

## The people refusing to use AI

*Suzanne Bearne*

Nothing has convinced Sabine Zetteler of the value of using AI. "I read a really great phrase recently that said something along the lines of 'why would I bother to read something someone couldn't be bothered to write' and that is such a powerful statement and one that aligns absolutely with my views."

Ms Zetteler runs her own London-based communications agency, with around 10 staff.

"What's the point of sending something we didn't write, reading a newspaper written by bots, listening to a song created by AI, or me making a bit more money by sacking my administrator who has four kids? Where's the joy, love or aspirational betterment?" she says.

Ms Zetteler is among those resisting the AI invasion, which really got going with the launch of ChatGPT at the end of 2022.

Since then, the service and its many rivals have become wildly popular. ChatGPT is racking up over five billion visits a month, according to software firm Semrush.

But training AI systems like ChatGPT requires huge amounts of energy and, once trained, keeping them running is also energy intensive. While it's difficult to quantify the electricity used by AI, a report by Goldman Sachs estimated that a ChatGPT query uses nearly 10 times as much electricity as a Google search query.

For Florence Achery, owner of Yoga Retreats & More, the environmental impact is one reason why she vows to stay away from AI. "My initial reaction was that AI is soulless and is a contradiction with my business, which is all about human connection," says Achery, based in London. "However, I found out that the environmental impact was awful with all the energy consumption required to run the data centres. I don't think that people are aware of that."

While Ms Zetteler admits she respects AI for all the social good it can achieve, she says she's concerned about the wider impact on society. "I'm happy that AI exists for blind people if they can have articles translated by AI and anything that is truly beneficial. But in general, I don't think it will benefit us long-term."

Is she worried it might have a knock-on effect on her business, especially if rival companies are using AI? "Already my profit margins look unsuccessful if that's how you measure success, but how about if you measure success by how much you're contributing to society and how well you sleep?"

Sierra Hansen, who lives in Seattle and works in public affairs, also refuses to use AI. For her, she's concerned that the use of AI is harming our ability to problem solve. "Our brain is the thing that helps organise what our days look like, not going to AI Copilot and asking it to tell it how to manage my schedule. Our job as a human is to apply critical thinking skills, and if you are feeding simple tasks into ChatGPT then you're not solving on your own. It's doing the thinking for you."

*Abridged from **BBC** – 5 May 2025 – (495 words)*

## Trump Administration Cancels \$1 Billion in Grants for Student Mental Health

*Michael C. Bender*

The Trump administration has halted \$1 billion for mental health services for children, saying that the programs funded by a bipartisan law aimed at stemming gun violence in schools were no longer in “the best interest of the federal government.”

Lawmakers authorized the money in 2022 after a former student opened fire at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, killing 19 children and two teachers and injuring 17 others. The measure, known as the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, broke a decades-long impasse between congressional Republicans and Democrats on addressing gun violence by focusing largely on improving mental health support for students.

But just as some of the mental health programs are starting, the Education Department canceled the funding this week and informed grant recipients that they would have to reapply for the money because of potential violations of federal civil rights law.

The department did not specify a civil rights law or provide the grant recipients with any evidence of violations.

An Education Department spokeswoman confirmed that the grants had been discontinued because of a particular focus on increasing the diversity of psychologists, counselors and other mental health workers.

“Under the deeply flawed priorities of the Biden administration, grant recipients used the funding to implement race-based actions like recruiting quotas in ways that have nothing to do with mental health and could hurt the very students the grants are supposed to help,” said Madi Biedermann, the department’s deputy assistant secretary for communications. “We owe it to American families to ensure that taxpayer dollars are supporting evidence-based practices that are truly focused on improving students’ mental health.”

Ms. Biedermann declined to provide applications that the department viewed as discriminatory, citing privacy laws. Instead, she offered examples of specific provisions pulled from lengthy applications.

A provision in one application set a “diversity goal” of hiring eight nonwhite counselors out of a total of 24. A line in an additional application included training for mental health professionals that included helping counselors “recognize and challenge systemic injustices, antiracism and the pervasiveness of white supremacy to ethically support diverse communities.”

Christopher Rufo, the conservative activist who has spearheaded the assault on critical race theory and diversity, equity and inclusion programs, posted screenshots on social media this week of some grant applications, which he said was proof that the program was “being used to advance left-wing racialism and discrimination.”

“No more slush fund for activists under the guise of mental health,” Mr. Rufo wrote.

But Mary Wall, a former deputy assistant secretary for education involved in setting up the process to solicit bids for the program under the Biden administration, said it was a “gross overstep” to equate mental health services with the radicalization of children.

“One of the first questions after every single school shooting is whether the student had access to mental health support and services,” Ms. Wall said. “It is no stretch to say that taking away this support introduces the risk of harm to school communities and students.”

*Abridged from **The New York Times** – May 1, 2025 – (496 words)*

## **Pale, porous and 3D printed: inside the weird and wonderful quest to make compostable shoes**

Shoes are notoriously hard to recycle and the vast majority are sent to landfill. Can a new design help reduce the environmental impact of our footwear? The shoes may not immediately strike you as the future of mainstream fashion. Pale and porous, they resemble a cross between a beige Croc and the long-net stinkhorn fungus found on forest floors. Their creators, however, hope this will be the next huge breakthrough in sustainable footwear: the world's first 3D printed, made-to-measure, compostable shoe, which can be broken down at the end of its life, in an attempt to stem the flow of millions of shoes into landfill each year.

Fashion is among the world's top polluting industries. It is responsible for about 10% of global carbon emissions and consumes huge amounts of water and land for production. Modern shoes are among the hardest items to produce sustainably because of their complexity, say industry experts, and there are few reliable statistics about the number manufactured every year for the world's 8 billion humans.

There is an almost total dearth of statistics about their environmental impact. Most shoes are composed of a mixture of synthetic fabric, rubber, plastic and metal, which is often held together with strong adhesives, and they are incredibly difficult to dispose of. The vast majority are bound for landfill once used, where they could take hundreds of years to break down.

It cannot be thrown on a compost heap at the end of the garden to break down – it needs to go to a composting plant. Most shoes end up in landfill, but there are very few statistics about their environmental impact. Glue and other binding materials can make shoes difficult to recycle, even when new substances are used for their main components, such as cactus “leather” – a material made from the leaves of the nopal cactus – it is still hard to say what constitutes an environmentally friendly shoe, and that consumers should use them for as long as possible. Despite some environmental drawbacks leather is durable and can be repaired.

Probably one of the most sustainable pieces of footwear is still a high quality, well-made leather shoe. You can have it resoled and the leather can be repaired. There is a lot of research into other leather can be repaired. There is a lot of research into other material such as banana skins and coconut skin but, ultimately, leather is a by-product of the meat industry and it would go to waste. But the majority of people could not afford the cost of those high-quality shoes.

Most vegan materials, if you look at them, have far more oil in them and they've probably been imported from China. Our members and partners are finding it really difficult to navigate because there are no regulations. There is nothing that says if you want to classify a shoe as being sustainable, it has to have X, Y or Z. There's nothing. It's a really difficult subject.

*The Guardian*, Patrick Greensfield, Jan 25

## Still booting after all these years: The people stuck using ancient Windows computers

Thomas Germain, BBC, 19 May 2025

Since its launch in 1975, Microsoft has penetrated digital infrastructure so completely that much of our world still relies on aged, sometimes obsolete Windows software and computers.

"In a way, Windows is the ultimate infrastructure", says Lee Vinsel, an associate professor at Virginia Tech in the US who studies the maintenance and repair of old technology. "Their systems are built into everything around us, and the fact that we have all of these ancient examples around is the story of the company's overall success. That's what's kind of amazing about Microsoft. For a long time, Windows was just how you got things done."

In 2024, Windows was at the centre of a controversy across the German internet. It started with a job listing for Deutsche Bahn, the country's railway service. The role being recruited was an IT systems administrator who would maintain the driver's cab display system on high-speed and regional trains. The problem was the necessary qualifications: applicants were expected to have expertise with Windows 3.11 and MS-DOS – systems released 32 and 44 years ago, respectively. In certain parts of Germany, commuting depends on operating systems that are older than many passengers.

A Deutsche Bahn spokesperson says that's to be expected. "Our trains have a long service life and are in operation for up to 30 years or longer." Deutsche Bahn regularly modernises its trains, the spokesperson says, but systems that meet safety standards and prove themselves stable are generally kept in operation.

It's not just German transit, either. The trains in San Francisco's Muni Metro light railway, for example, won't start up in the morning until someone sticks a floppy disk into the computer that loads DOS software on the railway's Automatic Train Control System (ATCS).

For the people who use this old technology, life can get tedious. For four years, psychiatrist Eric Zabriskie would show up to his job at the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and start the day waiting for a computer to boot up. "I had to get to the clinic early because sometimes it would take 15 minutes just to log into the computer," Zabriskie says. "Once you're in you try to never log out. It was excruciatingly slow."

When it comes to decrepit computer systems that inhabit larger companies and organisations, the main culprit is generally "deferred maintenance", says M Scott Ford, a software developer who specialises in updating legacy systems. "Organisations put all their attention on adding new features instead of investing those resources into making improvements on what already exists," Ford says, which allows reliance on older technology to build up over time.

Sometimes, government facilities in particular hang on to ancient software because its simplicity makes security easier to maintain, Vinsel says. "But there are all kinds of opportunities for failure when you get increasingly complex systems hooked up to the internet and companies stop supporting old software. Cybersecurity is a huge worry."

*Adapted from <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20250516-the-people-stuck-using-ancient-windows-computers...> 19 May 2025 (485 words).*

## **Social media influencers fuelling misogyny in schools, teachers say**

*George Wright & Adam Hale*

Social media influencers are fuelling an increase in misogyny and sexism in schools, according to a new poll by a teaching union. Almost three in five teachers said they believe social media use has had a negative effect on behaviour in schools, the NASUWT\* poll of 5,800 teachers in the UK found.

Influencer and self-proclaimed misogynist Andrew Tate was named by a number of teachers in the poll. The Department for Education (DfE) said it was supporting the teachers to tackle the "damaging impact" on children caused by "the rise of dangerous influencers".

Union members will debate motions at its annual conference in Liverpool this weekend, including one that suggests far-right and populist movements have shifted their recruitment on to social media, messaging and online gaming platforms.

"I have had boys refuse to speak to me and speak to a male teaching assistant instead because I am a woman and they follow Andrew Tate and think he is amazing with all his cars and women... These were 10-year-olds," one teacher said.

Another teacher said: "In a secondary English class last year, a group of boys opted, despite discouragement, to write a persuasive essay on why Andrew Tate is the GOAT (greatest of all time) which included praise of his view that women are a man's property... all of the parents were contacted and were appalled."

In an interview with the BBC in 2023, when pushed on whether his controversial views on women harmed young people, Tate claimed he was a "force for good".

Patrick Roach, general secretary of the NASUWT, said "there is an urgent need for concerted action involving schools, colleges and other agencies to safeguard all children and young people from the dangerous influence of far-right populists and extremists".

But the founder of a group which trains professionals in how to work with boys and young men said the access young people have to pornography is "way more impactful" than the influence of people like Tate. Michael Conroy, who launched Men at Work in 2019, told BBC Breakfast: "Without porn, Andrew Tate would not be a known name.

"Our boys, sadly, are learning about sex through porn, and it is usually representing to them a difference of power between men and women. Where there's access to a phone, there's access [to pornography], unfortunately."

He said while issues like misogyny and sexism were not new in schools, they were being "turbocharged because of accessibility" to dangerous material online.

The NASUWT conference came after *Adolescence*, a Netflix drama about a 13-year-old boy accused of murdering a girl from his class, prompted a national conversation about online safety.

Earlier this month, a survey commissioned by BBC News showed more than a third of secondary teachers have reported misogynistic behaviour from pupils at their school in the last week. About 40% of the teachers who responded also said they felt ill-equipped to handle such conduct.

*Abridged from **BBC** - 19 April 2025 – (483 words)*

\*NASUWT - The National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers

## Climate Forward: Confronting Our New Reality

This article is part of a special section on the Climate Forward conference hosted by The New York Times. In recent years, the rapid deployment of renewable energy and a shift away from the dirtiest fossil fuels has given even grizzled climate activists cause for some measure of hope.

The most extreme projections about temperature rise on planet Earth were replaced by less apocalyptic forecasts, and while the world wasn't shifting away from fossil fuels nearly fast enough, there appeared to be a realistic pathway to significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the decades ahead. Yet now, at the very moment the world seems to be making real progress in the fight against global warming, the scale of the problem seems to be getting even bigger.

Electricity demand is spiking, thanks to artificial intelligence and a new generation of energy-hungry data centers. Overall energy consumption keeps climbing as a new middle class rises in the developing world. And a large-scale phase-out of planet-warming emissions is being hampered by short-term politics, global conflict and ossified financial markets.

By 2050, global demand for electricity is expected to rise by as much as 75 percent, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Much of that demand will come from rapidly developing nations in Africa and Southeast Asia. But even in the United States, energy consumption is soaring after remaining relatively flat for 15 years. "Everyone is assuming that wealthy countries will taper their energy demand on a certain timeline," said Raj Shah, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, a non-profit group that is working on expanding clean energy access in poor countries.

The most extreme projections about temperature rise on planet Earth were replaced by less apocalyptic forecasts, and while the world wasn't shifting away from fossil fuels nearly fast enough, there appeared to be a realistic pathway to significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the decades ahead. Yet now, at the very moment the world seems to be making real progress in the fight against global warming, the scale of the problem seems to be getting even bigger. Electricity demand is spiking, thanks to artificial intelligence and a new generation of energy-hungry data centers. It's true that a growing share of the world's power will come from clean sources, including solar panels and wind turbines. Last year alone, nearly 86 percent of the new power generation built worldwide came from clean sources

*Adapted from the Climate Forward newsletter, May 2025*

## **How Weight-loss Wonder Drugs Are Redefining the Way Our Bodies Work**

Obesity was once medicine's Cinderella subject with some questioning whether the condition should even be viewed as a biological disorder. But the arrival of a new class of appetite-suppressing drugs such as Ozempic and Wegovy has transformed obesity treatment into the most scientifically exciting and commercially lucrative area of healthcare.

These drugs lead to dramatic weight loss, are shifting perceptions and, according to a series of results announced at the European Congress on Obesity (ECO) in Málaga this week, promise health benefits that extend far beyond weight management.

"It's been an extraordinary week," said Prof Susan Jebb, a public health nutrition scientist at the University of Oxford, who has been researching obesity treatments since the 1980s and who presented the findings at the ECO meeting. "Obesity has been [in the background] for so long and it's been such a slog," she added. "These drugs have energised the field and it has happened so fast."

First developed to help lower blood sugar levels as a diabetes treatment, it was quickly apparent that Novo Nordisk's drug Semaglutide (the active ingredient in Ozempic and Wegovy jabs) has a dramatic effect on weight. The drug works by mimicking a hormone, GLP-1, which is released in the gut when we eat and acts on receptors around the body, including the brain.

Eli Lilly's rival product, Mounjaro, contains the active ingredient Tirzepatide. This emulates GLP-1 as well as a second hormone producing even more impressive results, according to the first head-to-head trial reported this week in which participants lost an average of 20% of their body weight after 72 weeks of treatment.

The benefits of being at a healthy weight are substantial, with one study published in January suggesting weight-loss jabs could reduce the risk of 42 diseases including heart disease, cancer, clotting disorders, Alzheimer's, chronic kidney disease, addiction and a range of psychiatric conditions.

But, what happens when you come off the drugs? The problem with diets, notoriously, is that once a person stops dieting they often regain weight. For GLP-targeting drugs, the data is patchy because pharmaceutical companies typically stop tracking people once they stop taking the medicine. Jebb and colleagues are among the first to trace this trajectory .

They found rapid weight loss was followed by a rapid rebound. When people stopped taking Semaglutide they regained all the weight lost within 10 months – far quicker than for behavioural interventions. "We need to face up to the costs of lifelong treatment – and these drugs are expensive," said Jebb. "When we come to private prescriptions – and right now in the UK most people are doing this privately – people need to understand there are high risks of regaining the weight very fast when you stop. We've got to give people the facts."

*Adapted from: theguardian.com, May 2025. (475 words)*

## Elton John and Dua Lipa seek protection from AI

*Liv McMahon & Chris Vallance*

Dua Lipa, Sir Elton John, Sir Ian McKellen and Florence Welch are among a list of stars calling on the prime minister to update copyright laws in a way that protects them from artificial intelligence.

A letter signed by more than 400 British musicians, writers and artists, addressed to Sir Keir Starmer, says failing to give that protection would mean them "giving away" their work to tech firms.

Also at risk, they write, is "the UK's position as a creative powerhouse".

They want the PM to back an amendment to the Data (Use and Access) Bill that would require developers to be transparent with copyright owners about using their material to train AI models.

A government spokesperson said: "We want our creative industries and AI companies to flourish, which is why we're consulting on a package of measures that we hope will work for both sectors.

Other signatories include author Kazuo Ishiguro, playwright David Hare, singers Kate Bush and Robbie Williams, as well as Coldplay and Sir Paul McCartney, who told the BBC in January he was concerned about AI ripping off artists.

"We are wealth creators, we reflect and promote the national stories, we are the innovators of the future, and AI needs us as much as it needs energy and computer skills," it states.

They say their concerns can be met if the government backs an amendment proposed by Baroness Beeban Kidron ahead of a key vote in the House of Lords on Monday. Baroness Kidron's amendment, it says, would "allow both AI developers and creators to develop licensing regimes that will allow for human-created content well into the future."

Not everyone agrees with the artists' approach. Julia Willemyns, co-founder of the Centre for British Progress think tank, said such proposals could hamper the UK and its bid for growth.

The measures would "do nothing to stop foreign firms from using content from the British creative industries," she told the BBC. "A restrictive copyright regime would offshore AI development, chill domestic innovation, and directly harm the UK economy."

However, the letter comes amid mounting concern from artists over the inclusion of their works, and material protected by copyright, in the data used to develop generative AI systems.

These tools, which can produce new content in response to simple text prompts, have become increasingly popular and available to consumers. But their capabilities have been accompanied by concerns and criticism over their data use and energy demand.

The government carried out a consultation around its proposal to allow developers to be able to use creators' content on the internet to help develop their models, unless the rights holders elect to "opt out".

Mr Ishiguro pointed the BBC to an earlier statement in which he wrote, "why is it just and fair to alter our time-honoured copyright laws to advantage mammoth corporations at the expense of individual writers, musicians, film-makers and artists?"

*Abridged from **BBC** – 10 May 2025 – (481 words)*

## **Doom: One of gaming's oldest series reckons with the challenges of 2025**

Few names are as synonymous with video games as Doom. First launched in 1993, the first-person shooter (FPS) remains one of the most influential - and popular - series in the industry. But even it and its superhuman protagonist, The Doom Slayer, have to contend with the pressures of the games industry in 2025. Attracting new players, competing with the new titans on the scene and the rising cost of making - and selling - blockbuster titles.

While the Doom series is famous for pitting players against colossal enemies, there are other behemoths it has to face. "There's so much stuff competing for our attention these days, whether it's games, movies, or whatever," says executive producer Marty Stratton.

Free-to-play (F2P) games, such as Fortnite and Roblox, and annually updated series such as Call of Duty and EA FC regularly dominate most-played charts. There's evidence to suggest players, particularly younger ones, are spending most of their time on these titles - sometimes referred to as "forever games".

In the latest *Online Nation report* by UK regulator Ofcom, five of the top ten games among UK players were F2P. Fortnite recorded about 2.65m active UK users in May 2024, and Roblox 1.22m, according to the report, and global figures are much higher.

Drawing those players to premium titles can be a challenge but Marty argues but the Doom series has an advantage over others because it's so well-known and has a large, loyal fanbase. However, as industry expert Rhys Elliot says, "it's getting harder to rely solely on your hardcore players. Overall, the number of people playing premium titles isn't increasing, but the cost of making them is." The people who make games still need to make revenues each year because... well you know capitalism," he says. "One way of doing this is by attracting new players."

The games industry has also leaned into customisation in recent years, giving players the power to finely tweak different elements and aspects of difficulty - something that's been incorporated into The Dark Ages. "In that regard I think it's going to be a great first-time experience for a lot of fans," says Hugo Martin, Doom's Director.

But there's still the small matter of the cost of entry. The debate over prices has been a feature of gaming discourse for years. In 2010, a new game cost roughly £40 in the UK - and players had plenty to say about it at the time. If you consider inflation that would be about £60 in today's money. "When you look at the history of game pricing... it really hasn't skyrocketed," says Marty.

Recently, the issue has been thrown back into the spotlight thanks to worries over Donald Trump's tariff plans and price announcements from the three major console makers.

*Adapted from: bbc.com, May 2025 (474 words)*

## **Forecasts of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Fossil Fuels Soar in Trump's First 100 Days**

Donald Trump's ambitions for the US to "drill, baby, drill" for more fossil fuels have ironically been hampered by the economic chaos unleashed by his own tariffs, but the US is still on track to increase oil and gas extraction, causing a surge in planet-heating emissions, a new analysis shows.

The US was already the world's leading oil and gas power, producing more of the fossil fuels than any country in history during Joe Biden's administration. But Trump has sought to escalate this further, declaring an "energy emergency" to open up more land and ocean for drilling and launching an unprecedented assault on environmental regulations in his first 100 days back in the White House.

This new political climate means that the expected amount of greenhouse gas emissions from active and planned projects in US oil and gas fields has jumped under Trump, after previously dropping under Biden.

Despite awarding more drilling leases than Trump in his first 100 days, Biden also pursued policies to combat the climate crisis that saw oil and gas companies revise down their production estimates. That situation has now reversed, threatening a pulse of new pollution that will further add to the fever of a planet already suffering from heatwaves, floods, droughts and other disasters accelerated by global heating.

"The uptick in embodied emissions from forecast US oil and gas production is worrying," said Olivier Bois von Kursk, policy adviser at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, which tracks emissions projections from the lifetime of projects, based on data from research consultancy Rystad Energy. "The world can't afford more climate chaos."

Trump has already taken more than 140 initial actions to reverse environmental regulations and promote the use of fossil fuels, dismissing established climate science as a "giant hoax" and exhorting further drilling. "We have more liquid gold under our feet than any nation on Earth, and by far, and now I fully authorize the most talented team ever assembled to go and get it," the president told Congress in March. "It's called drill, baby, drill." He has already halted approvals of new solar and wind projects on federal lands and waters and criticized what he calls "scam" subsidies for clean energy. "We don't want windmills in this country," the president said shortly after his inauguration in January. "You know what else people don't like? Those massive solar fields."

The International Energy Agency, which has forecast that global oil and gas demand will peak by 2030, has said that no new major fossil fuel projects can occur if the world is to stay within agreed temperature limits and avoid catastrophic climate impacts. Last year was the hottest, worldwide, ever recorded and governments are collectively failing to meet targets to avert escalating disasters.

*Adapted from: theguardian.com, May 2025 (471 words)*

## **AI firms warned to calculate threat of super intelligence or risk it escaping human control**

*Dan Milmo*

Artificial intelligence companies have been urged to replicate the safety calculations that underpinned Robert Oppenheimer's first nuclear test before they release all-powerful systems.

Max Tegmark, a leading voice in AI safety, said he had carried out calculations akin to those of the US physicist Arthur Compton before the Trinity test and had found a 90% probability that a highly advanced AI would pose an existential threat.

The US government went ahead with Trinity in 1945, after being reassured there was a vanishingly small chance of an atomic bomb igniting the atmosphere and endangering humanity.

In a paper published by Tegmark and three of his students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), they recommend calculating the "Compton constant" – defined in the paper as the probability that an all-powerful AI escapes human control. In a 1959 interview with the US writer Pearl Buck, Compton said he had approved the test after calculating the odds of a runaway fusion reaction to be "slightly less" than one in three million.

Tegmark said that AI firms should take responsibility for rigorously calculating whether Artificial Super Intelligence (ASI) – a term for a theoretical system that is superior to human intelligence in all aspects – will evade human control.

"The companies building super-intelligence need to also calculate the Compton constant, the probability that we will lose control over it," he said. "It's not enough to say 'we feel good about it'. They have to calculate the percentage."

Tegmark said a Compton constant consensus calculated by multiple companies would create the "political will" to agree global safety regimes for AIs.

Tegmark, a professor of physics and AI researcher at MIT, is also a co-founder of the Future of Life Institute, a non-profit that supports safe development of AI and published an open letter in 2023 calling for pause in building powerful AIs. The letter was signed by more than 33,000 people including Elon Musk – an early supporter of the institute – and Steve Wozniak, the co-founder of Apple.

The letter, produced months after the release of ChatGPT launched a new era of AI development, warned that AI labs were locked in an "out-of-control race" to deploy "ever more powerful digital minds" that no one can "understand, predict, or reliably control".

The Singapore Consensus on Global AI Safety Research Priorities report was produced by Tegmark, the world-leading computer scientist Yoshua Bengio and employees at leading AI companies such as OpenAI and Google DeepMind. It set out three broad areas to prioritise in AI safety research: developing methods to measure the impact of current and future AI systems; specifying how an AI should behave and designing a system to achieve that; and managing and controlling a system's behaviour.

Referring to the report, Tegmark said the argument for safe development in AI had recovered its footing after the most recent governmental AI summit in Paris, when the US vice-president, JD Vance, said the AI future was "not going to be won by hand-wringing about safety".

*Abridged from **The Guardian** – 10 May 2025 – (493 words)*