UK backs digital revolution of public services at international summit

The annual [Digital Nations](#) summit, hosted this year by the UK, saw digital ministers from Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea and Uruguay meet virtually to discuss the opportunities artificial intelligence, big data, digital identity and other cutting-edge tech could offer.

The ten Digital Nations governments work together on issues relating to the digital transformation of government including the technical design of digital government services – such as the range of online services on GOV.UK and the digital identity systems that enable e-passports to function – digital infrastructure, the development and use of data, digital tools and technologies, and the digital skills of civil servants and end-users.

Technology is already helping make improvements in the UK. For example, the NHS Blood and Transplant Service scanned health data to find donors urgently during the pandemic while better data sharing is revolutionising public services, with [open banking](#) models allowing those in financial need to share their income to HM Revenue & Customs to fast-track their applications for new welfare entitlements.

At the event today the Minister for Tech and Digital Economy Chris Philp joined his international counterparts in committing to using digital technology to improve government services and decision making. He pointed to the UK government's recently published National AI Strategy as a good example of commitments to increase the transparency of algorithmic-assisted decisions in the public sector and invest in upskilling the civil service in data sciences.

Ministers agreed to continue to use digital tech to reduce the environmental impacts of government, narrow digital divides, and build trust in digital government services by putting safeguards in place on human rights, data protection, data and AI ethics and transparency.

Minister for Tech and Digital Economy Chris Philp said:

> The last eighteen months have proven that digital transformation is no longer a 'nice-to-have', but an essential tool with the potential to improve lives by building more efficient and innovative public services.
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> The UK is committed to harnessing the latest technology to deliver more on people's priorities and level up the country, so it was a privilege to host this year's Digital Nations summit to share insights with member countries and learn from their experience.

Following the summit, the ten member nations published a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to work together to accelerate digital transformation, continue to use technology to break down barriers between government and people, and embrace innovative digital solutions that deliver real-world impact.

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