

AI Catalyst: New platform provides SMEs with knowledge platform

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Businesses are increasingly looking to AI to improve productivity, reach new customers and compete in international markets, but many still face a basic question: where should they start?

The [AI Catalyst for SMEs](#) research project, operating across Austria and the Czech Republic, is designed to support small and medium-sized companies in strategically adopting AI to increase value for companies and stakeholders. The EU-co-funded initiative, of which the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) is a partner, connects research with business practice through [an online knowledge platform](#) with particular attention to marketing, sales and export.

At the centre of the platform is the AI Readiness Radar, a self-assessment designed to help SMEs to evaluate their preparedness for AI across managerial, technological and ethical dimensions. The 28-question tool examines areas including strategy, employee skills, digital infrastructure, data quality, governance, regulatory compliance and responsible AI use, providing SMEs with an overview of their strengths, development needs and recommended next steps.

AI Applications, Case Studies and Change Process complement the readiness perspective. Rather than presenting AI as a one-size-fits-all solution, AI Catalyst encourages SMEs to start with a specific business problem, assess their readiness and test small pilot projects, while keeping human oversight at the centre of decision-making. The AI Applications section showcases practical areas where AI can support businesses, ranging from content creation and customer analysis to sales forecasting and market research. SMEs can also access a framework that provides guiding questions for companies selecting and monitoring AI tools, in order to consider general aspects of transparency, data and privacy, fairness and bias, environmental impact, and compliance with regulation. The Change Process section provides a guide to managing change when implementing AI within companies. The Case Studies section provides interviews with companies in Austria and the Czech Republic that explore practical application of AI in SMEs.

The platform positions the AI Catalyst project as a resource for SMEs to adopt AI in a responsible manner and with a clear understanding of the risks involved.

<https://www.ihs.ac.at/de/news-und-events/news/detail/ai-catalyst-neue-plattform-unterstuetzt-kmu-be-im-einsatz-von-ki>