

**mcmml**

Munich Center for Machine Learning

# DELEGATION VISIT REPORT

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**United Kingdom 2026**



# ABOUT THE MCML DELEGATION VISIT TO THE UK

From 13–17 April, the MCML conducted a delegation visit to the UK, marking another important step in strengthening its international engagement in AI research. Building on existing partnerships, the visit focused on leading academic institutions across London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

The delegation brought together MCML researchers and partners for an intensive week of academic exchange, networking, and collaborative activities. Through a series of meetings, workshops, and discussions, the visit provided a platform to deepen established relationships while also opening avenues for new joint initiatives.

Beyond individual collaborations, the trip contributed to MCML's broader strategic goal of reinforcing Munich's position as a Central European hub for AI research. By fostering closer ties with key institutions in the UK, the delegation aimed to advance shared scientific agendas and promote sustained international cooperation in the rapidly evolving field of machine learning.



# THE DELEGATES

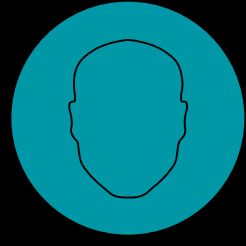
The core delegation to the UK included four directors and eight principal investigators, as well as three postdoctoral researchers, one associate, two junior research group leaders, six PhD students, and four members of the MCML management.



VERENA  
ALBRECHT



DAVID  
BANI-HAROUNI



MARTIN  
BINDER



DANIEL  
CREMERS



BARBARA  
PLANK



ROBERT  
RICHER



DANIEL  
RÜCKERT



JULIA  
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FLORIAN  
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BJÖRN  
ESKOFIER



VINCENT  
FORTUIN



MICHAEL  
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BJÖRN  
SCHULLER



THOMAS  
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LI



THOMAS  
MEIER



ANDREAS  
TRIANTAFYLLOPOULOS



DOMINIK  
MUHLE



MARTIN  
MENTEN



NASSIR  
NAVAB



BJÖRN  
OMMER

# DELEGATION PROGRAM IN A NUTSHELL

13–17 APRIL 2026

## 13

<b>2 PM - 3 PM</b>	Welcome by the organisers & MCML Keynote by Daniel Rückert, followed by Keynote by Francesca Toni
<b>3 PM - 5 PM</b>	Parallel Workshops
<b>6 PM - 7:15 PM</b>	German Embassy & Reception with speeches and networking

## 14

<b>9:30 AM - 10:30 AM</b>	Keynotes by Aldo Faisal and Björn Ommer
<b>10:30 AM - 12:30 PM</b>	Parallel Workshops
<b>1:30 PM - 2:15 PM</b>	Panel Discussion: “AI for Science: The Do’s and Don’ts”
<b>6 PM - 8 PM</b>	Welcome Reception by DAAD London with panel discussion on AI safety, security, and innovation

## 15

<b>11 AM - 12:50 PM</b>	Welcome by University of Oxford & Introduction to MCML
<b>2 PM - 2:40 PM</b>	Research Talks after Lunch Break
<b>3 PM - 5 PM</b>	Breakout Sessions (Med Science & Comp Science tracks)

## 16

<b>10:45 AM - 12:45 PM</b>	Welcome by Cambridge University, followed by AI for Science Showcase Talks
<b>1:30 PM - 2:30 PM</b>	Flash Talks (Early Career Researchers) after Lunch Break
<b>2:30 PM - 3:10 PM</b>	Discussion Sessions & Plenary Report Back
<b>3:30 PM - 4:15 PM</b>	Panel Discussion: UK-German Links in AI for Science
<b>4:15 PM - 5:30 PM</b>	Wrap-up & Final Remarks followed by Networking Reception

## 17

<b>9:15 AM - 10:50 AM</b>	Workshops at King’s College London (incl. welcome, showcases & group sessions)
<b>1 PM - 1:20 PM</b>	Welcome & MCML Introduction at UCL
<b>2:10 PM - 2:45 PM</b>	Flash Talks by Junior Researchers
<b>2:45 PM - 3:45 PM</b>	Networking & Collaboration Exchange

# DAY 1 AND 2 WORKSHOP AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

The MCML delegation visit kicked off with a two-day Machine Learning Conference at Imperial College London. We focused on the latest research in ML foundations, language, vision, and medicine, bringing together researchers from Imperial, MCML, and partner institutions.

The program reflected the breadth of AI research, featuring keynote talks by Francesca Toni (Imperial) on “Debating Explainable AI”, Daniel Rückert (MCML) on “AI and the Future of Medicine”, Björn Ommer (MCML) on “Efficient Models for Visual Intelligence”, and Aldo Faisal (University of Imperial) on “Nightingale AI”.

These were complemented by parallel sessions covering topics ranging from multimodal learning, surgical AI, and medical imaging to the behaviour, robustness, and interpretability of large language models.

In addition, the panel discussion “AI for Science: The Do’s and Don’ts” featured experts Barbara Plank (MCML), Daniel Cremers (MCML), Jason McEwen (Alan Turing Institute), and Chen Qin (Imperial), moderated by Maja Sophie Klimaschewski (Office of the Free State of Bavaria in the United Kingdom). The central debate focused on whether AI could eventually replace scientists or if it should remain a supportive tool. Participants discussed how LLMs accelerate technical tasks like coding, literature review, and writing. However, the panel cautioned against letting automated systems autonomously direct research. They emphasized the critical need for better evaluation frameworks, principled strategies for expressing and measuring model uncertainty, and integrating concepts from symbolic AI into statistical algorithms.

There was a strong consensus that AI should not be viewed as a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather as a diverse toolkit that can be applied to a wide range of domains and their intersections. The participants expressed that this should be considered when developing funding and educational strategies. The discussion concluded with a call for international cooperation and idealism to counter the dominance of major tech corporations, urging the scientific community to “take it slow and do it right.”

Overall, the conference set the tone for an inspiring week, highlighting both the rapid progress and the open challenges in AI research. It created space for critical reflection on the role of AI in science and society. Beyond the rich academic program, the event fostered connections between researchers across institutions, laying the groundwork for future collaborations.



# IMPERIAL



### EVENING RECEPTION AT THE GERMAN EMBASSY

As part of the visit, the MCML delegation was also invited to two evening receptions that provided valuable opportunities for exchange beyond the academic setting. At the reception hosted by the German Embassy London, participants from research, policy, and industry came together to discuss innovation and collaboration between Germany and the UK. The evening featured welcome remarks by the German Ambassador, Susanne Baumann, and Member of Parliament Chi Onwurah, as well as contributions from MCML directors, with pitches by Björn Ommer (MCML) and Julia A. Schnabel (MCML). The reception offered a great setting to strengthen connections and engage in informal conversations across sectors.



### DAAD RECEPTION AND PANEL DISCUSSION ON AI REGULATION

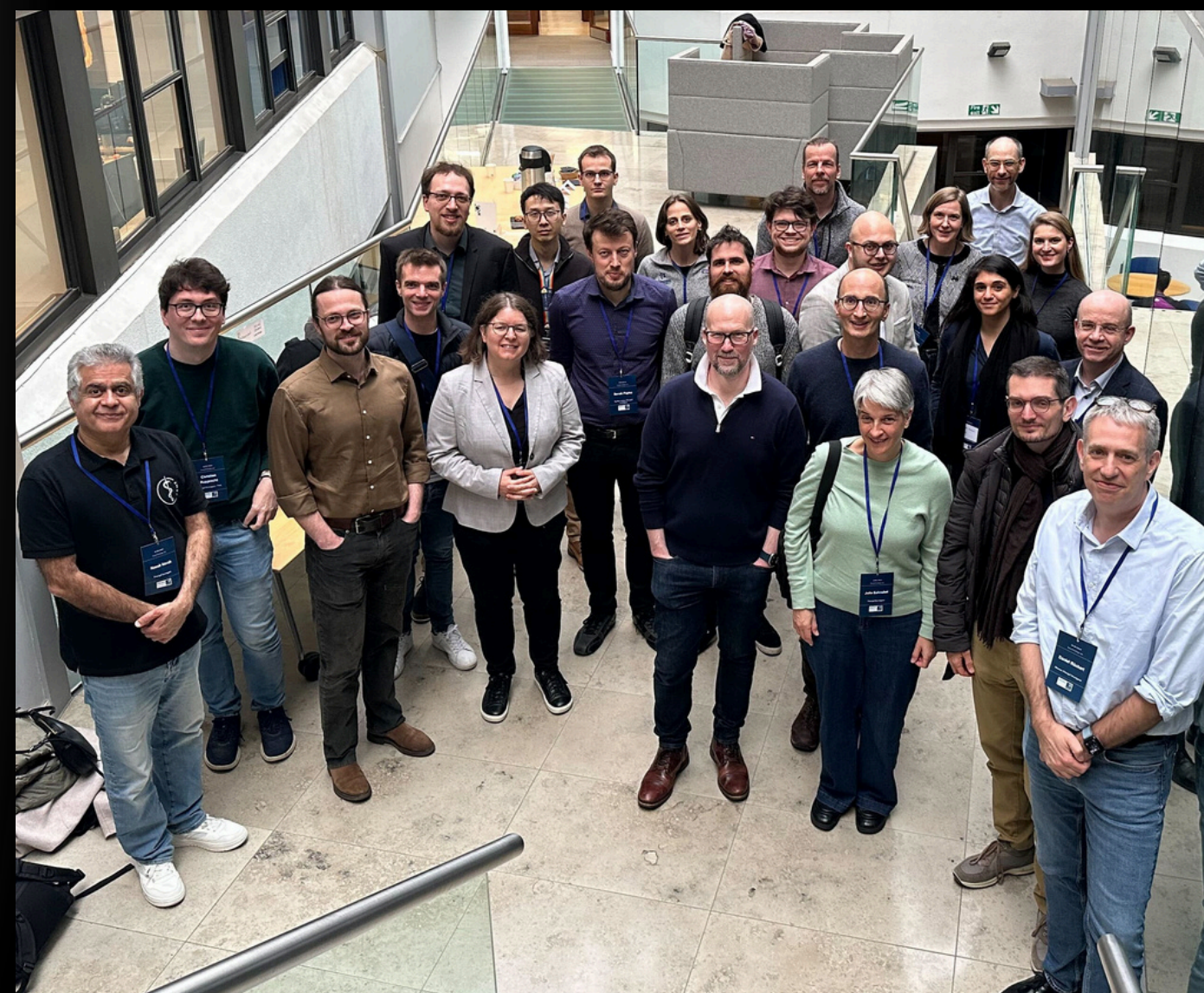
A second evening event was organized by the German Academic Exchange Service, focusing on one of the most pressing topics in AI today: regulation. The panel discussion on UK–German approaches to responsible AI governance brought together voices from academia and industry to reflect on current challenges and ethical considerations. Panelists included Emily Sullivan (University of Edinburgh), Björn Schuller (MCML), Daniel Rückert (MCML), and Kir Nuthi (techUK). The discussion highlighted the importance of international dialogue in shaping responsible and forward-looking AI policies.



# DAY 3 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The visit to the University of Oxford provided the delegation with an extensive platform for scientific dialogue, grounded in the university's academic tradition.

The program began with a series of talks by Daniel Cremers (MCML), Ronald Clark (University of Oxford), Björn Ommer (MCML), and Christian Rupprecht (University of Oxford and former TUM PhD student supervised by MCML PI Nassir Navab), setting the stage for lively discussions. In the afternoon, Nassir Navab and Ingmar Posner continued the program with talks that further bridged technical depth and real-world applications. Breakout sessions provided an opportunity to dive deeper into two central strands: medical science and computer science. Discussions in the medical track explored topics such as foetal imaging and human-centred AI in healthcare, while the computer science sessions focused on areas including video generation, 4D world models, and methods for controlling the behaviour of large language models.



# DAY 4 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Hosted at the University of Cambridge, our fourth day brought together researchers from the University of Cambridge to explore how AI is shaping scientific discovery and how collaboration can accelerate this progress.



The morning showcased a diverse set of perspectives on AI for science:

- Rich Turner (University of Cambridge) on advances in machine learning
- Barbara Plank (MCML) on language and AI
- Jennifer Schooling (Anglia Ruskin University) on smart places and digital innovation

In the afternoon, early-career researchers took the stage with a series of flash talks—ranging from biomedical applications to multilingual LLMs and AI agents for scientific discovery.

Afterwards, all participants split into groups to explore areas for collaboration with a focus on the most promising areas for UK–Germany collaboration in AI.

In addition, a highlight was the panel on strengthening UK–German collaboration in AI for science, chaired by Jess Montgomery (AI@Cam, University of Cambridge), with insights from James Fergusson (University of Cambridge), Megan Enion (University of Cambridge), and MCML Directors Daniel Cremers and Daniel Rückert.



# DAY 5 KING'S COLLEGE LONDON & UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

A day of exchange at KCL and UCL highlighted cutting-edge AI research and future collaboration opportunities across disciplines.



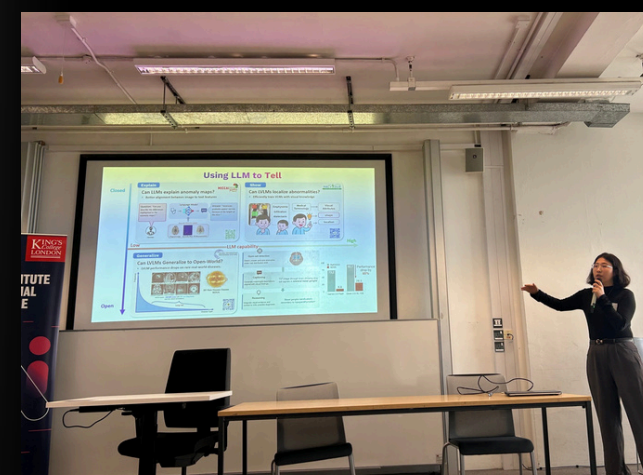
At King's College London, the morning started with Elena Simperl from King's College London (KCL), where she co-directs the King's Institute for Artificial Intelligence, presenting the Institute, which brings together AI activities from different departments, and the AI+ Initiative, which especially hires pre-tenure fellows.

Afterwards, a series of short flash talks highlighted ongoing work across institutions, offering concise insights into current projects. Participants then split into three thematic groups, each fostering more in-depth exchange.

The first group focused on AI in medicine and radiology, covering topics from medical imaging to molecular and health data. The second group explored natural language processing, with discussions ranging from core NLP methods to applications in areas such as climate and health. The third group centered on foundational AI research and knowledge representation, addressing theoretical questions and methodological advances.

The session concluded with reflections on future collaboration opportunities by Julia Schnabel (MCML) and Tamara Al-Janabi (KCL), followed by a working lunch that provided further space for networking and informal exchange.

We then headed to the University College London to spend an afternoon exploring current research directions at the intersection of AI, robotics, and healthcare. A keynote by Björn Schuller set the stage by examining how AI systems might be extended with emotion-related capabilities. He argued that incorporating aspects of artificial emotion could go beyond human-like interaction, serving as a functional mechanism to improve learning, adaptation, and decision-making in complex environments. This perspective opened up a broader discussion about the role of affective computing in next-generation AI systems.





### SESSIONS FROM UCL RESEARCHERS

The keynote session was followed by a series of talks from UCL researchers, each offering insights into distinct but interconnected domains. Dan Stoyanov presented his work on surgical AI, highlighting operating rooms as uniquely rich data environments. He illustrated how multimodal data—from video to sensor streams—can be leveraged to develop intelligent assistive systems that support clinicians in real time. Gabriel Brostow focused on human-computer interaction and raised critical questions about task selection in end-to-end learning systems. His talk emphasized the importance of aligning model objectives with meaningful human goals, particularly as AI systems become more autonomous and embedded in everyday workflows.

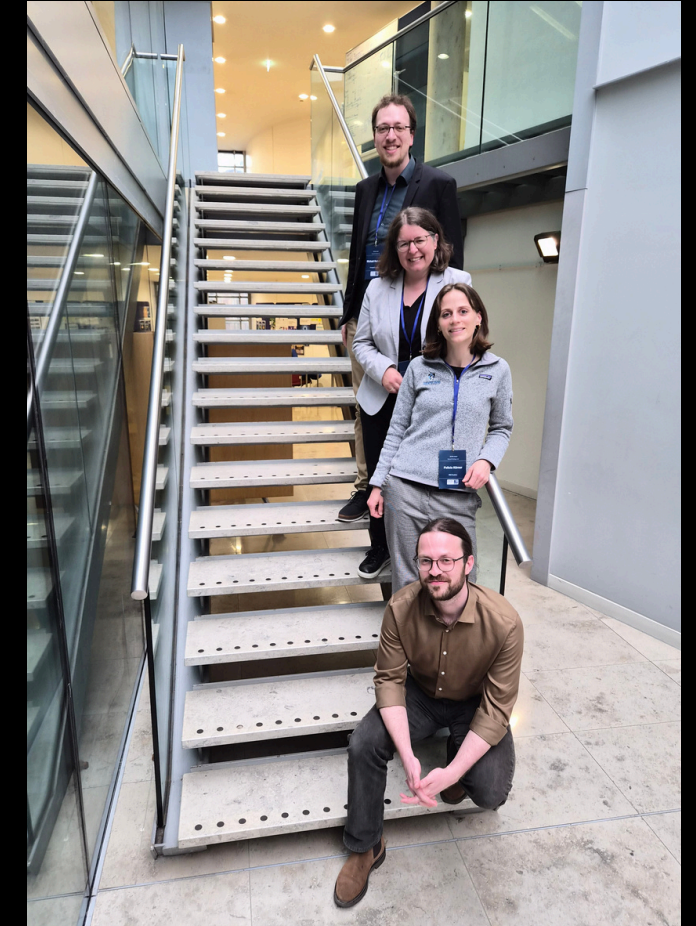
Finally, Dimitrios Kanoulas introduced the Robotics Intelligence Lab and its work on deploying AI in real-world robotic applications. From navigation in complex terrains to agricultural automation, his examples demonstrated the challenges and opportunities of bringing robust AI systems out of controlled lab settings and into practical use. Across all sessions, discussions centered on future research directions and the translation of academic work into industry applications. Questions around scalability, reliability, and human-AI collaboration were recurring themes, reflecting shared priorities across the participating institutions. The program also featured flash talks by junior researchers from both MCML and UCL, offering a glimpse into emerging ideas and fostering new connections.



# OUTLOOK ON FUTURE COLLABORATION AND DIRECTIONS

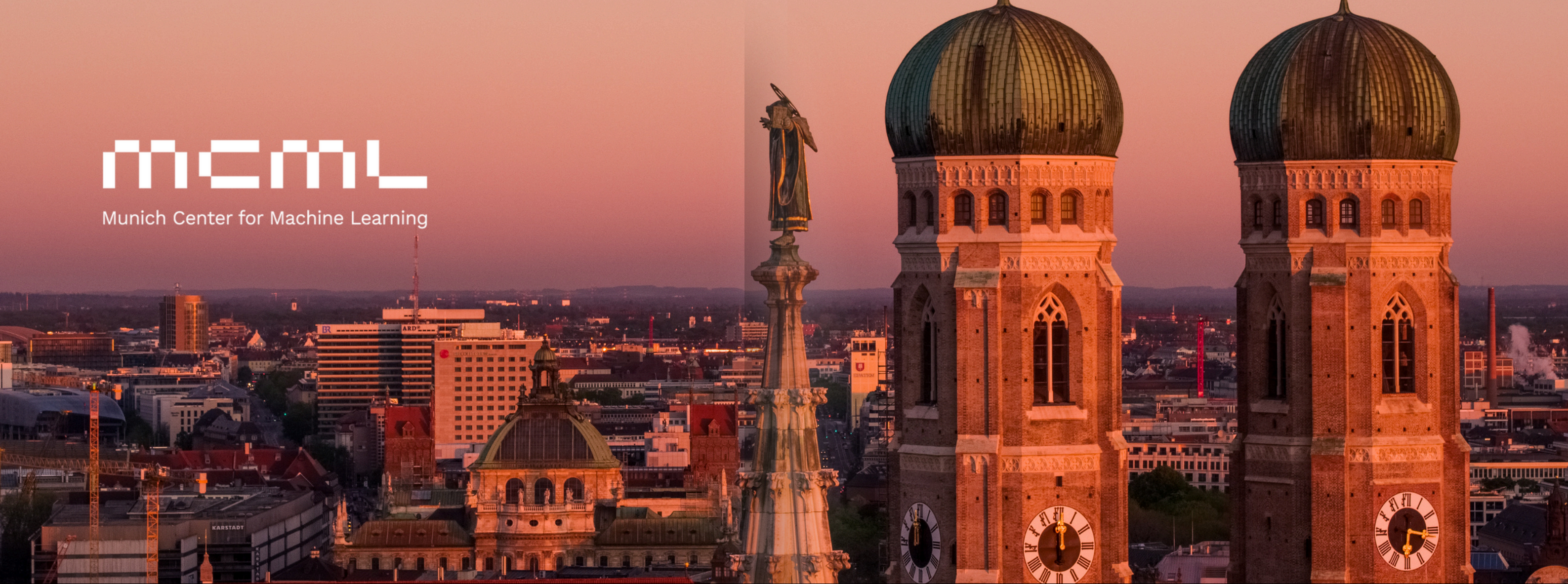


The MCML delegation trip to the UK represents an important step in expanding the center's international network. By bringing together leading researchers and institutions, the visit reinforces shared scientific goals and promotes long-term collaboration in the rapidly evolving field of AI. Beyond individual meetings and sessions, the trip underscores MCML's broader mission: to contribute to a globally connected research ecosystem and to strengthen Munich's role as a key player in AI and machine learning in Europe.



# mcml

Munich Center for Machine Learning



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