

Panel Session 3: “AI Trends, Opportunities and Threats”

The event commenced with a warm welcome from Professor Shiroyama, who greeted both the in-person attendees and those participating online. He set the stage by providing a brief introduction about himself before unveiling the theme for the session: "AI Trends, Opportunities and Threats." Notably, he highlighted the upcoming global summit on AI regulation to be hosted by the UK and Japan's initiation of its own AI strategy council, which had recently convened for the first time. This context framed the subsequent discussions that would unfold during the session.

The focal point of the session was the insightful presentations delivered by three distinguished speakers. First on the podium was Professor Pietro Lio from the University of Cambridge. Prof Lio's expertise in Computational Biology within the AI division, coupled with his international leadership in Machine Learning and Computational Biology, shone through. With dual PhDs in nonlinear dynamics and complex systems, as well as genomic sciences, Prof Lio seamlessly blended computer science, machine learning, and biomedicine. His current efforts in advancing deep learning methods, particularly in the biomedical realm, and the development of AI-base medical “digital twins” underscored his commitment to enhancing these advanced techniques.

The spotlight then shifted to Dr Giulio Corsi, a Research Associate at the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence. His work on the AI: Futures and Responsibility (AI:FAR) Project delved into the realm of epistemic security, exploring how peer-produced approaches could mitigate threats in online communities. Dr Corsi's use of machine-learning-based methods to analyze extensive social media data exemplified the intersection of technology and social responsibility. His ongoing pursuit of knowledge, evidenced by the submission of his PhD thesis, focused on countering disinformation and misinformation related to climate change through online activism.

The third speaker, Professor Yee-Kuang Heng from the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy, brought a socio-political perspective to the stage. His talk, titled "AI and Security as a Boring Apocalypse?," explored the media's portrayal of AI as an existential risk and the degree to which such commentaries are valid. Rather than overly alarmist claims, it may be more appropriate instead to focus on more “routine” challenges addressing systemic vulnerabilities and build resilience in societal and political structures that can help humanity cope with the challenges of AI. Prof Heng's projects on combatting AI disinformation, lessons from the Ukraine War, and the emergence of a futures ecosystem in government agencies provided valuable insights into the intersection of AI, security studies, and international relations.

Following these enlightening presentations, Prof Lio, Dr Corsi, and Prof Heng joined Prof Shiroyama at the front of the room for a dynamic panel discussion. The exchange between the panelists and the engaged audience members added a vibrant layer to the event, fostering a collaborative exploration of the multifaceted aspects of AI trends, opportunities, and threats.

