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Labour slams 'tech bro' Sunak's approach to AI



Image credit: Startup Coalition

Labour tech ministers have criticised "tech bro" Rishi Sunak's approach to regulating AI, claiming slow progress and mismanagement of priorities are letting down the sector.

AI dominated discussions at tech-focused fringe events at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool as the opposition gears up for next year's likely general election.

The prime minister has said the government will secure the UK's place as a global leader in AI technology. Sunak has made November's [AI safety summit](#) and the government's [Frontier AI Taskforce](#) pillars of his approach to regulating AI.

However, Labour's tech team said the Tory Party was failing the country's tech sector when it comes to managing the risks of AI and maximising its opportunities.

"One of our key missions is to achieve the highest sustained growth of any G7 economy. AI innovations will help us to achieve that and that should be the context we're discussing AI," said Matt Rodda, shadow minister for AI and intellectual property, speaking at an event organised by lobby group the Startup Coalition.

Rodda and his colleagues said that AI would be a fundamental driving force of economic growth in the UK but slammed the government for failing to capitalise on it.

Referring to the AI regulatory white paper, [published](#) by the tech department in March, Rodda said the lengthy process of its creation was indicative of the government's inability to manage AI.

"The key thing about this white paper is that it has taken a very long time to write it and publish it. And it's taken a long time to consult on it and that's another related failure by the government," said the MP for Pontypridd.

Shadow minister for international trade and investment, Davies-Jones, said the government's "forward process" for international collaboration, was "letting down people working in AI and letting down the UK economy".

AI safety summit has 'lost its way'

The shadow AI minister further criticised the upcoming AI Safety Summit, suggesting that its focus on the existential threats of frontier AI was unhelpful.

"Obviously safety is really important," he said. "They're looking at one aspect of AI rather than the whole piece and rather than focusing on its incredible economic potential."

Shadow minister for tech and digital economy, Alex Davies-Jones, echoed Rodda's claims that the summit's goals

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The MP for Pontypridd called for an internationally collaborative approach that effectively addresses the immediate threats of AI.

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