KEY RESULTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

"AI AGE & TRUST: ETHICS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR SCICOMM"

VolkswagenStiftung

— *How AI is reshaping trust at the heart of science*

AI is rewriting how knowledge is produced, filtered and shared – without new rules of trust, science communication risks drowning in its own success.

As AI moves from niche tool to core infrastructure in research and media, the information ecosystem is shifting towards "liquid content", where facts, arguments and styles flow seamlessly across articles, videos, chatbots and social feeds. This creates powerful opportunities – from expert-finding and automated monitoring of the literature to multilingual, short-form formats that can reach new audiences – but it also strains traditional models of peer review, editorial gatekeeping and public accountability. The central questions now are who remains responsible when AI enters the scientific workflow, how to prevent information inequality as premium models and data emerge, and how to ensure that human judgement, ethics and connection stay at the heart of science and its storytelling.

THE PANEL CALL TO ACTION:

1 — Make AI use in science and journalism fully transparent.
Require clear disclosure of how AI is used in research, publishing and reporting, supported by shared ontologies so its contributions can be assessed, reproduced and challenged.

2 — Anchor human accountability in every stage of knowledge production.
Reaffirm that authors, editors and reviewers remain responsible for accuracy and integrity, while using AI only for bounded tasks such as detecting fabricated text, image manipulation or conflicts of interest.

3 — Build strong AI literacy and ethical capacity across the ecosystem.
Integrate AI literacy, including risks, limits and bias, into scientific and journalistic training, and develop practical standards so AI supports integrity rather than undermines it.

4 — Bridge the gap between research and real-world deployment.
Create dedicated implementation units in hospitals and health systems that identify effective AI tools, run structured pilots, and integrate successful solutions into practice. Couple this with clear, risk-based regulatory pathways that reward transparency, reproducibility and clinically meaningful impact.

5 — Expand global access and derisk innovation for underserved settings.
Use public–private partnerships and catalytic funding to make models, compute resources and diagnostic technologies affordable and accessible in the Global South. Support locally led projects that adapt AI tools to regional needs, and leverage international infrastructures to share knowledge, evidence and best practices across borders.

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