to shaping the impact of technology and innovation for the benefit of individuals, organizations and society. AI sits at the heart of this because it has the potential to be a powerful partner, changing lives and accelerating progress towards a better future and a sustainable world.

We commissioned these essays to turn the spotlight on this generational opportunity – recognizing that the better we understand it, the better we can harness its power. Whether it’s creating new workplace opportunities, improving patient outcomes, tackling modern slavery or building a safe global food system, AI has a pivotal role to play.

We examine the importance of embedding digital trust in AI, the critical role for collaboration – between nations, policymakers, organizations and individuals – to unlock AI’s true potential, and the fast-evolving regulation designed to ensure consistency and certainty.

With AI crossing over from small, contained environments into mainstream technology at work and at home, this offers a transformational opportunity to unlock a multitude of benefits – provided trust and confidence are present too.

AI is just getting started. At BSI we are excited to partner with our clients as we embark on this journey. We are delighted to present these essays to explore the enormous potential AI offers to shape Society 5.0 and deliver a sustainable future powered by innovation.

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2. Society 5.0: The Fundamental Concept Of A Human-Centered Society, Open Business Council, Aug 2023
3. BSI Trust in AI Poll 2023



The invisible thread: How global collaboration and innovation can create a framework to build greater trust in AI

As a purpose-driven organization, BSI believes AI can be a force for good, changing lives, making a positive impact on society, and accelerating progress towards a sustainable world. In this essay, Sahar Danesh, Senior Government Engagement Manager, sets out how international collaboration can shape trust in AI so everyone can realize the benefits of innovation.





By Sahar Danesh

Senior Government Engagement Manager, BSI

As the uses for AI multiply, as many questions as answers are being created. What does safe use of AI look like and how do we build greater trust in its application? How do we protect society's most vulnerable from unintended consequences? What does best practice look like? How can industry and government partner to shape the future of AI so it is a force for good? To address these questions, and help ensure that AI application drives progress and positively impacts society, governments globally are racing to develop and implement robust governance to support it.

As this debate continues, international guidance on AI management is already being developed, offering an opportunity to draw on consensus-based standards to create a framework designed to build greater trust in AI and at the same time accelerating further innovations. Indeed, according to BSI's Trust in AI Poll¹, 61% of people globally say we need international guidelines to enable the safe use of AI and only one in ten think these are not necessary.

- As AI technology proliferates, national governments are racing to regulate its use in a way that protects both people and planet without stifling innovation.
- Standards founded on market-led consensus offer an agility and practicability in governance of AI alongside regulation.

61%



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Learning from experience

From Australia’s Responsible AI Network to China’s draft regulation of AI-powered services for citizens, to the lobbyists, academics and business leaders engaging the Brazilian government on citizens’ rights around Chat GPT, the global conversation about responsible governance² and how to regulate AI³ is alive. There is also a vibrant conversation underway about the role standards can play⁴.

In this, we can learn from experience. Compliance with international standards has the potential to act as an invisible thread, supporting organizations to trade more effectively and protect consumers around the world – as the example of pizza oven manufacturer Ooni shows. Similar work is underway in areas of increasing importance, such as sustainable finance, where an international standard has now been developed from a United Kingdom (UK) starting point to embed consistency in the global finance sector, and similarly with regard to inclusive service and consumer vulnerability.

Today, this is happening around AI. BSI, as the UK’s national standards body, is partnering with the UK Government to utilize standards in support of the UK’s AI strategy and provide guidance based on our expertise working with industry and consumers to develop consensus-based standards.

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Sahar Danesh





The regulatory landscape

This work is taking place as governments think and talk about how organizations will use AI and the guardrails that can be put in place to take advantage of the opportunities it presents. In the EU, the AI Act⁵ will represent a significant starting point in the conversation around rights and safety, with the UK hosting a global summit on AI safety⁶. Meanwhile reports suggest Japan is leaning towards softer rules to help boost economic growth⁷. In the US, two senators recently proposed a bipartisan framework to regulate AI⁸

Notably, the fact that all these countries are considering the regulatory approach indicates a desire to respond to AI with speed; a contrast to the slow global policy response to social media⁹. Nearly 20 years after Facebook's emergence, regulation around this remains in its infancy. The UK's Online Safety Bill¹⁰, described by the UK Government as world-first¹¹, for example, has been in the works since 2019 and is only now progressing towards becoming law.

There are many reasons for this, not least the complexity of the issue, but the emphasis on regulation of AI already suggests a recognition of the potential impact AI can have on society and a desire to act in response.

But even if there is appetite for a regulatory or legislative response to AI, no country can influence how another country chooses to regulate – or at least there's no guarantee of it, and certainly no guarantee for consistency across borders. This is why international standards can be so beneficial – they can create common consensus between different countries so that there is an understanding of what good practice looks like. In this case, having an internationally agreed view could help ensure that AI is trustworthy, that no individuals, organizations, or countries get left behind in the AI revolution and that the AI systems are indeed a force for good.



The hidden infrastructure

When it comes to rapidly emerging technology, standards and certification can act as the hidden infrastructure, with clear guiding principles designed to ensure innovation is safe and used properly. And because standards are dynamic and built on consensus of what good looks like across the market, they offer the opportunity influence behaviours across organizations.

Gathering consensus this way offers the opportunity for us to tackle global issues such as the race to net zero, where a suite of standards have been created to help organizations of all sizes to navigate the road to decarbonization. Creating the [ISO Net Zero Guidelines](#) involved a conversation between hundreds of voices from over 100 countries, including many new or under-represented voices. Within two months of launch, the guidelines had made the UN Climate Champions 2022 Yearbook of Climate Action¹². Nigel Topping, the UN High-Level Climate Action Champion, said they could be used “as a core reference text... to bring global actors into alignment, ratchet up ambition and address greenwashing.”¹³

In the realm of cybersecurity, standards and certification such as the international standard to manage information security ([ISO/IEC 27001](#)) are commonly used by organizations to mitigate risk¹⁴. Such guidance is designed to ensure that what is on the market is safe for consumers, generates trust and to help organizations implement better technological solutions.

100+



countries were involved in creating the ISO Net Zero Guidelines, demonstrating the power of collaboration.

Supporting innovation

Crucially, drawing on consensus can de-risk investment in new technologies and accelerate their adoption by building confidence. Cebr research conducted in 2022 found that 68% of firms reported that innovation was encouraged through the diffusion of new knowledge as a result of the use of standards¹⁵.

Standards can also support the development of new markets – the Cebr research found that two thirds of firms surveyed had experienced easier access into new markets at home as a result of standardization. Other identified benefits can include promoting the consolidation of emerging supply chains; preventing the risk of technology lock-in (where society is increasingly wedded to a specific tool) and helping to disseminate knowledge from large-scale R&D demonstrators and testing. For AI, where change and development is central, the hope is that standardization will support rather than stifle innovation to progress a more sustainable future.

68%



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Global consensus is key

In BSI's poll, nearly three fifths of people globally feel that vulnerable consumers need protections to ensure they can benefit from AI. When markets fail or there is a risk to consumers, regulation can be essential. And regulation certainly has a role to play to oversee AI, for example so that it isn't used to take advantage of human behaviour, or negatively impact society. But the advantage standards have over regulation is that they are shaped through global consensus and consider the concerns of society with a level of transparency that can accelerate the application of good practice.

Given the breadth of guidance needed, some might suggest we use AI to create the standards and regulation we need to respond. AI will almost certainly play a role in standards development in years to come – indeed, this is already being trialled¹⁶ – but we will need to maintain the vital benefits of the human interaction and discussion that capture consensus in a meaningful and effective way.

While building consensus is difficult and can take time, especially when creating international standards, in the case of AI, we are not starting from scratch. The forthcoming AI Management Standard (ISO/IEC 42001) draws on existing guidelines, and there are already many standards around trustworthiness, bias and consumer inclusion that organizations can use to inform their practice.

The agility of standards and organizations' ability to apply them is critical given the speed of change in AI.

History has shown us that emerging technologies – from cars to computers and smartphones – can bring enormous benefits to our lives. Having robust governance frameworks in place can help accelerate adoption and build greater trust. Partnering around the world and developing consensus on what good practice can look like when we use AI can help us to ensure that AI benefits, rather than disrupts, society and becomes a force for good.

57% 

of people globally say vulnerable consumers need protections to ensure they can benefit from AI.

Find out more

BSI, in its role as the UK National Standards Body, has taken a leading role in shaping global technical standards for Artificial Intelligence. In the UK Government backed AI Standards Hub, BSI brings together the AI community in the UK to identify and develop good practices for the development, governance and use of AI technologies that will be internationally recognized. Read all about the AI Standards Hub in the Standards Outlook Magazine [here](#).

References

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