More girls to study maths under plans to improve pathway into AI careers

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Government invests £8.2m to boost girls' advanced maths skills and AI careers.

Thousands of the country's brightest girls will get the opportunity to study advanced maths and progress into AI-related careers, as the government invests in the skills young people need for the jobs of tomorrow.

Currently only a third of A level maths pupils are girls, while currently only 22% of professionals working in AI related roles like software engineer or data science are women.

Now through the government's Plan for Change around 7,500 girls will be eligible for support as part of £8.2m of funding announced today to improve participation and teaching of advanced maths. The funding, part of the refreshed Advanced Maths Support Programme, will target support to thousands of pupils from 400 disadvantaged secondary schools – breaking the link between background and success so all young people have the chance to progress in careers of the future.

Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson, said:

Today's brightest maths minds are tomorrow's AI pioneers, and this government is opening the door for groups who have so far been left behind in the AI

revolution.

Through our Plan for Change we are breaking down barriers to opportunity, backing our young people and going further and faster for AI growth, ensuring the next generation can progress in the exciting careers of the future.

The updated Advanced Maths Support Programme includes pilot teacher training and student enrichment courses on the key maths concepts and skills needed for AI and this will benefit 450 students and 360 teachers from September.

It marks a crucial step in delivering a key commitment in the government's AI Action Plan – creating a strong talent pipeline and driving greater diversity across the AI talent pool.

It comes as the Education Secretary convenes a group of experts to advise on what changes are needed to the 5-18 education system to improve digital education and give young people the AI-specific skills they need to thrive in a digital world. The Digital, AI and Technology Task and Finish Group chaired by Sir Kevan Collins, non-executive board member at the Department for Education, will provide recommendations to the department and insights for the Curriculum and Assessment Review so they can draw on this expertise.

Members include Rose Luckin, Professor of Learner-Centred Design at University College London and Dr Sue Sentance, Director of the Raspberry Pi Computing Education Research Centre at the University of Cambridge and Chair of the BCS Schools and Colleges Committee.

Science Secretary, Peter Kyle said:

AI is the defining technology of our generation, improving our public services, sparking fresh economic growth, and unlocking the jobs of the future. We can only harness that potential if we have a pipeline of talent equipped with the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.

This package of support will help us deliver our Plan for Change and do exactly that. This is the first step in our plan to give every young person in the country the opportunity to develop the tools which will put them front and centre in delivering our AI-powered future.

Source: ***Department for Education****,* ***The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP*** *and* ***The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP***

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