

National Youth Council (NYC) x Singapore Polytechnic (SP) Webinar Series

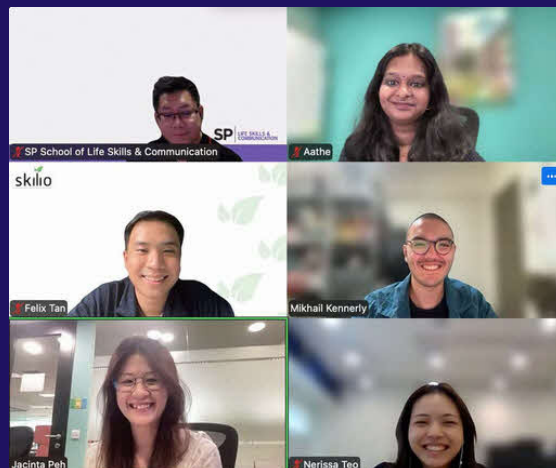
AI and Singapore's Next Chapter: Are We Ready?

13 May 2026 | Online (Zoom)

On 13 May 2026, 453 youths from Singapore Polytechnic (SP) participated in a webinar which discussed: (i) how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping Singapore's economy and future of work, (ii) opportunities for youths to gain practical skills and exposure in an AI-driven workplace, (iii) and how youths can remain resilient, adaptable, and future-ready in an evolving economy.

This session was co-organised by SP and NYC, and involved the following panellists and moderator:

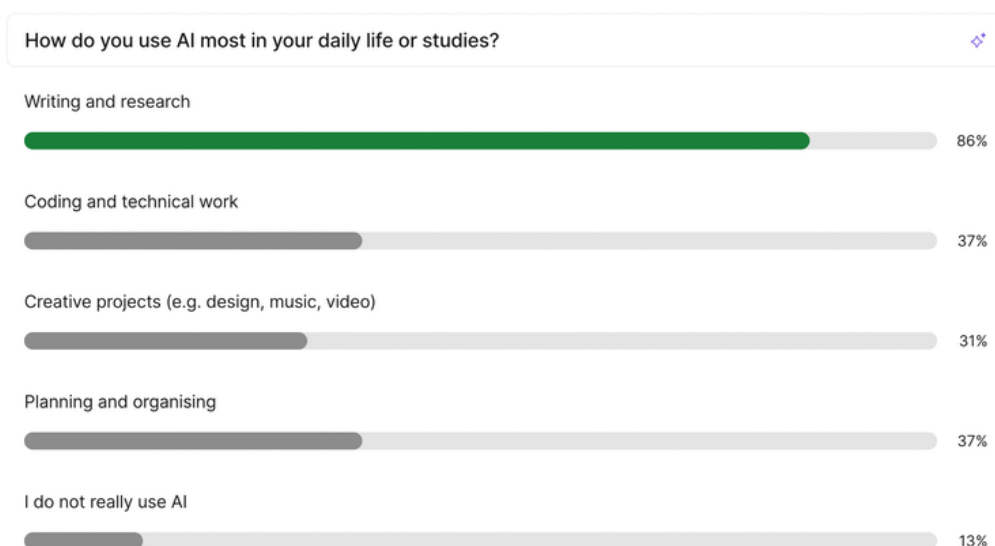
- Mr Felix Tan, Founder & CEO of Skilio
- Mr Mikhail Kennerley, Lead Research Engineer, Home Team Science & Technology Agency
- [Moderator] Ms Nerissa Teo, Singapore Polytechnic Year 2 Student, Diploma in Interior Design



The moderator shared that NYC, together with its Government and non-Government partners, had conducted a series of engagements - including the NYC x Singapore Polytechnic webinar series - to shape the SG Youth Plan (SGYP). She said that the SGYP was a youth-led action blueprint intended to capture the hopes and aspirations of young Singaporeans, empower youths to be the best versions of themselves, and support them in taking action to contribute meaningfully to Singapore.

i) Understanding how AI is changing the way we work

Participants were asked (via Slido) how they use AI most in their daily life or studies.



- 86% of respondents indicated **“writing and research”**.
- The speakers said that AI was integrated into everyday digital interactions through features such as AI-generated summaries and search results. They cautioned that AI-generated content could sometimes provide inaccurate information and advised youths to exercise discernment when using and interpreting AI-generated content.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how AI would affect jobs and the future workforce.

- Mr Kennerley said that AI was more likely to automate repetitive and rule-based tasks such as data entry, but remained limited in areas requiring critical thinking, deep domain expertise and physical presence. He said that AI was unlikely to fully replace human workers and would instead complement human judgement.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how youths should position themselves in an AI-driven economy, and whether to specialise in niche fields or follow broader trends.

- Mr Tan said that youths should continue pursuing their areas of interest and use them as a guide when learning AI, rather than trying to keep up with every emerging development as this would prevent them from feeling overwhelmed. He also said that employers valued the ability of employees who could learn and apply AI tools across different tasks, rather than knowledge of specific tools.

The moderator asked panellists whether AI would replace or enhance human creativity in fields like art and literature, and how it could be used ethically and responsibly.

- Mr Kennerley said that AI enhanced rather than replaced human creativity by helping to translate ideas into visuals, explore different concepts, and expand creative possibilities. He cited the example of game designers who used AI-generated placeholder art during playtesting to improve immersion and advance projects to a stage where professional artists could be engaged, and said that AI raised standards and expanded creative possibilities.
- He also said that issues such as ownership, copyright, plagiarism and originality remained unresolved, and that clearer guidelines were needed to ensure responsible use of AI-generated content.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how Singapore could balance AI adoption against concerns about job displacement and workforce transition.

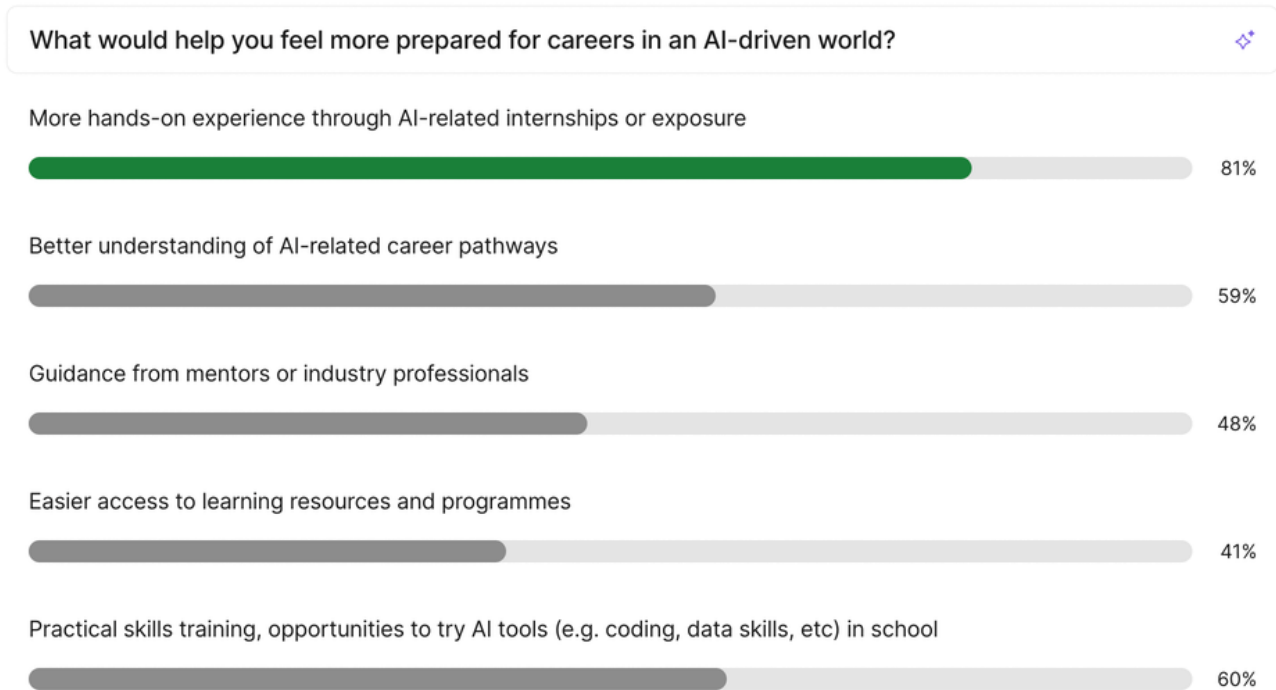
- Mr Tan said that Singapore needed to continue adapting to and adopting AI to remain globally competitive. He shared that the recent Economic Strategy Review had recommended positioning Singapore as an AI hub. He said that career transition support, such as career bridges, could help workers prepare for job disruption by identifying at-risk roles early and providing advance training, job support and job matching. He also shared that all economies were grappling with this challenge, and were experiencing significant tech layoffs with comparatively less support for displaced workers.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how Singapore could balance AI adoption against concerns about job displacement and workforce transition.

- Mr Kennerley said that over-reliance on AI could result in the loss of human creativity and ability to synthesise information and advised participants to continue to develop critical thinking rather than using AI to generate answers. He said that meta-learning, or learning how to learn, was an important skill for tertiary students, and that overusing AI tools reduced their ability to learn and apply knowledge effectively.
- Mr Tan said that discerning right from wrong and asking the right questions were essential but underrated skills. He said he was uncertain whether AI should be introduced in primary and secondary schools when students were still developing foundational skills such as arithmetic and comprehension.

ii) Exploring skills and opportunities in an AI-driven workplace

Participants were asked (via Slido) what would help them feel more prepared for careers in an AI-driven world.



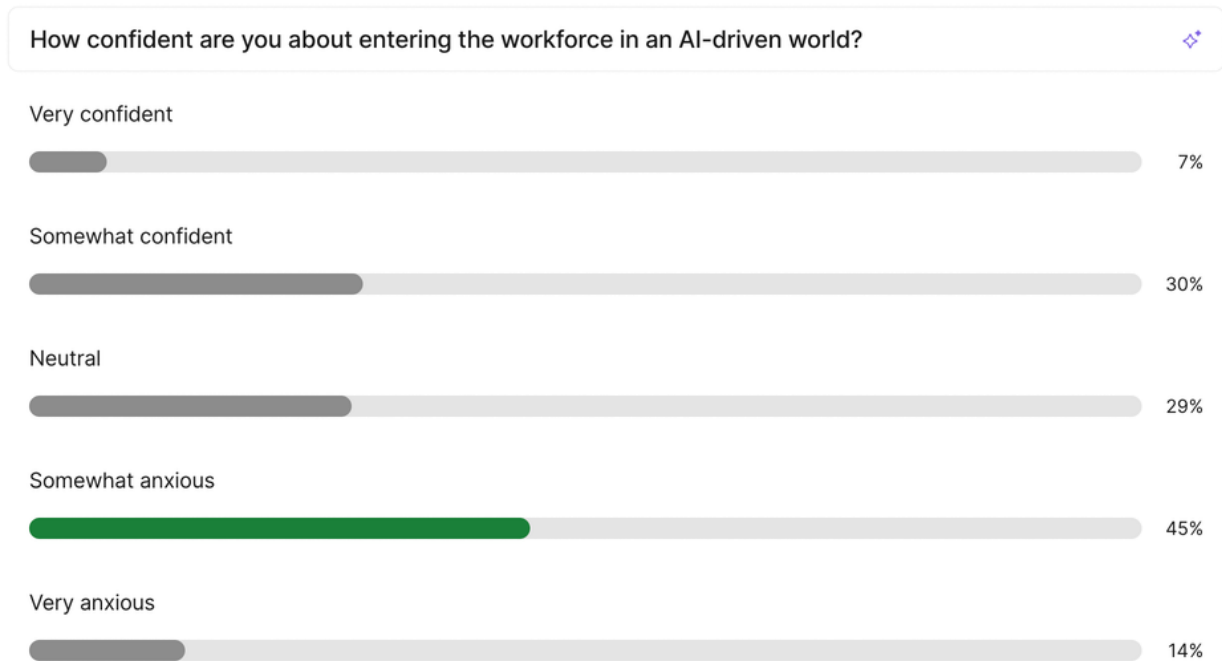
- 81% of respondents indicated “**more hands-on experience through AI-related internships or exposure**”.
- Mr Tan said that this reflected a broader desire among youths for practical skills training and a better understanding of AI-related career pathways.
- Mr Kennerley said that guidance from mentors and industry professionals was an underrated resource, and mentorship provided insight into both industry applications of AI and emerging non-technical skills. He said that people skills and human connections were becoming increasingly important as factors that differentiated humans from AI in the workplace.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how youths could remain competitive in an AI-driven workforce and prepare for emerging “new collar jobs”.

- Mr Tan said that “new collar jobs” referred to roles where practical skills and adaptability were valued alongside technical knowledge, reflecting the shift towards skills-based hiring in an AI-driven economy. He said that youths could gain practical experience through internships or starting their own ventures. He encouraged youths to build communities within their areas of interest to support learning and stay updated on industry developments.
- Mr Kennerley advised youths to build their expertise in a specific field and position themselves in areas where their work was not easily replaced by AI, such as tasks requiring the synthesis of complex information and multiple variables.

iii) Building Resilience and Navigating Change in an AI-Driven World

Participants were asked (via Slido) how confident they were about entering the workforce in an AI-driven world.



- 45% of respondents indicated “**somewhat anxious**”.
- The speakers said that entering the workforce was a transitional period and would come with a certain anxiety. They said that internships provided opportunities to gain experience, understand industry applications of AI, and help youths explore career fit.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how youths could navigate career uncertainty and anxiety in an AI-driven economy.

- Mr Tan said that youths should focus on opportunities created by AI rather than be concerned about job loss, and view AI as a tool to be used during internships to build domain-specific literacy. He said that having a support network was important in managing shared anxiety, and encouraged active networking, including seeking referrals.
- Mr Kennerley said that building human skills such as communication and interpersonal skills was as important as developing AI proficiency. He encouraged youths to actively seek guidance from mentors and professionals for industry insights. He advised that one’s career should be viewed as a continuous learning loop and AI should be used to support learning.

Closing remarks:

The moderator asked panellists what excited them about how AI was redefining jobs, and what was one piece of advice they would give youths.

- Mr Kennerley said that AI enabled more people to do meaningful, high-impact work earlier in their careers by lowering the barrier of entry to tasks that previously required larger teams. He said that AI was a force multiplier that required individuals to have domain knowledge and critical thinking skills to be effective. He advised youths to use AI deliberately, to ask better questions, explore ideas and compare viewpoints, rather than just to generate faster outputs.
- Mr Tan said that AI could help solve major problems faster, such as speeding up medical testing and research. He advised youths to stay positive about AI and focus on how it could be used to improve work and outcomes.