Artificial Intelligence: An Agenda for 2020

Academy Election 2020 Project
Working Group: Make Government AI Ready

Background

The public sector in the U.S. is at the beginning of a long-term journey to develop and harness AI tools. Although AI in the public sector can yield numerous benefits—including improving customer service and efficiency—it also raises concerns about bias, security, and transparency. In 2020, AI is being driven by advancements in algorithms; increases in computing speed and power; abilities to digest information, store and retrieve data, and to "self -learn"; and advancements in artificial speech recognition. While AI continues to move forward, a majority of Americans agree that these advancements need to be carefully managed.

Recommendations for 2021

1. Build trustworthy AI by establishing a single, authoritative, and recognized federal entity that focuses on AI's social, cultural, and political effects and leverages existing investments to create guidance and solutions.

2. Use ethical frameworks to identify and reduce bias in AI by demonstrating a federal government commitment to ethical principles and standards in AI development and use.

3. Build intergovernmental partnerships and knowledge sharing around public sector uses of AI by developing an interagency and intergovernmental mechanism that addresses the need to share practices between different levels of government, incentivizes and stimulates broader AI adoption, and addresses gaps in readiness to build an AI workforce for all levels of government.

4. Increase investments in AI research and translation of research to practice by increasing public access to federal government data, increasing by at least 50% investment into unclassified AI research, ensuring the protection of privacy at the individual level, and removing biases from programming to ensure equitable treatment.

5. Build and AI ready workforce by providing funding to support the growth of an AI competent federal workforce, develop policies and fund incentives that encourage the AI R&D to use multidisciplinary teams, and support studies to increase understanding of current and future national workforce needs for AI R&D.
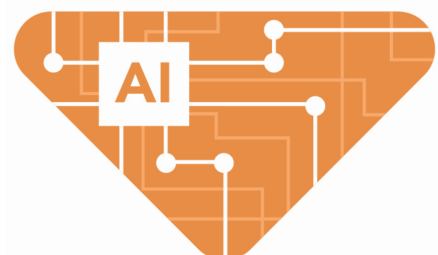
Additional Resources

These resources provide additional information and recommendations in the line with the Election 2020 paper, Artificial Intelligence: An Agenda for 2020.

The Academy: Election 2020 Paper: Make Government AI Ready

GAO Report: Artificial Intelligence: Emerging Opportunities, Challenges, and Implications for Policy and Research

White House Memorandum: Guidance for Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Applications

DOD Release: DOD Adopts Ethical Principles for Artificial Intelligence

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The Challenge: Make Government AI Ready

Artificial Intelligence (AI) allows computerized systems to perform tasks traditionally requiring human intelligence: analytics, decision support, visual perception, and foreign language translation. AI and Robotics Process Automation (RPA) have the potential to spur economic growth, enhance national security, and improve the quality of life. In a world of "Big Data" and "Thick Data," AI tools can process huge amounts of data in seconds, automating tasks that would take days or longer for human beings to perform.

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