

WITSA NEWSLETTER

Issue 03/26

Fulfilling the Promise of the Digital, Innovation & Tech industry

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WITSA

World Innovation, Technology
and Services Alliance



**Speakers
Bureau**



WITSA
Global AI Awards



**WITSA
WORLD
CUP**



WITSA
GLOBAL A.I. NETWORK



WITSA
Global Awards

Issue Highlights

Eyes on Taipei: The WITSA Global AI Summit, the WITSA Global AI Awards and the WITSA Global AI Index

- Inaugural WITSA Global AI Awards — Submit Nominations by July 17, 2026
- Mark Your Calendar for the WITSA Global AI Summit 2026, on Sept 1-2 in Taipei
- CTA Leads Coalition Letter on Section 232 Semiconductor Tariffs
- Women in Tech Series: Stela Lupushor, Dr. Carrine Teoh & Catherine Lian
- Launch of the WITSA Global AI Index September 1

CEO'S CORNER



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CEO's Corner:

From Taipei to Geneva: Building the Scaffolding for Sustained AI Leadership

Dear Members and Partners,

We close out the first half of 2026 having moved WITSA from diagnosis to delivery. In March and April, our Strategic Briefing on the Geoeconomic Pivot named the forces reshaping our industry and put numbers against them — a \$7 trillion uplift if we get interoperability right, a \$10 trillion contraction if we don't. This issue is about the machinery we are now building to push the probability needle toward the former. Two recognition platforms, one advocacy intervention, one talent initiative, and one foundational data product are all converging on the same window in Taipei this September, and I want to walk you through why that convergence is deliberate, not coincidental.



At the center of that machinery stands WITSA GAIN — the Global AI Ecosystem Network. GAIN is our transformation engine: a multi-stakeholder framework connecting policymakers, industry leaders, innovators, and investors across six continents to accelerate real-world AI adoption and impact. It is the platform through which WITSA moves from benchmarking to building, from insight to implementation.

To power that transformation, we are building the WITSA Global AI Index — the diagnostic foundation that tells us where each economy's AI ecosystem stands today. One hundred and twenty-eight countries, seven pillars, sixteen subpillars, eighty-three indicators, and an independent Expert Panel under formal governance. When it launches in Taipei, it will mark the first time an alliance of national technology associations, rather than a single research institute, has produced a benchmark of this scale. The Index is the evidence base; WITSA GAIN is the activation layer. Together, they form a continuum — diagnosis and delivery, measurement and mobilization, benchmarking and transformation.

Around this core, we feature key complementary initiatives converge in Taipei this September — two recognition platforms, one advocacy intervention, and one talent initiative — all designed to reinforce the same scaffolding for sustained AI leadership.

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Start with the WITSA Global AI Awards. When we designed the two-tier nomination model — national associations selecting one nominee per category, a Global Judging Panel determining the eventual winners — the governing question was the same one that shaped our scenario framework: how do you build something that is locally credible and globally robust? A centralized awards program, run entirely out of our Secretariat, would have been faster to launch but would have struggled with the perception that an outside institution is grading economies it does not fully understand. By putting the first cut in the hands of the 80-plus associations that live inside their own markets every day, and reserving the second cut for an international panel, we are bringing global recognition and attention to the national AI champions that best deserve them. . I would ask every member association reading this to treat the WITSA submission deadline of July 17 as a great opportunity. Your nominees are not just competing for a trophy in Taipei; they are the evidentiary base for the claim that strong AI innovation and leadership exists well beyond the handful of countries that dominate the headlines.

The WITSA Global AI Summit itself is the connective tissue for all of this. Returning to Taipei on September 1 and 2, on the back of a debut edition that drew over 500 delegates from 36 economies, this year's Summit is adding Physical AI to its Digital AI tracks and a curated visit to the SemiCon Taiwan 2026 show for delegates from more than 45 countries. Taiwan continues to be the right venue for these interactions. An economy that produces over 90% of the world's most advanced semiconductors, and that has chosen strategic connectivity over the sovereignty trap I described in our April briefing, is a fitting stage for us to demonstrate that AI leadership and global interoperability are complements, not substitutes. I would encourage delegations to book early — the "TISSA" promo code for delegate hotel rates expires at the end of July, and the Summit's growing footprint means rooms will not last.





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On the advocacy front, WITSA joined the Consumer Technology Association and nineteen other industry bodies this quarter in a coalition letter to U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer on the ongoing Section 232 semiconductor investigation. This is the kind of intervention our Policy Chairman, Ed Brzytwa, and I discussed in the April briefing: the difference between a defensive posture and a constructive one. We are not arguing against the U.S. Administration's underlying objective of a resilient domestic semiconductor base — investment in U.S. fab capacity is, as the letter notes, already at a historic high. We are arguing that tariffs on downstream consumer and commercial technology products would tax the very companies, many of them small and mid-sized, that are building the next generation of American AI-enabled devices, at a moment when memory chip shortages are already straining affordability. This is the kind of unglamorous, granular trade advocacy that rarely makes a keynote slide, but it can help determine whether the Agentic Renaissance scenario will come to fruition.

I also want to draw your attention to the continuation of our Women in Tech series, now featuring Stela Lupushor, founder of Reframe.Work Inc., Dr Carrine Teoh, ASEAN CXO Association President (Cybersecurity & Governance), and Catherine Lian, General Manager and Technology Leader IBM ASEAN. Following on from the “Give to Gain” spotlight we ran for International Women's Day, this is not a seasonal campaign that switches off once March ends. The governance argument I made in our last issue, that AI systems built without diverse input carry forward the blind spots of the people who built them does not have an expiry date, and neither does our commitment to amplifying the women shaping this industry across our 80-plus member economies. I encourage every association to keep nominating leaders for the WITSA Speakers Bureau; it remains one of the most concrete ways our network turns a stated value into a visible platform. None of these initiatives is large enough on its own to move the needle on the scenarios described in the last issue. Taken together, across one network of more than 80 associations, they foster the kind of strategic connectivity, rather than insular and misguided sovereignty, that I believe gives the Agentic Renaissance a fighting chance. Thank you, as always, for the work each of you is doing in your home markets to make that case real.

Warm Regards

Dato' Dan E Khoo

WITSA Chief Executive Officer

FEATURE



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Mark Your Calendar!

The WITSA Global AI Awards 2026

Sept 1, 2026, Taipei, Taiwan

Moving the conversation beyond raw capability to meaningful, real-world application.

As artificial intelligence fundamentally reshapes the global economy, true tech leadership requires orchestrating human-AI collaboration while maintaining the ethical guardrails that ensure technology serves human benefit.

The WITSA Global AI Awards establish a premier international benchmark for AI solutions that are not just innovative, but responsible, impactful, and scalable. Whether you are a scaling startup, an enterprise pioneer, or a policymaker shaping governance frameworks, this is your platform to validate your achievements on the world stage. Global winners will be celebrated during a prestigious gala ceremony at the catalytic platform WITSA Global AI Summit in Taipei (September 1-2, 2026).

About the WITSA Global AI Awards

The WITSA Global AI Awards is the world's first international benchmark for responsible, scalable, and impactful artificial intelligence. Held alongside the WITSA Global AI Summit, the Awards recognize AI solutions that are not simply impressive, and proven to create meaningful, real-world impact for people and societies across the globe.

The WITSA Global AI Awards celebrate corporations, organizations, NGOs, academia, and government entities that have made the most remarkable contributions to the AI field, moving the conversation beyond raw capability to meaningful application for human benefit, ethics, and sustainability.

Global Recognition for Your Country's AI Champions

[More Information](#)

[Download Nomination Form](#)



The WITSA Global AI Awards 2026

www.witsa.org

The Seven Categories:

Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation



AI INFRASTRUCTURE

This award recognizes the pioneers who have built the foundational infrastructure that makes scalable, responsible AI development possible

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Your country's AI champions deserve global recognition!
Nominate your national AI champions now!

For more information on the Awards:



Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation



TALENT

This award recognizes organizations that are closing the global AI skills gap by building the ethical, high-skilled workforce the AI era demands

Global Organizer

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For more information on the Awards:



Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation



Entrepreneurship

This award celebrates the founders and teams who are translating cutting-edge AI research into commercially viable, safe, and globally scalable solutions

Global Organizer

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For more information on the Awards:



Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation



USE CASES

This award celebrates deployed AI applications that deliver quantifiable, real-world impact — proving AI as a vital engine of progress and sustainable transformation.

Global Organizer

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Your country's AI champions deserve global recognition!
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For more information on the Awards:



[More Information](#)

[Download Nomination Form](#)



The WITSA Global AI Awards 2026

www.witsa.org

The Seven Categories:

Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation




DATA

This award honors the organizations and individuals who treat data as the strategic asset it is — proving that data integrity is the true determinant of scalable, safe AI.

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For more information on the Awards: 

Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation




PUBLIC POLICY

This award recognizes policy leadership that translates ethical principles into scalable, innovation-friendly governance frameworks that build public trust in AI.

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For more information on the Awards: 

Recognizing Excellence in Global AI Innovation




INVESTMENTS

This award recognizes the capital allocators and ecosystem builders whose strategic investments are accelerating responsible AI adoption and generating sustainable economic growth.

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Your country's AI champions deserve global recognition!
Nominate your national AI champions now!

For more information on the Awards: 

WITSA Global AI Awards 2026

Global Recognition for your country's AI champions



Winners Benefits include:

- Global Award, and Title Recognition
- Spotlight on Global Stage at the WITSA AI Summit, Taipei, Sept 1- 2, 2026 (Awards Gala + Press Conference)
- Features in WITSA global communications
- A platform to connect with policymakers & tech leaders globally

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Nominate your national AI champions now!

AI INFRASTRUCTURE TALENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP USE CASES
DATA PUBLIC POLICY INVESTMENTS

For more information on the Awards: 

[More Information](#)

[Download Nomination Form](#)



The WITSA Global AI Awards 2026

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7 award categories:

 **Infrastructure**

 **Talent**

 **Entrepreneurship**

 **Use Cases**

 **Data**

 **Public Policy**

 **Investments**

Global Organizer



Nominate your national AI champions now!

 **AI INFRASTRUCTURE**  **TALENT**  **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**  **USE CASES**
 **DATA**  **PUBLIC POLICY**  **INVESTMENTS**

More information on the Awards:



The awards operate through a two-tier process: participating member associations run a standardized national nomination and selection process to identify one national nominee per category, and a WITSA-appointed Global Judging Panel evaluates those nominees and may confer global awards on multiple winners per category.

This structure ensures local knowledge informs national nominations while a single, impartial standard governs the final awards.

For more information:

[Award Materials and Information Guide](#)

[Download Nominations Form](#)

This is a unique opportunity to elevate your members as global leaders in the AI era. If you have any questions regarding the categories or the two-tier process, please contact us at info@witsa.org.

THE WITSA GLOBAL AI SUMMIT 2026

1-2 SEPT - GRAND HOTEL, TAIPEI

Save the Date!

www.witsa.org

Taiwan to Host the Second WITSA Global AI Summit 2026

1-2 September 2026 — Grand Hotel, Taipei

Building on the landmark success of the inaugural 2025 Summit, the World Innovation, Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) and the Taiwan Innovative Software and Services Association (TISSA) are thrilled to confirm that the WITSA Global AI Summit 2026 will return to Taipei on 1-2 September 2026, hosted at the Grand Hotel.

Convening under the theme "AI Alive, Beyond the Future," the Summit will bring together more than 350 delegates from over 45 countries for the world's premier AI leadership forum — bigger, bolder, and more impactful than ever.

WITSA and Taiwan Host Association, the Taiwan Innovative Software and Services Association (TISSA) are excited to announce hosting the WITSA Global AI Summit for its 2026 edition in Taipei. This prestigious gathering will bring together AI leaders, innovators, policymakers, and industry trailblazers from across the globe to explore the transformative power of artificial intelligence and chart a bold course for a smarter, more inclusive future under the theme "AI Alive, Beyond the Future."

Two Landmark Launches at the Summit

The 2026 Summit will be the stage for two landmark firsts for WITSA's global network:



The launch of the WITSA Global AI Index — the first industry-led benchmark of national AI ecosystem maturity, covering 128 countries across 7 pillars, 16 sub-pillars, and 83 indicators, built directly from the practitioner input of WITSA's national member associations and validated by an independent Expert Panel.



The Inaugural WITSA Global AI Awards — recognizing AI Champions from 6 continents across seven categories spanning AI Infrastructure, Talent, Entrepreneurship, Use Cases, Data, Public Policy, and Investments, culminating in a gala ceremony at the Summit.

The WITSA Global AI Summit 2026 is a catalyst for global action. The 2026 Summit drive new commitments, partnerships, and breakthroughs that resonate far beyond the event itself, anchored by the launch of the WITSA Global AI Index and the Inaugural WITSA Global AI Awards.

THE WITSA GLOBAL AI SUMMIT 2026

1-2 SEPT - GRAND HOTEL, TAIPEI

Save the Date!

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What to Expect at the WITSA Global AI Summit 2026

Following the tremendous success of 2025, the 2026 edition promises to raise the bar in every dimension:

- High-impact keynotes from global AI leaders and tech visionaries shaping the intelligent age
- Dynamic panel discussions spanning Strategies for Sovereign AI, AI Hardware-Software Integration and Intelligent Robotics
- Expanded networking opportunities, connecting decision-makers, innovators, and investors from more than 45 countries
- The launch of the inaugural WITSA Global AI Index and the WITSA Global AI Awards & Gala Dinner
- Exclusive showcases of cutting-edge AI deployments and solutions from leading organizations worldwide
- Cultural experiences celebrating Taiwan's rich heritage alongside its forward-looking digital vision

The 2026 edition is set to feature an even more distinguished roster of global thought leaders. Details [here](#).

CTA LEADS COALITION LETTER ON SECTION 232 SEMICONDUCTOR TARIFFS

WITSA on Advocacy

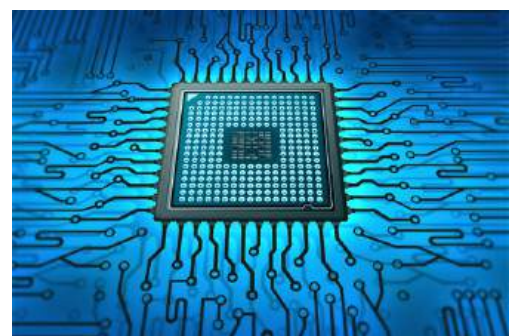
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WITSA has joined the Consumer Technology Association (CTA) and 16 other industry associations in a coalition letter to U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, urging the Administration to refrain from imposing tariffs on semiconductors and downstream consumer and commercial technology products under the Section 232 investigation.

The letter warns that broad tariffs on semiconductors and semiconductor-containing products would raise costs for consumers and businesses, worsen existing memory chip shortages, slow deployment of digital infrastructure, and undermine U.S. leadership in AI — all while delivering limited national security or manufacturing benefit, given that U.S. fab investment is already at a historic high.

Among its recommendations, the coalition calls on the Administration to preserve existing electronics exclusions, avoid duplicative or “stacked” tariffs, and pursue a plurilateral framework with trusted trading partners to strengthen semiconductor supply chain resilience.

As a signatory, WITSA reaffirms its commitment to advocating for policies that support a resilient, globally integrated technology ecosystem on behalf of its member associations worldwide.



SPECIAL FEATURE: WITSA WOMEN IN TECH SERIES

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The latest installment of the WITSA Women in Tech video series features three distinguished leaders sharing their perspectives on technology, leadership, and the path forward for women in the industry. Click on the poster to watch their session:



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and Services Alliance

WITSA Women in Tech Series

Episode 2:
Motherhood as a Leadership Asset

With Stela Lupushor

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Stela Lupushor
Founder Reframe.Work Inc.

Stela Lupushor is a thought leader, speaker, educator, and workplace humanist helping organizations navigate AI adoption without losing their humanity. Advisor to startups, enterprises, and governments on human-centered work transitions. NYU faculty and co-author of "Humanizing Human Capital: Invest in Your People for Optimal Business Returns" and "Humans At Work: The Art and Practice of Creating the Hybrid Workplace."



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and Services Alliance

WITSA Women in Tech Series

Episode 3:
Voices of Impact: Women Shaping the Digital Future

With Dr Carrine Teoh

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**Dr Carrine Teoh, ASEAN CXO Association
President (Cybersecurity & Governance)**

Dr. Carrine Teoh plays a pivotal role in driving regional digital collaboration, enhancing cyber resilience, and bridging the gap between technical governance and C-suite strategy across Southeast Asia. Her profound impact on the landscape has earned her prestigious accolades, including being named among the Top 30 Women in Cybersecurity in ASEAN, Digitech Brand Leadership Award, Asia Top 50 Women Tech Leaders Advisor and the Top 10 LinkedIn ASEAN Cybersecurity Influencers.



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WITSA Women in Tech Series

Episode 4:
Voices of Impact: Women Leading the Future of Tech and Innovation

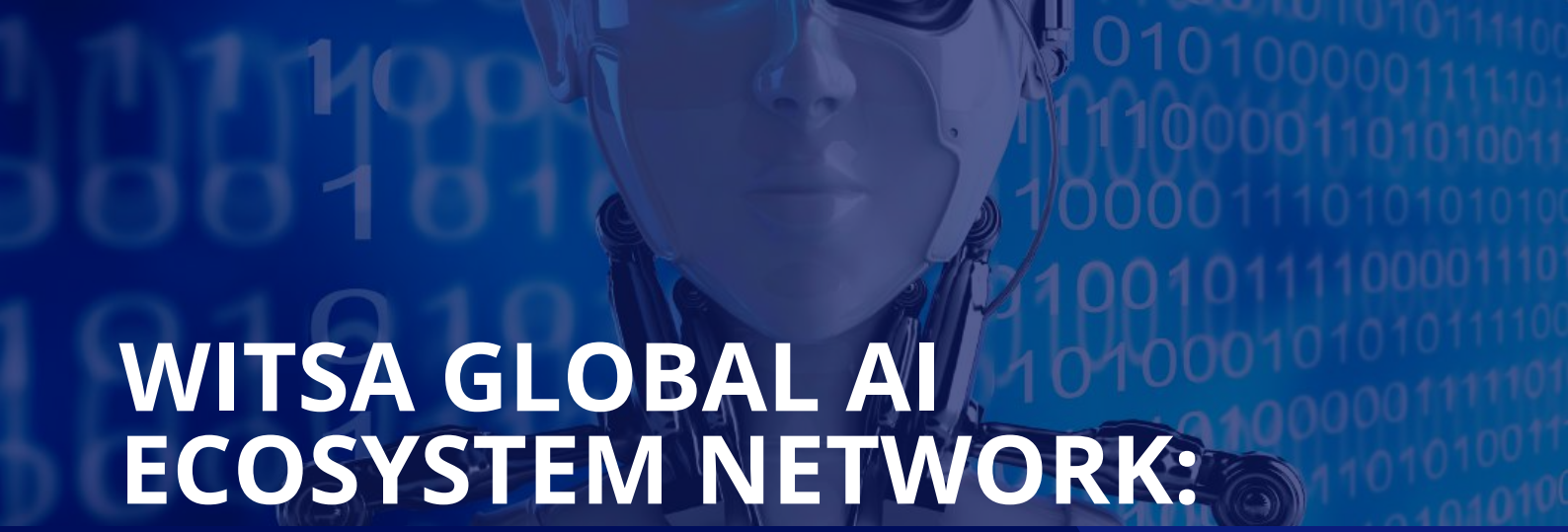
Catherine Lian

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Catherine Lian
General Manager and Technology Leader, IBM ASEAN

Catherine leads all strategic and operational decisions related to IBM's sales, services, and delivery operations. She works with clients and key stakeholders in the region to leverage hybrid cloud and AI technologies to help them further accelerate their digital transformation journey.

Catherine is recipient of the WITSA Women in Tech Award for the private sector category at the WITSA Global Awards 2023.



WITSA GLOBAL AI ECOSYSTEM NETWORK:

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Establishing the AI Ecosystem Hub for partner cities and regions across six continents drive innovation and collaboration among diverse stakeholders

The WITSA Global AI Ecosystem Network (WITSA GAIN) is designed to connect AI ecosystems globally, fostering collaboration among governments, industry, startups, academia, and investors. The network is structured around seven core pillars AI infrastructure, talent development, entrepreneurship, use cases, data, public policy, and investments all anchored by WITSA's AI Maturity Model.

Members can now join WITSA GAIN via the complimentary Foundation Membership is available, and have access to AI trend insights, and participation in foundational initiatives shaping AI ecosystems worldwide.

The intent:

WITSA GAIN will accelerate AI development through collaboration among innovators, startups, and policymakers, addressing local and global challenges, particularly in underserved regions

How it works:

Brings together innovators, startups, researchers, investors, and policymakers to accelerate the development and adoption of AI solutions

Impact:

Fosters regional hubs, supports infrastructure mapping, coordinates investments, and enables innovation matchmaking across borders

Leveraging International Expertise & Collaborative Knowledge

The WITSA GAIN platform brings together AI leaders from around the world, fostering the exchange of innovative ideas and best practices, making it a truly global knowledge hub

Forging Global Partnerships for Regional and International Growth

The network's unique model establishes enduring partnerships that transcend geographical boundaries, enabling members to collaborate with global regions and expand their reach

Resource Pooling & Cross-Pollination of Innovations

By uniting diverse AI ecosystems, WITSA GAIN enables the pooling of resources and cross-pollination of groundbreaking solutions, creating synergies that accelerate progress and drive impactful innovation

Driving Cross-Border Exports and Collaborative Opportunities

WITSA GAIN fosters international business opportunities, empowering stakeholders to expand exports and establish cross-border collaborations, making it an unparalleled platform for global growth in AI

Reach out to [us](#) to get a briefing on WITSA GAIN

[**Join WITSA GAIN**](#)

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NEWS

NEWS



KEYNOTE

MIKE WALSH
FUTURIST AND CEO OF THE
"The AI Power Organisation"

4TH 2023



CALLING FOR ARTICLES FROM **MEMBERS**

Send us your events to be included in the next issue
of the WITSA Newsletter, write to Azlina Ishak at
azlina@witsa.org





Be Part of WITSA's Catalytic Platforms

Are you passionate about making a difference in the global tech community? We invite you to be a catalyst for change by participating in WITSA's nine catalytic platforms.

From the World Congress on Innovation & Technology to our Global Awards and AI Ecosystem Network, there's a unique opportunity for everyone to contribute, collaborate, and lead.

To get involved, simply reach out to azlina@witsa.org to learn how you can participate and help shape the future of technology.



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