

# A Special Relationship Reboot? The US-UK Tech Prosperity Deal

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On 18 September, during the anticipated state visit, the leaders of the UK and the US signed the Technology Prosperity Deal, which promises to boost investment and cooperation to foster innovation, security, and economic prosperity. This is being lauded in the UK as a hugely significant milestone in transatlantic cooperation. The governments of both countries have released a **Memorandum of Understanding** (“**Memo**”) which covers a number of ambitious plans in strategic science and technology fields, including artificial intelligence (“**AI**”), nuclear energy, fusion, and quantum technologies.

The UK Government’s **press release** sets out the intention to bring resources and expertise together to make emerging technologies a shared success. The benefits cover healthcare by accelerating drug discovery with quantum computing, providing families with cleaner energy through civil nuclear initiatives, and creating jobs through investments in a new AI Growth Zone in the northeast of the UK.

## Key takeaways

Some key takeaways from the Technology Prosperity Deal and Memo include:

**1. Accelerating AI Innovation.** By collaborating on AI infrastructure, research and policy to accelerate AI-driven societal and economic transformation, this includes:

- a. Establishing joint flagship research programmes between USA and UK agencies, and boosting the AI for space partnership between space agencies,
- b. Developing secure AI infrastructure and the workforce of the future, and
- c. Advancing the partnership to promote secure AI innovation between the U.S. Center for AI Standards and Innovation and the UK AI Security Institute.

**2. Unleashing Civil Nuclear Energy.** To be leading on nuclear technology by collaborating on:

- a. Streamlining regulatory processes for nuclear deployment, accelerating licensing and review time frames, and facilitating commercial partnerships,
- b. Securing a supply chain for fuels, without reliance on Russian sources by the end of 2028,

- c. Coordinating research for cost-competitive fusion power plants and exploring novel applications, and
- d. Leading with a harmonised pro-innovation policy to support a US and UK led global fusion energy market.

### **3. Securing Quantum Advantage.** Initiatives to pioneer quantum technologies to transform sectors like defence, finance, and healthcare, including:

- a. A USA-UK benchmarking taskforce for quantum computing to accelerate benchmarking across quantum computing hardware, software and algorithms,
- b. A transatlantic Quantum Code Challenge for algorithm development aligned with real-world use cases,
- c. Using AI and high-performance computing to accelerate quantum algorithm development and coordinated research,
- d. Advancing standards and industry collaboration in quantum technologies and to deployment more efficiently by pursuing early stage, joint research and by testing via centers of excellence and national labs, and
- e. Creating a US-UK Quantum Exchange Program to boost adoption across defence, health, finance, and energy, and increasing collaboration via centers of excellence.

### **4. Foundations for Frontier Innovation.** Collaboration on secure development and foundations for frontier innovation, including:

- a. Research security to protect technologies and people, including a focus on threats to research including capacity building for universities, research organisations, and sectors and leading the adoption of practices to facilitate a trusted ecosystem of innovation,
- b. Partnership in telco innovation and supply chain resilience and development in 6G technologies, and
- c. Enhancing cooperation on critical infrastructure resilience.

### **5. Next steps.** A Working Group will be established within the next 6 months to guide this agreed cooperation and to oversee the initiatives, with annual discussions to shape these commitments.

### **Commentary**

The Technology Prosperity Deal highlights the strategic alliance between the UK and US, aiming to harness shared expertise to drive innovation and prosperity and address global innovation challenges. The UK

Government is touting the benefits of the Technology Prosperity Deal already, with £31 billion in investments from leading American tech firms. The success of this deal hinges on the effective conversion of these investments into tangible advancements and mutual benefits, together with the follow on from the working groups. The Technology Prosperity Deal presents investment and a unique opportunity for businesses to innovate and thrive in the UK, potentially setting a new standard for international cooperation in technology.

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