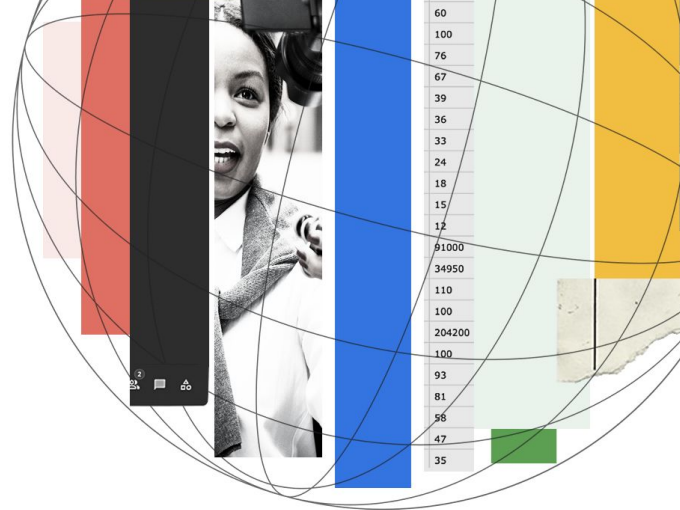
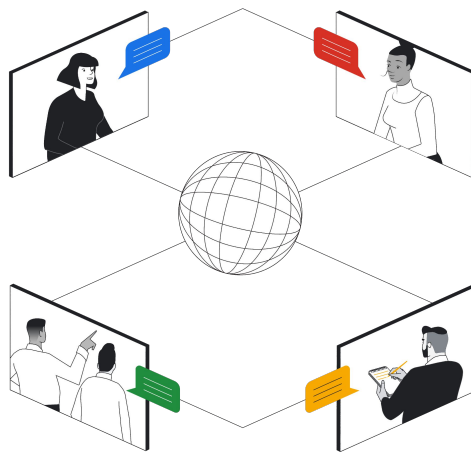


AI Academy

2026





AI Academy 2026

A **sector-defining** programme supporting leading publishers from across EMEA to define their **long-term AI strategy**, map the **road to transformation**, and **embrace a viable, AI-powered future**

Programme Objectives

The AI Academy is a six-month strategic and hands-on programme designed to help leading publishers across EMEA **move beyond AI experimentation** and build a roadmap for sustainable transformation.



A comprehensive **AI-readiness audit** benchmarking current capabilities and identifying key gaps



A strategic roadmap outlining a **long term path** to scale and adopt AI across the business



Launching a **capstone project** that tests or scales elements of the long term AI Roadmap



A tailored **governance** and **change management** framework to ensure responsible and effective AI adoption



Ecosystem **visibility** and **peer learning opportunities**, including participation in regional symposiums, alumni mixers

AI Academy is split in three phases, starting in January 2026

Phase 1

DISCOVERY

8 Weeks

The Discovery phase is an eight-week diagnostic that assesses each publisher's AI readiness through surveys, interviews and data analysis, producing a map of capabilities and tailored recommendations to close gaps across content, technical and commercial dimensions.

Phase 2

PLANNING

4 Weeks

The Planning phase is a four-week process that translates the assessment findings into a prioritised AI roadmap, aligning initiatives by impact, investment and feasibility, while reviewing governance, change management and selecting the focus for the capstone project.

Phase 3

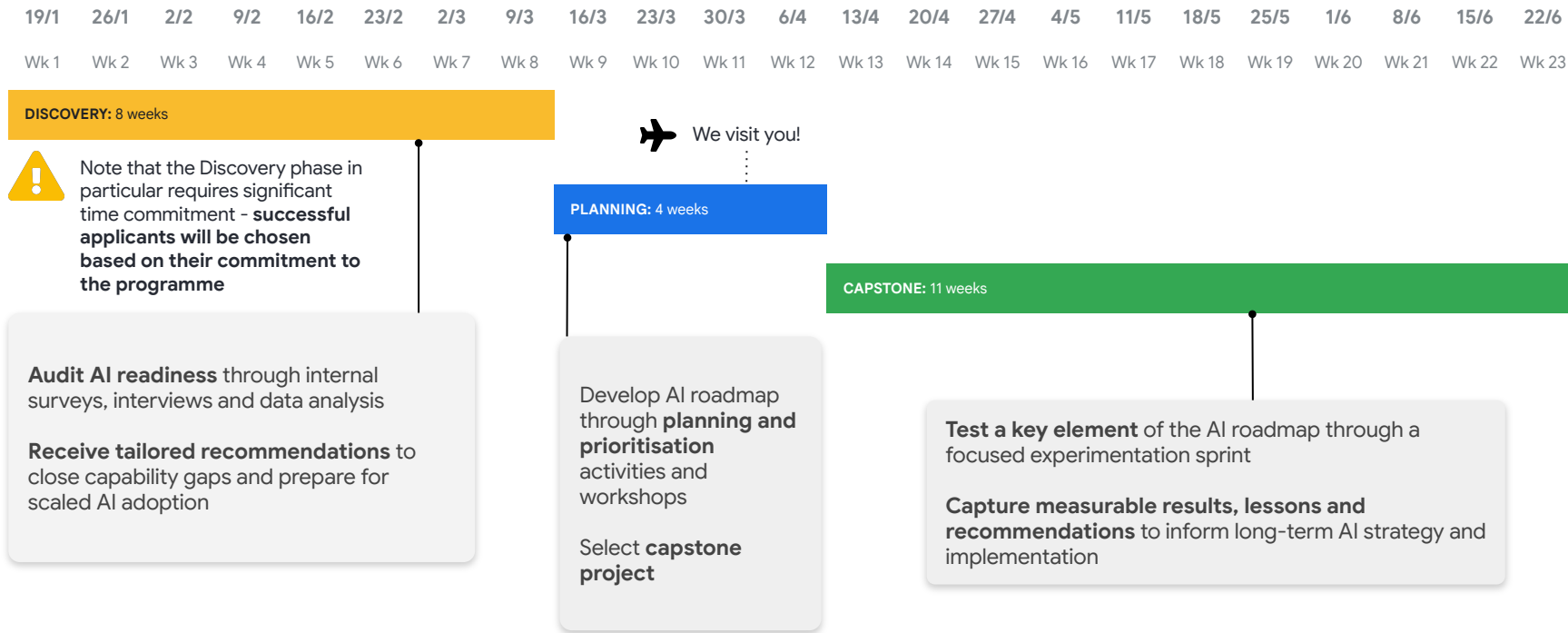
CAPSTONE

11 Weeks

The Capstone phase is an eleven-week experimentation sprint where publishers test an element of their AI roadmap, choosing one of three routes:

1. **Scaling** existing initiatives
2. **Redesigning** an operational process
3. **Testing** elements of an AI first business model

Over 23 weeks, we'll help you develop a practical, AI adoption plan that moves beyond isolated use cases



Eligibility criteria



Based in **EMEA** with an established digital product (>500k unique monthly visitors)



Have **moved beyond initial AI experimentation** (i.e. 2-3 existing AI experiments run)



Access to **staff, data and technology** to run AI experiments



Senior leadership buy-in to support the programme, particularly during the planning and strategy modules

Time commitments



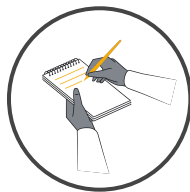
Executive sponsor support

Nominating a board-level sponsor to attend key summary sessions. The sponsor should be able to drive strategic change on completion of the programme



Cross-functional core team

Assigning 3-5 individuals to the core team, drawn from a wide range of departments, including editorial, commercial, and tech as a minimum



Weekly commitment for core team

Each week requires approximately 3 hours of dedicated time for the core team including weekly consulting sessions, cohort sessions with expert speakers and projects such as running hands-on experiments

The AI Academy programme is a collaboration between the Google News Initiative and FT Strategies

Google News Initiative

The **Google News Initiative** represents Google's largest-ever effort to help journalism thrive in the digital age. In collaboration with editors and journalists worldwide, the Google News Initiative (GNI) strives to foster a more sustainable, diverse, and innovative news landscape.

Through a comprehensive suite of programs, digital tools, training, and resources, the GNI empowers journalistic endeavors, enabling journalists to effectively discover, verify, and narrate compelling stories while upholding the highest standards of quality journalism.

FT STRATEGIES

FT Strategies is the specialist media and publishing consultancy from the Financial Times. FT Strategies' deep expertise enables its clients to future-proof their business, empower their teams, and fulfil their goals with our proven data, digital and change consulting expertise.

To apply for the programme, please fill in the
[application form](#)

Thank you