# North Wales eyes AI-driven future with bold investment and collaboration



North Wales is emerging as a promising player in the UK’s AI landscape, buoyed by its strong energy capacity, advanced fibre infrastructure and a solid academic base. These assets position the region to take an active role in shaping national AI policy while building a shared regional narrative around its capabilities.

To harness this potential, a unified strategy involving government, Ambition North Wales and local industries is essential. Success depends on clearly presenting the region’s AI strengths and adopting a people-centred approach that enhances service delivery, rather than simply introducing new technologies.

Healthcare provides a glimpse of what’s possible. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is using a digital pathology platform that has improved prostate cancer detection rates. An e-stroke tool is also helping clinicians with real-time decision-making support. These examples highlight how AI can streamline processes, freeing up healthcare professionals to focus on core responsibilities. But realising these gains depends on equipping the workforce with the right skills.

While training in data science and engineering remains important, so too is preparing staff to use AI effectively in everyday roles. Leadership must also embrace AI as a tool for transformation. The Workforce Partnership Council recently issued guidance advocating for a human-focused, fair approach supported by strong social partnerships.

At the policy level, the Welsh Government is prioritising workforce readiness for AI. A new subgroup within the Social Partnership Council is studying the skills impact of AI, helping educational institutions tailor their programmes to meet the evolving needs of employers.

Public sector organisations in North Wales, including councils and NHS bodies, are keen to explore AI’s potential. Yet the pressures of day-to-day operations often limit longer-term innovation. Public-private partnerships will be key to sharing resources, addressing investment gaps and coordinating strategy.

The foundations for growth are already taking shape. Better data infrastructure and workforce planning are vital, even if they rarely make headlines. These elements will be essential to unlocking AI’s full potential in the region.

Ambition North Wales, which oversees a £1.1 billion growth deal, is targeting sustainable development across digital and low-carbon sectors. The initiative aims to create thousands of jobs and drive economic value by 2036, laying the groundwork for an AI-powered future.

Further investment includes a £500,000 commitment from the Welsh Government via the Wales Data Nation Accelerator, which supports collaboration between universities and industry to improve quality of life and economic performance. The programme is helping position Wales as a leader in data science and AI, backed by a pipeline of skilled workers.

North Wales is also poised to benefit from the UK Government’s wider AI investment strategy. With major developments planned—such as one of Europe’s largest data centre campuses in Bridgend—the region could become a key technology hub.

While North Wales has the right ingredients for an AI breakthrough, it is the alignment of ambition, investment and collaboration that will determine whether the region fulfils its potential in this transformative era.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://businessnewswales.com/a-shared-ambition-can-unlock-ai-potential/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://ambitionnorth.wales/news/public-and-private-sectors-must-seize-the-ai-opportunity-in-north-wales/> - Ambition North Wales emphasises the need for a coordinated approach between government, Ambition North Wales, and industry to present the region's AI capabilities with clarity and confidence. The article highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in identifying sectors where AI can have the most significant impact and in creating new opportunities, particularly for underrepresented communities. It also discusses the risk of talent migration to larger cities and the necessity of developing compelling career paths within North Wales to retain and attract skilled professionals. ([ambitionnorth.wales](https://ambitionnorth.wales/news/public-and-private-sectors-must-seize-the-ai-opportunity-in-north-wales/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/north-wales-regional-innovation-hub-annual-report-2023-24/> - The North Wales Regional Innovation Hub's Annual Report for 2023-24 outlines various initiatives aimed at addressing complex health and social care challenges. These include establishing a RITA User Network to discuss reminiscence technology for individuals with dementia, employing co-production and storytelling techniques to enhance services and partnerships, and improving support for children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions. The report also highlights efforts to provide research support, such as designing dashboards to measure regional progress against the Autism Code of Practice and analysing responses to a Dementia Listening Campaign across six North Wales towns. ([northwalescollaborative.wales](https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/north-wales-regional-innovation-hub-annual-report-2023-24/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambition_North_Wales> - Ambition North Wales is a joint committee overseeing the North Wales Growth Deal, a £1.1 billion regional economic growth initiative. The partnership includes six local authorities and various educational institutions, aiming to build a more vibrant, sustainable, and resilient economy. The deal focuses on sectors such as low carbon energy, digital, agrifood & tourism, innovation in high-value manufacturing, and land & property. Objectives include creating 3,400 to 4,200 jobs and generating between £2 billion and £2.5 billion in additional Gross Value Added by 2036. ([en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambition_North_Wales?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://media.service.gov.wales/news/welsh-universities-change-lives-with-artificial-intelligence-and-data-science> - The Welsh Government has invested £500,000 in 22 innovative projects through the Wales Data Nation Accelerator, a collaboration between Cardiff, Swansea, Aberystwyth, and Bangor universities. This initiative aims to position Wales as an international leader in data science and artificial intelligence by ensuring that university research teams work closely with industry to improve economic returns, quality of life, and sustainability. The projects also focus on creating a skilled and digitally competent workforce. ([media.service.gov.wales](https://media.service.gov.wales/news/welsh-universities-change-lives-with-artificial-intelligence-and-data-science?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.gov.wales/wales-forefront-uk-drive-turbocharge-ai> - The Welsh Government welcomes the UK Government's multi-billion-pound investment in Artificial Intelligence, as part of the UK AI Opportunities Action Plan. Wales is uniquely positioned to benefit from this investment, with plans to develop tech hubs, shared resources, and data centres. US technology company Vantage Data Centers plans to invest over £12 billion across the UK, with a significant portion allocated to Wales, including the development of one of Europe's largest data centre campuses in Bridgend. ([gov.wales](https://www.gov.wales/wales-forefront-uk-drive-turbocharge-ai?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.gov.wales/using-artificial-intelligence-work-benchmarking-report-awareness-and-understanding-artificial-html> - A benchmarking report by the Welsh Government assesses the awareness and understanding of artificial intelligence in the Welsh public sector. The report highlights that while there is broad agreement on the changing nature of work due to AI, concerns exist about potential job losses in certain roles. It emphasises the necessity of human oversight, particularly in sectors requiring empathy and judgement, such as healthcare. The report concludes with recommendations to enhance social partnership working and build capability across the Welsh public sector workforce to realise AI's potential responsibly. ([gov.wales](https://www.gov.wales/using-artificial-intelligence-work-benchmarking-report-awareness-and-understanding-artificial-html?utm_source=openai))