

# MAINSTREAMING AI: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

MONTREAL  
NOVEMBER 12, 2025  
#COEE2025

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After the generative AI breakthrough, AI is rapidly emerging from specialist circles to become part of the scientific mainstream. Much like the Internet did 30 years ago, scientists across all disciplines are now grappling with how to integrate AI into their field of research and practice. This symposium captures this pivotal moment when the entire scientific community is becoming a stakeholder in AI research and development. It proposes panels around three themes that should appeal to every scientist.

**Keynote:** Yoshua Bengio, FRSC (Université de Montréal)

## PANEL 1 - AI AND UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

**Panellists:** Luc Vinet, FRSC (IVADO), Aurélie Labbe (HEC Montréal), Julien Billot (ScaleAI)

**Moderator:** To be confirmed

When Nobel Prizes are awarded to AI researchers working in private research facilities, can universities still claim to leadership in AI research? What does the future hold for AI research in universities? Some argue that a flourishing open-source and open-weight ecosystem is essential to maintaining the relevance of university research in AI. Is this a necessary condition? Is it sufficient?

## PANEL 2 - AI AND THE ORGANISATION OF SCIENCE

**Panellists:** Pierre Larouche (Université de Montréal), Foutse Khomh (Polytechnique Montréal), Laurent Charlin (HEC Montréal)

**Moderator:** To be confirmed

The AI ecosystem is expanding both vertically and horizontally. At the apex, a vibrant research community is building on the momentum of generative AI in a quest for further general-purpose AI models – and ultimately, artificial general intelligence. At the same time, the base is broadening: these new general-purpose models are being leveraged to extend AI into new fields of application. How will this reshape the organisation of science? Will AI bring additional impetus towards inter-disciplinarity? Or will we witness the emergence of a series of “AI and...” sub-disciplines?

## PANEL 3 - AI AND SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBILITY

**Panellists:** Joé Martineau (HEC Montréal), Golnoosh Farnadi (McGill University), third to be confirmed

**Moderator:** To be confirmed

Policy debates around the governance of AI first focused on “responsible AI”, and now AI safety is at the forefront. AI is coming of age amid overlapping geopolitical, economic, social and environmental crises. It should come as no surprise, then, that our collective anxieties are projected onto these policy debates. The resulting governance frameworks – in the EU and elsewhere – are notably more cautious than those that accompanied previous technological waves. How can the scientific community contribute to usher in responsible and safe AI, without choking its potential benefits? Can scientists play a role in easing public concerns and helping to build trust in AI – where such trust is warranted? At the very least, can they avoid making matters worse?