

14 January 2026

Framework Agreement between Microsoft Australia and the Australian Council of Trade Unions

Preamble

Microsoft Australia and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) agree to develop a framework to elevate the voices and expertise of working people in the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies into Australian workplaces. This agreement reflects our shared commitment to harnessing technology for the benefit of all, empowering workers, and supporting Australia's economic and social prosperity.

Microsoft believes in advancing AI by putting people first and helping people thrive. Microsoft is committed to helping people shape the future of work, not just react to it. To do this, it recognises the importance of workers' voices and knowledge in the successful implementation of technology. Microsoft has a longstanding commitment to responsible AI principles and processes, as led by our Office of Responsible AI.

This builds upon an historic agreement between Microsoft and the ACTU, Australian Services Union (ASU), the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA), and Professionals Australia that recognises the need for workers to have a strong collective voice amid the AI transition.

At the heart of this is the rights of workers to organise through their unions. This Framework Agreement builds upon the Memorandum of Understanding already agreed between unions and Microsoft concerning labour rights, which provides an explicit recognition of the rights and protections of workplace union delegates to fulfil their vital representative functions.

Microsoft's commitments to ensuring mechanisms to elevate worker voice, respond to worker concerns, and maintain open lines of communication with unions demonstrates the consultative and collaborative approach to the AI transition that can help Australia get the most out of this technology while maintaining the fair go.

Purpose

This agreement establishes a framework for open dialogue and collaboration between Microsoft Australia and the ACTU. Our agreement is grounded in three core objectives:

1. Information Sharing:

We will provide union leaders and workers with information and learning

opportunities on AI technology trends, practical applications, and the evolving digital landscape. This includes formal learning sessions led by Microsoft experts, as well as curriculum resources.

2. **Worker Voice in Technology Development:**

We will create channels and opportunities for union leaders and workers to share their experiences, insights, and concerns with Microsoft. By incorporating worker perspectives into the design, development, and deployment of AI systems, we aim to ensure that technology serves the needs of working people and supports safe, fair, and productive workplaces and respects the rights of creative and media workers and the vital role they play in Australian society, culture and democracy.

3. **Collaboration on Public Policy and Skills:**

We will work together to find areas of mutual interest to shape public policy in support of technology and needs of workers. Our agreement will focus on upskilling and reskilling opportunities, ensuring that workers are equipped to thrive in a rapidly changing economy. We will also advocate for responsible AI adoption and inclusive skilling initiatives across industries.

Dispute Resolution

Where disagreements arise regarding the interpretation or implementation of this agreement, Microsoft Australia and the ACTU commit to consult in good faith to resolve issues collaboratively.

Nature of Agreement

This framework agreement is not legally binding. It is a statement of shared intent and mutual commitment to partnership, dialogue, and action. Each party agrees that under no circumstances will it have any claim against the other for direct or indirect costs or damages arising from any obligations under this agreement.

On behalf of Microsoft Australia:

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On behalf of the Australian Council of Trade Unions:

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