

Public announcement

Top 100 2025: IRCAI's global index of artificial intelligence innovations advancing the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Author:

Davor Orlic, Chief Operating Officer
Anja Polajnar, Communications Manager

Category:

Confidential, external document

Date:

February 2026

Prepared by:

International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence

Objective:

The main objective is to present the projects in the Top 100 global index to the relevant stakeholders, the general public and gain traction on the world stage with the goal of positive press reviews and public exposure.

IRCAI Top 100: A Global AI for SDGs Index

The International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence under the auspices of UNESCO (IRCAI) is committed to supporting the development of AI-enabled solutions to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of this commitment, each year, IRCAI issues its "Top 100" call to compile a list of one hundred outstanding projects that harness the power of AI to address and achieve the 17 SDGs.

The 2025 edition of the Top 100 call proved a renewed success, marked by a higher quantity and quality of proposals submitted. Proposals covered all 17 SDGs, a wide range of industries, and originated from all UN geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania. The 100 selected projects demonstrate that the use of artificial intelligence in sustainable development is no longer a novelty, but rather a thriving area of innovation among organizations worldwide. Analysis of the submitted projects reveals a diverse and engaged international environment for sustainable applications and an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the field of sustainable technologies.

The main purpose of compiling this index is to present solutions from around the world with a tangible contribution to the SDGs. The index thereby serves as an excellent and effective platform for sustainable and ethical AI solutions.

The Top 100 global index has been published [on our website](#) at the beginning of February 2026.

The selection process

The selection and review process aimed to identify AI-enabled projects that presented robust applications that directly or indirectly addressed one or more SDGs. A strong focus was placed on the innovative research that drove the development, deployment, and use of the proposed applications.

The projects were evaluated based on a revised SDF Innovation Framework. The framework placed greater emphasis on the transferability, transparency, and accountability of submitted projects, as well as the projects' implementation of SDG measurement mechanisms. The criteria have been categorized as follows:

- **AI & Science:** The extent to which AI was integral to its delivery, including a proof of concept or a research paper demonstrating its potential.
- **SDGs:** The project's impact on the relevant SDG(s), measured through key performance indicators or by providing systems that

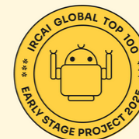
improve them.

- **Business:** The business aspects of the projects, including market need and sustainability of the product or service, and team characteristics.
- **Ethics:** The ethical impact and ramifications of the proposed application, including its alignment with relevant ethical design principles such as transparency, privacy, and accountability, or the AI model's technical and environmental sustainability.

About IRCAI

The International Research Centre in Artificial Intelligence (IRCAI) was founded by the Government of Slovenia in 2020. Its establishment was ratified at the 40th session of the UNESCO General Conference, where all 193 of the organization's Member States supported the establishment of the Centre. Representing a major AI arm for UNESCO, the Centre serves as a coordination point, funding route and exploitation accelerator for AI-powered approaches to address the UN SDGs.

Inspired by the international work of high-level institutions and researchers in the field of AI, the centre aims to showcase how AI can truly serve humanity and act as a dialogue platform for research and potential spinoffs.



IRCAI Top 100 – Global AI & SDG Index

