Empowering Business Leaders with AI and Cybersecurity Education

Angel Jimenez-Aranda, Tarek Gaber, Yun Chen, Mirage Islam

University of Salford, United Kingdom

Abstract

The rapid adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and challenges for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly in the field of cybersecurity. The AI-Cybersecurity Nexus project addresses this critical intersection, providing SMEs in Greater Manchester with the knowledge and tools to enhance the security of AI systems and leverage AI to strengthen their cybersecurity practices. Business education is at the heart of this initiative, equipping SMEs with essential skills to integrate cybersecurity measures effectively. Through a suite of free educational resources (including workshops, podcasts, online training, and consultancy), the project enhances business leaders' understanding of AI risks and opportunities. By fostering cybersecurity literacy, the initiative ensures SMEs can make informed strategic decisions that drive growth and resilience. AI-Cybersecurity Nexus initiative aims to foster innovation, business resilience, and sustainable growth in the region. A key focus of the project is inclusivity, aligning with the UK government's agenda to enhance diversity in STEM fields. By highlighting role models and encouraging women's participation in cybersecurity, the project contributes to a more diverse and robust cybersecurity workforce. This presentation will outline the project's framework, discuss its impact on SMEs, and explore the long-term benefits of accessible cybersecurity education for business sustainability and digital resilience.

Keywords: skills, business education, technology, artificial intelligence, innovation