



The Data Opportunity

The increasing ability of computers to learn, identify complex patterns and empower humans to make better decisions creates a huge social and economic opportunity. Organisations are using artificial intelligence (AI) to become more efficient and to tackle previously insurmountable problems like climate change and disease. The AI revolution will have an impact across the whole of society, with AI serving as a powerful tool for the people and the organizations that have access to it. As a society, we do have the opportunity to tackle some of society's most pressing issues. AI and data present us with that opportunity.

That opportunity is out of reach for many. Organisations need access to data to be able to employ AI. However, access to large data sets and the skills to use data effectively is increasingly concentrated with a small group of companies and countries. Fewer than 100 companies worldwide now collect more than 50 per cent of the data generated by online interactions,¹ and according to figures from LinkedIn around half of all people with technical AI skills work in the technology sector.

The intellectual property (IP) system has a role to play in enabling society to embrace the data opportunity. The IP Federation has urged the UK government to adopt a balanced commercial text and data mining copyright exception to enable organisations make use of the data that is lawfully accessible, such as the information that is made available online. Through supporting the creation of innovative data sharing solutions, such as privacy preserving technologies, the IP system can facilitate the sharing of sensitive data, and insights from data that organisations may not wish to make publicly available.

Treating data like the new oil² only encourages data hoarding. Instead we should be valuing the outcomes you can achieve through data. With better access to data, together with today's available computing power and sophisticated algorithms, society has an opportunity to drive better outcomes for some of the biggest challenges we face, such as in healthcare and climate change.

The value of collaboration, over and above organisations going it alone, has already been demonstrated by the open source movement. Sharing the building blocks of applications to foster collaboration can exponentially drive the creation of new solutions. An open and more collaborative approach to the way we use data, with shared goals in mind, could see similar gains in the insights and outcomes we can achieve.

The IP Federation will be engaging in dialogue on the many upcoming consultations and reforms relating to data, both in the UK and Internationally.

Sonia Cooper, President, IP Federation

¹ Microsoft Corporate, External and Legal Affairs (CELA) Data Science analysis based on similarweb.com, appfigures.com and alexa.com

² "The world's most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data." *The Economist*, 6 May 2017