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Up to £1 where sold

AI training hub coming to Surrey

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Surrey is set to become home to a high-quality training hub in Artificial Intelligence (AI), a move which could have transformative impacts in the way vulnerable residents engage and access public services.

Government announced last week that the **University of Surrey and the StoryFutures unit at Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL) will be the home of a new Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) in AI for Digital Media Inclusion**.

The funding will help establish a unique creative industry hub for high-quality training in responsible AI, inclusive design, and creative skills within the county.

In addition to creating 80 PhD posts, the centre will look at using AI to transform digital media into intelligent content that adapts to individual preferences, such as age, language, and sensory and physical abilities.

The ambition is to place Surrey – and the UK as a whole – as a world leader in media inclusion.

Surrey County Council is proud to back the bid and keen to work with the new centre to establish how public services could be made more accessible to its 1.2 million residents.

In a letter of support, Cllr Tim Oliver, Leader of Surrey County Council, said: *"We are excited by the Centre for Doctoral Training's (CDT) proposed approach to responding to the national need for a new community of experts who individually and collectively will deliver resilience for our digitalised Critical National Infrastructure.*

"We recognise and support the CDT's aim to develop the underpinning research, training, community-building, and knowledge exchange, contributing 80 highly skilled and connected resilience experts to the workforce.

"The funding bid and subsequent CDT and associated research and expertise will have a significant positive impact on our organisation's ability to deliver high-quality and sustainable services for all."

Cllr Oliver added the local authority was interested in exploring how new technology could improve the way its most vulnerable residents accessed its services.

There was also potential to look at increasing engagement with businesses, fire prevention, community safety services, and greener futures and net zero.

The Surrey hub will be one of 12 Centres for Doctoral Training in AI across the country that will benefit from £117 million of funding through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

It was **announced at the global AI Safety Summit held at Bletchley Park last week**.

Cllr Oliver added that Surrey County Council has an established track record of working successfully with the county's universities to drive innovation and economic growth.

Last week the local authority's cabinet agreed to investment £3 million to support the establishment of a new **CoSTAR (Convergent Screen Technologies and performance in Realtime) satellite studio and incubator space** on the RHUL campus.

The new centre for the creative industries – which will have direct links to the national lab based a short distance away at Pinewood Studios – will create 300 jobs, support 200 businesses and contribute £30 million to the Surrey economy.

The Council was also partner in a **successful bid by Surrey's Guildford Games Cluster and Warwickshire's Silicon Spa for £1.5 million from Research England**.

The funding will support two of the UK's biggest gaming clusters to work with higher education to drive innovation, invest in infrastructure and support growth in the wider regional economy through the Games and Innovation Nexus (GAIN) project.

Cllr Matt Furniss, Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, said: *"The games industry is one of Surrey's real success stories, showcasing our county and its talented workforce on a global stage.*

"This funding has the potential to take this growing, innovative sector to new heights, creating high-quality jobs and generating inward investment into our communities – both of which would be good news for our residents."

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