

# UK will lead on ‘guard rails’ to limit dangers of AI, says Rishi Sunak

Publication Date: 2023-05-18

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Section: Technology

Tags: Artificial intelligence (AI), Computing, Consciousness, Rishi Sunak, news

Article URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/may/18/uk-will-lead-on-guard-rails-to-limit-dangers-of-ai-says-rishi-sunak>



The UK will lead on limiting the dangers of artificial intelligence, Rishi Sunak has said, after calls from some tech experts and business leaders for a moratorium. Sunak said AI could bring benefits and prove transformative for society, but it had to be introduced “safely and securely with guard rails in place”. The prime minister’s comments sound a more cautious approach than in the past, after tech leaders including Twitter’s owner, Elon Musk, and Apple’s co-founder Steve Wozniak added their names to nearly 30,000 signatures on a letter urging a pause in significant projects. The letter called for a moratorium while the capabilities and dangers of systems such as ChatGPT-4 are properly studied and mitigated in response to fears about the creation of digital minds, fraud, disinformation and the risk to jobs. Sunak has been an advocate of AI, emphasising its benefits rather than risks, and in March the government unveiled a light-touch regulatory programme that did not appear to include proposals for any new laws or enforcement bodies. He also launched a £100m UK taskforce last month to develop “safe and reliable” applications for AI with the aim of making the country a science and technology superpower by 2030. But, speaking on the plane to Japan for the G7 summit, where AI will be discussed, Sunak said a global approach to regulation was needed. “We have taken a deliberately iterative approach because the technology is evolving quickly and we want to make sure that our regulation can evolve as it does as well,” he said. “Now that is going to involve coordination with our allies ... you would expect it to form some of the conversations as well at the G7. “I think that the UK has a track record of being in a leadership position and bringing people together, particularly in regard to technological regulation in the online safety bill ... And again, the companies themselves, in that instance as well, have worked with us and looked to us to provide those guard rails as they will do and have done on AI.” The US has also pushed for a discussion of AI at the summit in Hiroshima, with leaders potentially discussing the threat from disinformation or to infrastructure posed by a technology moving at speed, exemplified by the ChatGPT system. No 10 has indicated that it does not think a moratorium is the answer, but it is moving towards thinking about a global framework. The UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) said earlier this month it would look at the underlying systems – or foundation models – behind AI tools. The initial review, described by one legal expert as a “pre-warning” to the sector, will publish its findings in September. Geoffrey Hinton, known as the “godfather of AI”, announced he had quit Google earlier this month in order to speak more freely about the technology’s dangers, and the UK government’s outgoing chief scientific adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance, has urged ministers to “get ahead” of the profound social and economic changes that AI could trigger, saying the impact on jobs could be as big as that of the Industrial Revolution.