

A MANIFESTO FOR OUR TIME

TOA

Istanbul

Where AI Meets Humanity

The Humane Technology Summit

Istanbul, 2026

I. The Moment

We are living through the most consequential transition in the history of civilization.

We are living through the *most consequential transition* in the history of civilisation. And almost no one is asking the *right questions*.

AI is no longer coming. It is here. **It is reshaping how we think, work, love, and govern ourselves.** The machines we built to serve us are now writing our emails, raising our children's curiosity, interviewing for our jobs, and sitting at the table of power.

The race has begun. Not between nations. Not between companies. But between **the speed of technology** and *the wisdom to wield it*.

“This is going to be 10 times bigger than the Industrial Revolution, and maybe 10 times faster. AI will be one of the best tools ever created for improving the quality of life for everyone on the planet.”

— Demis Hassabis — CEO, Google DeepMind — Nobel Laureate in Chemistry

And yet the same week those words were spoken, the man whose foundational work made this all possible — who won the Nobel Prize for the very neural networks now reshaping civilization — issued a warning the world is only beginning to absorb.

“We should recognise that this stuff is an existential threat. We have to face the possibility that unless we do something soon, we are near the end. I think anybody who says there is no way AI will lead to the extinction of humans is simply not facing reality.”

II. The Tension

Two visions of the future are colliding. Both are right. Both are incomplete.

The builders say: we are unlocking abundance beyond imagination. The philosophers say: we are building something with no historical precedent. The investors say: the opportunity is civilisational. The scientists who created it say: the risk may be existential. **They are all correct.**

THE PROMISE

“In a decade, everyone on earth will be capable of accomplishing more than the most impactful person alive today. We can imagine a world where we cure all diseases, have more time for our families, and fully realise our creative potential.”

— Sam Altman — CEO, OpenAI

THE RECKONING

“For the first time in history, humans face real competition on this planet — not from other species, but from their own creation. AI is not a tool. It is an agent. And agents make decisions.”

— Yuval Noah Harari — Historian & Philosopher — Author of Sapiens

The historian who has studied ten thousand years of human civilization looked at what we are building and reached for a word no technology has ever deserved: **agent**. Not an instrument. Not a system. Not a tool. **Agent**. Something that decides.

“Superintelligence must support human agency, not override it. We are not building a replacement for humanity. We are building a mirror. And what that mirror reflects will depend entirely on what we choose to value, protect, and demand.”

— Mustafa Suleyman — CEO, Microsoft AI — Co-Founder, DeepMind — Author of The Coming Wave

Fei-Fei Li, the Stanford scientist who taught machines to see, has spent her career insisting that the most consequential design decisions in AI are never technical. They are human. *“The question is not whether AI will change the world,” she says. “It will. The question is whose values it will carry when it does.”*

This tension — between the promise of abundance and the reality of what we are creating — is the **defining conversation of our era**. *TOA Istanbul is where that conversation happens.*

III. We Believe

Six declarations at the core of the TOA Istanbul movement.

- I** That **technology is not neutral**. Every algorithm is a choice. Every design is a value. The question is never “what can AI do?” — it is always “what will it do, for whom, and at what cost?”
- II** That **the race to AGI must not be a race away from humanity**. The measure of progress is not intelligence. It is flourishing. A superintelligent world that has lost its soul is not progress — it is a catastrophe with a beautiful interface.
- III** That **Istanbul is not a peripheral voice in this conversation — it is the essential one**. A city that has stood at the crossroads of East and West for three millennia understands better than anyone what it means to hold two worlds together. That is exactly what this moment demands.
- IV** That **the builders and the conscience-keepers must be in the same room**. Not to agree. But to confront each other honestly, in public, with the stakes clearly named. The investors, the ethicists, the artists, the lawmakers — together.
- V** That **the next great leap in Humane Technology will not come from Silicon Valley**. It will come from the places where human-centred values are not a rebranding exercise — they are a lived reality. From societies that have survived empire, displacement, and reinvention, and emerged still deeply human.
- VI** That **we have a narrow window, and it is closing**. The choices being made in the next three to five years will shape the relationship between humanity and artificial intelligence for centuries. We cannot afford to have that conversation only in San Francisco.

IV. The Voices

The greatest minds of our era are already asking the question TOA Istanbul is built around.

YUVAL NOAH HARARI *Historian & Philosopher — Author of Sapiens, Homo Deus, Nexus*

“AI has mastered language. And language is the operating system of human civilization. Whoever controls the language controls the institutions, the laws, the politics. We are now conducting the biggest and scariest psychological experiment in history — and we are conducting it on our own children.”

Harari brings ten thousand years of perspective to a five-year crisis. He is the only voice in this conversation who has studied every moment a new technology rewrote what it meant to be human — and can explain precisely why this time is categorically different.

GEOFFREY HINTON *Nobel Laureate in Physics — Godfather of AI — Co-Founder, AI Safety Foundation*

“The industrial revolution replaced muscles. This revolution replaces intelligence — the brain itself. For a lot of people, their dignity is tied up with their job. We have to make sure that when AI is more powerful than us and smarter than us, it still cares about us.”

Hinton invented the neural networks that power every AI system on earth. He then walked away from Google to warn the world. He is not a pessimist. He is the scientist who built the thing — and he is telling us, with full precision, what it can do if we are not careful.

DEMIS HASSABIS *CEO, Google DeepMind — Nobel Laureate in Chemistry*

“I have been obsessed with building AI since I was a child — as the ultimate tool for science and for understanding the universe. If we do it in the right way, it will be the greatest instrument ever created for human flourishing. The question before us is whether we have the wisdom to do it in the right way.”

Hassabis won the Nobel Prize for using AI to solve one of biology's hardest problems. He is proof of what this technology achieves when aimed at human benefit — and proof that the people building it at the highest level are asking the hardest questions.

FEI-FEI LI *Co-Director, Stanford HAI — Founder, World Labs — Godmother of AI*

“I have always believed that AI must be human-centred. Not because it makes better PR, but because the technology itself — built correctly — reflects the richness and diversity of human experience. The question is not whether AI will change the world. It will. The question is whose values it will carry when it does.”

Li pioneered the vision systems that gave AI the ability to see. Now she is asking what AI should look at — and why. Her voice at TOA Istanbul represents the scientists who understand that the most consequential design decisions are not technical. They are human.

MUSTAFA SULEYMAN CEO, Microsoft AI — Co-Founder, DeepMind — Author of *The Coming Wave*

“Superintelligence must support human agency, not override it. We are not building a replacement for humanity. We are building a mirror — and what that mirror shows us will depend entirely on what we choose to value, protect and demand.”

Suleyman co-built one of the world's great AI labs and then wrote the clearest warning about what it might unleash. He is the rare figure who has operated at the frontier of AI development and emerged with a clear moral framework for what must come next.

TRISTAN HARRIS Co-Founder, Center for Humane Technology — Creator, *The Social Dilemma*

“With social media, we ignored the probable and chased the possible — and the world paid the price. We are making the exact same mistake with AI, at ten times the speed and a hundred times the scale. 2026 is the year we either choose differently, or we lose the ability to choose at all.”

Harris is the conscience of the technology industry. He saw what social media would do before it did it, built the global movement to confront it, and is now running toward the AI moment with the same clarity and the same urgency. At TOA Istanbul, he is not a critic. He is the architect of the alternative.

V. The Crossroads

Istanbul has always been the crossroads.

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Three thousand years of standing where civilisations meet, clash, and remake each other. Where Europe looks East and East looks West. Where the ancient and the modern have always negotiated their future on the same stone streets.

This is not a coincidence. ***This is destiny.***

The cities that host the conversations that shape the future are not chosen by geography alone. They are chosen because their history has prepared them to hold the weight of the question. To be the room where the tension does not collapse into easy answers, but is held, examined, turned over — and transformed into something new.

Istanbul is that room. For AI and humanity, for East and West, for builders and conscience, for acceleration and wisdom — ***this is where it all comes together.***

VI. The Call

This is not an event. This is a movement.

This is not an event. This is a *movement*.

TOA Istanbul is where the builders and the thinkers, the investors and the philosophers, the optimists and the conscience-keepers come to do the hardest thing in technology: **tell each other the truth.**

We will not solve AI here. But we will ask the questions that make a solution possible. We will create the common knowledge that transforms panic into purpose, and debate into design.

The narrow path is real. The window is open. *The world is watching.*

“In a world deluged by irrelevant information, clarity is power. The most important questions are not technical. They are human: Who are we? What do we value? What kind of world do we want our children to inherit? These questions cannot be answered by engineers alone. They must be answered by all of us.”

— Yuval Noah Harari — Historian, Author of Sapiens

We are building more than a summit. We are building the **global home of Humane Technology**. The place where the most important conversation of our time is not shouted across a divide — but held, with rigour and humanity, at the crossroads of the world.

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