The Honda – Ohio State Partnership: Upskilling the Workforce for AI-Powered Work

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AT OHIO STATE

Education for Citizenship 2035

Strategic Plan Preview for The Ohio State University Board of Trustees
April 25, 2025

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TRANSFORMATIVE ENDEAVORS > ENTERPRISE AI > AI FLUENCY

AI Education and Fluency

Equipping and empowering all Ohio State students, faculty, and staff with AI skills for the future.

Key initiatives:

- Develop "bilingual" students by embedding AI skills into the undergraduate curriculum and developing new courses and programs
- Will ensure that every Ohio State student, beginning with the class of 2029, will graduate being AI fluent
- Equip faculty and instructors through training and building capacity for AI faculty hiring

Strategic value:

- Positions Ohio State as a national leader in AI education, focusing on ethical and responsible use of AI to build a talented workforce for Ohio and the nation's employers.

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The AI(X) Hub

Unlocking exponential possibilities when AI is fused with different fields (X)

Vision:

- Create a dynamic intellectual hub to harness OSU's vast expertise where AI scientists and domain experts across the university can collaborate to accelerate groundbreaking research and transformative innovation.
- Advance fundamental AI research to push the boundaries of AI.
- Establish a collaborative ecosystem that unites researchers, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders.
- Develop cutting-edge AI products that reach billions and drive meaningful change.
- Deliver solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.
- Empower the next generation of AI leaders through accessible AI education, mentorship, and skill development for all Ohio State learners.

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AI(X) Faculty Hiring

AI(X) Hub is designed to be a **dynamic engine f**
Ohio State's world-class research community
discovery, drive interdisciplinary collaborati
future of **AI** through bold ideas, shared

To enable this vision: OSU will hire ~ **100 fac**

- To build our next generation of AI leader
- To cement OSU's role as a national hub
  entrepreneurship

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AI(X) Hub: Cutting across 6 Strategic Pillars (X)

Foundational AI	AI for Health	AI for Engineering and Physical Sciences	AI Agricu
Elevating the theoretical, mathematical, and algorithmic underpinnings of AI	Harnessing AI to revolutionize healthcare	Advancing the application of AI, enabling practical technological solutions	Applyin address challen agricultur efficient, su and resil production

AI(X) Hub

Serves the needs of the broader OSU research community. Leverages faculty expertise across OSU to achieve translational research impact. Helps with technology transition, developing product leaders who launch AI-enabled products and services.

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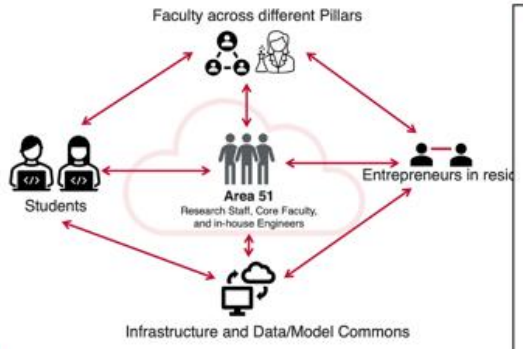
AI(X) Hub Organizational Structure



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Core Capabilities

The AI(X) Hub will equip researchers with advanced tools and expanded capabilities to drive innovation and accelerate discovery. It is designed to:

- **Build a Braintrust for AI**
  - Create a cutting-edge resource for collaborative research in the 21st century
  - A dynamic **intellectual hub** where domain experts, AI faculty, programmers, engineers, and scholars converge to solve complex problems, spark high-impact innovation, and compete for large multidisciplinary projects.
    - **Ex.** Create *AI software workflow pipelines* that are *easily reusable* and *reconfigurable across research domains.*
  - Host workshops and tutorials. Bringing different communities of domain experts and AI experts together.
- **Provide Scalable Shared Infrastructure**
  - University-wide computing cluster
  - Smaller experimental computing cluster for the Hub
- **Develop data/model commons**
  - Work with different university constituents to develop robust **data (and model) commons**
  - **Idea:** Data/Model commons integrated with cutting-edge **computing clusters** will help democratize access to high-performance computing and curated datasets for rapid advances across all disciplines from medicine, science and engineering to the social sciences and humanities
- **Accelerate Entrepreneurship:**
  - Accelerate collaboration between researchers, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders to streamline the path from discovery to deployment, bringing ideas from the lab into the real world.
  - "Entrepreneurs in residence" will be responsible for finding mature technologies that they can connect to their VC networks and translate into companies.

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Concept:

Honda + OSU faculty + AI industry practitioners work together in a collaborative innovation space on campus to regularly experiment, engage, and co-mentor project teams that develop innovative AI workflows suitable for intrapreneurial integration into a company

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Honda – OSU AI Commons

Safely build, experiment, test, and validate AI innovations in a joint environment between OSU & Honda

- Strategy
- Development
- In-vehicle features
- Manufacturing & Supply Chain
- After Sales
- Enabling Tech (SOC,..)

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Honda Expanding AI

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New AIx Hub

High Strategic Alignment

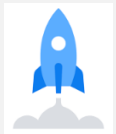
- Health
- Foundational
- Science & Engineering
- Responsible AI
- Agriculture
- Cyber Security

AI Digital Proving Ground

Key Expected Benefits:

Talent Pipeline & Education

Innovation at Scale



Expanded Research Fields

Leveraging Emerging AI Ecosystems

Mutual Growth

Learning & Research Capability

Capability Tiers

- **Tier 1 – AI Literacy:** Short, immersive "AI for Everyone" bootcamps. Associates learn to co-pilot daily tasks with AI (e.g., automation, ideation, decision support).

AI for *me* → individual productivity and literacy.

- **Tier 2 – Applied Innovation:** Cross-functional project squads (mix of OSU students + Honda associates) solving domain problems — from factory optimization to customer experience.

AI with *team* → team-based problem solving, innovation culture.

- **Tier 3 – Deep R&D:** A selective program where Honda associates spend 12-24 months embedded at OSU labs, driving frontier research (multi-agent systems, edge AI for mobility, etc.).

AI for *Honda* → leadership in research and strategy.

The 3 tiers will enable Organization transformation in the AI x Software era

Tier 1 - AI Literacy - individual productivity and literacy

***Goal**: Every associate becomes AI-fluent enough to augment their own work.*

Ideas:

- **Micro-Certifications:** Short, stackable credentials (e.g., "Prompt Engineering Essentials," "AI in Excel," "Ethical AI 101").

- **AI Builder Clinics:** Hands-on labs where associates bring their *own work problems* (reports, emails, analysis tasks) and learn how to tackle them with AI tools in a safe environment.

- **AI Proving Ground:** Digital Sandbox environments with curated datasets/tools where associates can safely experiment without fear of "breaking production."

- **Peer-to-Peer Learning Circles:** Associates form small cohorts to share how they're applying AI in daily workflows — spreading grassroots adoption.

***Honda Benefit**: Associates experience <u>value</u> in a "learning" environment -> PRODUCTIVITY gains*
***OSU Benefit**: Gains a scalable "learning" platform to extend its Education impact directly into industry settings*

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AI Jumpstart for Honda Executives @ OSU

Using AI with Judgment, Discipline and Impact

AI JUMPSTART FOR HONDA

From AI Access to AI Fluency

A one-day experience designed to move you from AI passenger to AI driver.

Today's Journey	
8:30-9:00 AM	**Introductions and Honda Context**
9:00-10:00 AM	Performance: Why AI Matters, and Why AI is not the Outcome
10:00-10:15 AM	Break
10:15-11:15 AM	Driver: Why the car is not the Advantage. The Driver Is
11:45-12:15 AM	Use: How to Give AI Better Direction
12:15-1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 -2:00 PM	Think: Use AI to make Better Decisions Through Better Thinking
2:00-3:00 PM	Solve: How to Structure Harder Problems with AI
3:00-3:30 PM	Break
3:30-4:30 PM	Lead: How Individual AI Fluency Becomes the Catalyst for Organizational AI Fluency
4:30-5:00 PM	Integration: What Leaders will accept, revise, reject, and Practice
5:00-5:15 PM	Day 2 Setup and Program Break

Facilitated by **Srini Koushik** in collaboration with Fisher College of Business
Founder and CEO, Right Brain Labs
Executive Advisor for AI Fluency
The Ohio State University

GCSE: Orchestrating Complex Challenges

For hard problems, give AI the mission before asking for the output.

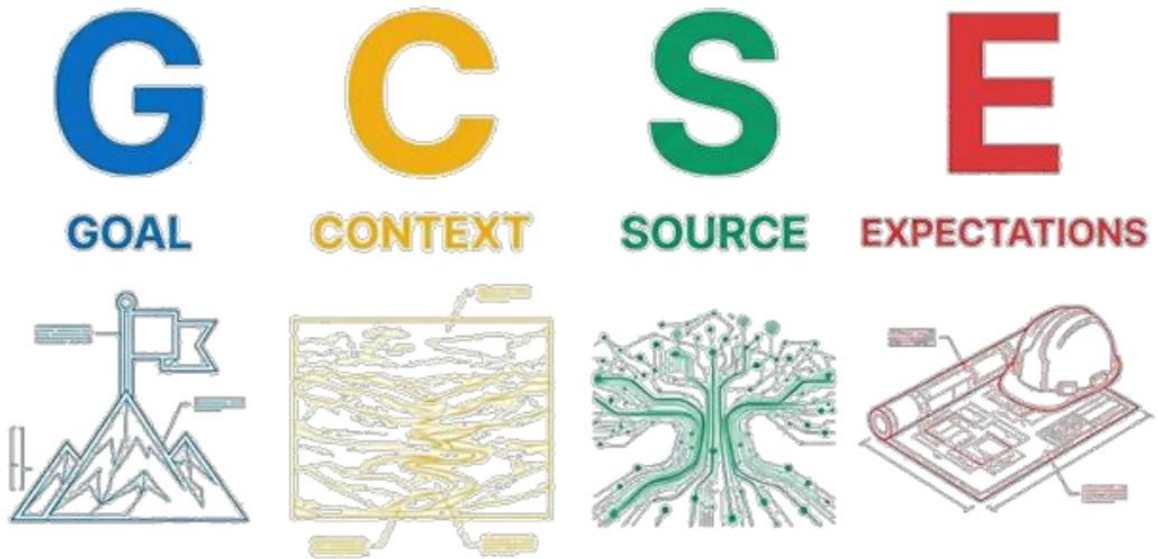
GCSE helps leaders frame complex challenges with:

Goal - What outcome are we trying to achieve?

Context - What situation, constraints, and stakeholders matter?

Sources - What knowledge, data, or perspectives should AI use?

Expectations - What should the output include, avoid, or make clear



Tier 2 - Applied Innovation - team-based problem solving, innovation culture

***Goal**: Move from literacy to applied, team-based problem solving.*

Ideas:

- **Innovation Project Teams:** 3–5 associates + OSU students + faculty coach → rapid cycles on Honda-relevant challenges. (E.g. capstones)

- **Solution Challenge Sprints:** Quarterly themed challenges (e.g., “AI for Safety,” “AI for Sustainability”) where squads compete to prototype solutions. (E.g. Participation with Student Clubs)

- **Cross-Functional Learning Rotations:** Associates from manufacturing join customer experience teams, and vice versa, to ensure broader exposure and fresh thinking. (E.g. 2-4 week sprints)

***Honda Benefit**: Associates experience application in a “learning” environment -> EFFICIENCY gains*
***OSU Benefit**: Students gain real-world, cross-industry experience & job opportunities solving innovation challenges*

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Center for Software Innovation

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The Center for Software Innovation **Part-Time Co-Op Program** connects Ohio State students with startups and innovation-driven companies working on real product, engineering, and go-to-market challenges.

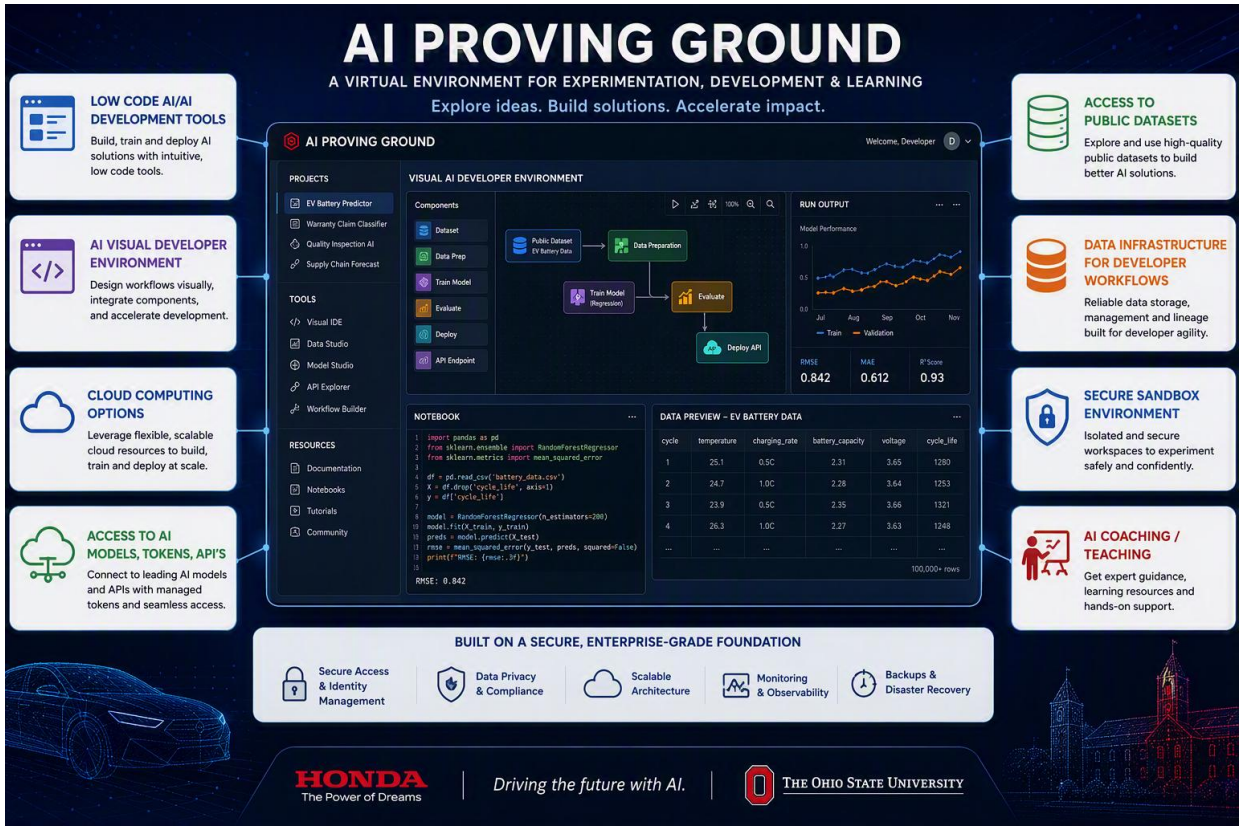
Through paid, part-time roles during the academic semester, students contribute to meaningful projects while gaining hands-on experience alongside founders, engineers, and operators, and companies gain access to motivated talent ready to support real work.

Students typically work 10–20 hours per week while remaining fully enrolled.

Honda-OSU AI Proving Ground Concept

This AI Proving Ground concept has two modes for skills development:

- **Action-Based Learning (Tier 1)**
  Honda associates or OSU students independently experiment, prototype, and train their AI skills using shared tools, datasets, and infrastructure
- **Guided Team Experimentation (Tier 2)**
  Honda teams work alongside OSU faculty and students to co-develop, test, and refine AI solutions.



Tier 3 - Deep R&D - leadership in research and strategy

***Goal**: Develop a cadre of "AI x Software Champions" who drive Honda's future strategy.*

Ideas:

- **Research:** 12–24 month embedding at OSU AI labs, where associates co-lead frontier research projects with faculty (e.g., multi-agent mobility systems, responsible AI governance).

- **Honda–OSU Joint Publications:** Fellows co-author papers or whitepapers, strengthening Honda's credibility in the global AI community.

- **Translational Bridges:** Associates return to Honda with a mandate to "translate" cutting-edge research into internal roadmaps, ensuring practical impact.

***Honda Benefit**: Associates experience creation in a "learning" environment -> NEW VALUE CREATION gains*
***OSU Benefit**: Researchers & Faculty gain industry collaboration opportunities and access to frontier mobility challenges*

Introduction to **CRAIG**

Center on Responsible AI and Governance (CRAIG), an NSF Industry-University Cooperative Research Center with sites at **Ohio State, Northeastern, Rutgers, and Baylor**. Research, workforce development, and peer-to-peer learning are the three pillars. The center held it's first Industry Advisory Board (IAB) meeting on June 4-5. CRAIG's IAB is composed of **Honda, Ford, Meta, Merck, Nationwide, Cardinal Health, and Cisco**. The IAB funded four one-year research projects at $75,000 each.

- **Runtime governance for agentic AI** (Sachin Kumar, Ohio State). Enforcing instruction hierarchies at runtime and producing auditable records when policies conflict.
- **AgentFuzz** (Zhiqiang Lin, Ohio State). Automated red-teaming of agentic systems, built to run in the pipelines teams already use to build and ship software.
- **Agent-Guard** (Rajiv Ramnath, Ohio State). Purpose-bound data access auditing. Existing controls verify who accessed data; this asks why.
- **Scaling responsible AI with lean tools** (Rakesh Mallipeddi, Ohio State). Applying operational-excellence and quality-management methods to AI governance at scale.

Group Discussion:

1. Identify opportunities to build stronger partnerships between academia and industry for applied AI initiatives – Please share known opportunities used for workforce upskilling?

2. Develop strategies for creating a sustainable AI proving ground that drives organizational transformation – Please share your ideas on what features / functionality an AI proving ground must have to be effective and sustainable?

3. Consider governance challenges to scale AI across operations in a responsible way – Please share your opinion on governance challenges to scale AI across operations?