

Conference Day Agenda

Monday 7th February 2022

Circle Square, Oxford Rd, Manchester M1 7FS

1:00 - 1:30: Arrival & Registration

Welcome & Introduction to Skills Festival

Katie Gallagher, MD, Manchester Digital

Ministerial address

Keynote Presentation

Skills Festival Headline Sponsor, Autotrader

Panel Discussion: The Democratisation of Emerging Technologies

How accessible are future skill sets? The Government's recently published National AI Strategy, sets the tone of 'a step-change for AI in the UK, recognising the power of AI to increase resilience, productivity, growth and innovation across the private and public sectors' This panel will explore how approaches to emerging skills such as AI should be democratised, to ensure high-end technology skills and knowledge for practical application is accessible to diverse early talent, and potential implications for such developments to be left largely in the hand of higher-level academia.

- Panel to be announced.

Skills Audit

Findings and Questions

Panel Discussion: Wage inflation: the impact on sustainable tech recruitment in Greater Manchester

In-demand job roles continue to be in short candidate supply. Recruiting enough of the right tech talent continues to hinder the sector's growth in the region. Until outcomes of the current investment in reskilling and up-skilling are realised, we're seeing a vicious circle of wage inflation that is not sustainable and may ultimately damage the ecosystem. Does this mean intervention is needed? This panel will export the realities of such behaviours on business growth/survival, diversity innovation, as well as consider whether the shift to remote working is or will impact on recruitment in the long term, positive and negative.

- Panel to be announced

Keynote Speaker

Craig Fenton: Director of Strategy and Operations UK&I, Google

The Digital age is more than ever a human age: the future of tech education

Closing Remarks and Final Thoughts

Katie Gallagher: MD, Manchester Digital

Regional Government Leader - TBC

5:00 - 6:30: Networking & Drinks