# Cisco backs UK’s digital future with ethical AI and inclusive connectivity



As the UK accelerates towards a digitally empowered future, Cisco is positioning itself as a key enabler of national transformation. Through innovative, inclusive and ethical technology, the company is supporting economic growth, social equity and public sector resilience. Connectivity, once a convenience, is now a vital driver of opportunity, service delivery and national competitiveness.

Cisco’s partnership with the UK spans decades. From connecting schools to securing critical national infrastructure, the company has played a foundational role in the country’s digital development. Its involvement in NHS Living Labs, through the Cisco-led Lister Alliance, highlights how applied technology can address complex challenges — from tackling loneliness and supporting elderly health to improving frontline productivity.

The future integration of artificial intelligence into the economy and public services depends on strong digital infrastructure. Cisco’s work aligns with the UK’s Industrial Strategy, focusing on connectivity and digital skills to fuel growth and competitiveness. This includes expanding data centre capacity and building nationwide networks capable of supporting AI innovation and data-driven services securely and at scale.

At the heart of this infrastructure push are partnerships with major UK Service Providers. These alliances, often in collaboration with government agencies, aim to deliver reliable and resilient networks that underpin national services and security. By advancing technologies such as network automation and assurance, they are simplifying operations, future-proofing services and opening new revenue streams — creating the digital backbone for Britain’s AI economy.

Ethical development is core to Cisco’s approach. Its Responsible AI Framework, built on fairness, transparency, accountability, privacy and security, ensures AI is designed to mitigate bias and protect data. This framework is essential for trusted AI adoption in sensitive sectors such as healthcare, education and public safety. Cisco’s social impact projects further demonstrate the role of AI as a force for good — from helping police disrupt human trafficking to aiding farmers and maintaining vital infrastructure.

Digital skills are another priority. Cisco’s Networking Academy has trained over 585,000 people across the UK, with courses updated to include AI and emerging technologies. These efforts are embedded in local communities through libraries and educational institutions, broadening access and building a future-ready workforce.

A landmark Memorandum of Understanding signed in October 2023 with the Crown Commercial Service reflects Cisco’s expanding role in public sector transformation. The agreement offers government bodies competitively priced access to IT solutions focused on cybersecurity, hybrid working and sustainable infrastructure, accelerating digital adoption across departments.

Regional partnerships also play a crucial role. In Greater Manchester, Cisco is working to bridge the digital divide with secure, scalable connectivity in underserved communities. These efforts support improved social care, empower frontline workers and promote digital inclusion.

Cisco’s Country Digital Acceleration programme further underlines its commitment. Supporting innovation, regional development and public sector modernisation, the initiative aligns with national strategies to build a secure, inclusive and innovative digital economy.

Through ethical AI, inclusive connectivity and long-term partnerships, Cisco is helping to build a resilient digital Britain. Its work resonates with the vision behind Connected Britain 2025 — a future-ready UK powered by technology, rooted in fairness and driven by innovation.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://totaltele.com/powering-britains-digital-future-ciscos-commitment-to-inclusive-connectivity-and-ethical-ai/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news-blogs.cisco.com/emea/2022/10/20/cisco-and-greater-manchester-combined-authority-collaborate-to-create-a-more-inclusive-digital-region/> - In October 2022, Cisco partnered with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to enhance digital infrastructure and public services in the region. The collaboration aims to provide secure, scalable connectivity to underserved communities, supporting digital inclusion and addressing the digital divide. Initiatives include deploying digital tools to combat loneliness, assisting the elderly in health management, and equipping frontline staff with technology to improve productivity and job satisfaction. This partnership exemplifies Cisco's commitment to fostering inclusive connectivity and public sector transformation in the UK.
3. <https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/news/crown-commercial-service-announces-a-new-memorandum-of-understanding-with-cisco-offering-a-discounted-baseline-on-products> - In October 2023, the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cisco, granting public sector organisations access to a comprehensive portfolio of IT solutions. The agreement offers competitive rates and discounts on products related to cybersecurity, digital transformation, critical infrastructure, and hybrid working enablement. This initiative aims to improve security, accelerate digital adoption, and deliver better value for money to the public sector, aligning with Cisco's commitment to supporting the UK's digital future.
4. <https://news-blogs.cisco.com/emea/2022/06/13/cisco-commits-to-help-accelerate-a-more-inclusive-digital-united-kingdom/> - In June 2022, Cisco pledged to enhance digital skills training accessibility across the UK, aiming to train an additional quarter of a million people by 2020. Through the Cisco Networking Academy, Cisco partnered with educational institutions to establish 330 academies throughout the UK, training over 500,000 individuals. The initiative also involved collaborating with libraries to offer digital skills courses, such as 'Intro to Cybersecurity,' making training accessible within communities. This commitment underscores Cisco's dedication to fostering inclusive connectivity and public sector transformation in the UK.
5. <https://www.ukauthority.com/articles/ccs-signs-major-new-mou-with-cisco/> - In October 2023, the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cisco to accelerate the adoption of secure digital technology in the UK public sector. The agreement enables CCS to provide diverse and flexible bundled offers at standardised prices, covering areas such as cybersecurity, digital transformation, critical infrastructure, and hybrid working enablement. This partnership aims to maximise commercial benefits, enhance cybersecurity capabilities, and improve public service expertise, aligning with Cisco's commitment to supporting the UK's digital future.
6. <https://gblogs.cisco.com/uki/cisco-signs-mou-with-crown-commercial-service-to-support-secure-sustainable-digital-citizen-services/> - In October 2023, Cisco signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Crown Commercial Service (CCS) to support the secure digitisation of the UK Government and public sector. The agreement offers flexible bundles at standardised prices, including solutions for hybrid work, sustainability, and digital skills acceleration. Cisco's Networking Academy committed to providing over 2,000 hours of free, self-paced digital training to upskill over 90% of senior civil servants by 2025. This initiative aligns with Cisco's dedication to fostering inclusive connectivity and ethical AI in the UK.
7. <https://www.cisco.com/c/en_uk/solutions/digital-transformation/index.html> - Cisco's Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) programme aligns with the UK's Digital and Industrial Strategies, focusing on innovation, public sector transformation, and regional growth. The programme aims to drive economic growth and productivity by enhancing digital skills, supporting public sector digitalisation, and addressing regional disparities. By collaborating with the UK Government, Cisco seeks to build a more inclusive, innovative, and ethical digital Britain, providing secure, scalable connectivity and fostering AI-driven innovation to support economic growth and public sector ambitions.