CIVIC knows

Artificial Intelligence

AI Discovery Service

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Overview

We help organisations move from curiosity about Generative AI to clear, confident decisions.

CIVIC's AI Discovery Service is a focused engagement designed to identify where different forms of Artificial Intelligence — including Generative AI (GenAI), Large Language Models (LLMs), predictive and statistical models, optimisation and decision engines, and automation — can genuinely improve services, operations, and outcomes, and where they can't. We collaborate with you to navigate the hype, assess risks and craft practical ethical opportunities ready for implementation.

Whether you are exploring AI for the first time or already have ideas on the table, our discovery work gives you a grounded view of value, feasibility, and next steps for cloud-based digital services.

Why AI Discovery

There is growing momentum around the use of Artificial Intelligence in all its forms — from rules-based automation and predictive models, through to machine learning, optimisation, and Generative AI. Many organisations are already seeing tangible benefits across areas such as:

- Improving customer interactions and service responsiveness
- Analysing and extracting insight from large volumes of structured and unstructured data
- Forecasting demand, risk, and operational pressures
- Supporting staff with intelligent decision tools and co-pilots
- Automating repeatable tasks to free people to focus on higher-value work

Our role is to help you understand the most appropriate approaches for your context and how to apply them responsibly. This way you can invest confidently and build solutions that deliver lasting value.

What the Service Does

Our AI Discovery Service helps you:

- **Identify the most valuable opportunities** where AI could improve services or outcomes, focusing on real user needs, service pressures, and organisational priorities rather than technology trends.
- **Sense-check, validate, or challenge ideas and use cases**, helping you distinguish between what sounds promising and what is genuinely feasible, proportionate, and worthwhile.
- **Understand the practical implications** for your data, technology, people, and operating model — including changes to workflows, skills, governance, and accountability.
- **Assess risks and constraints early**, such as data quality, security, bias, regulatory requirements, and operational impact.
- **Make clear, informed decisions** about whether to proceed, how to do it well, and what to do next, supported by evidence rather than assumption.

The outcome is not experimentation for its own sake, but clarity: a shared, evidence-based understanding of what is worth pursuing, what is not, and why — giving you a confident foundation for delivery, investment, or conscious non-action.

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Key Features

- **Practical experience applying AI in real-world services,** including GenAI, LLMs, predictive models, and automation, with a focus on outcomes rather than experimentation.
- **Clear identification of the most valuable problems to solve**, grounded in user needs, service performance, and organisational priorities.
- **Review of your existing technology and cloud estate** (AWS, Azure, GCP), assessing how well current platforms support AI-enabled services.
- **Assessment of data readiness**, including availability, quality, pipelines, ownership, and dependencies that may enable or constrain use cases.
- **Consideration of security, privacy, and governance from day one**, ensuring alignment with regulatory, assurance, and organisational requirements.
- **Understanding user needs and ways of working**, particularly for people who will rely on AI-enabled tools in day-to-day operations.
- **Experience with integration, validation, and deployment patterns**, helping ensure AI components fit safely and reliably into live services.
- **Emphasis on knowledge transfer and capability building**, so teams are confident to own, operate, and evolve solutions over time.

Benefits

Working with CIVIC on AI Discovery gives you:

- A realistic, balanced view of AI — including what different approaches (from automation to GenAI) can and cannot do in your specific context, helping you avoid both over-reach and missed opportunity.
- Reduced delivery risk through early identification of constraints such as data quality, technical complexity, skills gaps, regulatory requirements, and operational impact.
- Clear, credible options for next steps, backed by evidence, trade-offs, and reasoning, rather than assumptions or vendor promises.
- Stronger alignment between business goals, user needs, and technical choices, ensuring that any proposed solution supports real services and outcomes.
- Confidence that security, ethics, and governance have been properly considered, so decisions stand up to internal scrutiny, audit, and public-sector accountability.

Our Approach

We use a short, structured discovery grounded in established consulting practice, combining strategic analysis, service design, and technical assessment. The approach is collaborative and proportionate, designed to create shared understanding quickly while producing clear, decision-ready outputs.

1. Understand the Goals

We start with outcomes, not technology.

This phase focuses on establishing a clear strategic and service context for any potential AI use. We work with senior stakeholders and delivery teams to understand what success looks like and why AI

is being considered.

- Clarify product vision, business drivers, success measures, and constraints
- Understand any existing AI, data, or digital strategy and how this work aligns
- Explore known, proposed, or emerging use cases and the problems they aim to address
- Identify key people, teams, decision-makers, and governance structures
- Map current services, processes, pain points, and opportunities for improvement

The output of this stage is a shared, outcome-focused view of priorities, assumptions, and decision criteria.

2. Evaluate the Current Landscape

We assess what is already in place and what that means in practice.

This phase brings together technical, data, and operational perspectives to understand feasibility and risk. The aim is not to design a solution, but to surface enablers, constraints, and dependencies early.

- Review existing or emerging AI, data, and cloud architecture
- Identify technical, data, operational, and organisational constraints
- Understand data sources, quality, ownership, access, and integration patterns
- Assess security, privacy, regulatory, and assurance considerations
- Consider impacts on operating models, skills, and ways of working

This stage provides a realistic picture of what is possible within the current environment, and what would need to change.

3. Findings and Recommendations

We close the loop with clear, usable, consulting-grade outputs.

This phase focuses on synthesis and decision-making. We bring together insights from across discovery to support informed choices, rather than defaulting to delivery.

- Playback of findings, assumptions tested, and validated or rejected hypotheses
- Clear articulation of opportunities, risks, trade-offs, and dependencies
- Prioritised recommendations, often expressed as an initial backlog or set of options
- Clear next-step pathways, including delivery, pilots, further discovery, or conscious non-action

The result is a defensible, evidence-based foundation for investment, delivery, or strategic decision-making.

Team

AI Discovery works best with a small, senior team that combines business insight with technical depth. Depending on the scope, this typically includes:

- A product or business specialist
- A GenAI or machine-learning engineer
- A security or risk specialist (where appropriate)

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The exact team structure is tailored to your context and regulatory environment.

Experience

We have applied AI in a range of practical contexts, including:

- **Conversational services and chatbots**, supporting high-volume interactions, triage, and self-service while integrating safely with existing systems and processes.
- **AI assessment and evaluation tools**, helping organisations understand suitability, risk, performance, and governance considerations before moving into delivery.
- **Customer services**, where generative and predictive models support improved onboarding, routing, and response quality.
- **Document analysis**, using LLMs and supporting models to extract insight from large collections of unstructured text, including ESG-related material.

In each case, the focus has been on accuracy, transparency, and integration into real services — not experimentation for its own sake.

Public Sector Context

We bring deep experience working within complex public-sector environments, supporting organisations to deliver change that is both effective and responsible. Our teams regularly deliver digital and cloud services in line with GDS Service Standards, security accreditation processes, and data-protection requirements.

We design AI-enabled services that fit naturally within multi-supplier programmes, reinforce clear accountability, and enable confident decision-making — helping organisations put robust, transparent solutions into operation with confidence.

Security, Ethics, and Assurance

Security and responsible use of AI are built into our discovery work from the outset, shaping not just the technical design but how AI behaves in practice. We pay close attention to how AI presents itself to users — including conversational tone, clarity, and trust — and how clear guardrails are put in place around its use.

This includes:

- Data protection and information security by design
- Model risk, bias, and explainability, including how decisions and outputs are communicated
- Definition of appropriate AI behaviours, prompts, and responses — particularly for chatbots and conversational tools
- Clear guardrails covering escalation, human oversight, and acceptable use
- Consideration of operational, service, and reputational impact
- Alignment with organisational governance, assurance, and accountability processes

This approach helps ensure that any move into delivery is confident, responsible, and ready to operate safely in real-world services.

Building Capability

Building capability is a core part of our work, not a by-product of delivery.

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We work collaboratively with your teams throughout discovery, sharing knowledge, testing assumptions together, and making our thinking visible. This helps build confidence not just in the outcomes, but in the decisions that lead to them.

Our focus is on enabling people to understand AI as part of a wider service and organisational context — including how it affects users, processes, governance, and day-to-day operations. We take time to explore why particular options are recommended, what trade-offs are involved, and how risks are managed.

The aim is not dependency on CIVIC, but capability within your organisation. By the end of discovery, teams are better equipped to make informed decisions, engage constructively with suppliers, and evolve AI-enabled services responsibly over time.

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