IAPP **AI Governance Global Europe 2026**

Training 1-2 June
Workshop 2 June
Conference 3-4 June
DUBLIN

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The Gift of Fire: Ethics, Law and Literacy in the Age of Autonomous AI

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The Prometheus Myth: A Modern Parable

The Ancient Gift

Prometheus stole fire from the Gods and gave it to humanity, a transformative act that brought both progress and peril.

The AI Parallel

Today's AI developers are modern Promethean figures, bestowing powerful technology that illuminates but also consumes, transforms, and threatens.

Source: https://www.smk.dk/article/efterlyst-maleri-dukker-op-i-graekenland-efter-90-aar/

AGENDA OUTLINE

I. Welcome and Introductions
II. Why Are We Here? (The Problem)
III. What Does Good Look Like? (The Standards)
IV. What Do We Actually Do? (The Call to Action)
V. Questions and Answers
VI. Closing Remarks

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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Priority Check - When your organisation adopts AI, what is the primary driver?

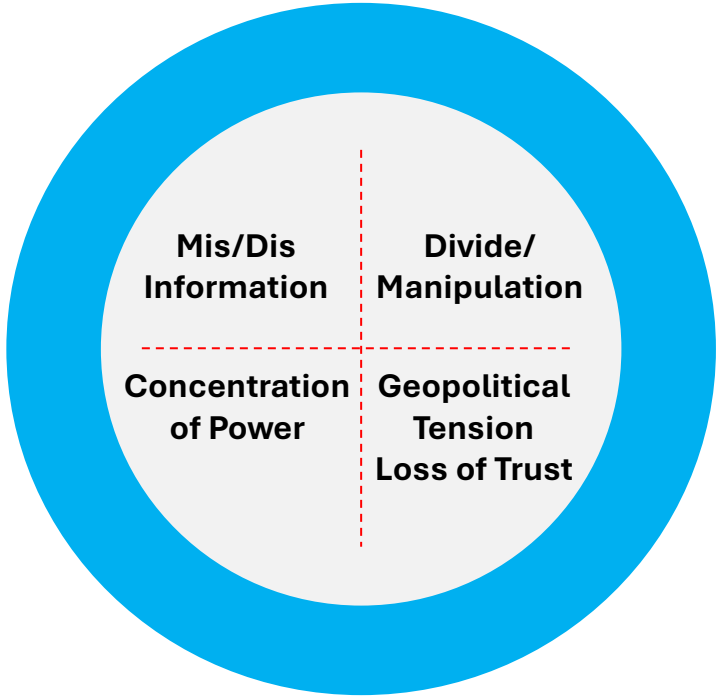
Why Are We Here? (The Problem)

"Those who don't look at the future are blind in one eye, those who don't look at the past are blind in both eyes"

Past learning

Not my problem

Today's relevance



Consequences

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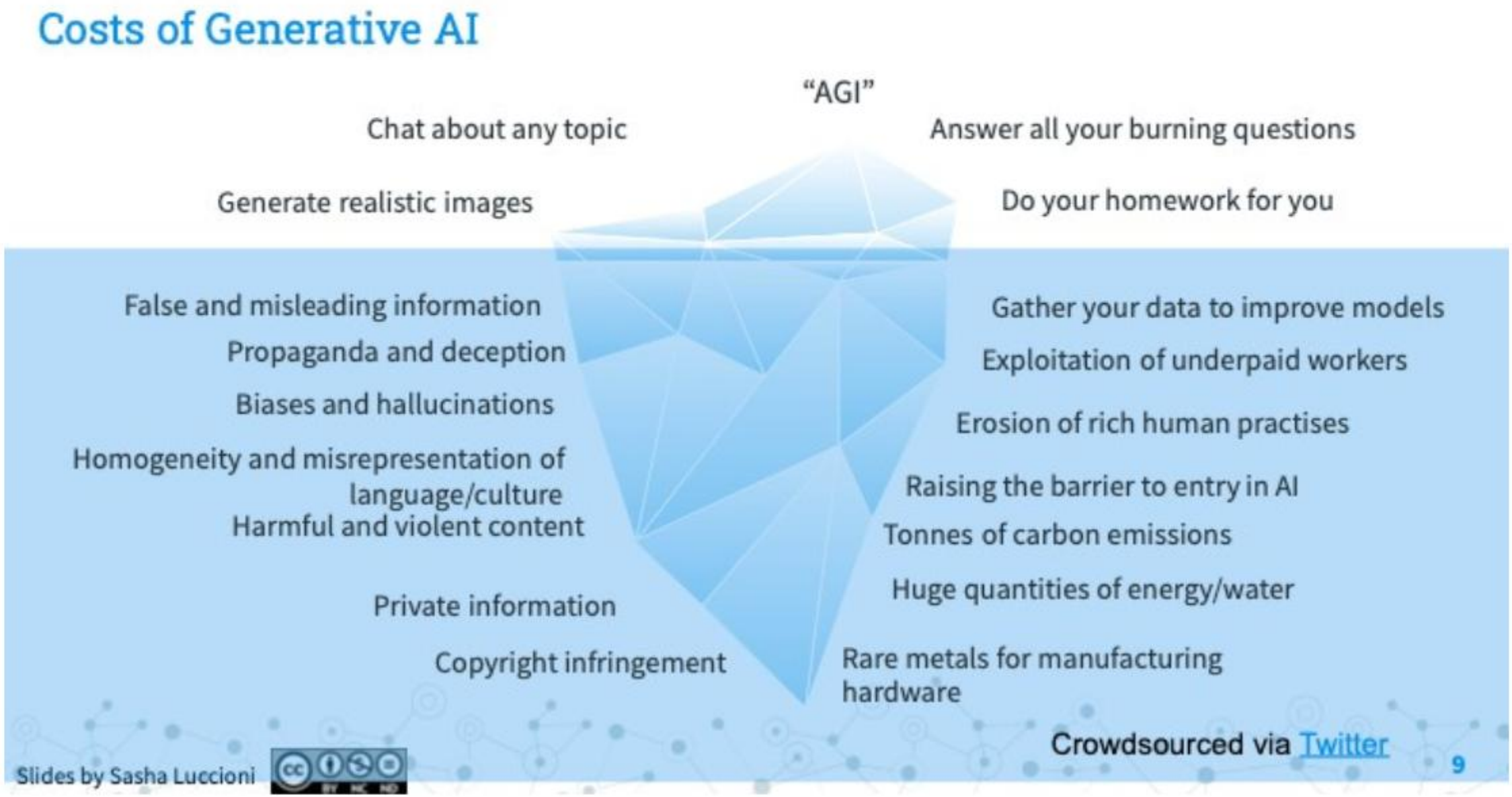
Recent Use Cases

Case	Root Causes	Consequences	Modern AI Parallel	Lesson for AI & policy
Post Office Horizon IT	• Blind faith in opaque software • Institutional denial	• Ruined lives & livelihoods • Systemic injustice	• Algorithmic evidence • Automated adjudication	• Right to contest outputs • Mandatory independent audits
Challenger Disaster	• Normalisation of deviance • Ignored expert warnings	• Catastrophic loss of crew • Organisational trauma	• Overconfidence in models • Disregarded edge cases	• Preserve dissent channels • Mandatory expert sign-off
Major IT Outages	• Single-site vulnerability • Brittle infrastructure	• Mass economic disruption • Severe reputational damage	• Centralised cloud failures • Supply chain fragility	• Enforce geographic diversity • Mandate tested failovers
UK Data Centre & AI Compute Expansion	• Rapid demand growth • Concentration of hyperscale data • Weak energy coordination	• Grid strain • High carbon footprint	• Large-scale model training • Hyperscale cloud infrastructure expansion	• Carbon-aware compute planning; • Align AI growth with national resources

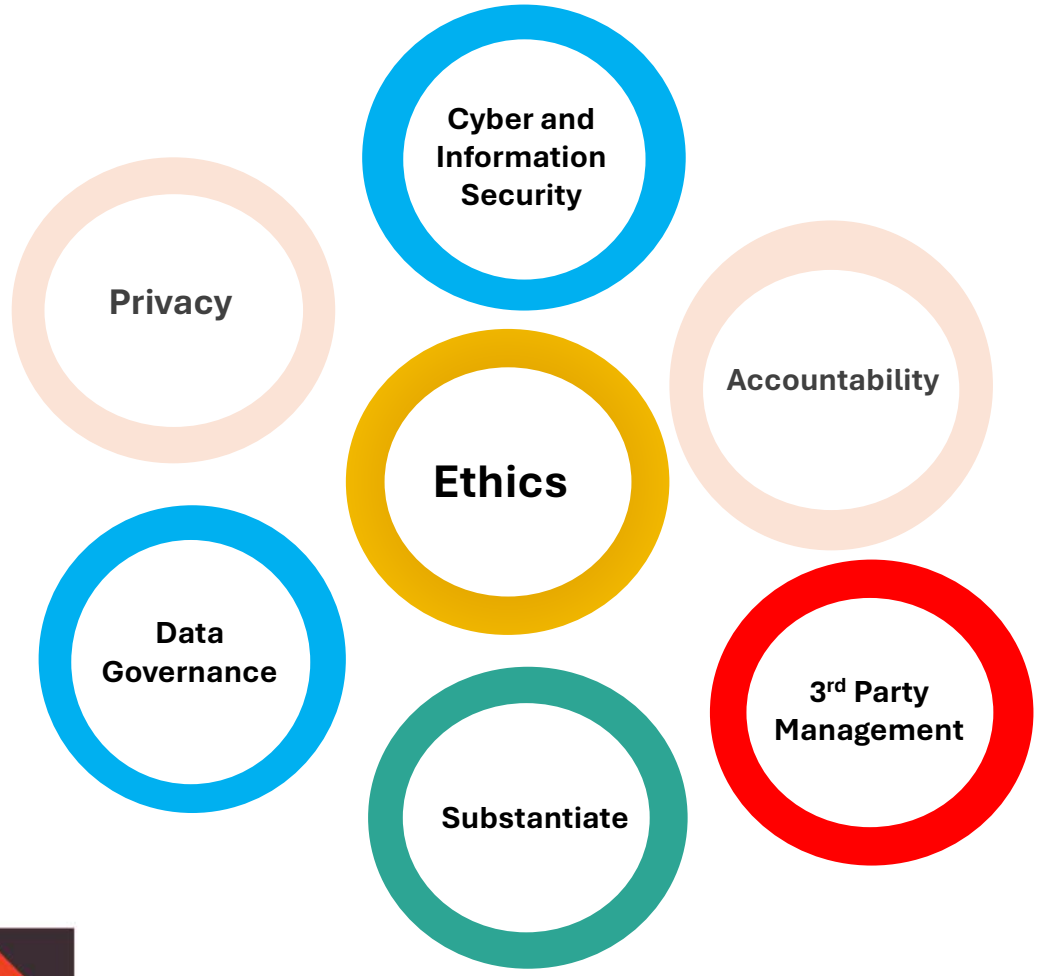
OECD: AI Incidents and Hazards Monitor



Ethics Temperature Check - How much does AI ethics actually influence decisions in your organisation day to day?

Governance reflection – Current state

Siloed Approach



Reactive Approach

- Misunderstood Risk Management
  - Endless assessments
  - Lack of root cause analyses
  - Lack of action plans and risk ownership
- Assumptions
  - It is already done
  - Someone else owns it
  - We're compliant
- Tick-box exercise
  - Irrelevant policies & process
  - Misalignment with organisational goals
  - Just because it's legal doesn't mean it's right

What Does Good Look Like? (The Standard)

Do good - No harm to humans, society & the environment 'Protect, Respect and Remedy'
UN guiding Principles on human rights

- Ethics
- Sustainability
- Privacy
- Security & Safety
- ISO 42001

AI Development

Ethics

- Guiding Principles
- Environment
- For the good of ALL
- ICO's AI guidance

Governance

- Integrated
- End to End
- Aligned
- Relevant and Applicable

Sustainability

Make it visible

- Unified AI Energy Scores
- Understand impact

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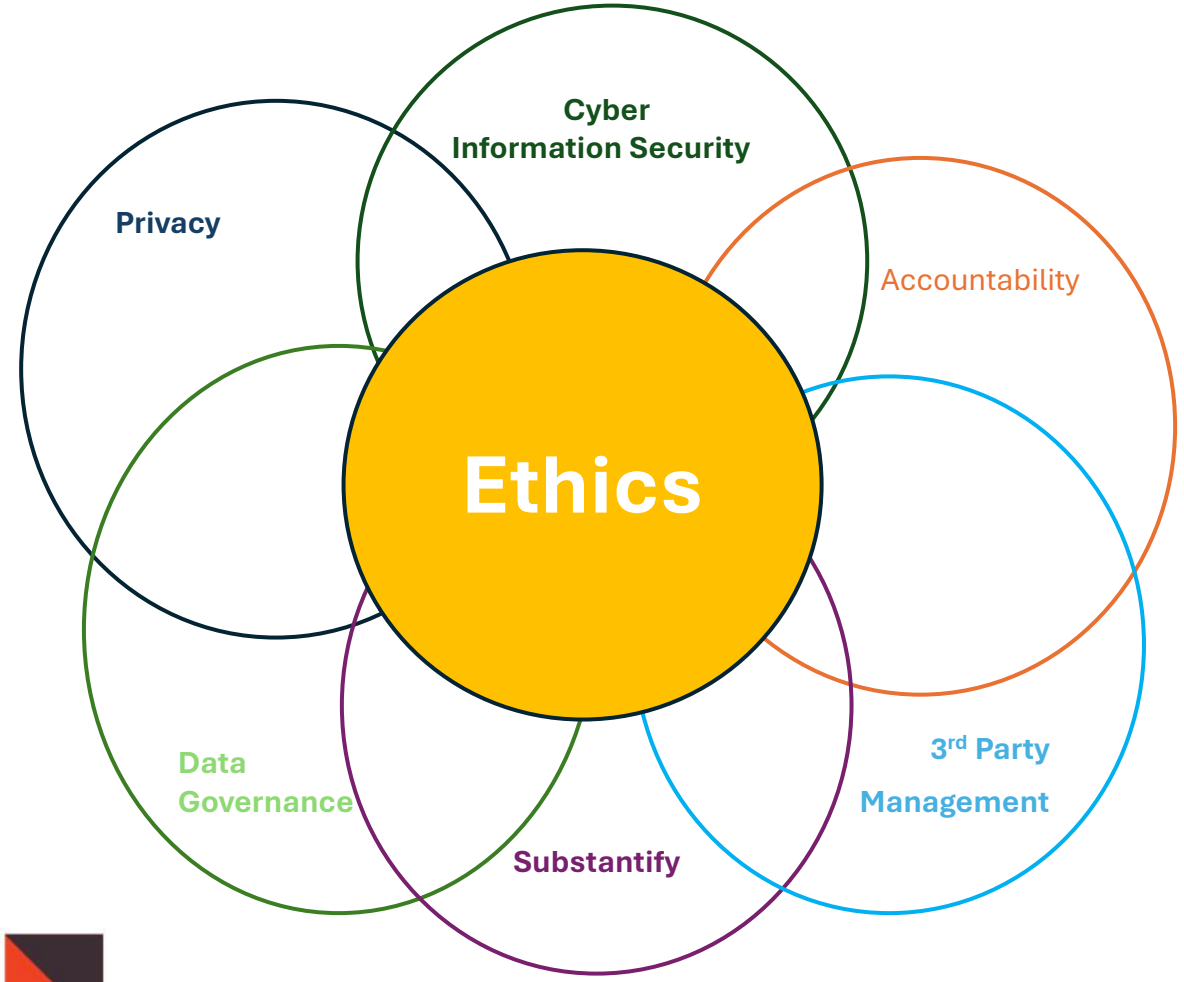
Have you ever considered the environmental cost of an AI system you build, procured or used?

Governance reflection ways forward

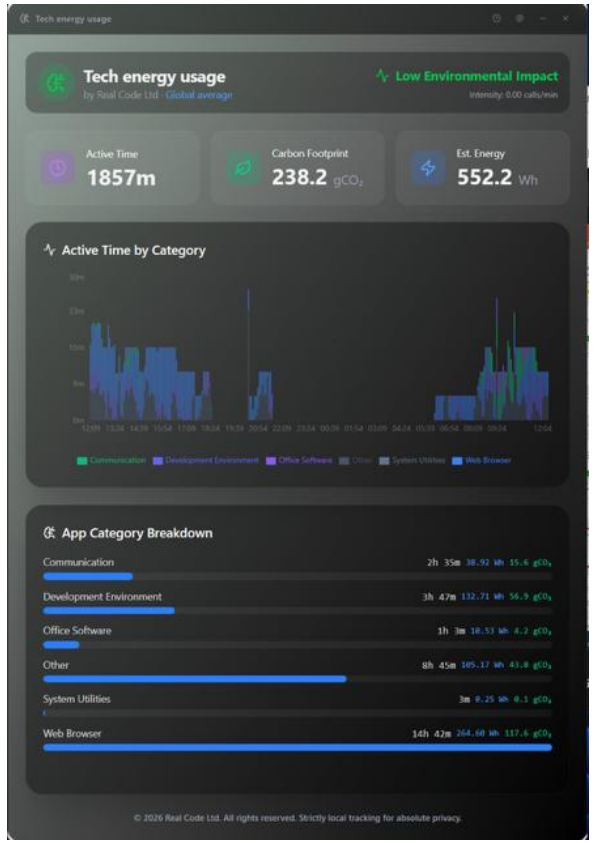
Integrated and Aligned Approach

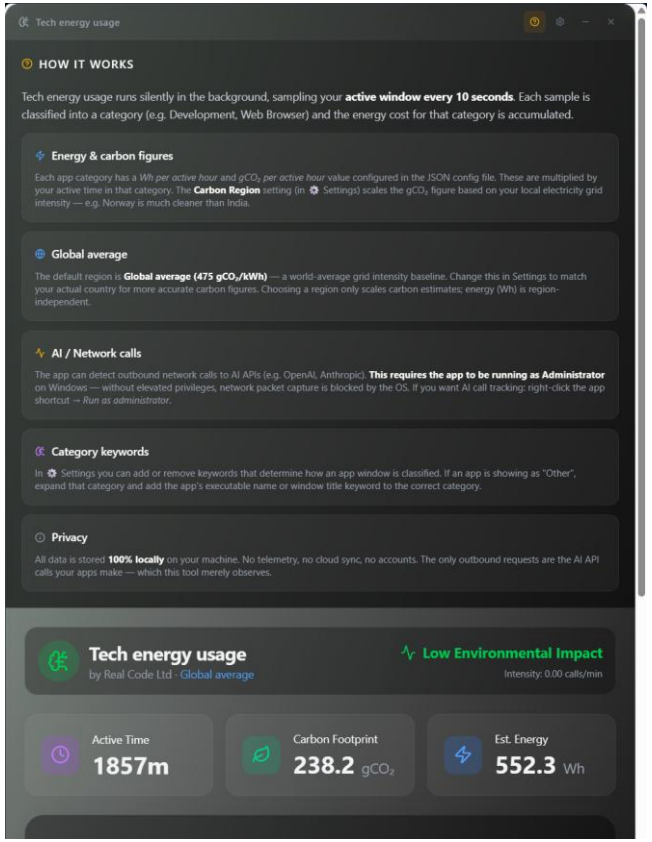


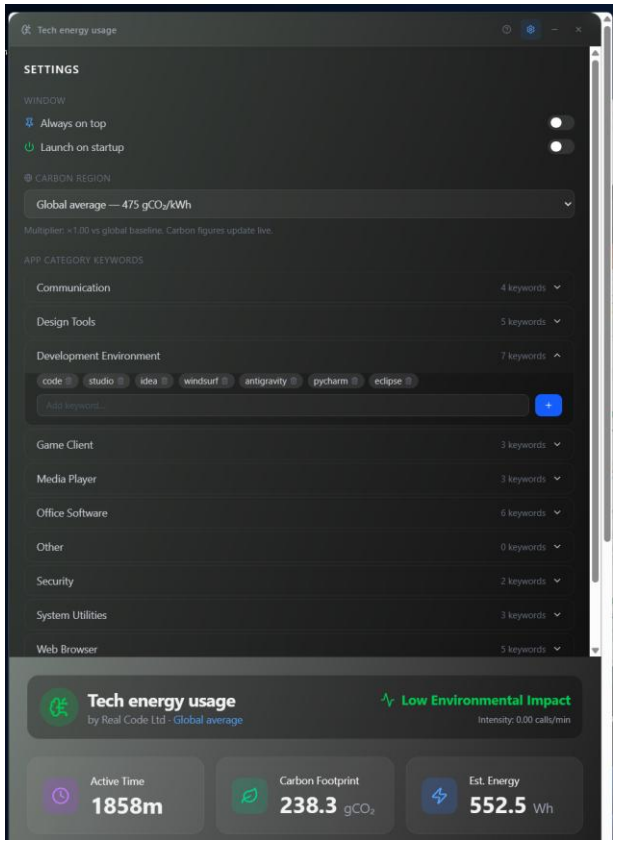
Proactive Approach

- Standards
- Ethics by Design
- Literacy and Awareness
- Values-led compliance

What Do We Actually Do? (The Call to Action)

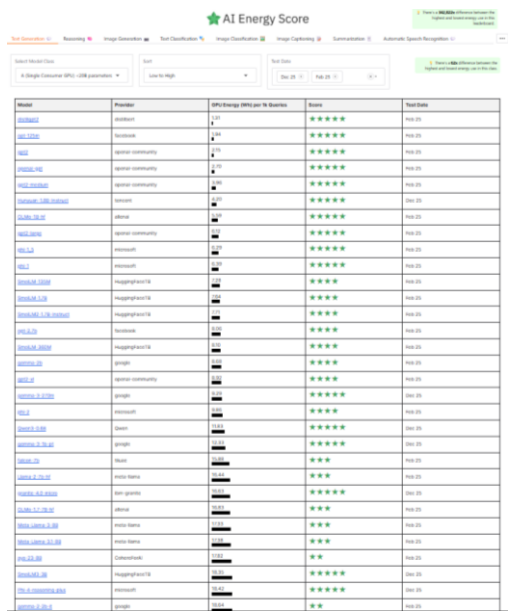




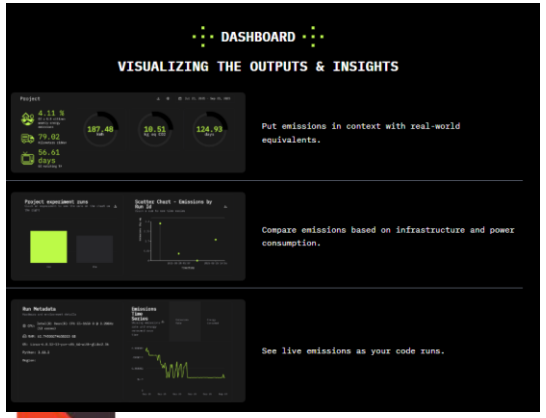


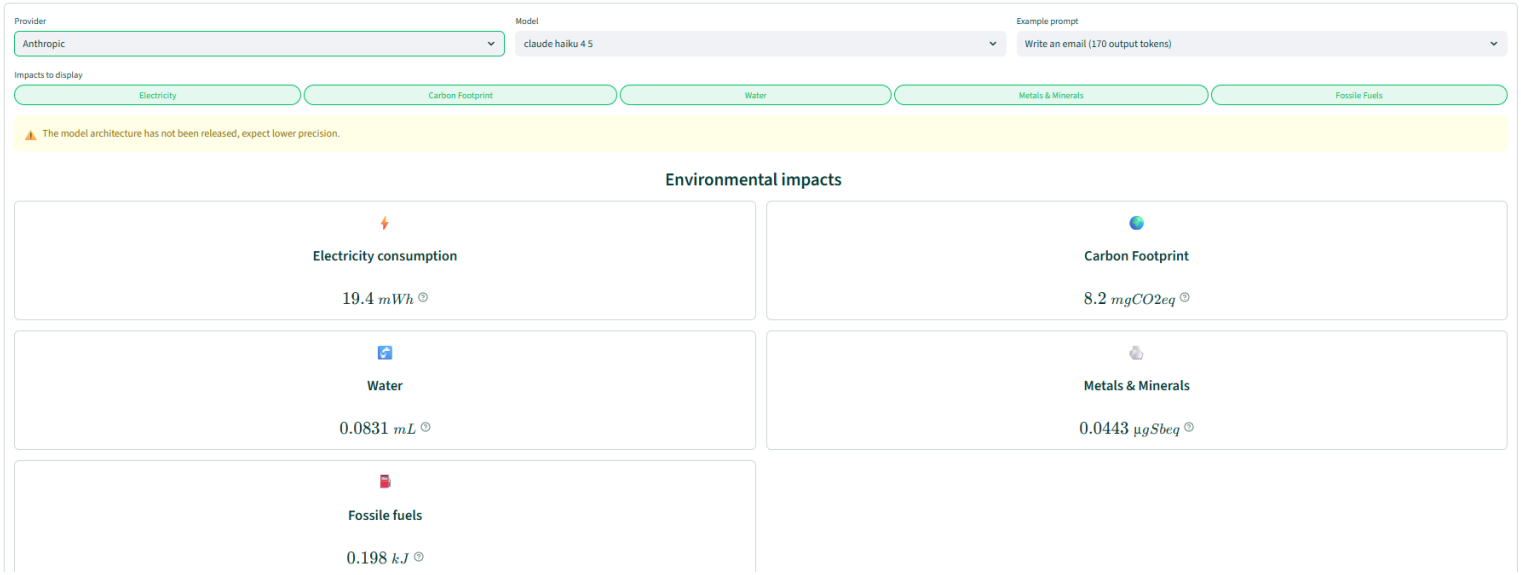
Use Case: Open-source software to make energy monitoring freely available on a per-user or enterprise basis

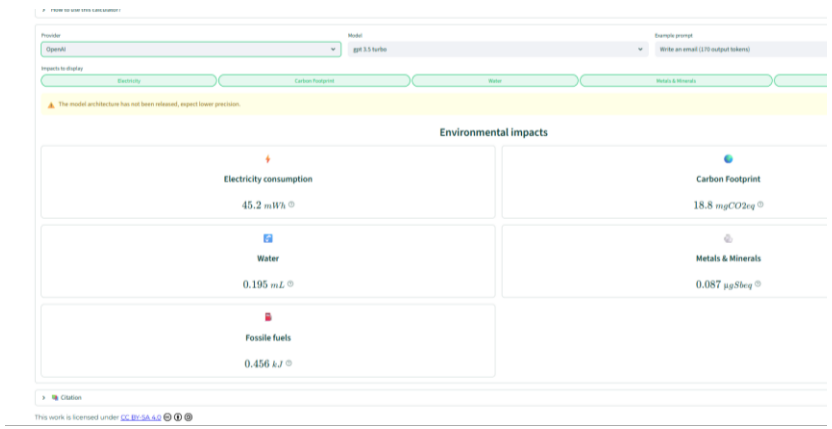
What Do We Actually Do? (The Call to Action)

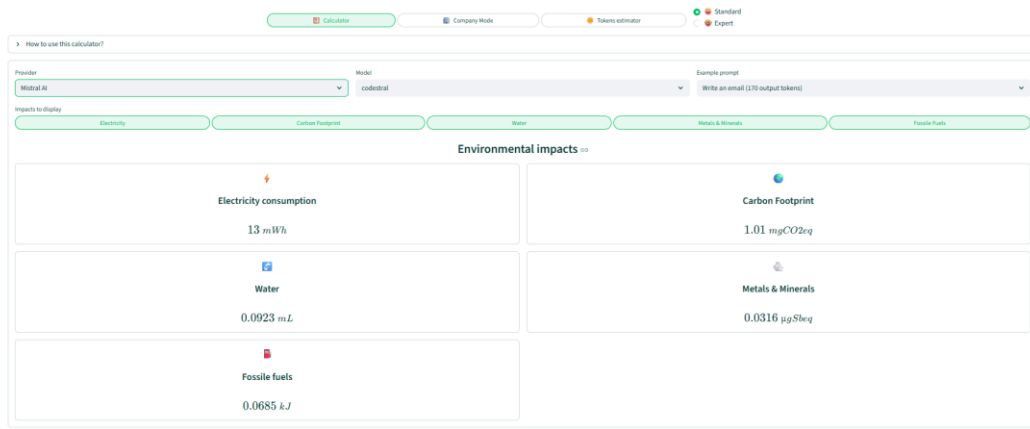


Sources: *Hugging Face ↑ CodeCarbon ↓*









Source: EcoLogits Calculator

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What Do We Actually Do? (The Call to Action)

Example Tender/RFP Question

"As part of our commitment to sustainability and transparency, we ask vendors to disclose the energy efficiency of AI models and systems provided under this RFP. Please provide the AI Energy Score (or an equivalent industry-standard energy efficiency rating) for each AI model or system proposed. If an AI Energy Score is not available, include:"

- *Estimated energy consumption (in kWh) for typical workloads.*
- *Carbon footprint per inference/training session.*
- *Energy optimization techniques used in model training and inference.*
- *Certifications, benchmarks, or third-party validation related to energy efficiency. Vendors demonstrating a commitment to minimising AI-related energy consumption and carbon footprint will be prioritised in our evaluation process.*

Example Procurement Contract Requirements

"Clause: AI Energy Efficiency & Disclosure"

- *Energy Transparency: The Supplier agrees to provide an AI Energy Score (or an equivalent standard) for all AI models delivered under this contract. If unavailable, the Supplier must disclose energy consumption metrics, including power usage and carbon emissions per AI processing unit (e.g. query), and the energy-saving measures put in place.*
- *Sustainability Commitment: The Supplier shall make commercially reasonable efforts to improve the energy efficiency of AI models and implement optimisations to reduce energy consumption without compromising performance.*
- *Ongoing Reporting: The Supplier shall, upon request, provide updated AI Energy Scores or equivalent benchmarks for AI models used in ongoing services. If material changes affect energy efficiency, the Supplier must notify the Buyer and offer an updated version where feasible.*
- *Compliance & Penalties: Failure to provide required energy efficiency disclosures or a material deviation from the disclosed AI Energy Score (or equivalent) may be considered a breach of contract, subject to corrective measures, renegotiation of terms, or penalties as determined by the Buyer. These requirements align with our organization's sustainability goals and ensure vendors contribute to reducing the environmental impact of AI deployments.*

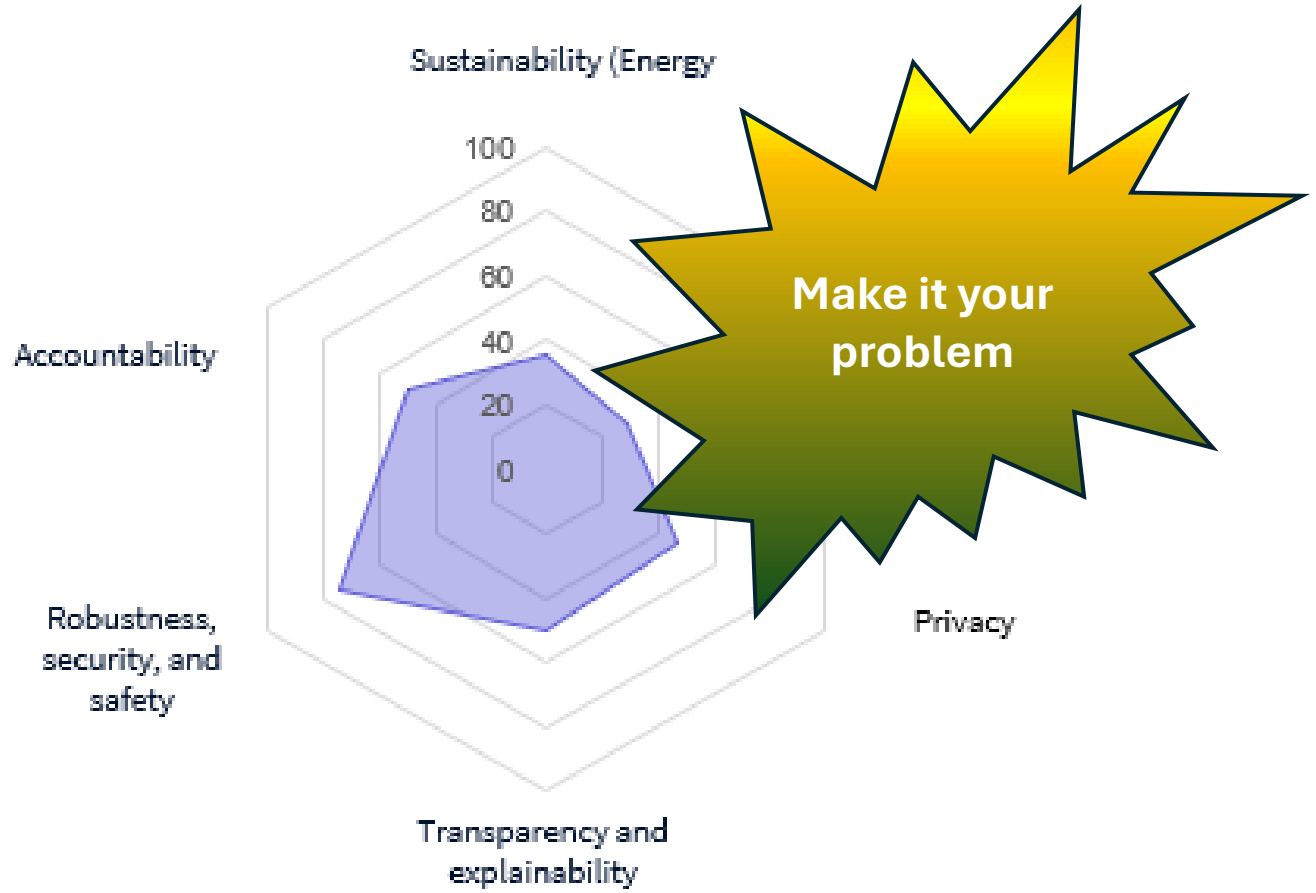
Source: Hugging Face – Calls to Action

What Do We Actually Do? (The Call to Action)

Ethics / Education	**Run one pre-mortem on every AI project: What harm could this cause and to whom?**
Software Development	Add an ethics assessment to your Definition of Done. If no one can answer who is affected by this model's errors, it's not done.
Sustainability	Before your next AI procurement, ask the vendor: What's the estimated carbon cost of training and inference? If they can't answer, that tells you something.
Privacy / Governance	Map your agentic AI touchpoints before regulators ask. Know which systems make autonomous decisions and on what basis.

Governance Reflection

Pillar Scores



Pillars	Score
Sustainability (Energy and CO2	35.71
Ethics	28.57
Privacy	46.43
Transparency and explainability	50.00
Robustness, security, and safety	75.00
Accountability	50.00

- Responsible AI
- Accessible AI
- Visible AI
- AI for Good

Source: Adopted using the Oxford Insights Framework

We Hold the Fire…

a Gift that Demands Responsibility

The gift of AI is ours to steward. With autonomous systems comes profound responsibility to design ethically, govern wisely, and ensure this transformative technology illuminates rather than consumes our future.

RESOURCE LIST

- Markkula Center for Applied Ethics: https://www.scu.edu/ethics/
- Bridging the Gap: Integrating Ethics and Environmental Sustainability in AI Research and Practice https://huggingface.co/papers/2504.00797.
- Sustainable AI Group- https://sustainableaigroup.com/
- AI Models Hiding Their Energy Footprint? Here's What You Can Do - https://huggingface.co/blog/sasha/energy-score-call-to-action
- OECD AI Incidents Monitor - https://oecd.ai/en/incidents
- RealCode- https://www.realcode.co.uk/measuring-the-cost-of-a-prompt-meet-tech-energy-usage/
- CodeCarbon- https://codecarbon.io
- Data and AI Ethics Framework- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-ethics-framework/data-and-ai-ethics-framework

Audience Q&A

How Did Things Go?
(We Really Want To Know)

Did you enjoy this session? Is there any way we could make it better? Let us know by filling out a speaker evaluation.

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2. Select **IAPP AIGG Europe 2026**.
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Thank you!