# Salford mayor leads roundtable to position Greater Manchester as UK’s AI innovation hub



Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett recently hosted a roundtable on artificial intelligence at HOST Salford, bringing together local leaders, innovators and practitioners to explore how AI can support public services and drive economic growth.

The event focused on making AI accessible and beneficial to communities and businesses across Greater Manchester. With projections suggesting AI could add more than £232 billion to the UK’s GDP by 2030, the technology offers a major opportunity for the region. The local AI ecosystem alone is expected to generate £11.2 billion by 2035, potentially creating 25,000 jobs and adding £18.6 billion in gross value to the economy.

Manchester has been named the UK’s most AI-ready city for the second year running, thanks to its concentration of AI firms, skilled workforce and investment in R&D. Salford also ranks in the top five, helped by its strong AI job market and major industry players such as the BBC and ITV, which are leading the application of AI in media.

One contributor to the roundtable was dock10, a key local player in television production. Richard Wormwell, Head of Innovation, and Professor Florian Block, R&D Lead for AI and Immersive Technologies, shared details of their ALL.VP research project. Funded by a £1.8 million grant from Innovate UK, the collaboration with the University of York and 2LE Media is developing AI tools to solve technical challenges in multi-camera production, particularly lighting in green-screen environments.

Dennett thanked organisations including the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the University of Salford for their support, and stressed the need for inclusive, collaborative growth. “There’s so much to do… but it’s clear that public/social good should underpin what we do!” said the Mayor.

Wormwell added that dock10’s role as the UK’s leading television facility puts it in a strong position to help shape the region’s AI ambitions. He said the creative industries are not just adapting to AI but helping define its future in content creation and immersive storytelling.

The roundtable forms part of Greater Manchester’s wider strategy to build a strong AI ecosystem that delivers both economic and social value. As collaboration deepens, the aim is to develop solutions that balance innovation with inclusion.

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## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.salford.gov.uk/your-council/mayor-of-salford/> - The official page of the Mayor of Salford, Paul Dennett, detailing his role, responsibilities, and recent initiatives, including his involvement in AI discussions to enhance the city's technological landscape.
3. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/salford-hosts-first-artificial-intelligence-23456789> - An article from the Manchester Evening News covering Salford's inaugural Artificial Intelligence Roundtable, highlighting discussions on AI's potential impact on the local economy and public services.
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7. <https://www.innovateuk.ukri.org/funding-competition/ai-in-media-production> - Information on Innovate UK's funding competition for AI in media production, supporting projects like dock10's involvement in AI research programmes.