

# 'Stop working with Pentagon' – OpenAI staff face protests

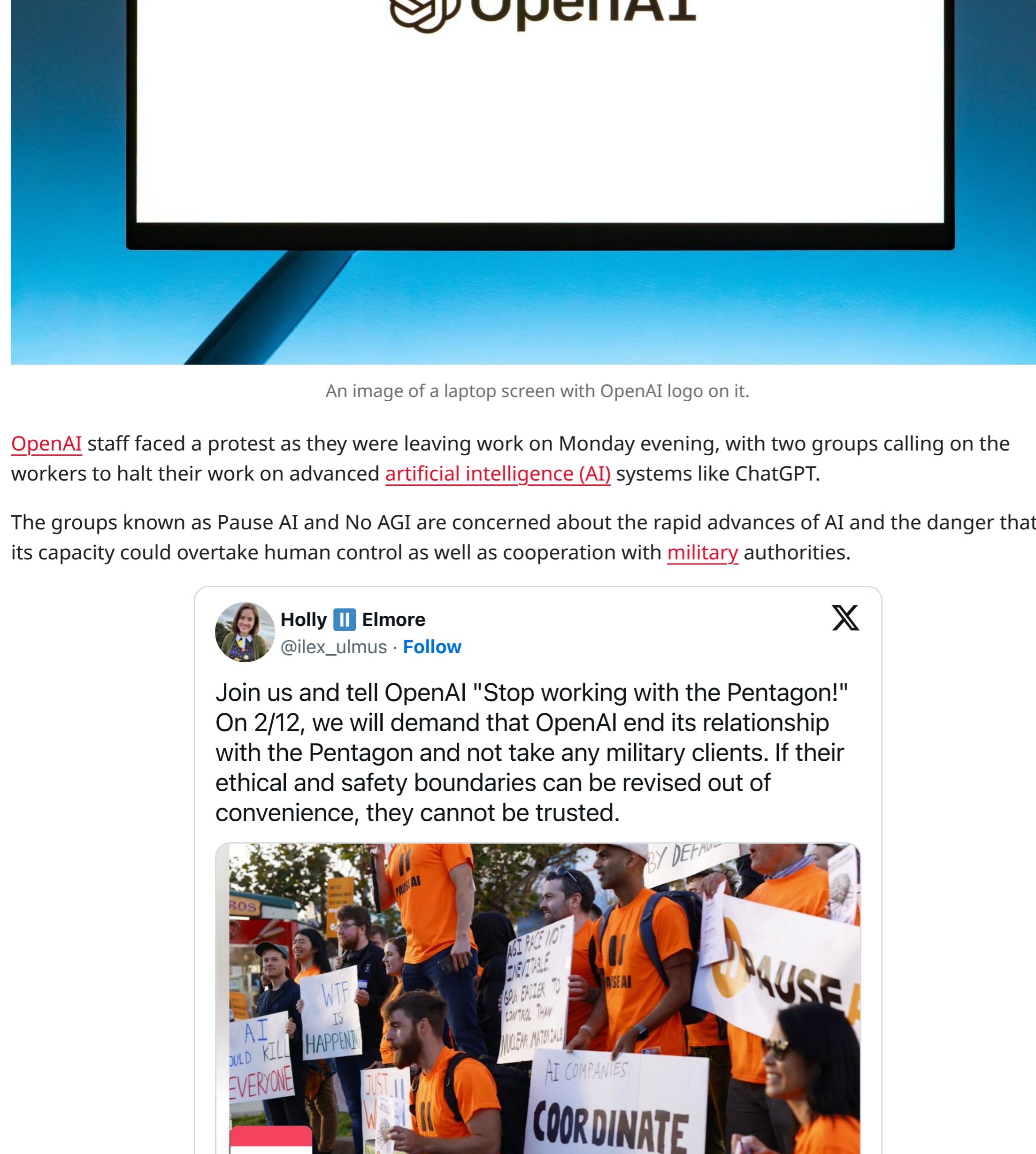


Graeme Hanna Tech Journalist

Last updated: 13 February, 2024

Disclosure

Why Trust Us



An image of a laptop screen with OpenAI logo on it.

OpenAI staff faced a protest as they were leaving work on Monday evening, with two groups calling on the workers to halt their work on advanced [artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) systems like ChatGPT.

The groups known as Pause AI and No AGI are concerned about the rapid advances of AI and the danger that its capacity could overtake human control as well as cooperation with [military](#) authorities.

Holly Elmore @ilex\_ulumus · Follow

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Join us and tell OpenAI "Stop working with the Pentagon!" On 2/12, we will demand that OpenAI end its relationship with the Pentagon and not take any military clients. If their ethical and safety boundaries can be revised out of convenience, they cannot be trusted.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024 AT 4:30 PM  
Protest @OpenAI (PauseAI & No AGI)  
1960 Bryant St, San Francisco, CA 94110

5:55 PM · Feb 5, 2024

12 · 84 · Reply · Copy link · Read 13 replies

Dozens gathered at the [OpenAI](#) premises on Bryant Street in San Francisco in the aftermath of the company amending its usage policy to omit details of using AI for military purposes reports [Venture Beat](#). Days later, it was confirmed OpenAI had entered into a partnership with the Pentagon to work on "[cybersecurity tools](#)".

The protest organizers spoke about their aims and why they were taking this action.

"The goal for No AGI is to spread awareness that we really shouldn't be building AGI ([artificial general intelligence](#)) in the first place," said its leader, Sam Kirchener.

"Instead we should be looking at things like whole brain emulation that keeps human thought at the forefront of intelligence."

His counterpart at Pause AI, lead organizer Holly Elmore added their wish for "a global, indefinite pause on frontier development of AGI until it's safe."

She opined, "I would be so happy if they ended their relationship with the military. That seems like a really important boundary."

## The cause of OpenAI protests

OpenAI's foray into the military space is a significant development, so it would be remarkable if they were to reverse their decision and grant Elmore her wish.

It comes at the same time [the company's CEO Sam Altman has warned of the potential dangers of AI](#) due to "societal misalignments" which some would argue include the abuse of the technology for military means.

Altman has also called for the creation of a universal regulator for AI, a sentiment shared by Pause AI's Elmore who added, "Self-governance is not enough for these companies, there really needs to be external regulation."

Kirchener was blunt in his warning of where all this would lead if the advances of technology were left unchecked, calling for human dynamics to be prioritized.

"If we build AGI, there's the risk that in a post-AGI world, we'll lose a lot of meaning from what's called the psychological threat, where AGI does everything for everyone. People won't need jobs. And in our current society, people derive a lot of meaning from their work, he implored.

As reflected in their names, Pause AI appears more concerned with the safe development of new tech whilst No AGI wants it to be stopped altogether.

Image: [Pexels/Andrew Neel](#)

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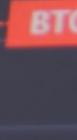
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Graeme Hanna

Tech Journalist



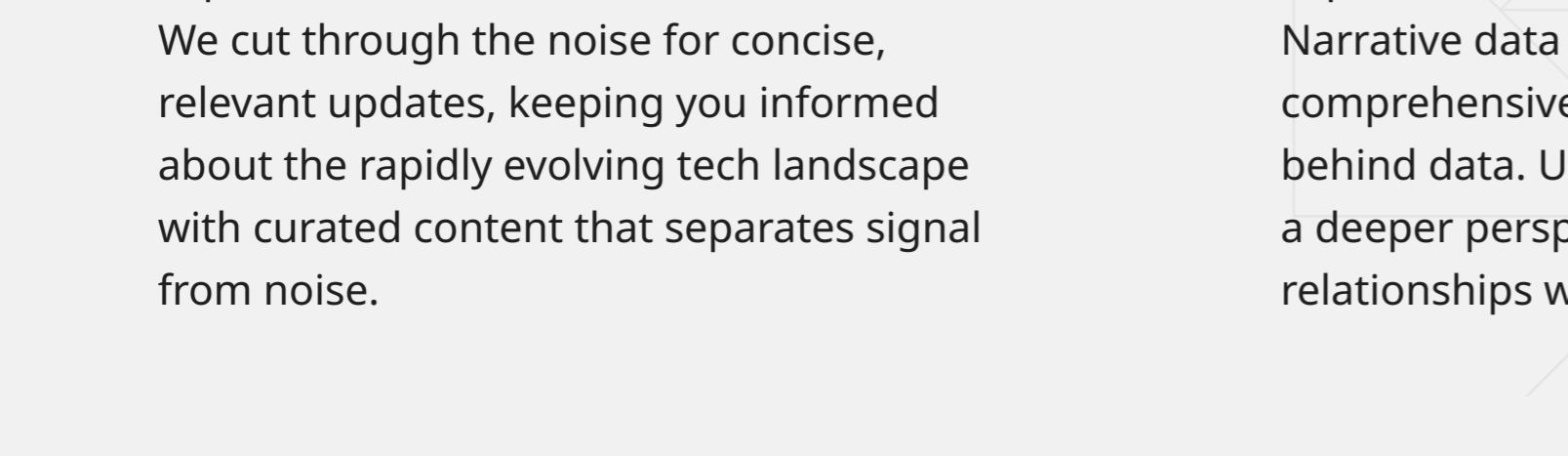
Graeme Hanna is a full-time, freelance writer with significant experience in online news as well as content writing. Since January 2021, he has contributed as a football and news writer for several mainstream UK titles including The Glasgow Times, Rangers Review, Manchester Evening News, MyLondon, Give Me Sport, and the Belfast News Letter. Graeme has worked across several briefs including news and feature writing in addition to other significant work experience in professional services. Now a contributing news writer at ReadWrite.com, he is involved with pitching relevant content for publication as well as writing engaging tech news stories.

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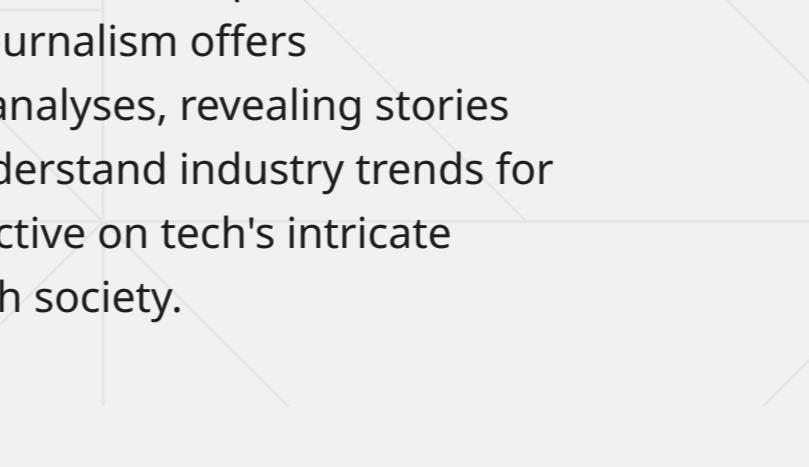


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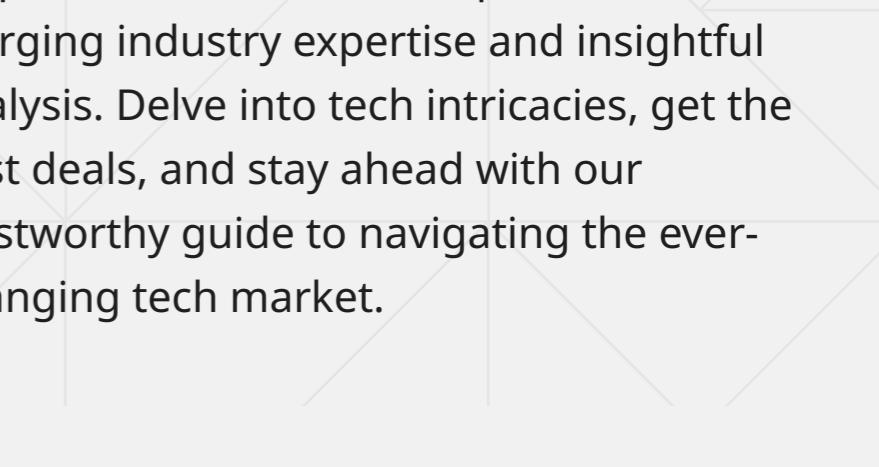
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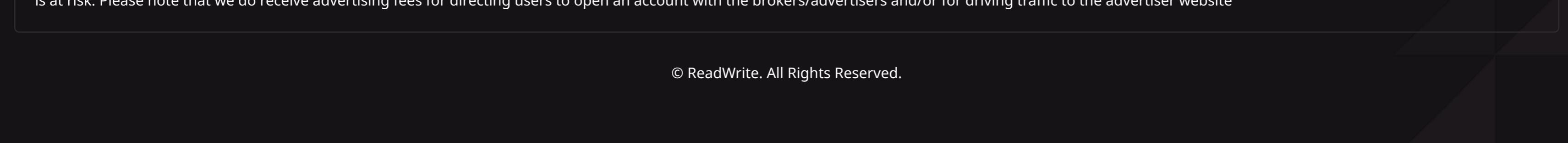
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