



TECH & AI PODCAST / PROGRAMME

Commissioning Brief Number	47221
Commissioner	Dan Clarke, Commissioning Editor, Factual Storytelling
For enquiries please contact	Lea Lauvray, Business Coordinator, lea.lauvray@bbc.co.uk
Guide price	£7k per ep (including presenter fees)
Anticipated duration/ number of episodes	50 eps at 28'
Anticipated transmission period	April 2027-March 2028
Production location	Proposals which support the BBC's strategic rebalancing of production away from London, either from the outset or with a credible transition plan in the first year of the contract, are encouraged.
Deadline	Short proposals and completed production eligibility questionnaires must be submitted via PiCoS by midday on Tues 10 Nov 12 noon

Creative opportunity

This is an invitation to pitch for an always-on podcast and Radio 4 strand about Technology and AI.

We're not looking for a straight industry podcast. What we're looking to commission is a podcast about how we live, love, work, think, parent and play in a world that is conditioned, underpinned, saturated and increasingly determined by innovations in tech and AI.

Whose use – in every conceivable part of our lives, from the endless arguments about screen time with our kids, to the workings of democracy and even the future of the human race – is contested, difficult to understand where to stand on, and urgently in need of sane, open-minded navigation and interpretation.

We will need this show to keep the audience across developments in tech and AI and to explore the ethical challenges and big-picture dilemmas that these new technologies present us with, placing them into a wider societal context. We also want it to offer takeaways on how to manage it all.

We don't want a podcast that simply denigrates (or celebrates) tech and AI. This technology is giving us the most astonishingly powerful tools. Tools that will be able to help us realise our potential in ways that are scarcely imaginable. And yet they are also a threat to almost every single way we currently live, and controlled by forces that are opaque, powerful, and a long way from here. We want this podcast to be the place that dives into every side of this, with vigour, clarity and grip – with seriousness, yes, but with humour too – to provide listeners with useful takeaways, and agency, in a world where so many of us feel powerless in the face of change.

We think human experience is central to communicating the impact of tech and AI on the lives of our audience – and to help listeners to invest in this subject. Compelling storytelling will be central to a successful idea.

Your pitch will need:

To be hosted by a brilliant presenter, or presenters – who will bring intelligence, personality, insight and powerful storytelling. Who will be fully committed to the project, both in the studio and beyond. Who can become bigger than the format and own this subject for both the Radio 4 audience and for a broader podcast audience.

To have a compelling, distinctive format that has the potential to grow a community, as part of the Radio 4 schedule and across all key podcast platforms. We're really interested in how this show could innovate in terms of format and treatment and are open minded about approaches that are like nothing else out there. If your treatment suits visualisation, then that's great – but don't be restricted by it having to do so.

To tackle the big ethical and existential questions about what it is to be alive in this turbulent, tech-driven age, alongside the more functional questions that we all need to know the answers to – e.g. how we can use tech and AI to help us, and what we need to guard against.

To help the audience navigate and understand the things they need to know about the business and culture of Silicon Valley.

To be driven by provocative, immediately thought-provoking framings, that get listeners into the bigger issues in ways that make you want to listen. E.g. Should we be telling our children to abandon school and become plumbers? If you have an AI 'girlfriend', are you cheating on your wife? Should tech companies be held responsible for the actions their products provoke?

To be flexible enough to weave powerful, first-person storytelling into the mix when that's the best way to engage an audience on a subject.

To be the place to go for the most interesting thinkers and thinking about tech and AI, both past and present. And to stage debates between people who perhaps fundamentally disagree. It is, after all, one of the most contested subjects of our times.

Distribution

The granting of RSS rights is a condition of commission.

Key deliverables

Social media assets and visualisation are likely to be part of the offer. We will develop these alongside the successful production company.

Important Information:

- In order to pitch, your company must be an approved supplier and be registered on PiCoS. You can find more information on how to do this on the [BBC Radio Commissioning website](#)
- This title will be commissioned under the **Audio Terms of Trade**, unless otherwise specified
- **Music Policy** [Using Music in BBC audio programmes](#)
- Your proposal should consider how the editorial and production methods contribute towards the BBC's [Sustainability strategy](#) and the BBC's [Diversity & Inclusion strategy](#).

- The [BBC Editorial Guidelines](#) set the editorial values and standards of the organisation. The guidelines apply to all BBC content wherever in the world it is broadcast or published.
- The BBC has issued [Information and Guiding Principles](#) to ensure the responsible use of Generative AI technology in BBC programmes. Note that if you intend to use Generative AI in the production and delivery of your programme, this will need to be discussed with the commissioner, who will consult Editorial Policy as appropriate.
- The BBC reserves the right, at any time prior to the award of a commission and without incurring any liability to affected producers to accept or reject any proposal or to cancel the commissioning process.
- **Partnerships:** if you plan to submit as part of a partnership, please include the following detail in the Production Eligibility section on PiCoS:
 - Responsibilities each partner will take
 - Personnel who will be responsible for the production and delivery of the programme
 - Lead company with whom the BBC will contract

TIMELINE

Tues 10 Nov 12 noon	Submit Production Experience (up to 1000 words) and Short Proposal (a brief outline of your idea - up to 500 words - showing how it meets the editorial brief) All submissions will be reviewed and the strongest proposals shortlisted. Producers will be notified whether or not they have been shortlisted. No feedback is provided at this stage.
Wc 16 Nov	Shortlisted producers are invited to pitch. They may be asked to prepare additional material (e.g. a powerpoint presentation).
04-17 Dec	Pitch meetings with the commissioning editor
Tues 12 Jan 12 noon	Producers submit a Full Proposal (up to 1200 words). You may also be requested to provide further information (e.g. a sample running order; a proposed budget)
Late January	Results

Production Eligibility

In the Production Experience section of the create proposal page in PiCoS, please outline your relevant production experience, using recent examples, in the following areas (maximum 1,000 words):

Relevant experience in making factual podcasts that deal with challenging editorial subjects. Proven track record of delivering impartial journalism. Expertise in subject matter. We expect the Producers and Execs who would work on the project to be named.

Relevant experience of producing successful factual podcasts – and ideally, experience of making always-on or weekly strands. Producers and Execs who have not worked with Radio 4/BBC Sounds before should list their relevant experience in detail.

An understanding of – and track record with - the audience that we are aiming to appeal to with this show.