

Call for "Human-First" Innovation at Landmark ZenAI 2026 Conference

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

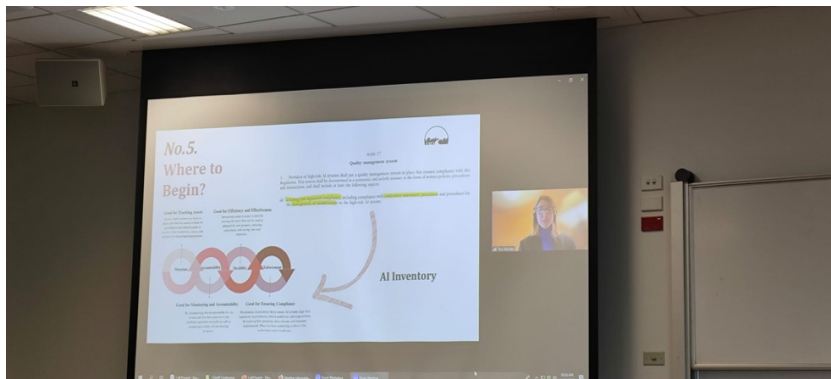
Building a future in which artificial intelligence (AI) enhances rather than diminishes human flourishing was the central mandate at the ZenAI Conference 2026, held on 26 February 2026. Hosted at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and broadcast to a global digital audience, the conference themed “Zen in the Age of AI” marked a pivotal shift in the global tech discourse.

As AI systems move from passive tools to "agentic" participants in daily life, Fikun Trust organized this conference to address the rising "technological anxiety" felt across industries. The event brought together ethicists, researchers, tech and language experts to bridge the gap between rapid automation and human wellbeing.

Redefining AI: From Efficiency to Wellbeing

Conference convenor, Dr. Jumoke Giwa emphasized that technical capability is no longer the primary hurdle; the challenge is now psychological and social.

"Technology is a reflection of our collective consciousness. To ensure AI serves humanity, we must first master our own inner peace and ethical clarity."



Key Highlights & Strategic Directives

The "Mindful Design" Mandate: Speakers including Rochelle Stewart-Allen and Tea Mustać argued that ethics and privacy are not "add-ons" but core design requirements. The conference called for AI governance that prioritizes human dignity over mere speed-to-market.

Addressing AI-Induced Anxiety: A major focus was placed on the mental health impacts of automation. Experts proposed integrating "wellbeing metrics" directly into AI performance benchmarks to ensure systems support, rather than stress, their human users.



Inclusive Innovation: Discussions led by Heather Newell, Modupe Mujota, and Tom Wu highlighted AI’s role in aging populations and wellness systems, and career development, ensuring that the "AI revolution" does not leave vulnerable sectors behind.

Global Activism: The event uniquely linked AI ethics to social justice, with Dr. Giwa drawing attention to the complexities of agentic AI, technology-facilitated gender-based violence (GBV) and the need to eliminate the distribution of child sexual abuse materials (CSAM).

The Convergence: where technology and harm intersect

United Nations
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Sexual images, videos, or audio of children created or altered using artificial intelligence tools are child sexual abuse material.

Even if no child can be identified, deepfake materials normalize the sexual exploitation of children.

Join **UNICEF** in calling for urgent action to stop this threat and protect children.

Tuesday is Safer Internet Day.

The harm from deepfake abuse is real.

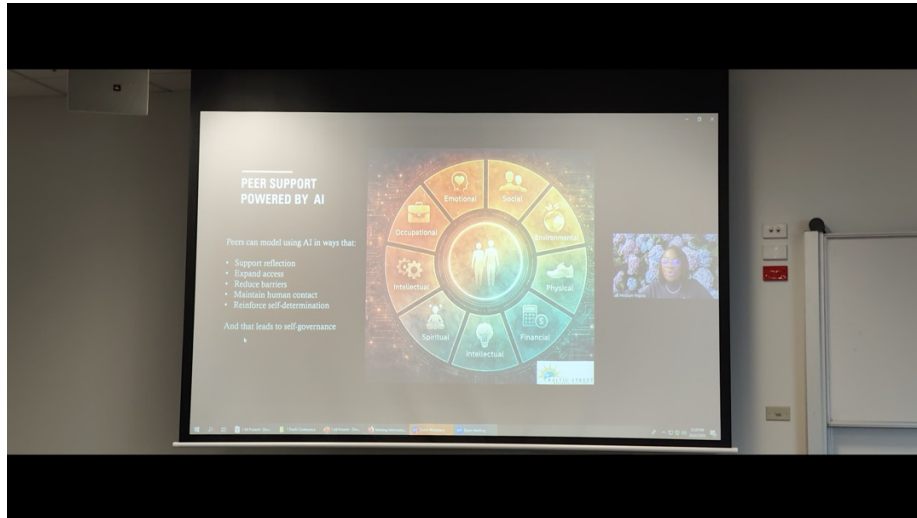
We need urgent action to confront the escalating threat of AI-generated child sexual abuse material.

unicef for every child

A Call to Action for Industry and Policy

The ZenAI 2026 Conference outlines a roadmap for Zen & AI Synergy by calling on:

1. Organizations to adopt corporate wellness programs that address digital displacement.
2. Policy makers to establish regulatory frameworks focused on algorithmic fairness.
3. Educators to train the next generation of engineers in both technical mastery and ethical philosophy.



About Fikun Trust

The Fikun Trust is a leading advocate for human-centered technology and social equity. Through advocacy, dialogue, and research, the Trust seeks to ensure that the digital age remains a tool for capacity building, community empowerment and global wellbeing.

www.fikuntrust.com

About ZenAI Conference

The ZenAI Conference is a premier hybrid event series exploring the intersection of mindfulness, ethics, and artificial intelligence.

www.zenaiconference.com