# Demis Hassabis predicts artificial general intelligence within a decade amid calls for ethical AI development



Demis Hassabis, the CEO and co-founder of Google DeepMind, recently articulated a bold vision for the future of artificial intelligence (AI), predicting that the elusive goal of artificial general intelligence (AGI) could be reached within the next decade. Speaking at the Google I/O developer conference, Hassabis emphasised the transformative potential of such advancements, foreseeing significant changes in the job market. While he acknowledged the inevitable disruption that some existing jobs will face, he was optimistic about the emergence of new roles that would not only be valuable but also intellectually stimulating. “Whatever happens with these AI tools, you’ll be better off understanding how they work and what you can do with them,” he advised students, urging them to embrace the changes ahead.

This call to action resonates strongly in a time when generative AI technologies are evolving at breakneck speed, a trend ignited by the launch of OpenAI's ChatGPT in 2022. Hassabis encourages students, particularly those at the university level, to cultivate an adaptability in their learning, shaping them into versatile learners who can thrive in an ever-changing landscape. He suggested that individuals blend their personal passions with core skills, tapping into opportunities in emerging fields such as virtual and augmented reality, as well as quantum computing. This advice is vital, particularly for graduates entering a labour market characterised by rapid technological innovation and disruption.

Reflecting on this technological momentum, Hassabis conveyed his belief that public perceptions of AI's potential oscillate between excessive caution and unwarranted hype. In an interview at the University of Cambridge, he noted that while advancements in AI could revolutionise scientific discovery, there remain substantial ethical and regulatory challenges. He highlighted the need for global cooperation in establishing ethical guidelines to mitigate the risks associated with AI misuse and to ensure that these technologies benefit humanity as a whole. This echoes sentiments shared by his colleagues, who underscore the importance of addressing the potential dangers of AGI and the need for responsible development practices.

In the broader context of AI's capabilities, Hassabis's work has yielded significant milestones, such as the success of AlphaFold, a tool that predicts protein structures and stands poised to revolutionise various fields of medicine. His efforts reflect a dedication to harnessing AI's potential in solving real-world challenges, a perspective that came into sharper focus with his recent recognition as a Nobel laureate in Chemistry. This accolade underscores the transformative role AI can play in scientific advancement, while also reminding us of the complexities involved in managing its impact on society and the environment.

Parallel to these developments, Hassabis's initiative, Isomorphic Labs, aims to accelerate the drug discovery process significantly. By leveraging AI to streamline research, the lab seeks to address pressing health issues, including oncology and neurodegeneration. It has garnered partnerships with major pharmaceutical companies, illustrating the practical applications of AI-driven innovation in combating global health challenges. As the landscape of healthcare continues to evolve, the merging of AI with traditional medical practices represents a promising frontier that could reshape treatment paradigms.

As the race towards AGI intensifies, figures like Hassabis and his fellow DeepMind co-founder Shane Legg are at the forefront of discussions about AI's potential and associated risks. Their advocacy for an ethical approach towards AI development is crucial, particularly as public scepticism about the technology continues. While the future remains uncertain, Hassabis’s insights convey a message of cautious optimism, emphasising that amidst disruption lies the potential for profound opportunities. Grounded in his deep understanding of both technology and neuroscience, he posits that the true value of AI will be realised through cooperation, knowledge sharing, and a shared commitment to ethical standards.

In this rapidly evolving dual landscape of threat and opportunity, the call for responsible AI advancement becomes ever more pressing. As students, innovators, and policymakers alike grapple with these issues, Hassabis’s vision provides a beacon, one that encourages a proactive approach towards the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead in the age of AI.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMigAJBVV95cUxNWVV0RWw0U280TXZfRnlRZXpIVjNMT3NaR0RQNHZMaHRQazNHNGNBOC1mY0lZekJFZV8zTzJZcXdicXBKWVJiN0RuTWpyTkVIUFN0dF9BLW9oWGFvNXFwclZhTHIzT29wUTRleHRJa2hMQ1JWMjFFeHhDVnBiXzhVeWJCVUdoQXMyQ3c2eGN2TVdzRzljNktzT1lWNUE4bEhrWks5azJfNjV5UFZ1N0N4V3FwaHlzekQ4YmhGV3ZNdEZGUEh6V2xnVDdReS1ZSVFxMmQ5WGhWN0VzMzBiVFozYjZLd2szZmZ2QzVPLTlKRndaWUp6c3ROdERGUExwbEY10gGGAkFVX3lxTFBkbGE4T012ME5HRTdYWlFzZ3Q1MTZNcVhKaVNMMGRfb1l5d1ROX3g2OHBmeVhqRzBhQTQ3dzZ0bGpqaV9HS0gwOVVOMnQ5ZVZSTERoNU02aHpHZk1yMHNldFRMdTdMZFFqM0JBWkZpR1YteGVZSHZPR1pFNHYwWDVYVHNOQW9OSklYSlhXQ2I2ZHRHY1NXTGVxUzBneDA0Y0hCZDFWazY1T1VsTXVlbkplcWZjWDlXYldWQ2FLMDU3NVR6TUZwcm9ab1B5ckJ4X0hrX2tEbTB2YzcyYWJaWE51SDhCN2NFbjZrMGptbTZjUjhyLWJiNkplT2VmR1B0YVBoVUtLMEE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en)
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* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://time.com/6246119/demis-hassabis-deepmind-interview/), [[4]](https://elpais.com/tecnologia/2024-11-20/demis-hassabis-premio-nobel-de-quimica-necesitaremos-un-punado-de-grandes-avances-antes-de-llegar-a-una-ia-general.html)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[6]](https://qa.time.com/6310659/shane-legg/)

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2. <https://time.com/6246119/demis-hassabis-deepmind-interview/> - In this interview, Demis Hassabis, CEO of DeepMind, discusses the rapid development of AI technologies, highlighting both their transformative potential and inherent risks. He emphasizes the need for responsible advancement and regulatory measures to ensure AI benefits humanity, acknowledging potential dangers such as misuse for malicious purposes and ethical dilemmas. Despite competitive pressures among AI labs, Hassabis advocates for global cooperation and ethical standards to mitigate risks and maximize benefits, proposing concepts like universal basic income to distribute AGI's wealth fairly.
3. <https://www.axios.com/newsletters/axios-am-aa27f8d0-8f1b-11ef-87fc-5d3d6a7c5945> - Demis Hassabis, co-founder and CEO of Google DeepMind, reflects on the long journey of AI development and its future potential. Despite early skepticism, AI's impact on scientific discovery is now being recognized globally. Hassabis emphasizes that AI's long-term potential remains underrated, although it's overhyped in the short term because of phenomena like OpenAI's ChatGPT. Hassabis' insights come as Google and Microsoft's AI initiatives gain momentum under DeepMind co-founders’ leadership. The article also covers Israel's conditions for a Lebanon peace solution, Trump and Harris on the campaign trail, and GOP's unsuccessful attempts to change election rules. Additional topics include pro-crypto campaigning, Mitch McConnell's emotional milestone, and Costco Connection's significant magazine circulation.
4. <https://elpais.com/tecnologia/2024-11-20/demis-hassabis-premio-nobel-de-quimica-necesitaremos-un-punado-de-grandes-avances-antes-de-llegar-a-una-ia-general.html> - Demis Hassabis, founder of Google DeepMind and winner of the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, has highlighted the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) in solving real scientific problems. Despite recent advancements, Hassabis underscores that more significant developments are needed before achieving artificial general intelligence that matches or surpasses human capabilities. Hassabis and his team have achieved major milestones, such as developing AlphaFold, an AI tool that predicts protein structures and could revolutionize medicine. However, he expresses caution about the necessary conditions for AGI to become a reality. Additionally, while optimistic about AI's potential to address issues like climate change through the design of efficient materials and systems, he acknowledges the need for further advancements to mitigate its environmental impact.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/41b51d07-0754-4ffd-a8f9-737e1b1f0c2e> - Isomorphic Labs, a drug discovery start-up owned by Google’s parent company Alphabet, plans to have its first AI-designed drug in trials by the end of this year, according to founder Sir Demis Hassabis. The start-up is focusing on major disease areas such as oncology, cardiovascular conditions, and neurodegeneration. The company aims to significantly accelerate the drug discovery process, which traditionally takes five to ten years. Isomorphic Labs, spun out of Google DeepMind in 2021, has attracted major pharmaceutical partners like Eli Lilly and Novartis to enhance the efficiency and reduce costs of drug development. Hassabis, who also leads Google DeepMind and was awarded the Nobel Prize for chemistry, hinted at the launch of Project Astra, an AI assistant prototype, later this year. He envisions a future where AI agents handle interactions on behalf of vendors and customers, prompting a rethinking of the web structure. Hassabis also emphasized the need for caution and coordination among AI developers to prevent potential threats to human civilization posed by advanced AI technologies. DeepMind's ambitious goal is to develop artificial general intelligence (AGI), despite estimated timelines suggesting that true AGI might be five to ten years away.
6. <https://qa.time.com/6310659/shane-legg/> - Shane Legg, co-founder of DeepMind, has long been concerned with the risks and potential of artificial general intelligence (AGI). He has been predicting the arrival of human-level machine intelligence since 2011, once estimating a 50% chance of its development by 2028. Though initially dismissed by many AI researchers, this viewpoint has gained traction with key figures like Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio now sharing similar concerns. Legg, together with Demis Hassabis and Mustafa Suleyman, founded DeepMind to develop AGI and solve humanity's problems. DeepMind, now part of Google DeepMind, continues to focus on AI safety, with Legg leading efforts to ensure that AI systems behave as intended. He believes solving AI alignment issues may be more feasible than previously thought. Legg has also fostered a community within DeepMind passionate about AGI. Despite public skepticism about AI's impact, Legg remains optimistic that ethical and capable AI could significantly improve the world.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demis_Hassabis> - Demis Hassabis is a British artificial intelligence (AI) researcher and entrepreneur, known for co-founding and leading Google DeepMind. Born in London in 1976, Hassabis was a child chess prodigy and began his career in video game development, co-designing the hit game Theme Park at age 17. He later earned a double first in computer science from Cambridge and completed a Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience at University College London. In 2010, Hassabis co-founded DeepMind, which was acquired by Google in 2014. Under his leadership, DeepMind achieved major AI milestones, including AlphaGo, the first program to defeat a world champion in the game of Go, and AlphaFold, which accurately predicts protein structures. In 2024, Hassabis and colleague John Jumper were awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for their work on AlphaFold, highlighting AI’s transformative role in scientific discovery. Beyond DeepMind, Hassabis founded Isomorphic Labs, focusing on AI-driven drug discovery. He is also a member of the Royal Society and serves as an AI adviser to the UK government. His interdisciplinary approach continues to shape the future of AI and its applications across various fields.