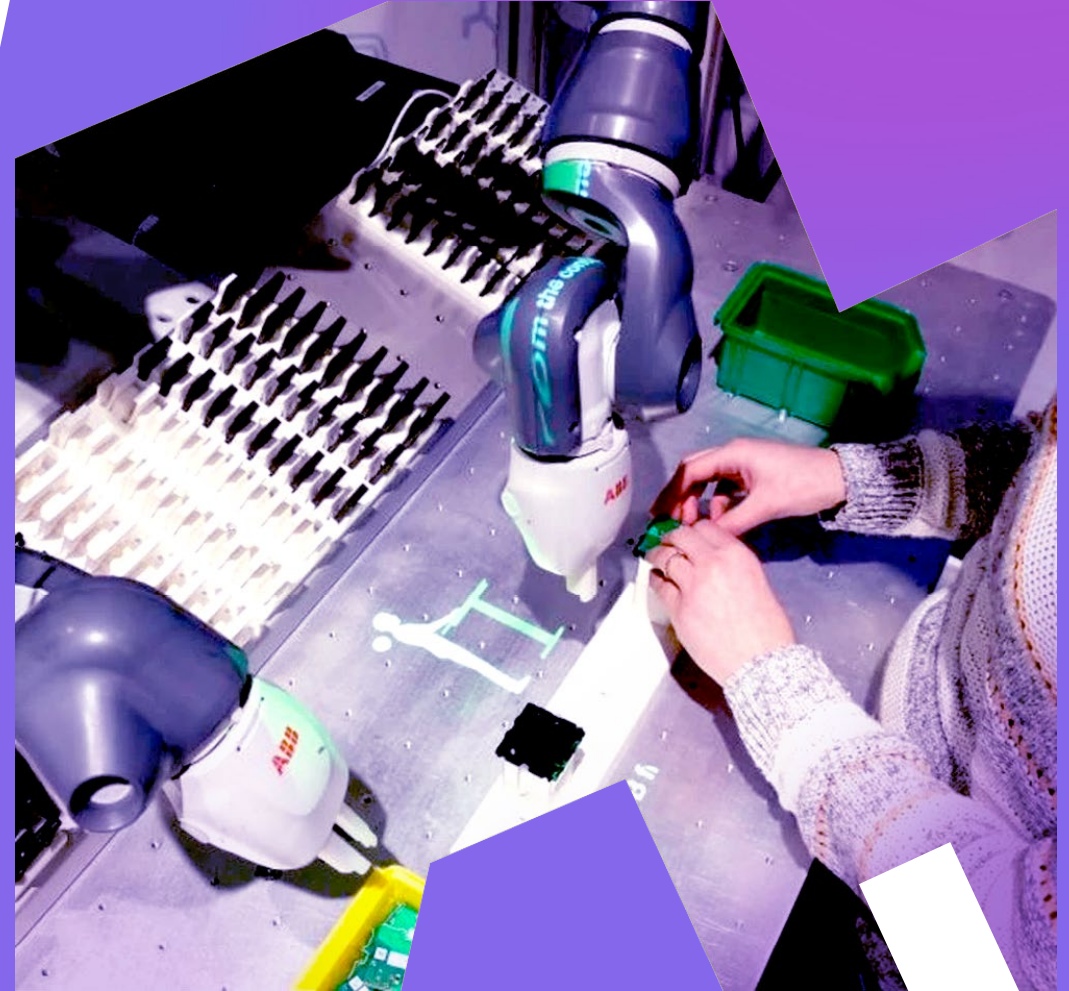




Artificial  
Intelligence  
Flanders

# The Flanders AI Policy Plan

[www.flandersai.be/en](http://www.flandersai.be/en)



## Subsidy opportunities for AI R&I in Flanders

about **€153,5 million (in 2024)**

### I. Research Fund Flanders

Fundamental and strategic basic research  
on/with AI by academia

+/- €21,7 million in 2024

### II. The Flemish AI policy plan

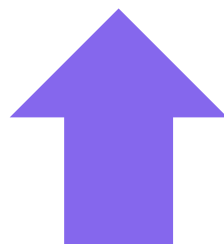
Demand driven strategic basic research +  
AI take-up by enterprises and society

more than €35 million per year

### III. Innovation and Enterprise Flanders

stimulate and foster innovation and  
entrepreneurship on/with AI, mainly in  
enterprises and technical universities

+/- €96,8 million in 2024



More than **€35 million** per year

## I. Research component

Strengthen strategic basic research  
in AI

**€14.185 million**

## II.a. Implementation component

Foster adoption of AI in all sectors +  
Support development of AI technology

**€9.5 million**

## III. Flanking component (support)

Raising awareness, training,  
ethical framework for AI

**€3.35 million**  
(+ €475,000)

## II.b. Digitalisation component

Programme Digital Transformation  
(with Cybersecurity plan: €12.04 mio)

**€8.02 million**

Education  
(with Cybersecurity plan: €1.6 mio)

**€1 million**

## I. Research component

Demand-driven research and development of generic AI methodologies that can be used for applications in healthcare, industry, energy and society.

## II.a. Implementation component

- Guide and support companies (pioneers) in their AI applications
- Support companies that are developing AI technology

## II.b. Digitalisation component

- Strengthen digital maturity in enterprises (SMEs and innovation followers), with special focus on Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity

## III. Flanking component (support)

- Guidelines and advice on legal, ethical and social aspects of AI and data applications
- Increase knowledge of AI (education, training and skills)
- Raise awareness and engage citizens



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## Research component:

Demand-driven pioneering research:  
Flanders AI Research Programme

[www.flandersairesearch.be/en](http://www.flandersairesearch.be/en)



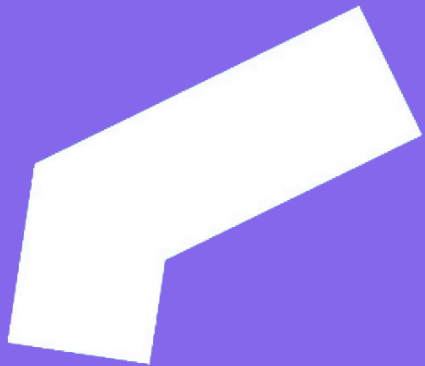


Flanders AI Research Programme: a **single programme** brings together a **critical mass** of AI researchers from all universities and from (strategic) research centres



Involved in the programme:

- 11 knowledge institutions
- 40 research groups
- 90 professors
- 140-300-1000-... AI researchers  
Direct funding of 100 PhD + 40 other researchers
- imec is coordinating partner



AI for a longer healthy life



Photo: KU Leuven



AI for a human-centric digital society



Responsible AI  
'Responsible AI'



Photo: Flanders Make

AI for Industry 5.0:  
human-centric,  
sustainable and resilient

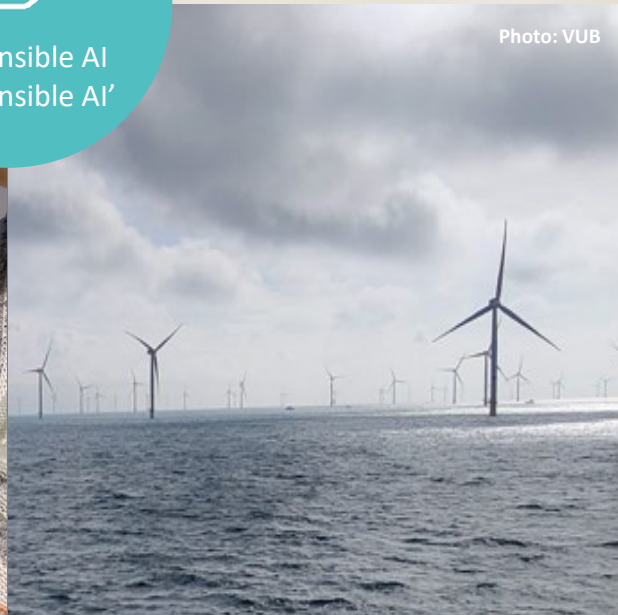
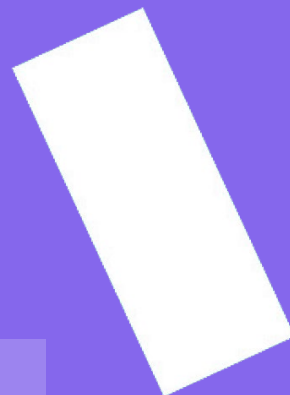


Photo: VUB

AI for sustainability, care  
for our planet, energy  
transition





## Demand-driven research challenges

### AI driven data science

AI as support in making complex decisions and creating insights with AI-driven data science

### Situated AI

AI to perform complex tasks in a dynamic environment with (semi-)autonomous AI systems that collaborate in real-time with each other and with humans



Responsible



Resilient and high-  
performing



Sustainable  
Energy-efficient



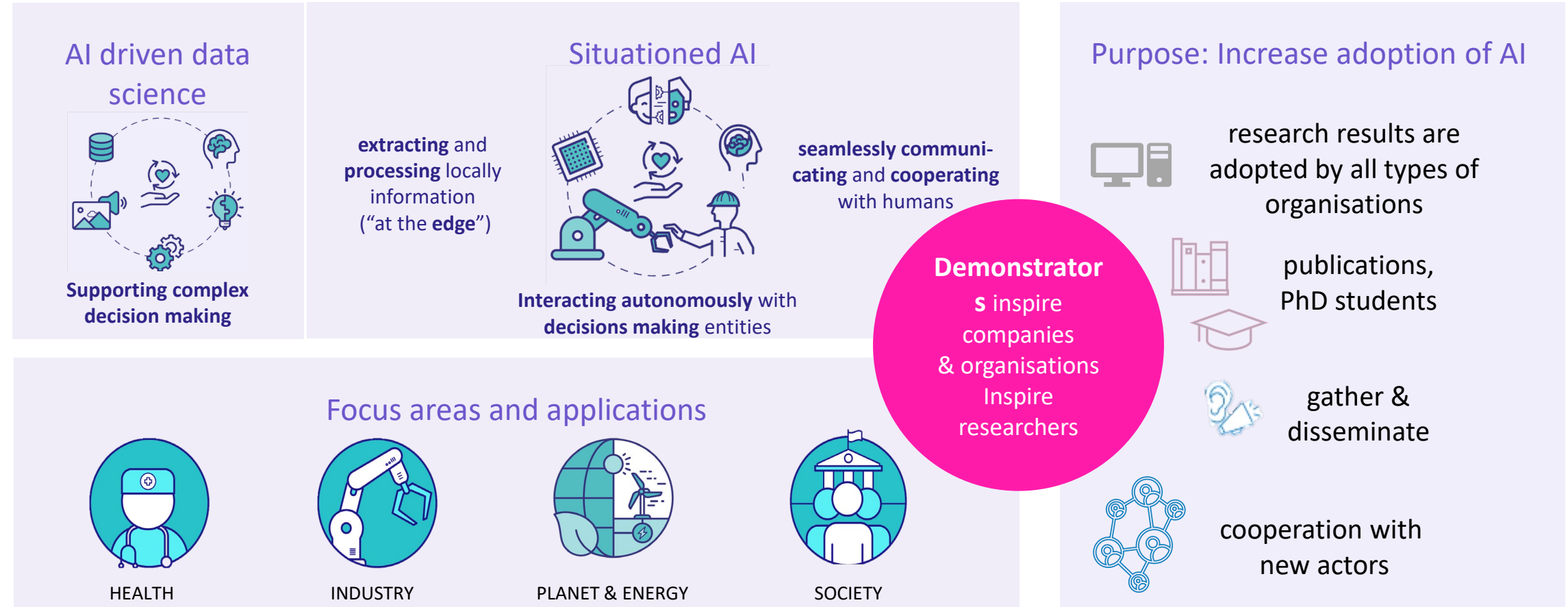
Human-centred



Productive  
Data efficient

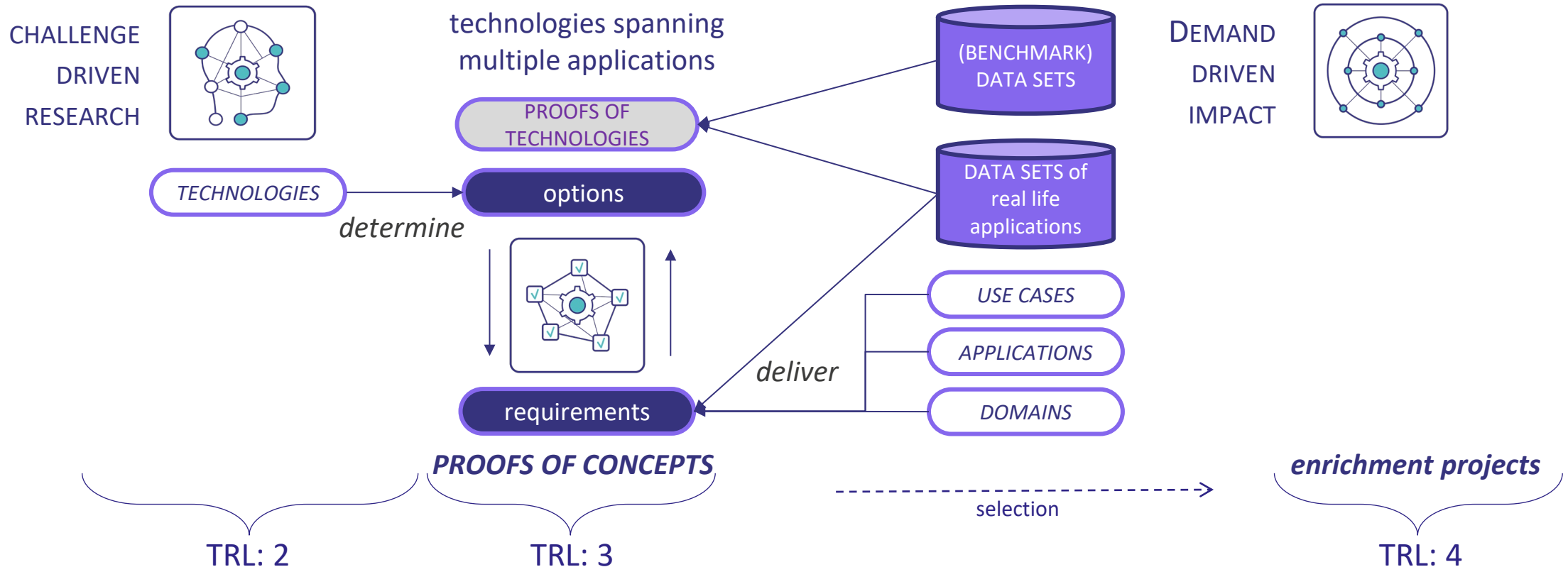


## Generieke onderzoeksvragen en toepassingen in 4 focusdomeinen





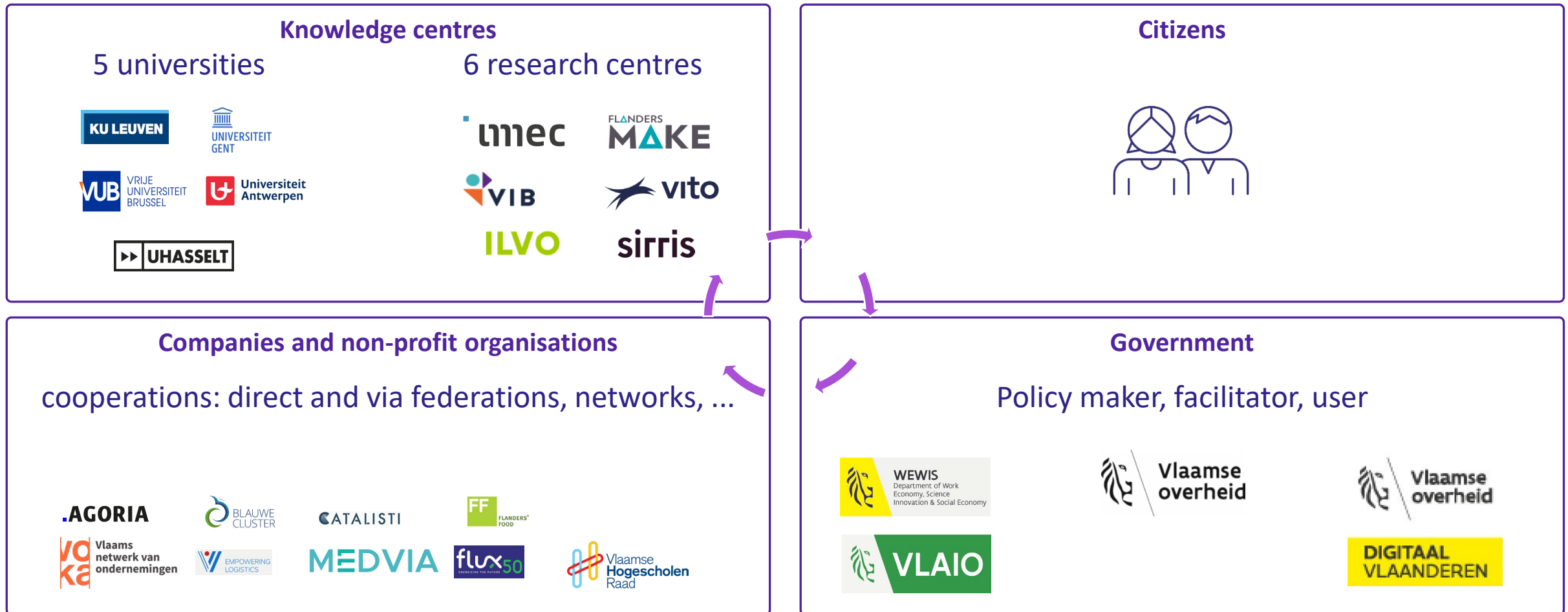
## Interplay of research offer and technological demand as basis for a five year work programme



→ no calls for project proposals, but mutually agreed upon work packages, tasks and cooperations that are jointly executed



## A strong AI ecosystem in Flanders (quadruple helix)





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## Implementation component:

Foster AI Adoption in all industries

Support the development of  
AI technology

Reinforce the digital maturity

[www.vlaio.be/ai](http://www.vlaio.be/ai)



Foster use of AI in all industries

### For innovation leaders and technology providers

€5 million

Making the results of the research component available to Flemish enterprises (via VLAIO policy instrument mix) through collective research:

- COOCK+ (collective research): valorising (basic) research results by accelerating the introduction of technology and/or knowledge by a group of companies
- ICON (interdisciplinary cooperative research): development of new knowledge by one or multiple research organisations and at least three enterprises
- TETRA: practice-oriented research by university colleges/technical universities and integrated training courses at universities for businesses and non-profit organisations
- LA: Agricultural projects

→ At least 1 partner from the research component is involved in the project

Support the development and application of AI technology

### For innovation leaders and technology providers

€4.5 million (+ standard R&D subsidies)

- Support **research and development of AI projects (applications and technology)**
  - Innovation support for research and development (incl. R&D feasibility studies) – individually or in cooperation with other enterprises
  - Baekeland mandates for doctoral research in collaboration with a company
  - R&D projects in an international consortium → EUREKA AI call
- Support for **AI entrepreneurship**
  - Innovative start-up support
  - Project call “ready for scale-up”
  - Innovation mandates for post-doctoral research in cooperation with an enterprise

## Boost digital maturity

### For technology users (SMEs and innovation followers)

€8.02 million

(€12.04 million together with policy plan Cybersecurity)

Raise awareness, advise and inform  
Coaching and guidance

Network of structural partners and knowledge institutions in “Entrepreneurship Contract”, “Eye Opener(Blikopener)”, business advisors at VLAIO, ...



Collective knowledge creation and  
knowledge dissemination by research  
organisations

Projects by knowledge institutions,  
collective research organisations, living labs,  
...



Subsidies to companies for  
implementation

SME growth subsidies, cybersecurity  
improvement projects, “SME wallet”



### Boost digital maturity

Raise awareness, inform and advise on the possibilities of digitalisation (incl. AI and Cybersecurity)

Coaching and supervising individual practical applications

Network of structural partners, research organisations, knowledge institutions, business consultants, ...

#### Collective approach

- Thematic events and webinars
- Seminars
- Masterclasses
- Networking events

#### Individual approach

- Consulting and coaching sessions
- Referral to relevant partners
- Demand articulation

#### Examples:

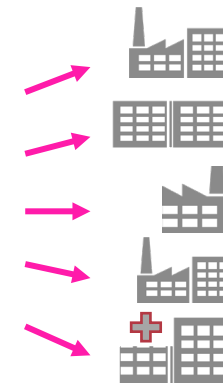
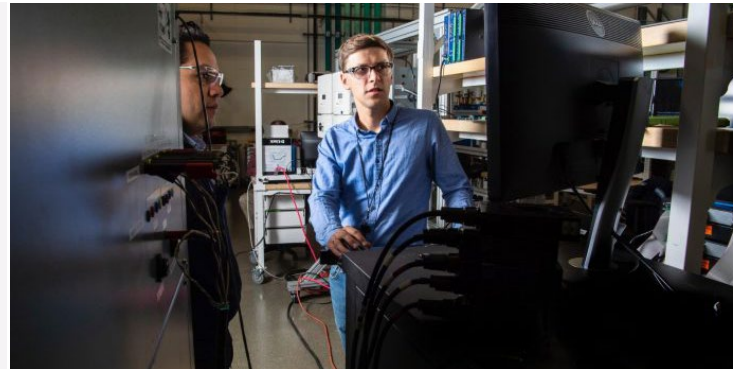
- “START AI”
- AI inspiration sessions
- AI bootcamp: build your own GPT
- Learning network: from processes and responsibilities to integrating digital tools

### Boost the digital maturity

#### Collective knowledge building and knowledge dissemination by research organisations

Universities, university colleges/technical universities, collective research centres, living labs, ...

- Translate, combine and validate new knowledge in collaboration with a group of companies
- Collective applications and demonstrators to accelerate the acceptance and adoption rate of digital applications (incl. AI)



#### Examples:

- Creative AI (AP Hogeschool)
- Smart Meal Planning (VIVES, KU Leuven, Flanders FOOD)
- DIGIBUILD: Digital Support for Construction Industrialisation via Off-site Production (Flanders Make, Buildwise, UHasselt)
- Reconfigurable cOBotic prodUction AsSistantT (Sirris, KU Leuven)

### Boost digital maturity

Subsidies to enterprises for the implementation of digital technologies (incl. AI and Cybersecurity)

#### Implementation

- SME growth grant: grant to purchase consulting for the rollout of projects using data to make products, services and processes smarter
- Cybersecurity improvement projects: grant to purchase consulting and guidance to increase cybersecurity maturity
- “SME Wallet”: grant for the purchase of limited consultancy in function of digital transformation

#### Supporting research and development of AI applications

- Innovation support for research and development (individually or as part of a cooperation)



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## Societal component:

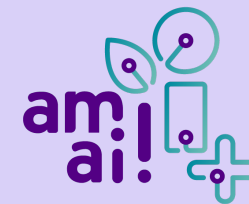
AI for the benefit of society  
and citizens



[www.data-en-maatschappij.ai](http://www.data-en-maatschappij.ai)



[www.vaia.be](http://www.vaia.be)



<https://amai.vlaanderen/en>

**NCP**  
Flanders

[ncpflanders.be](http://ncpflanders.be)

## I. Education and training

€1.1 million

### *Flemish AI Academy*

- Artificial intelligence training for professionals and researchers
- Channel existing expertise on AI from academia to industry

## IV. Education component €1 million (with Cybersecurity plan €1.6 mio)

- Initiatives on EdTech
- Applications for innovative tenders on AI and CS
- Awareness projects on digitalisation (incl. AI and CS)
- Initiatives on computational skills (including AI & CS) for pupils

## II. Ethics component €750,000



### *Knowledge Centre Data & Society*

- Enabling Flemish companies, policy makers, regulators and citizens to capitalise on the greatest social and/or economic benefits from AI
- Bringing together various interest groups
- Creating tools, advice and recommendations

## III. Outreach €1 million



### *AMAI! Programme*

- Operational costs amai!  
€625,000
- 3 amai! projects (citizen-participation projects around AI)  
€375,000 (separate yearly budget)

### *NCP Digital*

### **NCP** Flanders

- Supporting applicants to Horizon and Digital Europe programmes on AI and ICT  
€75,000

## I. Flanders AI Academy (VAIA)



## II. Ethics component



## III. Public outreach



## IV. NCP Flanders

**NCP**  
Flanders

## V. Education component VLAIO





## The Flemish AI Academy

### What?

Cooperation between all  
universities and university colleges  
in Flanders

### Target audience?

For professionals & researchers

### Objective?

Targeted learning about artificial  
intelligence

Channel expertise from academia to  
industry

# The Flemish AI Academy



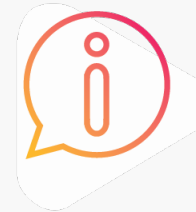
## Demand capture

Which industry needs which training programmes? We define learning paths for different professional target audiences.



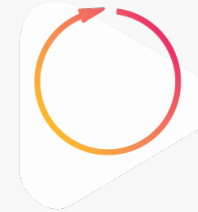
## Disseminate

We collect courses and learning opportunities on AI and help people find appropriate training courses.



## Connect

We help those who wish to organise a training programme move forward through input from experts, marketing and knowledge of lifelong learning.



## Joint development

If needed, we supplement existing offerings with additional course materials, always in collaboration with our partners.

[www.vaia.be/en](http://www.vaia.be/en)



Purpose: The Knowledge Centre Data & Society is the central hub for the legal, social and ethical aspects of data-driven applications and AI applications.

## Target group:

Industry, policy, civil society and general public

## What do we do?

- Build and disseminate insights and information
- Translation of knowledge into practical tools and processes
- Stimulate public awareness and debate: build and support network and learning environment
- Contribute to the development of legal frameworks and guidelines

[www.data-en-maatschappij.ai/en](http://www.data-en-maatschappij.ai/en)

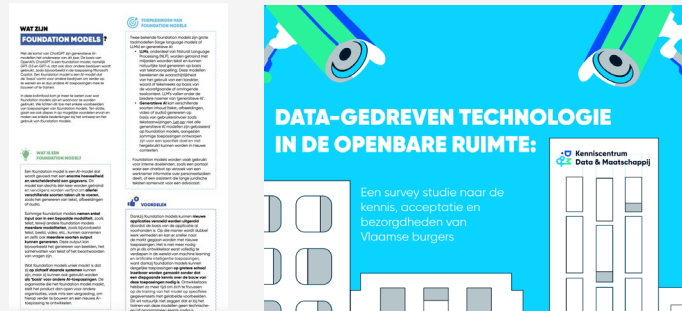


**Knowledge Centre  
Data & Society**

## Examples

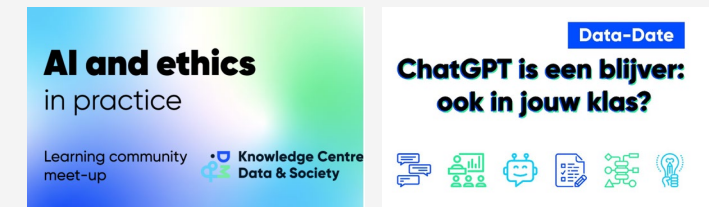
### Information & insight:

brAIinfoods –  
monitor



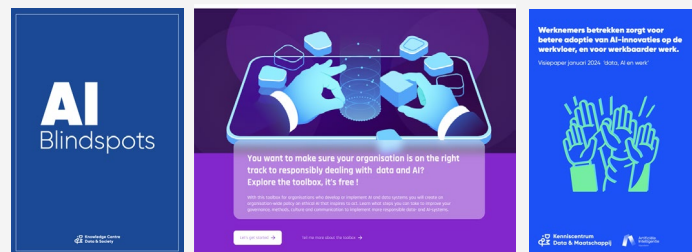
### Network & learning environment:

Learning network –  
monitor



### Tools & processes:

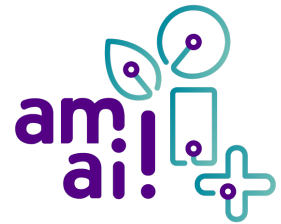
Blind spots –  
organisational  
policy builder –  
AI & work



### Legal frameworks and guidelines:

Policy monitor –  
Policy prototyping





## Purpose - AI and citizen science

### Insight:

Giving a broad public insight into how AI is part of their lives

- Science communication

### Ideas:

What do you want AI to be used for (and how)?

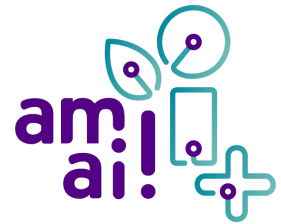
- Citizen science

### Impact!

We give consortiums the opportunity to make citizens' ideas a reality

- Project call
- Projects with citizen science approach

<https://amai.vlaanderen/en>



4 stages - citizens involved in each step

1. Collect research questions
2. Co-create solutions
3. Launch project call
4. Develop solutions through CS approach

The amai! team:

- **Scivil:** Flemish Knowledge Centre Citizen Science
  - Linked to RVO society vzw, imec
- **Knowledge Centre Data & Society**
  - Linked to research group imec-SMIT, VUB





Purpose – Complying with the 7 basic conditions of responsible AI in education, by fostering and strengthening competencies in the broad field of education, pursuing evidence-informed policy and developing responsible AI for EDucation.

### Target group:

Education professionals from compulsory education, art education and adult education

### How ?

Realisation plan with various action points around professionalisation, research and implementation with attention to communication and a coordinated approach.

More information: [Kenniscentrum Digisprong](#)

## I. Research component



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## II. Implementation component



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## III. Societal component



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[www.vlaanderen.be/kenniscentrum-digisprong/themas/innovatie/artificieel-e-intelligentie](http://www.vlaanderen.be/kenniscentrum-digisprong/themas/innovatie/artificieel-e-intelligentie)

## Internationalisation Flemish Policy Plan AI



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Thank you  
for your  
attention!

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