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How is the UK intending to enhance the benefits of data and AI?

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The use of data, particularly in the context of artificial intelligence (“AI”) and automated systems is growing at a rate that is almost immeasurable and is being deployed in ways that previously would have been considered to exist only in the imagination. We often hear concerns around the risks and dangers of organisations using data and AI but, as the conversation progresses, the benefits are becoming more and more apparent. As part of this shift, from focusing on the risks to appreciating the benefits, the UK Centre for Data and Ethics and Innovation (the “CDEI”) has released its [2019/2020 Work Programme](#) and [2 Year Strategy](#) (the “Strategy”) aimed at developing and utilising the benefits of data and AI for the UK society and economy.

The Strategy explains the foundations the UK has in the world of data and AI, and the CDEI believes the UK “has the opportunity to shape a policy, regulatory and cultural environment...that supports beneficial innovation in data-driven technology that is worthy of public trust.” In so doing, the CDEI makes it clear that public views, interests and concerns will be taken into account as essential factors to achieve its goals whilst also fostering effective partnerships between civil society, government, research and industry.

The [Terms of Reference](#) within the Strategy provide the key overarching aims of the CDEI:

1. Analyse and anticipate risks and opportunities;
2. Agree and articulate best practice; and
3. Advise on the need for action.

Examples of how the CDEI proposes to meet these aims include:

- Reviewing the existing regulatory framework to identify gaps in response to the uses of data and AI and barriers to ethical innovation;
- Engaging industry bodies, public service providers and consumers to coordinate world-leading standards and codes of conduct in data and AI uses;
- Publishing recommendations to government on how it can support safe and ethical innovation in data and AI through policy and legislation; and



- Providing expert advice and support to regulators on the implications of data and AI uses and areas of potential harm.

By preparing the Strategy, the CDEI demonstrates its commitment to cementing the UK as a leader in promoting and harnessing the benefits of data and AI whilst also taking into account the paramount need to regulate in the space. That said, while the show of commitment is welcome, certain of the content is fairly generic in nature and somewhat vague at this stage. It is also interesting to see the consistent use by the CDEI of “data and AI” as a phrase throughout the documentation, including in its overall aim to develop and utilise the benefits of data and AI. It will be interesting to see whether the intention is to focus on data solely used in the context of AI? Or is it broader? Only time will tell and we will be following with interest to see how the Strategy unfolds in practice and to witness the progress the CDEI makes. The [Artificial Intelligence Practice Group at Paul Hastings](#) is a leader in this industry and is well positioned to provide our clients with the confidence and commitment required to enhance their data and AI capabilities, addressing any concerns or risks head-on and mitigating potential liability.



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