

# MEDIA RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**16 December 2024**

## **AIIA Welcomes National AI Capability Plan**

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) today welcomed the Minister for Industry and Science The Hon Ed Husic's announcement to develop a National AI Capability Plan as an important acknowledgement of the need for Australia to think strategically and invest in local AI capability to ensure Australia maintains its economic competitiveness .

The Plan, announced today by the Minister, recognises Artificial Intelligence as a crucial driver of Australia's economic future, with AI and automation projected to contribute up to \$600 billion annually to Australia's GDP by 2030.

AIIA CEO Mr Simon Bush said, "The development of a comprehensive National AI Capability Plan is a significant step forward to map out how Australia can move from AI laggard to AI leader. Australia has been a slow adopter of AI across its economy by global standards due to adoption concerns and fears. Australia requires a balanced approach to both ensuring AI regulation and guardrails protect citizens but also having industry policy that supports AI innovation, investment and adoption."

"Australia currently lags behind many of our international competitors in AI adoption and implementation so this Plan is a crucial step in the right direction. While we strongly support the Government's recent work on AI guardrails and safety measures, we have consistently advocated for a parallel national strategy backed by targeted investment."

The AIIA particularly welcomes the Plan's focus on growing investment, strengthening AI capabilities, boosting skills, and securing economic resilience. These align with the industry's priorities for developing domestic AI capabilities and ensuring Australian workers and businesses can thrive in an AI-enabled economy.

"I would encourage the Government to move as quickly as possible in the development of the Plan and move towards funding the implementation as a matter of priority," Mr Bush added. "With the review process scheduled to conclude at the end of 2025, the government response would likely come after the 2026 budget cycle, meaning we wouldn't see funding flowing until at least the 2027 budget. This is simply too long to wait in the fast-moving AI landscape."

"We strongly urge the government to bring forward the review deadline to July 2025, allowing recommendations to be considered for the 2025-26 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook."

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The AIIA looks forward to actively participating in the consultation process and working with the government to ensure the Plan delivers meaningful outcomes for Australia's technology sector and the broader economy.

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## About the AIIA

The AIIA is Australia's peak representative body and advocacy group for those in the digital ecosystem. Since 1978, the AIIA has pursued activities to stimulate and grow the digital ecosystem, to create a favourable business environment for our members and to contribute to Australia's economic prosperity. We are a not-for-profit organisation to benefit members, which represents around 90% of the over one million employed in the technology sector in Australia. We are unique in that we represent the diversity of the technology ecosystem from small and medium businesses, start-ups, universities, and digital incubators through to large Australian companies, multinational software and hardware companies, data centres, telecommunications companies and technology consulting companies

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