The Oxford Consultation on Copyright and AI

On 18 February 2025, representatives from academia, the creative industries, policy, law, computer science, AI and civil society participated in the "AI and Creativity Workshop" organised by the Accelerator Fellowship Programme of the Institute for Ethics in AI, University of Oxford. The workshop was hosted by Dr. Caroline Green, Lead of the Accelerator Fellowship Programme and Director of Research at the Institute for Ethics, and Baroness Beeban Kidron OBE.

Convened against the backdrop of the UK government's proposals in its 'Copyright and AI' consultation to amend creative copyright by introducing a wide-ranging copyright exemption for web scraping, the workshop sought to bring together the creative industries and AI communities in a deliberative session that sought answers to the questions: How can creativity support AI? How can AI support creativity? And how should we protect and grow both sectors? The discussions were rich and productive, exploring both the technical and regulatory opportunities for collaboration.

The group agreed on the following statement and action:
"New technology presents exciting creative opportunities, but we are at a pivotal moment in shaping the regulatory landscape for AI. If AI is to protect creative heritage and truly benefit creativity and humanity, its development must consider the collective needs of creators, technologists, policymakers, researchers, and the wider public. Creators possess both moral and commercial rights over their work. Some AI companies are already adopting responsible approaches to copyright, prioritising transparency and legal compliance. However, the UK government's consultation on 'Copyright and Artificial Intelligence' has been framed as a competition between the creative industries and AI companies, rather than fostering an inclusive, co-productive process. The current proposals risk destabilising the economic foundations of the creative sector while failing to recognise AI companies that are taking a responsible approach to copyright and transparency."

The group reached a consensus on the following issues:
- The growing tendency of UK government actions to separate AI and the creative industries undermines potential collaboration. AI and creative sectors must engage in a comprehensive and balanced dialogue.
- The UK's creative industries are well-positioned to play a significant role in the generative AI revolution. However, participation must be grounded in a strong intellectual property (IP) framework, supported by imaginative and balanced consultation processes.
- Certain AI companies have demonstrated responsibility by adhering to copyright laws, acting transparently, and paying for licenses. Expanding copyright exemptions would disadvantage these responsible companies while favouring large technology corporations.

Given the urgency of these issues, the group proposed reconvening as the '**Oxford Consultation on Creative Copyright and AI' to provide an inclusive and co-production approach**. Opportunities to engage with this alternative consultation will be provided.

For questions, please get in touch with: aiethicsafp@philosophy.ox.ac.uk

Statement signatories:

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Sebastian Cuttill, Parliamentary and Campaigns Manager, News Media Association

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Baroness Alex Freeman of Steventon, Crossbench Peer, House of Lords, British Science Communicator, life peer, former TV producer

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