MASTERCLASS SERIES · GETTING AI READY · 15 OCTOBER 2026

Getting AI Ready

Foundations for growth and impact

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What we'll cover today.

01 What innovation means for your organisation

02 The five drivers of innovation readiness

03 Practical and ethical uses of AI

04 Measuring growth and social impact

Scan with your phone
to participate in Slido.

Where are you on your AI journey?

Pick the option that best describes your organisation today.

01

Curious Minds

Talking about AI, not yet doing much.

02

Individuals Experimenting

People trying AI tools across the organisation, ad hoc.

03

Running Pilots

One or two structured pilots underway with leadership backing.

04

AI Native

AI is embedded in how we work, with governance and shared capability.

Scan the Slido QR on your screen to respond.

PART ONE

What is for purpose innovation.

Getting the language right so your board, team and funders are working from the same map.

What do we actually mean by innovation?

Not a buzzword. Not a lab. A discipline any for-purpose organisation can build.

> *"The process, skillset or result of creating new programs or projects that create social and economic value for an organisation, its clients, beneficiaries, partners and community."*

PROCESS

How you do it

A repeatable way of turning ideas into tested, funded, adopted change — not one-off hero projects.

SKILLSET

Who does it

Capabilities across your team — problem framing, prototyping, evidence, storytelling — not just one 'innovation person.'

RESULT

What it produces

New programs or projects that create social and economic value for clients, beneficiaries, partners and community.

Business as Usual vs Innovation

Both are essential. Understanding the difference is how you lead each one well.

BUSINESS AS USUAL	INNOVATION
We improve and optimise what already exists	What we create is new — for us, our clients, or the sector
We are always improving how we serve clients	Our service delivery method is new for us or our clients
We take what works and adapt it to a different region or group	We re-imagine existing services to reach underserved communities
We have set project plans and contract deliverables — quality execution is our focus	Projects involve experimentation, test, learn and adapt — many pivots, rapid learning
Our work is evidence-based — we are confident it works	Our work is evidence-informed — we don't yet know if it will work
Projects are externally funded with guaranteed value exchange from the outset	We create ambitious social and economic value with potential for replication and scale

Which outcomes are on your agenda right now?

Eight outcomes for-purpose organisations pursue through innovation and AI. Most boards focus on two or three at a time.

01

Grow revenue

Develop new products and services that expand the core offering and unlock new revenue streams.

02

Scale impact

Build new service models, establish an evidence base, and secure funding to take them to scale.

03

Improve service delivery

Reimagine service delivery to enhance customer experience and deepen social impact.

04

Build an innovation culture

Create a culture that promotes experimentation, reduces friction, and rewards learning.

05

Reach new audiences

Extend into new customer segments and markets beyond the traditional base.

06

Lift productivity

Shift the operating model to improve margins, reduce costs, and free staff from admin.

07

Develop future leaders

Grow curious, creative leaders who drive the next phase of growth and impact.

08

Systemise innovation

Build the systems and processes to manage innovation internally — a repeatable engine, not one-off pilots.

Boards get sharper decisions when they name the outcome first — then choose the innovation.

PART TWO

The Innovation Readiness Framework.

The five organisational conditions that decide whether your AI and innovation efforts stick — or stall.

AI is a tool. Innovation readiness comes first.

AI sits within digital innovation, one of many ways for-purpose organisations can innovate.

DIGITAL INNOVATION

AI is a tool, not a strategy. Also: data, automation and digital platforms.

PRODUCTS & PROGRAMMES

New offerings that meet unmet needs and create value for clients and communities.

SERVICE DELIVERY

New ways of delivering support, such as peer-led, outreach or integrated services.

PROCESSES & OPERATIONS

New workflows and ways of organising work that improve quality and reduce effort.

FUNDING & BUSINESS MODELS

New ways to fund and sustain the mission, including earned income and blended funding.

PARTNERSHIPS & SYSTEMS

New collaborations, shared governance and changes to how the wider system works.

Get the organisation innovation ready before designing and implementing AI.

AI can accelerate an innovation process; it cannot substitute for readiness.

Source: Nesta, The Open Book of Social Innovation (illustrative types; categories can overlap).

Five conditions that determine readiness.

Get these right and innovation compounds. Get any one wrong and pilots fail on repeat — no matter how good the idea.

01

GROWTH MINDSET

The belief that capability can be built. Effort and learning are valued over being right.

02

INNOVATION CAPABILITY

The skills, tools and time to run experiments — not just talk about them.

03

INTELLIGENT GOVERNANCE

Guardrails that accelerate: clear risk appetite, decision rights and reporting rhythm.

04

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

Visible executive sponsorship, protected time, and rewards for the right behaviours.

05

ADAPTIVE CULTURE

Psychological safety to try, learn from misses, and share both wins and stumbles.

Readiness isn't a score to chase — it's the ground you stand on when you try something new.

Measure readiness. Build it. Measure it again.

The Shackleton Labs Innovation Readiness Survey measures the five drivers and is included in every engagement.

BEFORE EACH ENGAGEMENT

Establish the baseline

Assess the five drivers before work begins. Identify strengths, readiness gaps and the capabilities your organisation needs to build.

EVERY QUARTER

Track progress

We recommend repeating the survey every quarter. Review movement across the five drivers and agree the next priorities.

AFTER EACH ENGAGEMENT

Assess the readiness uplift

Repeat the survey at the end of every engagement. Compare with the baseline, identify remaining gaps and agree the next steps.

Our aim: prepare partners for best-practice innovation and AI design, development and implementation.

Is our innovation readiness moving in the right direction?

Five questions per driver. Ask for evidence of change since the last review, not just a list of activities.

GROWTH MINDSET

1. What have we learned since the last board review?
2. Which assumptions have we tested and changed?
3. How are project lessons changing our decisions?
4. What are staff learning through stretch roles?
5. Are ideas reaching informed decisions faster?

INNOVATION CAPABILITY

1. Which priority skill gaps have we closed?
2. Can teams apply their training to real problems?
3. Do teams have the tools and time to experiment?
4. Where are ideas stalling in our innovation pipeline?
5. Which pilots now have evidence to justify scaling?

INTELLIGENT GOVERNANCE

1. Are our AI purpose, policy and risk limits clear?
2. Do delegated approvals help safe pilots start sooner?
3. Who owns delivery, risk and each decision?
4. Do board reports drive stop, adapt or scale decisions?
5. What harms or policy breaches require our attention?

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

1. Which experiments are executives actively sponsoring?
2. Are leaders protecting innovation time and budgets?
3. Which barriers has the executive team removed?
4. How are leaders modelling curiosity and learning?
5. Do we reward innovation, not just BAU delivery?

ADAPTIVE CULTURE

1. Is staff confidence to speak up improving?
2. Are teams sharing misses as openly as wins?
3. Is collaboration spreading beyond the usual teams?
4. How is beneficiary feedback changing our approach?
5. Are useful changes becoming everyday practice?

Abundance and deficit — same driver, two different organisations.

You'll recognise your organisation somewhere on each row. That's the diagnosis.

DRIVER	DEFICIT MINDSET	ABUNDANCE MINDSET
Growth Mindset	*"We don't have time or budget for that."*	*"What could we learn from a small test?"*
Innovation Capability	*Ad hoc, dependent on one or two people.*	*Shared toolkits, trained facilitators, time protected.*
Intelligent Governance	*"AI is banned" or "AI is fine, no policy."*	*Clear risk appetite, decision rights, quarterly review.*
Transformational Leadership	*Innovation talked about, not sponsored.*	*CEO owns a flagship; execs protect leader time.*
Adaptive Culture	*Failures hidden, wins claimed narrowly.*	*Wins and misses shared; learning is the currency.*

One move per driver — that's your readiness lift.

Don't try to fix all five at once. Pick one tactic per driver, baseline it, revisit at 6 and 12 months.

GROWTH MINDSET	**Project retrospectives** After-action reviews at every project end.	**Stretch assignments** One stretch role per team each year.	**Learning velocity KPI** Track time from idea → decision.
INNOVATION CAPABILITY	**Quarterly innovation bootcamp** Immersive PM bootcamp for a small cohort.	**Capability uplift** Train 20% of staff in AI or design-thinking basics.	**Ideation & creativity training** Problem-solving, ideation and creativity techniques.
INTELLIGENT GOVERNANCE	**AI Purpose Statement** Board adopts an AI purpose + risk appetite.	**Delegated pilot budget** Pre-approved pilot envelope under an agreed cap.	**Quarterly innovation report** Board paper with kill / scale / continue calls.
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP	**Executive sponsorship** CEO sponsors one flagship experiment each year.	**Protected leader time** Leaders spend ~10% of time on innovation.	**Behaviour recognition** Awards tied to innovation behaviours, not outcomes.
ADAPTIVE CULTURE	**Experiment showcases** Monthly show-and-tell of live experiments.	**Psychological safety pulse** Twice-yearly short pulse on speak-up safety.	**Cross-team rotations** Short rotations for at least 5% of staff each year.

Pick one tactic per driver. Baseline it, revisit at 6 and 12 months — that's your readiness lift.

PART THREE

AI in the for-purpose sector.

What kind of AI we're actually talking about — and where it earns its keep for mission-driven organisations.

Four families of AI — and how widely they're actually used.

Not all AI is ChatGPT. Different families do different jobs — with different maturity, cost and governance implications.

GENERATIVE

Creates new content

Text, images, audio and code produced by large language models.

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot Chat.

74% of NFPs

already use generative AI (Infoxchange 2025).

Best for: Drafts, summaries, briefs, first-cut ideas.

ASSISTIVE / COPILOT

Sits inside your tools

AI built into the software you already pay for — Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, your CRM.

M365 Copilot, Gemini in Workspace, Salesforce Einstein.

6.3 hrs / week

saved by daily gen-AI users in Australia (KPMG 2026).

Best for: Everyday productivity uplift across the team.

ANALYTICAL & PREDICTIVE

Finds patterns and forecasts

Classical machine learning on your own data — segmentation, prediction, risk scoring.

Power BI, Tableau Pulse, custom ML on your CRM data.

20% of innovation-

active Australian businesses use AI in some form (ABS 2024–25).

Best for: Donor churn, service demand, program targeting.

AGENTIC

Acts on your behalf

Multi-step AI workflows that plan and execute tasks with tools and data.

Copilot Studio agents, ChatGPT agents, Claude with tools.

<10% at scale

— the frontier for 2026–27, moving fast (Deloitte State of AI 2026).

Best for: High-volume workflows — with strong guardrails and human review.

Sources: Infoxchange NFP Tech Report 2025 · KPMG Australia 2026 · ABS Business Characteristics Survey 2024–25 · Deloitte State of AI 2026.

Use AI to replace routine tasks, not people.

Free people for client and beneficiary-facing work, better service delivery and human connection.

WHERE AI SHOULD HELP

Routine administration

Reduce repetitive, low-value work: data entry, scheduling, document formatting and routine reporting.

Pattern-based tasks

Sort, categorise, summarise and prepare first drafts in approved systems, with human review.

More time for purpose

Redirect the time saved toward creative, enterprising work that improves services and serves the mission.

WHERE PEOPLE MUST LEAD

Relationships and care

Support staff, not substitute for empathy, trust, human connection or meaningful contact with beneficiaries.

Judgement and accountability

Do not let AI alone make high-stakes decisions about eligibility, safeguarding or care. Keep people accountable.

Privacy and quality

Do not put sensitive information into unapproved tools. Check accuracy, bias and appropriateness before acting.

Measure success by better services and more time with people, not fewer people.

Use AI to reduce admin, not manufacture trust.

Recent Australian practice, alongside clearly labelled international cautionary cases.

GOOD USES · AUSTRALIA

Uniting NSW.ACT · care administration

Buddy transcribes multilingual care notes and helps staff find policies. June 2026 reporting: case notes cut from 15 minutes to under 2.

YMCA South Australia · operational reporting

April 2026 case study: reports produced in under 30 minutes, rather than a full day. Staff time redirected to strategy and community impact.

MISUSE & BACKLASH · INTERNATIONAL

Rewriting people's views · Aug–Sep 2026

Neighbors for Strong Communities · United States

Its merger-letter tool turned a critic's opposition into support and invented personal hardship. The nonprofit acknowledged an error.

Fake war-victim appeal · Nov 2025

AFP exposed AI-made war victims in a Sudan donation appeal. Crowdfunder's nonprofit status unverified.

Automate the task. Preserve the person's voice, consent and accountability.

Reported outcomes, not independent audits. Cautionary cases are media findings, not court judgments. Checked 18 Sep 2026.

Source: ICDA (10 Jun 2026) · Anthropic / YMCA (Apr 2026) · The Contrarian (10 Sep 2026) · AFP Fact Check (20 Nov 2025)

Six functional use-case zones.

Where Australian for-purpose organisations are already getting measurable value. Most start with one or two.

FUNDRAISING & PHILANTHROPY

Donor segmentation, personalised appeals, grant application drafting, prospect research.

Type: Generative + Analytical

SERVICE DELIVERY

Client-facing self-service, triage, translation, accessibility, caseworker copilots.

Type: Generative + Assistive

OPERATIONS & FINANCE

Rostering, financial modelling, procurement, invoice processing, expense classification.

Type: Analytical + Assistive

KNOWLEDGE & REPORTING

Summarising research, drafting board papers, extracting insight from unstructured data.

Type: Generative

PROGRAM DESIGN & EVIDENCE

Literature scans, program logic testing, outcome measurement, evaluation write-up.

Type: Generative + Analytical

MARKETING & COMMS

Content generation, campaign optimisation, social listening, creative variants.

Type: Generative + Assistive

Where's your biggest 'pain-to-payback' sitting today?

Which use cases move the needle most?

A rough guide to where for-purpose organisations are seeing the biggest growth-and-impact returns first.

USE CASE ZONE	TIME TO VALUE	IMPACT POTENTIAL	GOVERNANCE LIFT
Knowledge & reporting	Weeks	Medium	Low — review and disclosure suffices
Marketing & comms	Weeks	Medium	Low — brand and IP guardrails
Fundraising & philanthropy	1–3 months	High	Medium — privacy, personalisation ethics
Operations & finance	1–3 months	High	Medium — access, controls, audit trail
Service delivery	3–6 months	Very high	High — client safety, oversight, escalation
Program design & evidence	3–6 months	High	Medium — evidence standards, bias review

Sensible starting portfolio: two low-lift wins to build capability, one high-impact pilot to build evidence.

PART FOUR

Measuring growth and impact.

The two returns that keep boards and funders on your side — and how to track them from day one.

Growth and Impact — not either / or.

For-purpose organisations that only measure one lose the argument. Great ones instrument both from day one.

GROWTH RETURN

How the organisation gets stronger.

- Revenue — new streams, retention, diversification
- Reach — clients served, geographies, segments
- Efficiency — cost per unit, cycle time, staff time reclaimed
- Capability — people trained, tools embedded, pilots run

The board and CFO care about this.

IMPACT RETURN

How the mission goes further.

- Client outcomes — changes in wellbeing, access, ability
- Equity — who benefits, who is still missing
- Quality — satisfaction, safety, trust
- System change — policy, practice, sector shifts

Funders and communities care about this.

The best AI use cases move at least one metric in each column.

Twelve metrics is enough. Fewer is better.

Pick two from each row. Baseline before you start. Report at 90-day, 6-month, 12-month.

REVENUE & DIVERSIFICATION

- New revenue from AI-enabled offer
- Grant $ raised with AI-supported writing
- Donor retention rate change

REACH & SEGMENTS

- Clients served vs baseline
- New segments engaged
- Waitlist time reduction

EFFICIENCY & CAPACITY

- Staff hours reclaimed per month
- Cost per client / per case
- Cycle time on core process

CAPABILITY & GOVERNANCE

- Staff trained in AI (%)
- Pilots completed with kill / scale calls
- AI risk register items closed

CLIENT OUTCOMES

- Change in a target outcome measure
- Client satisfaction & trust
- Equity of access indicator

SYSTEM SIGNAL

- Sector citations / adoption of your model
- Policy engagements
- Partner co-invest attracted

Rule of thumb: 3 growth metrics, 3 impact metrics, 1 governance metric. Report on the same day every quarter.

PART 4 · A 12-MONTH REPORTING RHYTHM

What good looks like across a year.

Same shape whether you're piloting one use case or twenty. Consistency beats sophistication.

BASELINE · MONTH 0

Set the ground truth.

- → Pick 6–12 metrics
- → Capture 3-month backward baseline
- → Agree the target movement
- → Agree what ‘failure’ looks like

Board sees the baseline before any pilot starts.

90 DAYS · FIRST READ

Learning update, not victory lap.

- → Movement vs baseline
- → Kill / scale / continue calls
- → Adoption + capability signals
- → Unexpected wins and misses

Board hears learning velocity, not just results.

6 & 12 MONTHS · IMPACT

Full growth + impact story.

- → Growth and impact metrics
- → Cost per outcome trend
- → System / partner signals
- → Next-year investment case

Funders and board see a repeatable pattern.

Preparation for Week 2 (optional)

A few things to consider before our next session, if helpful.

Preparation for Week 2 (optional)

No homework required. These prompts may help you reflect ahead of our next session.

01

Your innovation priorities

Which innovation outcomes feel most relevant to your organisation over the next 12 months?

02

Your readiness to innovate

Where might your organisation be strongest across the five drivers, and where could it use more support?

03

Where AI could help

Is there a challenge or opportunity where AI might improve services, save time or support growth?

04

What progress could look like

What changes would tell you an idea is making a difference? Think about growth, impact or staff time.

CLOSE · WHAT'S COMING

See you back here on 29 October.

Same time. Same Zoom. Practical, applied, and paced to build on what you just heard.

WEEK 2 · 29 OCT 2026

Designing Intentional AI Experiments

Measure what matters.

- Turning your use case into a testable experiment
- Choosing metrics that convince a board and a funder
- Setting kill / scale / continue thresholds up front
- Governance guardrails that actually accelerate
- Live worked example on a real use case from the room

WEEK 3 · 12 NOV 2026

From AI Scoping to Implementation

Use cases for impact.

- Turning scope into a working use case
- Building for adoption, not launch
- Measuring ROI credibly
- Making it stick beyond the pilot
- Series close: from baseline to pilot to evidence

SHACKLETON LABS

Thank you.

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human to human

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