



Congress House
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3LS

Paul Nowak General Secretary
Kate Bell Assistant General Secretary

Kanishka Narayan MP
Kate Dearden MP
Department for Business,
Innovation Science and Trade
Old Admiralty Building
Admiralty Place
London
SW1A 2DY

from: Matt Dykes
direct line: 020 7467 1245
email: mdykes@tuc.org.uk

6 September 2026

Dear Kanishka and Kate,

We are writing as Parliament reconvenes to welcome you both to your appointments, and in recognition that working together, your roles present a real opportunity to deliver for working people.

The government is actively pursuing an AI strategy based on the assumption that these are transformative technologies. And you have acknowledged that AI technologies are changing the world of work, and that workers and their unions are key to shaping that change.

But we have not yet seen a practical plan that gives force to your acknowledgement that working people need to determine and benefit from AI-related change.

The US is demonstrating the risks of technological advancement in an economy without safeguards against ever rising inequality. Tech billionaires have boomed, while the share of wealth going to workers has collapsed to historic lows. It is no surprise that the American public are among the most fearful of this chaotic billionaire-driven AI agenda – with two in three US workers expecting AI to make the worker experience worse.

A political backlash is underway to demand an alternative, with data centres becoming a lightning rod for public anxiety of a technological future dominated by a few.

Technological advances can help build a better future. To do so we need a clear and credible plan that, as the PM has said, breaks from the failing model of the past decades. Until then, the public's response is quite rational. There is no durable and progressive political basis for AI adoption when

a large majority of workers in the UK think AI gains will be mostly captured by large firms and investors.

Given the uncertainty of how AI may play out, the government should adopt a 'no-regrets' approach that would be positive whatever the eventual pace of technological progress. This includes adapting the tried and tested tools we already have at our disposal.

When it comes to AI and the future of work, this plan needs to be rooted in three clear principles: Ensuring working people have a voice, rights and a fair share - at work and in the economy more broadly.

A comprehensive plan must include reforming corporate practices so that workers are stakeholders in firms, not merely inputs to be minimised using AI in the pursuit of short-term profits. It means a right to negotiate on AI, empowering workers' expertise and interests as a pre-requisite for any fair and effective AI adoption. It means a decisive shift to taxing wealth fairly compared to work.

This can start now with the policy underway on algorithmic and surveillance workplace technologies. Workers need a clear right to negotiate on technologies that risk undermining their dignity and conditions at work. Upholding this Plan to Make Work Pay commitment will be a first test for the government to demonstrate that it stands for a pro-worker technology agenda.

There will be pushback. For employers keen on AI but allergic to workers' rights, we would say it's notable that the Nordic countries have among the highest levels of AI adoption. A key factor is that these workers have more structural power to shape technology and are therefore more open to its effective use.

Working people winning a stake in the benefits of new technology can be a vital plank in this government's plan to deliver growth in every postcode. Without this, AI disruption – real and perceived – will become ripe for exploitation by the far-right.

Fundamentally, this is about how technology helps lay the foundations for a more resilient and fairer economy. Your collaboration as ministers will be essential for shaping that. We look forward to continuing to work with you both in the near future on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Nowak



General Secretary

Kate Bell



Assistant General Secretary