



AI
Leadership
& Skills
Strategy
Update

Hampshire Skills
Partnership – 11 June
2026

David Patterson, Chair –
AI Growth Alliance

Progress update on AI
Leadership & Skills
Strategy

AIGA: Orchestrating the Future of AI in Hampshire & The Solent

1. Communications & Marketing

Regional branding, stakeholder engagement, and national visibility.



Strategic Purpose & Impact

Strategic leadership and governance.

Providing strategic leadership and governance.

2. Skills & Leadership

Building workforce capability, leadership confidence, and talent pipelines.



Bridging the Fragmentation Gap

Unites siloed regional efforts to avoid duplication and prevent being overlooked for national investment.

AIGA Steering Group

An "Enabler" Not a Delivery Body

Acts as a catalyst and broker rather than commercializing products or replacing existing initiatives.

3. Ecosystem Coordination Working group

Reducing fragmentation and aligning multi-helix regional partners.



4. Ethics & Inclusion

Embedding transparency, safety, and digital inclusion as a regional advantage.



"AI for Growth, Growth for All"

Focused on inclusive adoption that benefits SMEs, rural firms, and underrepresented communities.



5. Infrastructure & Investment

Coordinating testbeds, data-sharing, and securing private/public funding.

Multi-helix intermediary

Advancing inclusive AI for multi-helix regional partnership.



Purpose of Today

AI transforming
all sectors and
roles

SMEs = 88–
90% of
economy

Strategy
required Spring
2026

Evidence
review
complete

A Whole-System AI Skills Approach for Hampshire & Solent

Across all sectors and organisation types:

- SMEs and microbusinesses (core focus)
- Large employers and corporates
- Public sector (local government, NHS, blue light services)
- Education and training providers
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Across the SuperCluster and Key Sectors:

- Defence, maritime, aerospace, life sciences, health & social care, digital, professional services, construction, tourism, rural, retail
- Tier 1 corporates → SME supply chains → microbusinesses
- AI adoption flowing through value chains

One connected ecosystem:

- Shared skills framework and pathways
- Leadership at all levels
- Collaboration across sectors
- Inclusive access for all communities



Evidence Base





What Businesses Told Us

31% report AI skills gaps

53% want AI
training/support

39% unaware of options

81% value peer learning



AI Adoption Snapshot


10% not using AI

30% exploring

38% early use

22%
integrated/advanced

Key Skills Needed

- AI basics and awareness
 - Data literacy
 - Prompting skills
 - AI tools and workflows
 - Ethics and data safety
 - Change management
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- A decorative graphic element consisting of several thick, purple, curved dashes arranged in a partial arc on the right side of the slide.

The AIGA logo is a circular emblem with a dark blue background and a white, stylized, fibrous or root-like pattern. The letters 'AIGA' are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font across the center of the circle.

AIGA

The SME Problem

Training not
designed for
SMEs

Limited accessible
short courses

Key barriers: cost,
time, awareness,
relevance



Cross-Cutting Insights

Hampshire & Solent has a significant opportunity to lead nationally

Strong assets, partnerships, and evidence provide the foundation for a scalable, replicable model.





Strategic Direction

A: Foundations

B: Leadership

C: Navigation

D: Peer learning

E: Inclusion

F: Evidence & review

Strengthening the Evidence Base:

Strong Foundation
Established

- Comprehensive
SME and
microbusiness
evidence

National
frameworks and
policy alignment

Clear demand for
AI skills and
leadership support

Next Phase: -
deepening system
insight:

- Engage large
employers and
anchor
organisations

- Capture
SuperCluster
industries demand
signals

Understand supply
chain expectations
and pressures

Incorporate public
sector and
inclusion
perspectives

Outcome:

A fully
representative,
whole-system
strategy

Aligned to real
market demand
and regional
priorities

Building a
Representative,
Whole-System
Evidence Base

Peer learning event (FSB & Chamber)
– starting point

Targeted engagement with large
employers and corporates

Public sector and anchor institution
input

Sector-based engagement across
SuperCluster industries

Inclusion of VCSE and community
organisations

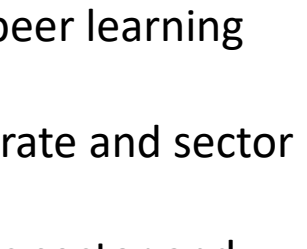
Ongoing SME and microbusiness
engagement

Working Across the SuperCluster and Supply Chains

- Engage major employers across key sectors:
 - *Defence, aerospace, maritime, health, digital*
- Focus on leadership, digital strategy, AI adoption, workforce transformation and skills demand
- Understand expectations placed on SME supply chains
- Align SME support with real market requirements
- Establish and 'AI Anchor Employers Group'
- Enable AI capability to flow through supply chains



Next Steps Towards Strategy Finalisation

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- Deliver FSB / Chamber peer learning event
 - Conduct targeted corporate and sector engagement
 - Gather input from public sector and inclusion partners
 - Validate findings through wider SME outreach
 - Refine strategic framework and delivery model
 - Develop FutureDotNow Based Delivery Framework
 - Articulate Funding Methodology and limitations
 - Articulate the Formal Quals AI Skills Pathway
 - Align with Solent AI Partnership pilot
 - Final strategy submission to Hampshire Skills Partnership

Conclusion: Building Momentum for a Region- Wide AI Future

Strong evidence base and clear strategic direction established

Whole-system approach connecting businesses, public sector, education and communities

Expanding engagement to include corporates, supply chains and anchor institutions

High-profile launch at Farnborough International Airshow (20-24 July 2026)

Strategic partnerships with Farnborough International and Solent Freeport

Positioning Hampshire and the Solent as a national leader in AI skills and adoption