

The Accenture logo, featuring the word "accenture" in a white, sans-serif font with a small chevron symbol above the 't'.The tech:nyc logo, featuring a stylized white icon of a person with a lightbulb above their head, followed by the text "tech:nyc" in a white, sans-serif font.A wide-angle photograph of the New York City skyline at dusk. The sky is a deep purple and blue, with scattered clouds. The city's lights are on, reflecting on the water in the foreground. The Empire State Building is prominent on the left, and the One World Trade Center is on the right. The water in the foreground is dark and calm.

Built to lead: New York's momentum toward global leadership in applied AI

Why New York's distinctive approach to collaboration and focus on talent gives it an edge—and how executives are positioning to take their work to scale

Preface

In 2024, Accenture and Tech:NYC conducted research (see Appendix) to examine New York City's (NYC's) potential to become a global destination for applied artificial intelligence (AI). We studied executive plans, assessed sentiment and examined contributing factors (present, emerging and needed). We articulated a three-pronged strategy to accelerate economic growth and productivity, attract and equip top AI talent, and scale AI responsibly. And we recommended six interlocking actions focused on reinvention, infrastructure, trust and leadership.

One year later, in our 2025 New York AI Executive Survey, we revisit that opportunity with fresh data and sharper insight. Our survey responses illustrate AI's transformational impacts, and what C-suite executives across sectors are prioritizing now, particularly in terms of jobs and talent development.

The results point to real progress. Consider: in one year, generative AI (gen AI)-related opportunities have grown at twice the national rate. Nearly every executive surveyed (99%) plans to expand hiring for AI-related roles. AI adoption has jumped from 55% to 78%.¹ Employers posted 120% more AI-related jobs than the year prior, with demand for gen AI roles more than doubling.² They're also increasing AI investment, upskilling teams and scaling use cases.

New York is also demonstrating the practical promise of physical AI across the city. Drones assist first responders. Predictive systems monitor tunnels and bridges. Generative tools translate sign language, optimize transit, and expand access to education and public services. AI robots assist in facilities management at LaGuardia. Talent pipelines are growing. Public-private coordination continues to strengthen. A new civic culture around AI is taking shape.

The city's optimism also sets it apart. Eighty-eight percent of executives report feeling optimistic or thrilled about the future of AI, and believe the city has emerged as a global AI destination. Together, these signals show that New York is not just participating in the global AI race. It is setting a high bar for other cities and regions.

New York's early advantage stems from how it applies AI: across sectors, at scale as quickly as possible, and in service of economic and responsible growth. The key will be building with purpose on this momentum as growth brings challenges, technologies evolve and competition emerges. With US private AI investment reaching \$109 billion in 2024, cities nationwide are moving aggressively to attract capital, talent and momentum.¹

To move forward effectively, our findings show that executives are focused on three broad areas:

- Strengthening the city's people-centered AI blueprint through job creation and upskilling that keeps pace
- Capturing the compounding value of its investments and ecosystem
- Ensuring that responsible AI frameworks align with innovation as AI continues to evolve

The bottom line: by deepening its commitment to adaptive leadership and policy, public-private collaboration, real-world execution and responsible growth, New York can continue to build a solid foundation for its future with AI.



Contents



5

Introduction



8

Strengthening New York’s
people-centered AI blueprint



15

Capturing the compounding value
of New York’s investments and ecosystem



23

Frameworks to guide
AI’s evolution and advances



29

Conclusion: New York
is positioned to lead



30

Appendix

Lead authors



Julie Samuels

President and CEO,
Tech:NYC



Laura Peterson

Americas Operations Lead and New York
Metro Office Managing Director,
Accenture



David Leckstein

Americas Technology Lead,
Accenture



Joon-Seong Lee

Global Lead – Growth AI,
Accenture



Jennifer Walden

Client Account Lead,
State of New York, Accenture



Francis Hintermann

Global Managing Director,
Accenture Research



Corrine Vitolo

US Research Lead,
Accenture Research

About the research

Accenture conducted a cross-industry survey of 500 C-level executives in New York City (NYC) across 20 industries. The survey was fielded from March 2025 through April 2025 across the five NYC boroughs.

Survey insights were coupled with input from a curated group of industry experts. The team also gathered qualitative research to discover AI’s impact on several aspects of NYC and State’s economy. Topics included employment projections, AI use, applications and outlook in the New York metropolitan area, upskilling and development programs, and policy and regulatory development around responsible AI.



99%

of executives surveyed plan to increase recruitment for AI-related roles—up 20% from 2024

Introduction

Artificial intelligence has moved quickly from theory to practice, and nowhere is this transformation more vivid than in New York. Here, AI is already helping leaders reshape industries, institutions and individual lives. In fact, by all measures, New York is a living lab for real-world AI implementation, setting an increasingly high bar on outcomes.

Consider: according to findings from the 2025 New York AI Executive Survey, along with additional research, AI is contributing to exceptional gains across New York’s industry sectors including finance, healthcare, life sciences and retail.

Public-private partnerships are realizing increased velocity as well, as leaders find themselves better positioned to develop collaborative, long-term visions, strengthen ecosystem partnerships and create jobs with AI. For example, Empire AI—New York’s groundbreaking public-private academic consortium—is contributing to the state’s advancements in AI research and workforce development, fueled by new funding and an expanded network of university partnerships.

And in the year since our 2024 survey, AI-related employment opportunities have grown at double the national rate. This, as almost all (99%) of the 500 executives who responded to our 2025 survey plan to increase their recruitment for AI-related roles (up 20% from last year).

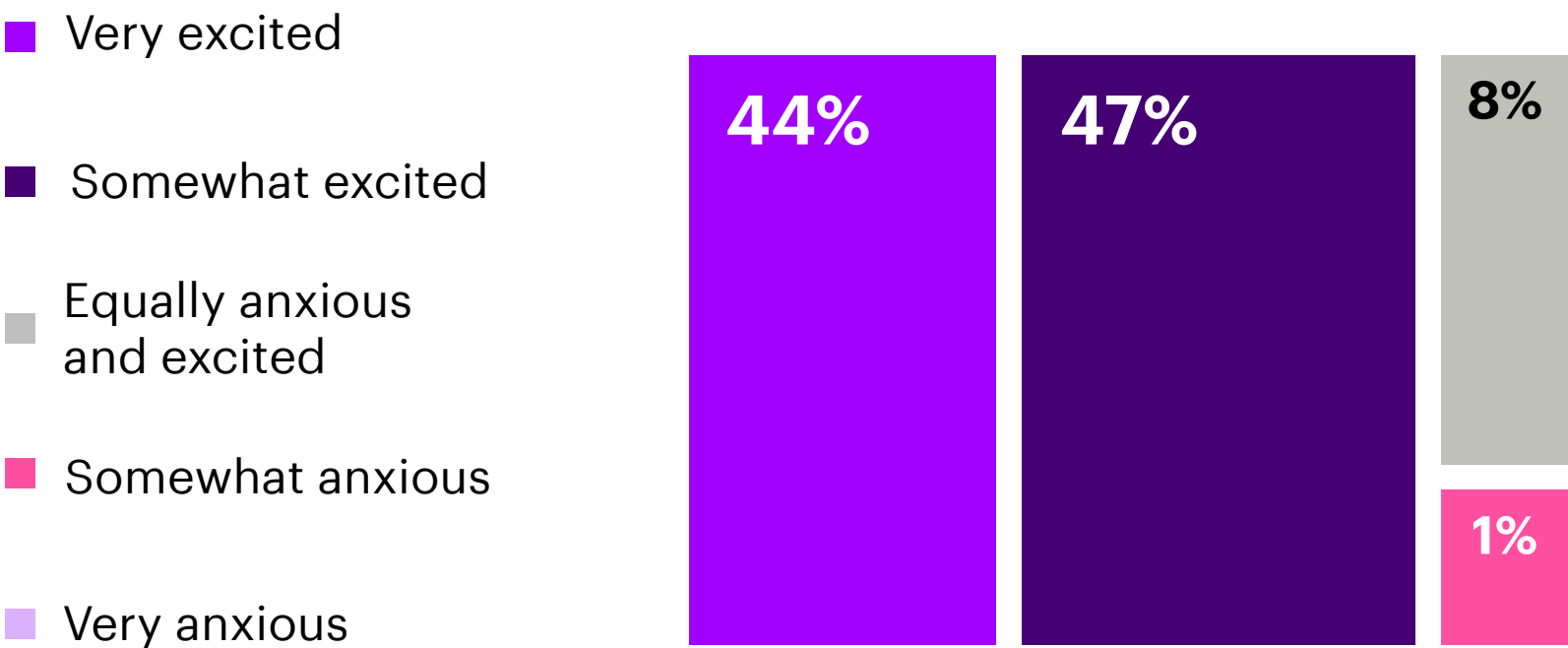
Moreover, as a vital finding from our survey attests, executives are concurrently pursuing robust strategies to help existing workers develop the skills they need to succeed as the nature of work evolves. Over the last 12 months, 84% of executives have upskilled or reskilled employees to move into AI roles, and 86% plan to do so over the next 12 months. And most (91%) of NYC executives agree that organizations investing in continuous AI upskilling will strengthen talent retention within the next 3–5 years. These efforts are guided by a forward-thinking body of plans, strategies and programs, also developed in New York, to ensure continuous and responsible innovation across functions, processes and people (see Appendix: “Learn more about NYC’s AI deployment”). Just 24% identified uncertainty around ROI for AI recruitment as a top challenge, down from 50% last year.

Given this progress, it’s no surprise that we found higher levels of optimism among NYC leaders about AI than across the global population. What’s particularly notable is the relative level of their optimism. As shown in the chart below, a full 90% of NYC leaders are optimistic about AI implementation in their organization and 91% are excited about it.

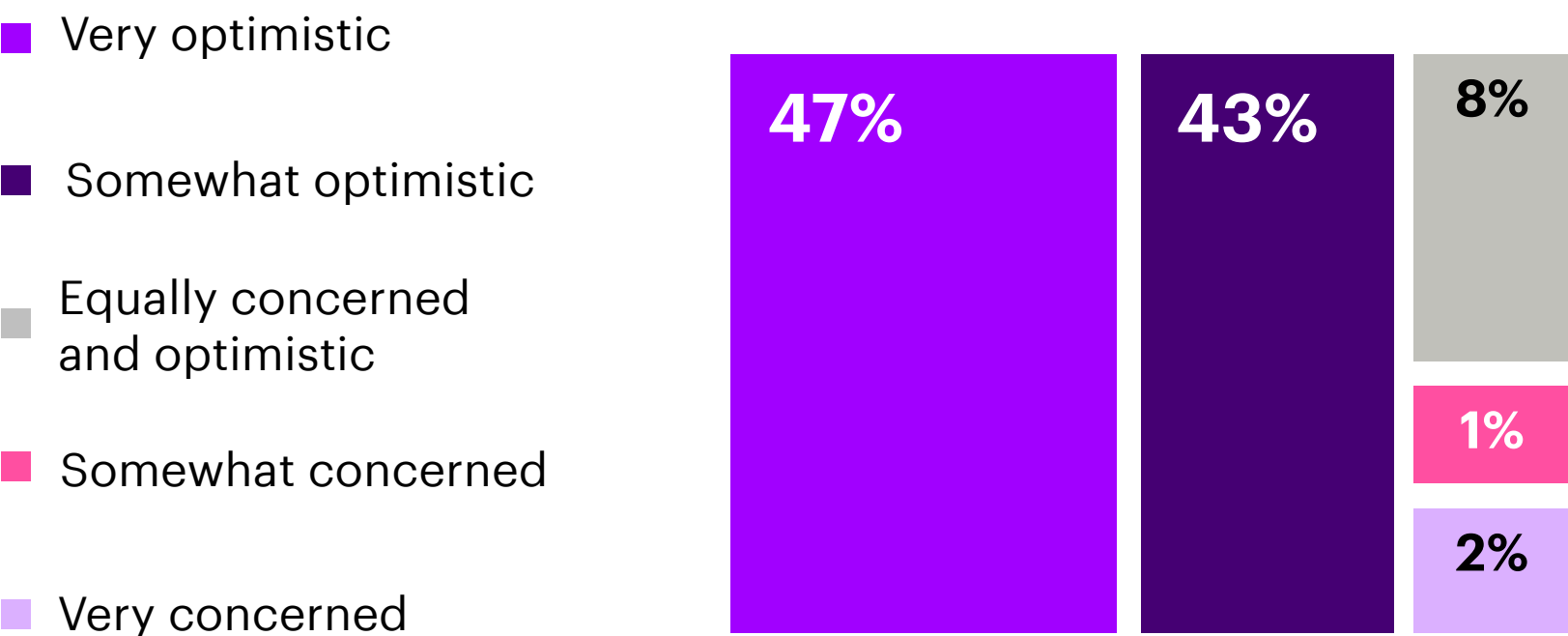
There is a strong sense of optimism about AI adoption, with organizations viewing it as a transformative force for innovation, efficiency and growth

How do you feel about the implementation of AI throughout your organization?

Excited to Anxious

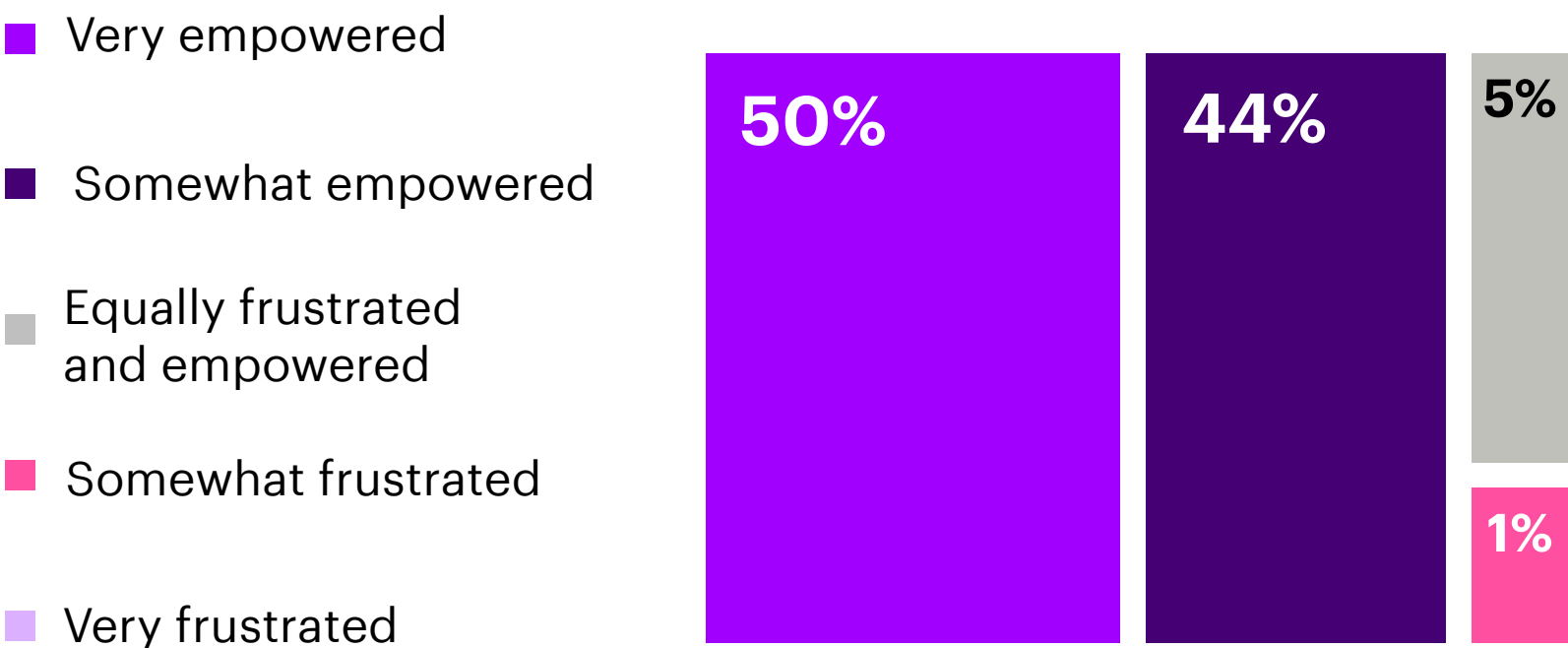


Optimistic to Concerned

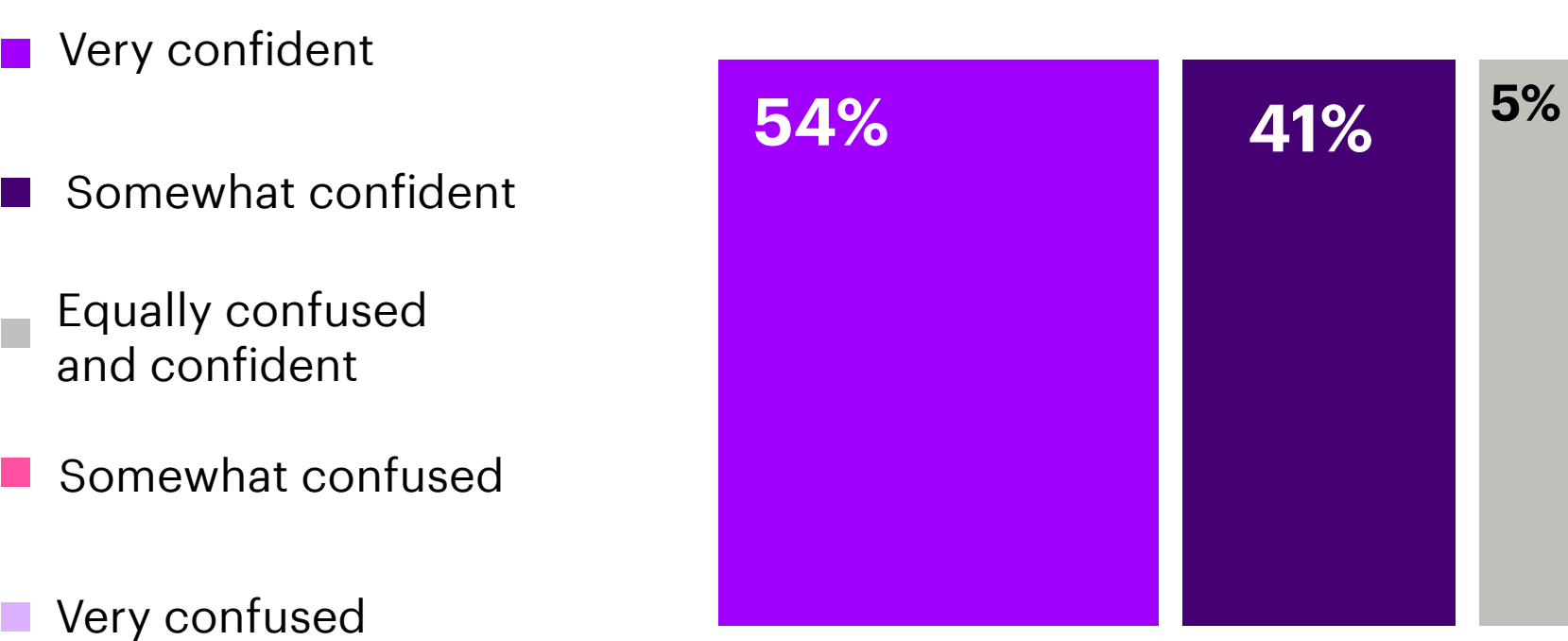


Additionally, most (92%) said they believe investing in AI now will lead to measurable competitive advantage in the next 3–5 years. By comparison, Stanford’s 2024 AI Index found that just 55% of individuals worldwide saw AI products and services as more beneficial than harmful.

Empowered to Frustrated



Confident to Confused



Of course, as AI use expands, related challenges also arise and intensify. For example, although job growth forecasts are strong, recruiting is accelerating and reskilling efforts are maturing, executives remain worried about talent availability. Data privacy and security, meanwhile, are perennially (and globally) top-of-mind issues.

Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

Three focus areas can reinforce New York’s role at the forefront of applied AI

To help New York’s executives address these challenges and strengthen the city’s position as a leader in applied AI, this report codifies three broad areas leaders are focusing on to fortify AI’s positive effects and advance New York’s AI use with confidence:

- 1. Strengthening the city’s people-centered AI blueprint through job creation and upskilling that keeps pace with adoption
- 2. Capturing the compounding value of its investments and ecosystem
- 3. Ensuring the integration of a strong digital core and responsible AI into development and deployment as AI expands further into agentic and physical AI

In one year, New York has moved from making nascent forays into AI use to demonstrating the technology’s promise across a wide variety of forms and programs. Its potential to be a lasting, leading destination is therefore strong, but it’s not guaranteed. Other regions are increasingly asserting their AI presence, and as noted, private investment in AI and gen AI continues to grow throughout the country and beyond. In 2024, private investment in AI across the US reached \$109.1 billion, China’s reached \$9.3 billion and the UK’s reached \$4.5 billion. Gen AI drew \$33.9 billion in global private investment—an 18.7% increase over 2023.¹

Nonetheless, through collaboration and thoughtful planning, New York will sustain and even accelerate its momentum to bring governance, strategies, programs and intent to scale. Ultimately, New York can exemplify the “art of the possible” for other urban areas and for the world at large. The rest of this report examines highlights from our findings in the context of each area.

In 2024, private investment in AI across the US reached

\$109.1 B



Strengthening New York's people-centered AI blueprint



84%

of employers have upskilled existing employees into AI roles, and 91% say continued investment in reskilling strengthens retention

New York's strongest lever in AI leadership is its people. Its collective blueprint for AI—guided by plans like New York City Economic Development Corporation's (NYCEDC's) Artificial Intelligence Advantage and the Center for an Urban Future's Maximizing NYC's AI Opportunity—includes talent development as a key element of its strategic approach.^{3, 4} Through coordinated public-private action, New York is not only scaling applied AI, but actively shaping its own unique ecosystem where talent, innovation and inclusive growth reinforce one another.

In October 2023, for example, New York became the first US city to publish a comprehensive AI Action Plan, outlining 37 foundational steps—from building a citywide AI governance framework to launching an external advisory network, training public employees and embedding AI procurement standards.⁵ By March 2024, it was announced that 31 of these actions had been started or completed within a year of the plan's launch.⁶ The city has also committed to publishing annual progress reports to ensure transparency and alignment.⁷

And the results are measurable. AI adoption surged from 55% to 78% in just one year. Demand for AI talent is accelerating faster than the national average, with job postings up 120% year-over-year and gen AI postings more than doubling. Top employers—including Amazon, Meta, Google, Bloomberg and JPMorgan Chase—are fueling the market, while hiring priorities blend technical and human-centered skills. Interestingly, the top AI-hiring organizations have remained largely consistent, with continued demand from the aforementioned companies in addition to Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, New York University (NYU) and Columbia University. This consistency suggests that top talent is circulating within a strong, stable ecosystem and choosing to stay in New York.

Among these AI professionals, most have a diverse employment history, often spanning research, software development and data analysis roles. Notably, 10% of their prior occupation titles are rooted in academia, highlighting the deep connections between New York's educational institutions and its AI workforce.² Of the 63% respondents who selected NYC or the NYC Metropolitan area as the world's leader in AI, a large majority point to strong educational opportunities (64%), access to local AI talent (53%) and dissemination of AI across industries (50%) as drivers.

Looking ahead, AI’s impact on jobs will vary by role. Fields such as healthcare, computer science and mathematics—more exposed to augmentation than many others—are expected to see steady growth over the next five years. Executives surveyed said the employee skills they are most focused on developing include AI (LLMs, prompt engineering, agentic AI), innovative thinking (generating ideas, planning for the future) and data skills (such as data science and data mining).² A majority (64%) also report having those strong academic relationships that will help them recruit an AI-ready workforce.

Nearly all executives (99%) plan to expand their AI teams in the next three years, with many scaling hiring by more than 20%. And, as our executive survey data indicates, New York is focused on fortifying its talent pipeline. This growth is not confined to new talent; as noted, 84% of employers have upskilled existing employees into AI roles, and 91% say continued investment in reskilling strengthens retention.

A majority (62%) of executives also say that NYC’s current upskilling and reskilling initiatives are leading the way in AI workforce development, preparing the workforce for AI-driven roles. This confidence is reinforced by their strong sense of optimism, as 90% of executives believe NYC can maintain its leadership in AI by continuing to offer best-in-class training programs and education.

Together, these efforts reveal a city that is not only adapting to change but also proactively shaping what comes next. Indeed, a closer look reveals upskilling efforts across industry sectors in New York.



New York State’s broader AI education commitments

While much of this report focuses on NYC, state-level initiatives add valuable context. Governor Kathy Hochul has launched a statewide AI training program for public employees and is partnering with Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers to deliver AI education to small businesses.

Governor Hochul has also launched New York’s free community college program, covering tuition, fees, books and supplies for adult students aged 25–55 pursuing associate degrees in high-demand fields at the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY), including AI and related fields.

Meanwhile, Empire State Development’s AI Prep program offers free training, mentorship and internships to disadvantaged college students pursuing AI careers.²⁶ New York State also leads the nation in AI-related graduate degree programs, with more than 20 Master’s-level offerings.³⁷

In financial services, JPMorganChase’s internal GenAI platform, LLM Suite, is now used by over 200,000 of its employees, including CEO Jamie Dimon.⁸ The company is also working with employees to reshape workflows, increasing their efficiency and augmenting their ability to contribute value.

In life sciences, Johnson & Johnson—with a key Tech Hub in NYC—is upskilling more than 56,000 employees with gen AI training, focusing on new skills such as prompt engineering and summarization.⁹ The company is also rolling out digital boot camps and its AI-powered “J&J Learn” platform to support ongoing learning and align employee development with business needs.

In data, S&P Global has launched a comprehensive gen AI program that will upskill over 35,000 employees.¹⁰ Through tailored training, hands-on labs and real-world use case development, it will also accelerate the responsible adoption of AI across the organization.

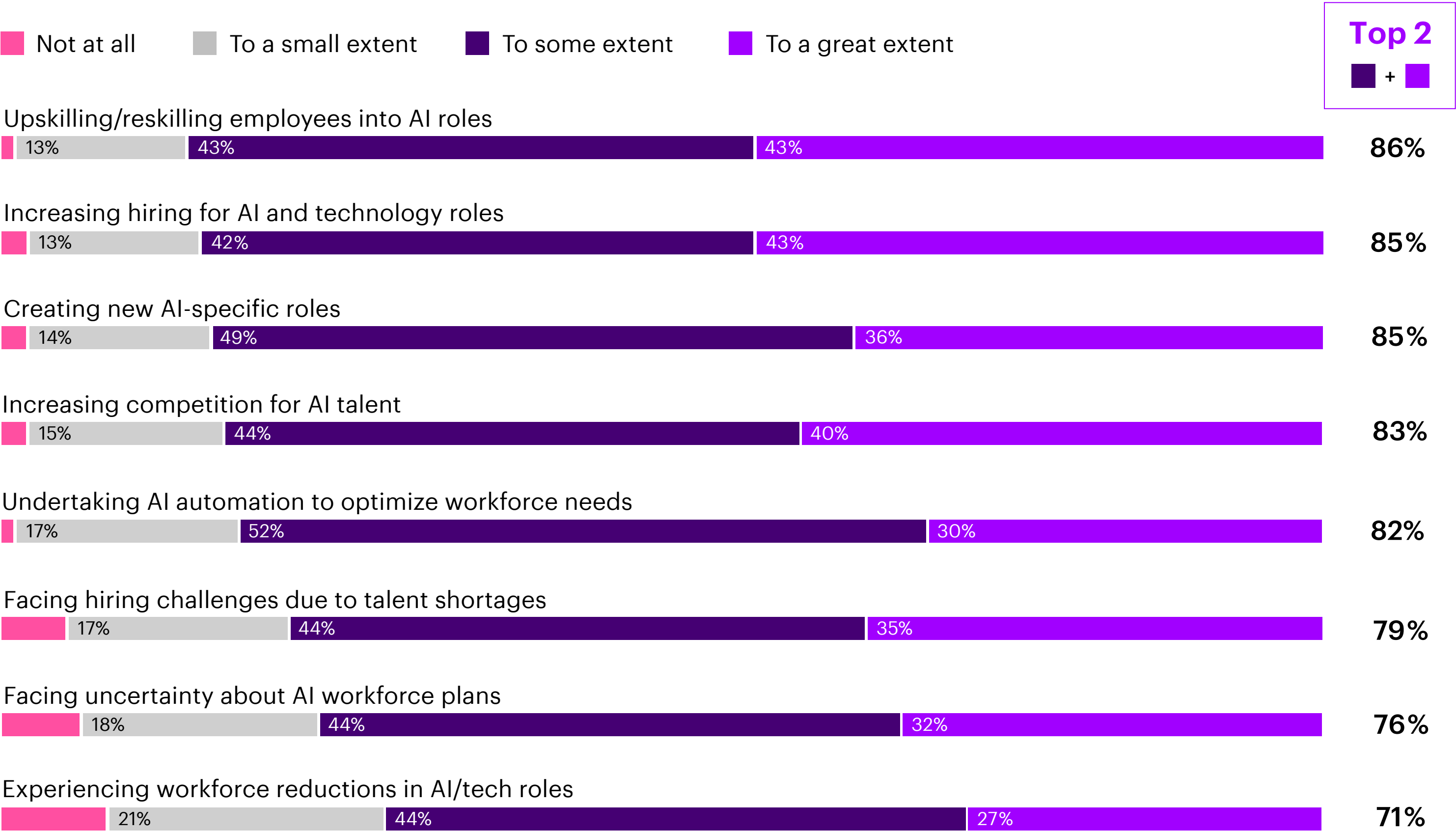
In consumer goods, Estée Lauder Companies has launched an AI Innovation Lab in partnership with Microsoft to integrate gen AI across its global operations.¹¹ The initiative focuses on upskilling employees and developing tools like internal chatbots to streamline product development, marketing and consumer engagement.

In the next year, organizations are likely to prioritize upskilling to bridge skill gaps and adapt to evolving AI demands amid increasing competition for skilled AI talent. In the next 12 months, 86% of executives plan to upskill employees and 85% plan to increase hiring for AI roles.



In the next year, organizations are likely to prioritize upskilling to bridge skill gaps and adapt to evolving AI demands amid increasing competition for skilled AI talent

To what extent will the following workforce changes occur in your organization over the next 12 months?



Top 2 Box results may appear differently than the chart summation of Strongly agree + Agree due to rounding.
Top 2 = To a great extent + To some extent.

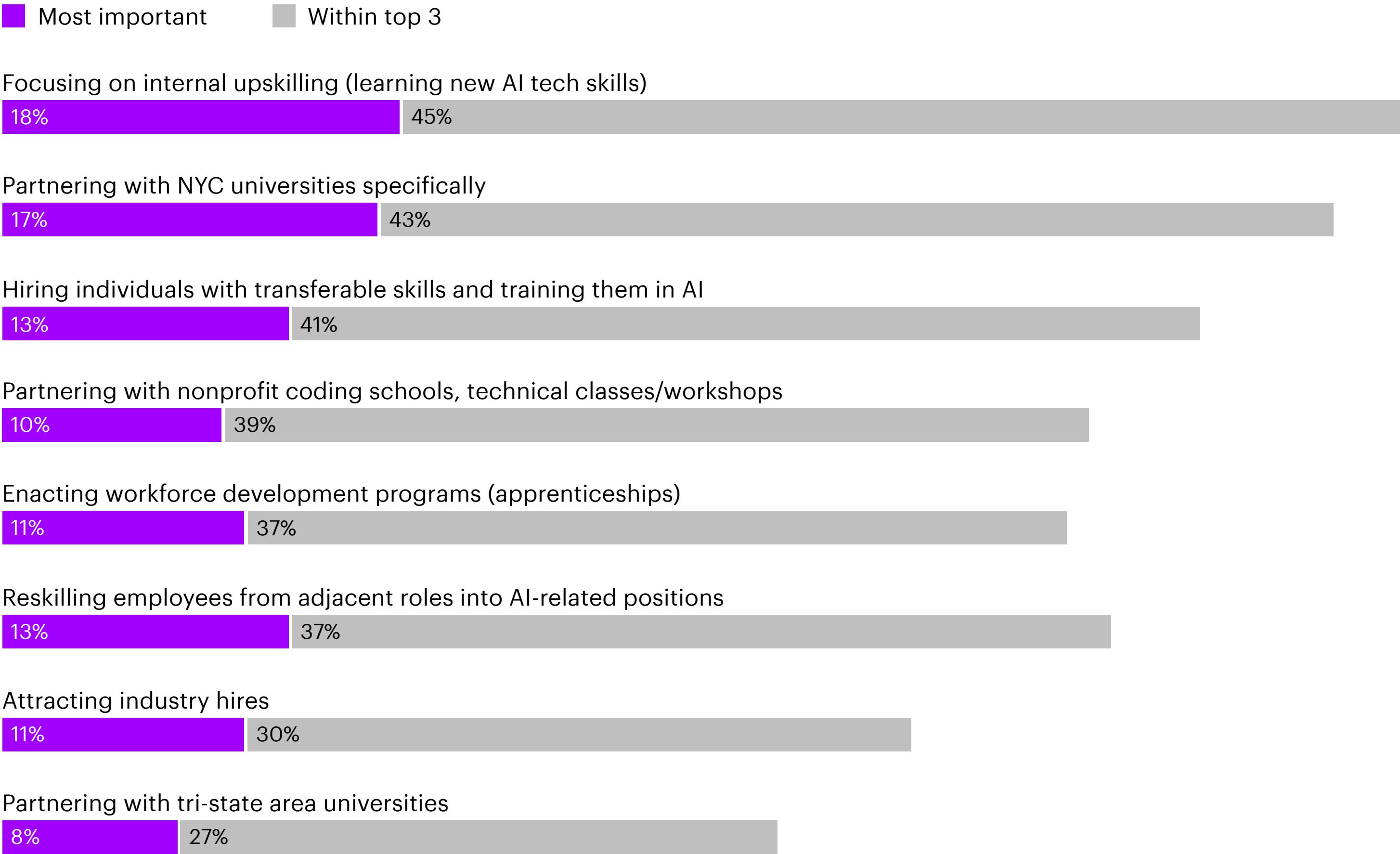
Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

Finally, this story extends well beyond industry to include the AI adoption and skilling efforts being undertaken by nonprofits and other civic organizations, demonstrating New York’s commitment to accessibility. Decoded Futures, for example, a signature initiative of the Tech:NYC Foundation, is equipping NYC’s nonprofit sector with the tools, training and strategic support needed to integrate AI into their operations.¹² Since its launch in 2023, Decoded Futures has engaged more than 1,000 nonprofit leaders through immersive learning experiences. The program now supports over 80 NYC-based nonprofits, including major institutions like the New York Public Library, CUNY and the YMCA.

Meanwhile, academic institutions, including Columbia University, New York University (NYU) and CUNY are offering hands-on programs in AI, machine learning and responsible innovation, accessible to the general public. Public-private partnerships and open enrollment programs such as New York Public Library’s TechConnect program, Per Scholas and OpenAI Academy are providing accessible AI literacy and training across New York.^{13, 14, 15} At the K–12 level, NYC Public Schools are embedding AI fluency into classrooms through curriculum and policy innovation.¹⁶ A new culture of co-learning is taking root—one where people and AI systems develop together on the job, in school and in civic life. This shift to continuous, broadly available, adaptive learning may prove to be the city’s most strategic investment.

Executives strongly believe leveraging internal upskilling and partnering with NYC-area universities will help develop a more robust AI talent pipeline

Which of the following available resources can organizations best leverage to develop NYC’s robust AI talent pipeline? Rank all, where 1 = best resource.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

Internal upskilling ranks highest, with 45% placing it in their top three resources, followed closely by partnerships with NYC universities (43%) and training individuals with transferable skills (41%).



Staying ahead as the model evolves

As AI and applications evolve, so too, will the challenges leaders face. The good news is that leaders will be able to use AI itself to great effect to accelerate strategic learning, coordination and reinvention.¹⁷

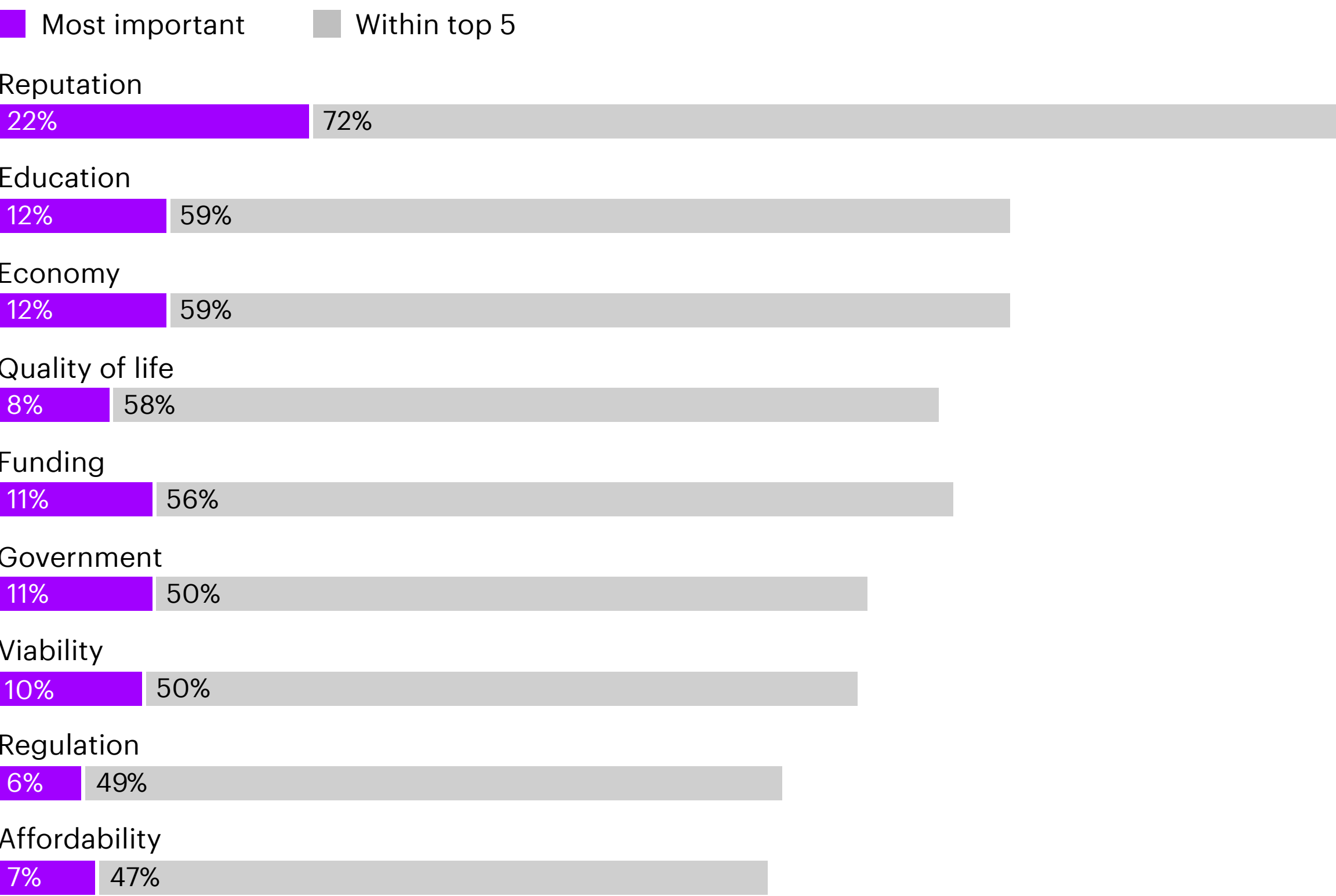
Specifically, Accenture Research shows that organizations capturing the most value from gen AI are those that create mechanisms to help people learn continuously and feed that learning back into decision-making.¹⁸ Almost all (91%) of the executives surveyed agree that strong leadership support and incentives drive successful AI upskilling initiatives.

At the organizational level, executives will also need to take a longer view, leading with a clear vision to reinvent work, reshape the workforce and prepare employees for a gen AI-powered future by embracing skills-based management, hiring for potential and investing in broad-based AI upskilling.¹⁸ Personalized, AI-driven learning is already helping some organizations close skills gaps and empower employees to succeed in AI-augmented roles. At the same time, AI agents are beginning to transform how people and technology collaborate, allowing organizations to embed AI as “digital colleagues” and reimagine workflows, roles and capabilities as a result.

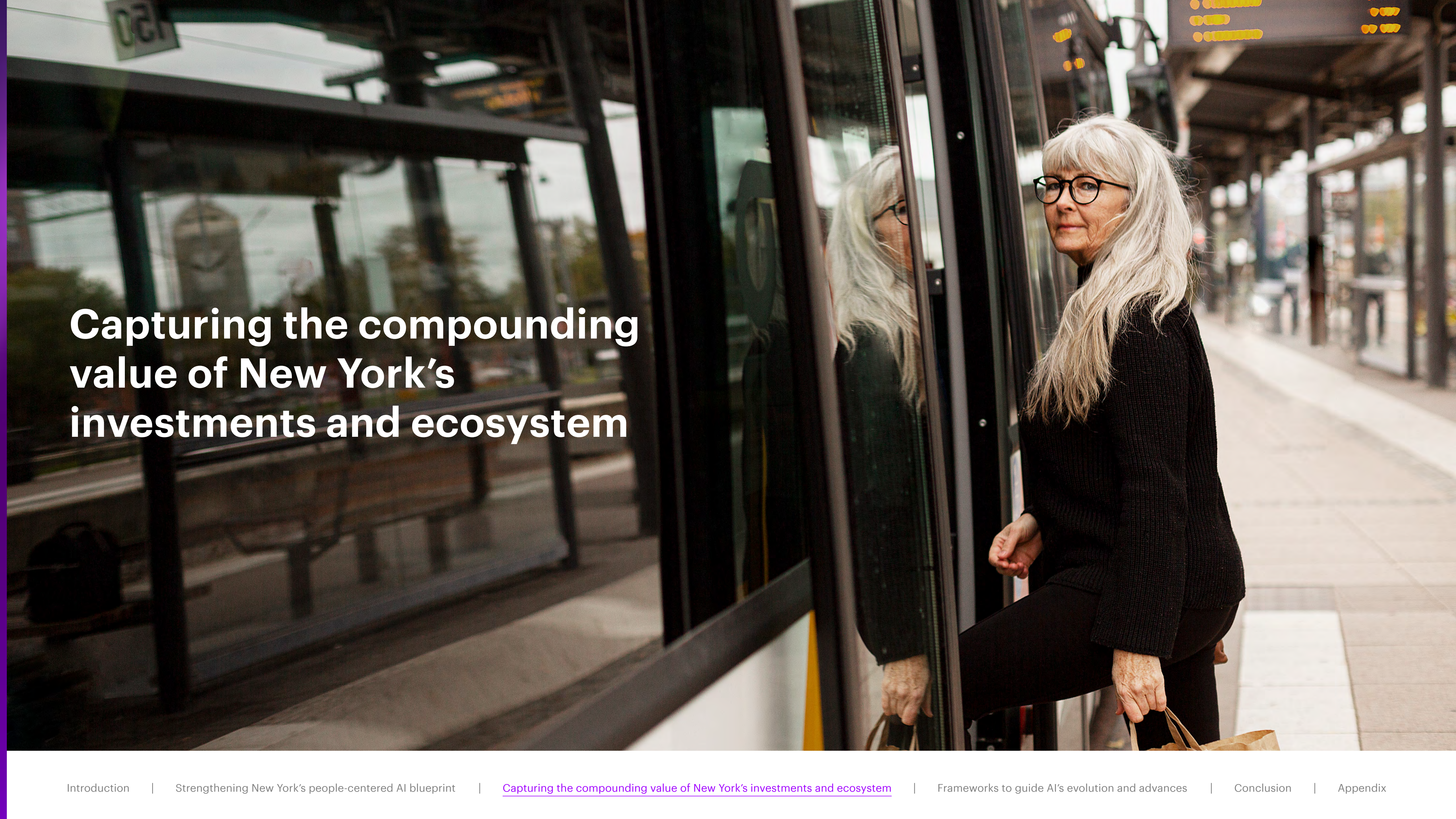
NYC’s reputation offers the greatest boost for AI recruitment efforts, with 72% of executives ranking it in their top 5 and 22% naming it the single most important factor. This outpaces other strong factors, including access to education and a strong economy.

NYC’s reputation offers the greatest boost for AI recruitment efforts – followed by the city’s accessibility to higher education opportunities and strong economy

What are the factors about NYC that are going to facilitate your company’s AI recruitment efforts? Rank the top 5, where 1 = most important.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

A photograph of an older woman with long, wavy white hair and black-rimmed glasses. She is wearing a black ribbed sweater and black pants. She is standing on a train platform, looking out of the open door of a train car. Her reflection is visible in the glass of the train door. The background shows a blurred city street with other people and buildings.

Capturing the compounding value of New York's investments and ecosystem



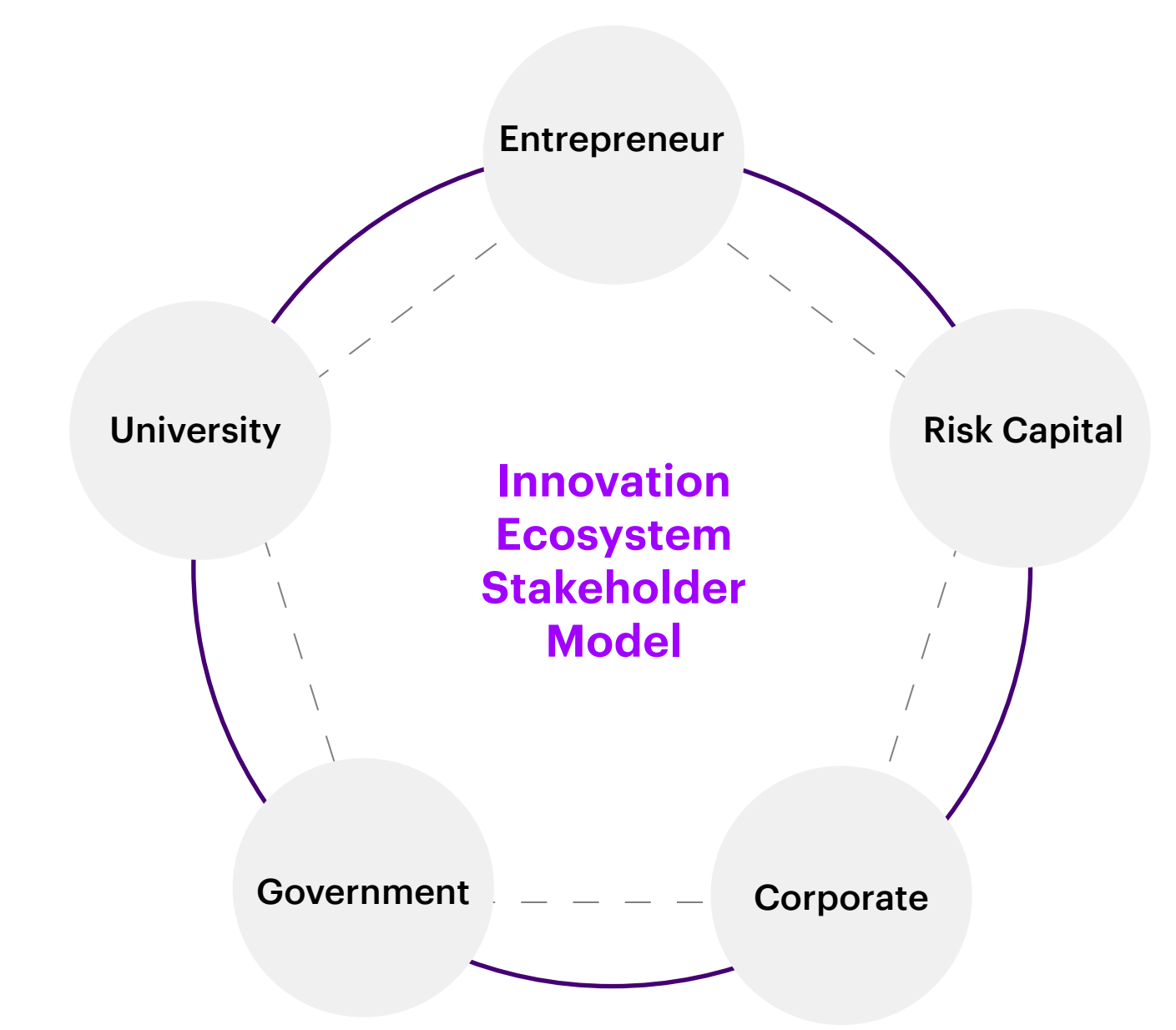
New York’s early investments in AI were bold, decisive and inclusive—not just at the city and state level, but across industry, infrastructure, education and civic life. Now comes the more difficult phase: capturing the full value of those investments while navigating complexity, momentum and fast-following peers. In a landscape where adoption is broad but still evolving, leaders must commit to continuously surfacing lessons—not only to scale what works, but to share insights across sectors and close emerging gaps. In a region as complex as New York, this calls for sustained coordination and a continuous commitment to growing the connective tissue between government, corporate and academic stakeholders.

New York’s unique ecosystem is the central, vital component for future success. In our 2024 survey and landscape assessment, we highlighted the five key ingredients from Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT’s) model of successful ecosystems and stakeholders; all are visibly present and active in New York¹⁹ (see graphic).

By continuing to invest and grow collaboration across these components of New York’s ecosystem, visible and positive outcomes can compound. These key segments are, together, symbiotic and accretive growth drivers—the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This is the flywheel that drives New York’s significant momentum, one that few other cities can match. By cross-pollinating investments and collaboration across these segments, the entire ecosystem gains strength.

Complementary stakeholders in innovation ecosystems

A healthy innovation ecosystem draws value from—and delivers value to—five different kinds of stakeholders.



Source: MIT Sloan Management Review

On the corporate front of New York’s innovation ecosystem, we’re already seeing these positive impacts play out. A key driver for industry comes from leading AI providers with a presence in New York, including pioneers such as Google, NVIDIA, AWS and now, OpenAI. These global hyperscalers are joined by a growing cohort of AI-native New Yorkers such as Hugging Face, AlphaSense, ElevenLabs, Cognition AI and Dataminr.

OpenAI’s recent expansion to New York emphasizes the importance of its AI ecosystem: the talent is here, the clients are here and the infrastructure is evolving quickly to meet new demands. From its Soho office, which marks the organization’s first expansion beyond Silicon Valley, it is already collaborating with members of the local ecosystem. Specifically, through a partnership with the NYCEDC and the Founder Fellowship startup accelerator program, OpenAI is providing capital and API credits to early-stage companies.²⁰ At this writing, the initiative has already supported 250 entrepreneurs across 168 companies, with participating founders raising over \$22 million in venture capital and grant funding. This, as OpenAI has launched an additional industry-academia consortium called NextGenAI, with \$50 million in initial funding and 15 research institutions.²¹

And New York continues to spark interest among entrepreneurs and individuals who are focusing their careers on AI. This hub of AI activity now includes more than 2,000 AI startups—including 35 AI unicorns—and 40,000 AI professionals who call New York home.²²

At the state level, several flagship initiatives attest to New York’s approach to leadership. In the latest state budget, Governor Hochul and the state legislature added another \$90 million in capital funding to substantially increase the final computing power of Empire AI.²³ The new state investment will be matched by \$50 million in private funding from new members and \$25 million over 10 years in operating funding from SUNY. This \$165 million in additional funding increases the total investment in the public-private project to more than \$565 million, while also supporting expanding access for SUNY researchers and the addition of new members including the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.



Empire AI’s academic partners

As of early 2025, Empire AI has expanded to include 10 leading research institutions across New York state:

- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- The City University of New York (CUNY)
- New York University (NYU)
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI)
- The State University of New York (SUNY)
- University of Rochester
- Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)
- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
(as a strategic partner)

Together, these institutions form the backbone of a statewide “AI for good” research network—advancing breakthroughs in areas such as healthcare, climate science, ethical AI and inclusive workforce development.

Meanwhile, research is taking place across the state, led by the consortium’s founding members at Cornell University and Cornell Tech, Columbia University, NYU, SUNY, CUNY and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Empire AI is currently running at maximum capacity, with 85 research projects underway and more than 250 researchers granted access to the system to date. And even though Alpha—the initial version of its supercomputer—represents only a small fraction of Empire AI’s eventual computing power, it is already the 243rd most powerful computer in the world, according to the November rankings of the TOP500 list, the industry-standard benchmark for supercomputers. Alpha also ranked 38th on TOP500’s Green 500 list, which ranks the number of calculations per watt of power.

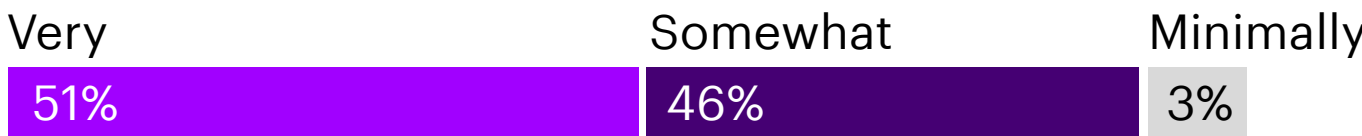
Executives believe collaboration between industry and universities is enormously important, and many organizations would consider it a priority. Most executives believe today’s college graduates are entering the workforce well-prepared for AI-related roles, with 51% saying “very prepared.” At the same time, nearly all respondents view stronger collaboration between industry and academia as essential—91% say it is “very” or “extremely important” for industry to help shape AI-related curricula in NYC.



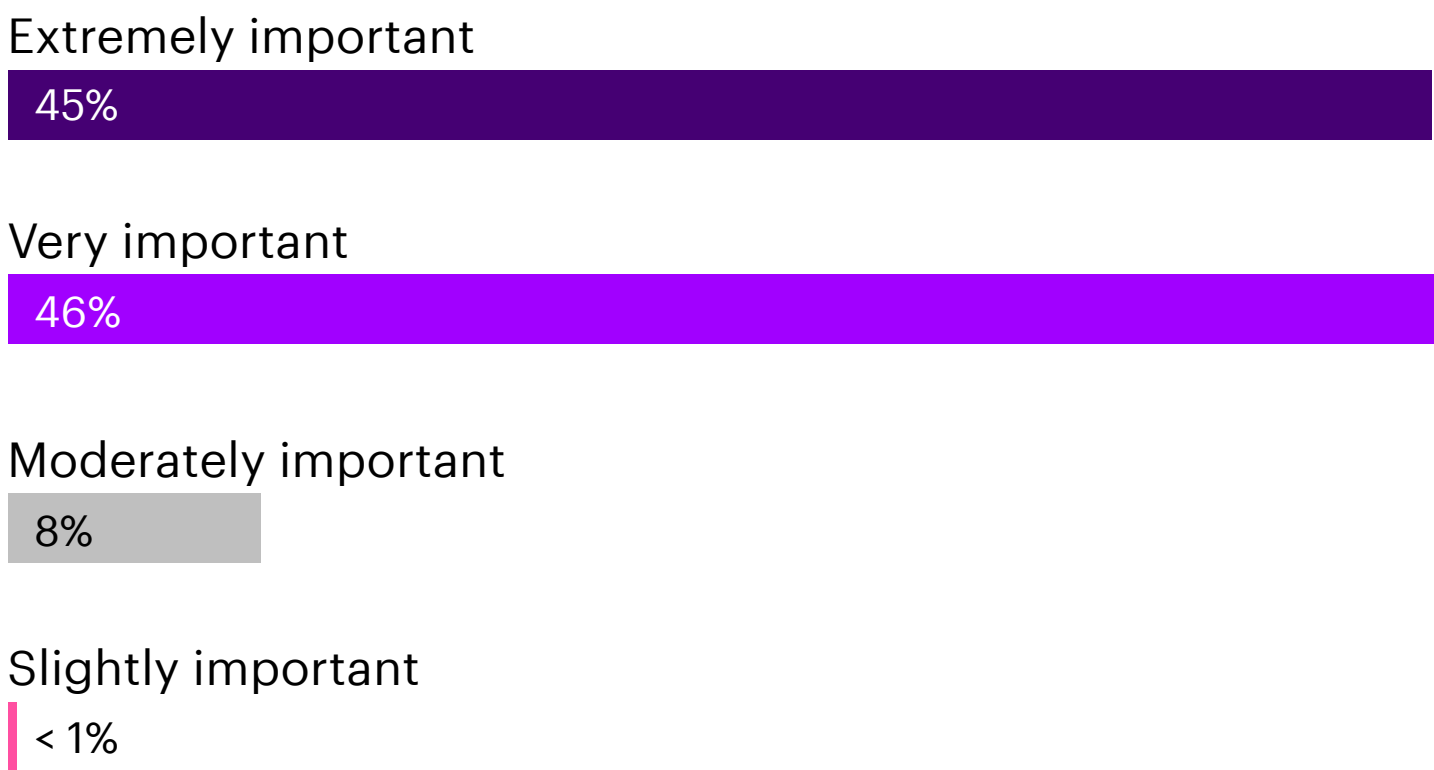
Executives believe collaboration between industry and universities is of great importance and many organizations would consider it a priority

How well-prepared do you believe college graduates are for AI and AI-related roles in your industry in the next 1–3 years?

Prepared



How important is it for industry to influence university curricula to better align AI education with workforce needs in NYC?



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

Similarly, NYCEDC’s aim to make New York the global capital of applied AI is taking shape through a plan for new funding vehicles, an AI Advisory Council and a portfolio of inclusive programs that range from startup support and workforce training to targeted sector innovation.²⁴ These initiatives reflect a model of leadership that blends government agencies, entrepreneurship, equity and execution.

At the same time, New York continues to introduce numerous AI-related regulations at the state and city levels of government, with over 100 related proposed pieces of legislation introduced this year.²⁵

Policy-making efforts must balance the desire to keep pace with innovation with the concern around impacts on growth. Almost half (47%) of survey respondents expressed concern that AI regulation may not keep pace with the technology’s advancement, and more than half believe that AI regulation may impact business innovation and growth.

New York’s outreach to small- and medium-sized businesses is also driving this messaging home (see box). Through such government, state and private initiatives, New York is continuing to strengthen its leadership in AI.

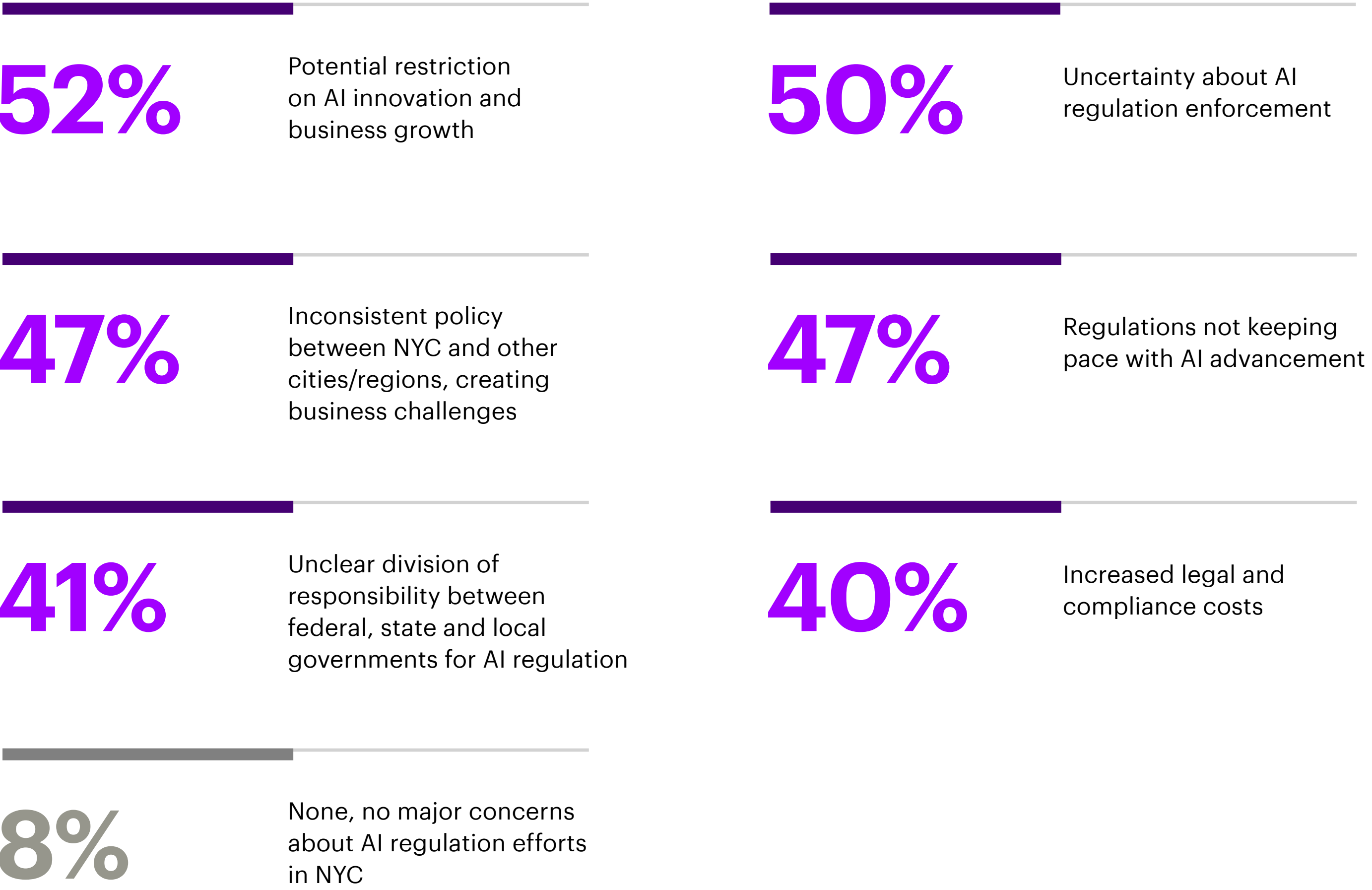
NYC and State: Looking out for small- and medium-sized business interests in AI

The NYCEDC Nexus AI program is a \$3 million investment to connect NYC-based startups with local businesses to create and adopt applied AI solutions. As of 2023 (the most recent data available at this writing), there were 183,000 small businesses across the city, over 1,000 more than there were before the pandemic.³

Additionally, to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses across the state with AI education and adoption, Empire State Development (ESD) will partner with New York’s network of Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers (EACs) to provide AI training.²⁶ EACs are strategically located in disadvantaged communities in every region of New York; this initiative aims to open the door to small businesses seeking to better capitalize on the power of AI.

Organizations are mostly concerned with the potential that AI regulation efforts and enforcement may impact innovation and business growth

Which of the following concerns, if any, do you have about AI regulation efforts in NYC? Select the top three.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500



Lead with value, connect investments to outcomes and share lessons

To remain out front, New York executives are focused not only on doing more with what they already have in place, but also on investing with an eye toward the future. Most (92%) believe that AI investments made today will deliver measurable competitive advantage within three to five years, with sentiment strongest in health and financial services sectors. Investment levels attest to this view. In 2024, New York AI companies raised \$5.52 billion across 217 deals, with another \$1.54 billion secured by May 2025.²⁷

To turn investment into impact, executives will need to continue leading with value and intensify their efforts to connect AI adoption and deployment to outcomes. They will also need to expand their efforts to share what works.

This means prioritizing bold, high-impact initiatives that tackle systemic challenges across key industries. From healthcare to financial services to public infrastructure, New York-based organizations must focus on end-to-end process reinvention—not just pilots or isolated use cases.

It also means deepening alignment at the highest levels of their organizations. Accenture Research finds that CEO sponsorship is critical—companies with executive buy-in achieve 2.5x higher ROI.¹⁸ Leaders must set the tone by investing in targeted executive education that builds deep understanding of gen AI and by showing them how initiatives can and should knit together, leading directly to measurable results.

Organizations are already actively partnering with academic institutions to strengthen AI capabilities, with top strategies including direct hiring or apprenticeships (59%), research collaborations (58%) and joint ventures to commercialize AI products (57%). Many also sponsor university competitions, engage with innovation labs and co-host employee development sessions.

And New York’s ability to make coordinated progress across sectors—public, private, academic and social—is already a core strength. This kind of multi-stakeholder alignment is a rare, hard-won value differentiator. Strengthening and deepening this alignment is how leadership becomes durable and how progress compounds.





Organizations are actively engaging with academic institutions, apprenticeships, research collaborations and joint ventures to ensure a steady flow of skilled AI professionals

How are you engaging with academic institutions to develop AI capabilities? Select all that apply.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

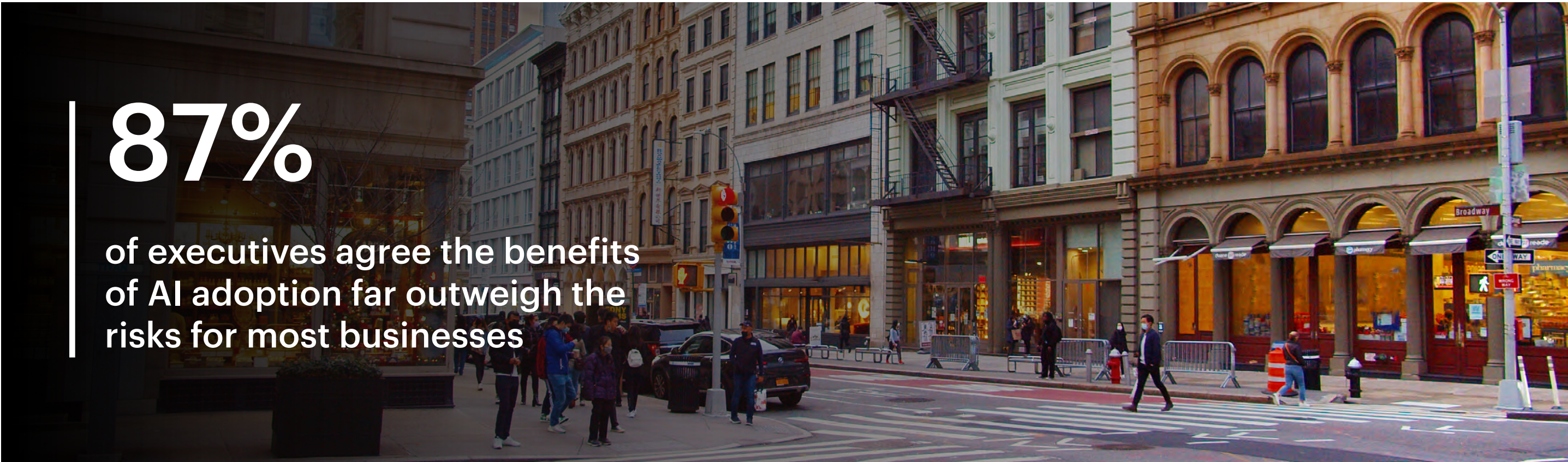


Frameworks to guide AI's evolution and advances

Meaningful progress includes responsibility: as New York accelerates its AI journey, it’s critical that executives continue to prioritize safety and trust. To do so, they need to place humans at the front and center of their AI transformations purposefully, focusing on job design, upskilling and development initiatives. They need to assess their digital core to be sure they can offer support commensurate with the needs of ongoing AI deployment. And, they need to re-evaluate and revise responsible AI (RAI) frameworks to ensure that as the technologies evolve, work is grounded in and bound by ethical policies and practices. Our survey results underscore this imperative, as 61% of respondents viewed privacy challenges, including security issues and deepfakes, as AI’s biggest downside.

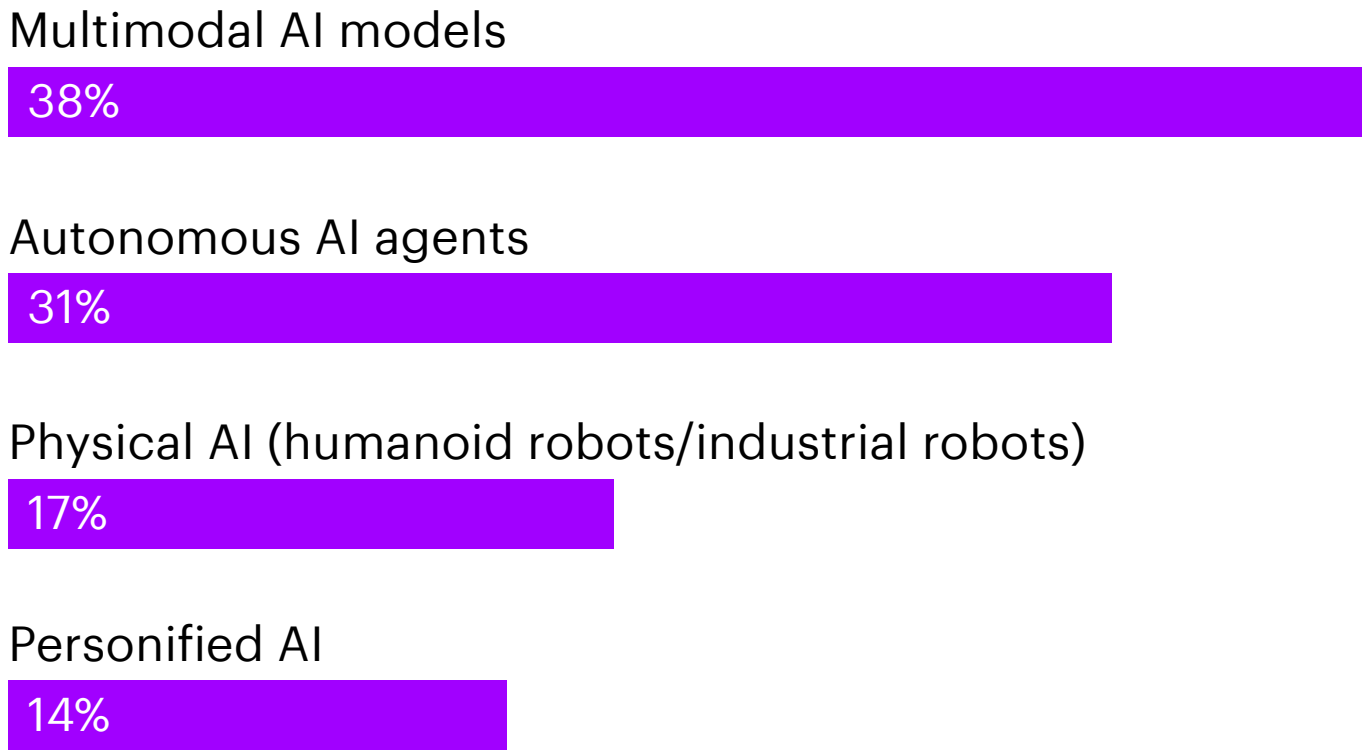
Nonetheless, 87% of executives agree the benefits of AI adoption far outweigh the risks for most businesses. And the technology’s evolution continues to astound. AI preceded gen AI; and now agentic AI is emerging as systems capable of acting autonomously, proactively making decisions, taking actions and adapting to achieve specific goals.

Industries that embrace early advancements in multimodal AI models, autonomous AI agents and physical AI will be better positioned to optimize operations and tap the full potential of AI. Roughly a third of our survey executives cite agentic AI as being the most transformative technology to impact their industry over the next 3–5 years. Agentic AI has the potential to fundamentally reinvent business and workflows and will come in the form of industry-specific solutions.



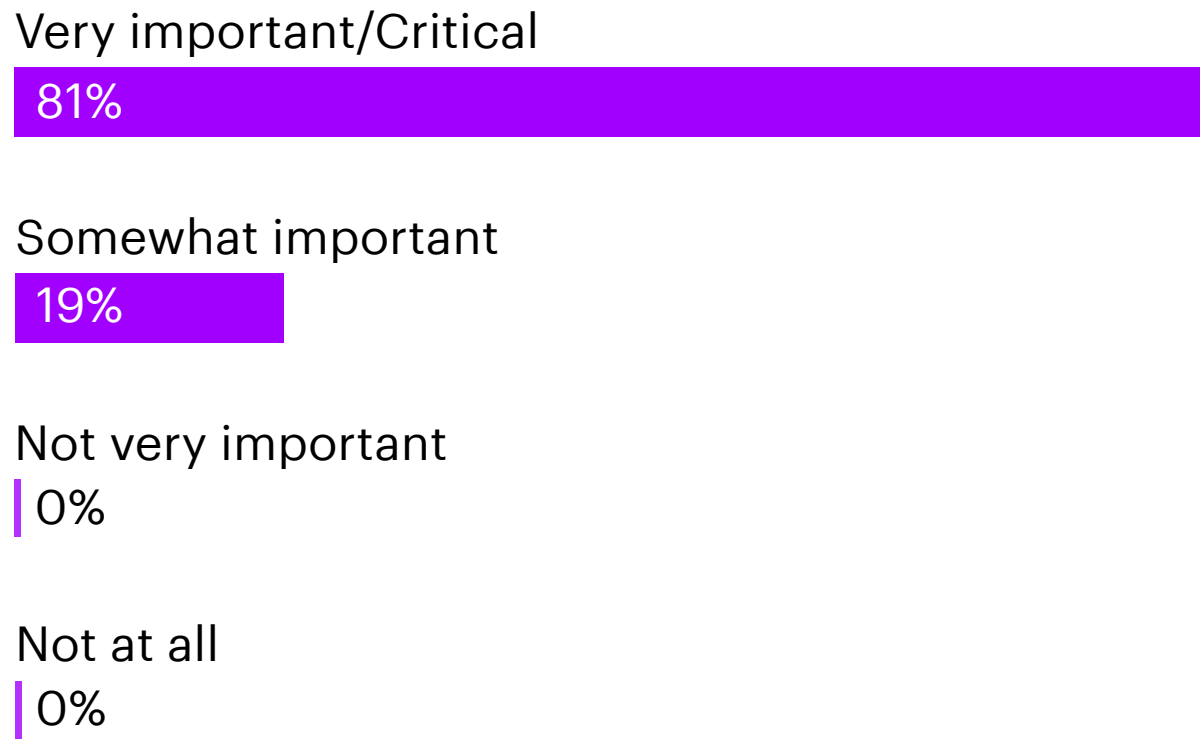
Industries that embrace early advancements in multimodal AI models, autonomous AI agents and physical AI will be better positioned to optimize operations and tap the full potential of AI

Which of the following future applications of AI do you believe will be the most transformative to your industry in the next 3–5 years?



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

How important do you believe physical AI (AI integrated into robotics, smart infrastructure, real-world automation) will be in transforming your industry over the next 3–5 years?





58%

of executives cite increased accessibility as AI’s greatest potential benefit for NYC residents

Consider what’s already emerging on this front. For one example, in New York’s prominent financial services industry, Visa has introduced Intelligent Commerce—a function powered by agentic AI to provide personalized, secure commerce for its customers and merchants. In this use case, the AI agent transforms the way consumers shop, from browsing through post-purchase management, seamlessly administering key phases of the shopping process. One of the top drivers of NYC executives’ optimism around AI is precisely this ability to help businesses and employees work smarter, underscoring the city’s readiness to lead in the next wave of AI-driven transformation.

New York’s Dataminr agentic AI initiatives offer another example. With their new agentic AI roadmap, Dataminr is developing intelligent, autonomous AI agents for enhanced real-time decision making in security and safety. These intelligent AI agents autonomously generate critical context as events, risks and threats unfold. This innovation introduces a new generation of AI-powered real-time information that enables private and public-sector organizations to supercharge their abilities to more effectively navigate a world of constant change—revolutionizing how their users rapidly understand, contextualize and respond to unexpected events.²⁸

Agentic AI can also support new forms of value and business models. Consider physical AI, which is powering broad advancements across robotics,

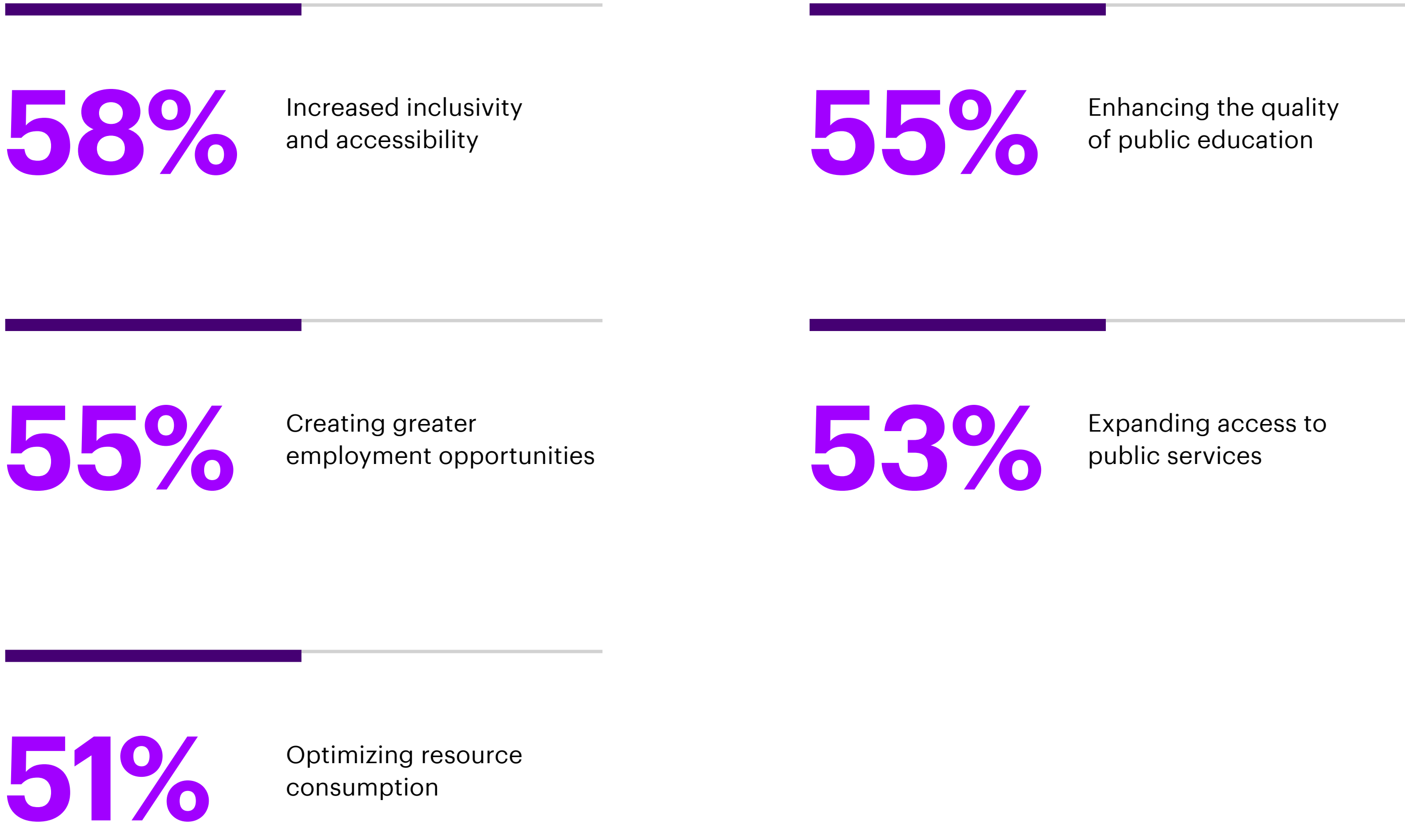
manufacturing and industrial applications. A full 81% of survey executives believe physical AI is critical or very important to the transformation of their industries in the next 3–5 years. It’s already doing so visibly across key elements of New York’s infrastructure, thanks to early action. From drones aiding first responders, to predictive maintenance at tunnels and bridges, to AI-powered waste management at LaGuardia, physical AI is already operational.^{29, 30, 31} Smart sensors monitor traffic, air quality and storm flooding; AI systems optimize ports, logistics and public safety responses.

Moreover, the city’s Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) has launched Smart City pilots to test new AI tools in real-world settings, while NYC Cyber Command protects over 100 agencies from evolving threats.³² Additionally, programs including the NYC Cyber Academy are training a new generation of cybersecurity leaders.

Another critical value front? Accessibility. Already, AI is helping translate sign language, improve public transit and expand access to education and services. Beyond use cases in manufacturing, distribution and logistics, humanoid robots will soon be able to help people with disabilities and/or neurodiversity break down barriers to work and support independence at home.³³ Executives (58%) cite increased accessibility as AI’s greatest potential benefit for NYC residents.

Executives see AI’s biggest benefit for NYC residents in increasing inclusivity and accessibility, enhancing the quality of public education and creating greater employment opportunities

In what areas do you think AI will most improve the lives of NYC residents? Select the top five.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

New York is also a center for advanced robotics. The extensive ecosystem is powered by deep capital, strategic infrastructure, a broad base of industry and a diverse tech workforce. New York’s robotics hub is anchored by the renewed Brooklyn Navy Yard, which serves as home to emerging robotics and advanced manufacturing firms—an apt representation of AI’s evolution to the physical.

New York academic institutions are part of the development of these physical forms of AI. Empire AI academic partners, including NYU, Columbia University and RIT, offer advanced robotics research and development.



The New York Robotics Network includes 15 colleges and universities, 12 industry partners, 30 ecosystem partners, and 25 capital and investment partners that support over 100 robotics startups.³⁴ New York also hosts the GoAERO Prize, an international competition that challenges innovators to build autonomous flying machines for disaster response.³⁵ Importantly, the robotics ecosystem welcomes and includes youth; the NYC First Robotics program draws thousands of younger students and showcases youth-led innovations.³⁶

Organizations view efficiency and productivity gains as the top business benefit of AI, cited by 61% of executives, making it the leading driver of AI adoption strategies. But competitive advantage through innovation (55%) and enhanced decision-making (50%) are close behind.



Organizations see AI’s biggest benefits in efficiency and productivity, making these factors the primary drivers of their AI adoption strategies

What do you see as AI’s biggest upsides for businesses? Select the top three.



Source: New York AI Executive Survey, n=500

Treat digital core and responsible AI as value accelerants

Building on last year's recommendations for digital core infrastructure and smart AI safeguards, these imperatives remain essential to New York's advancement in AI.

As AI extends from pilot programs to scaled deployments, New York's leaders must embed trust, safety and security deep into their organizations, including their digital cores. As Accenture defines it, the digital core refers to the integrated systems, platforms and data infrastructure that power an organization's operations, enabling it to operate dynamically, securely and at scale.¹⁸ For New York, that means ensuring secure interoperability, modernizing legacy systems and aligning infrastructure with long-term resilience. Across both digital and physical domains, New York's AI future depends on an unshakable foundation of public trust.

New York has laid a strong foundation for trustworthy AI—through proactive regulation, real-world testing, public engagement and cyber preparedness. Leaders can now focus on expanding from safeguards to standards to make sure that every deployment, from drones to digital services, is aligned with the commitment to safety, security and equity.

That means understanding responsible AI and governance as an innovation and value accelerant, not a constraint. Leaders can realize that innovation by integrating it as part of a framework for procurement, design and implementation processes across all agencies and sectors.

Finally, it is imperative for New York to continue to invest in the policies, programs and people who will protect and guide these systems. This includes expanding programs such as the NYC Cyber Academy, growing the pipeline of AI ethics and cybersecurity experts, and building governance mechanisms that are as adaptive as the technologies they oversee. The construction of this critical infrastructure is well underway. The next step is ensuring it scales with the city itself.



Conclusion: New York is positioned to lead

Over the past year, New York has moved from piloting promise to proving performance—deploying AI not in isolation, but as a catalyst for economic growth, public innovation and workforce transformation.

The numbers bear this out. AI-related opportunities in New York have grown at twice the national rate. Nearly every executive we surveyed plans to expand hiring and upskilling. AI tools are already enhancing essential services—from infrastructure and emergency response to education and accessibility. And institutions across the public, private and academic domains continue to align around a shared vision.

But New York is not coasting on early success. The race to lead in AI is accelerating and global competitors are gaining ground. Cities across the country—and the world—are emerging on the map to claim their share. In response, New York is moving ahead and building on its distinctive strengths—its people, its commitment to collaboration, its pace and its principles—to remain in front and shape best practices in AI leadership.



Appendix

Accenture Research Team

Corrine Vitolo, US Research Lead
Michael Malinoski, Survey Research Senior Manager
Donovan Griggs, Survey Research Senior Analyst
Megan Bernardi, Thought Leadership Analyst
Nicole D’Agostino, Economic Marketing Manager
Regina Maruca, Senior Editor
James Velasquez, Editorial Manager

Tech:NYC contributors

Bennu Amen, Policy and Research Manager, Tech:NYC
Alex Spyropoulos, Director, Government Relations, Tech:NYC
Diah Mehera, Marketing and Communications Director, Tech:NYC

Acknowledgments

Andrea Arce, New York Metro Local Market Lead, Accenture
Susanne Bianco, Marketing, US Local Eminence Lead, Accenture

Learn more about NYC’s AI deployment

[How generative AI will unlock big value in the Big Apple,](#)
Accenture x Tech:NYC

[NYC’s Artificial Intelligence Advantage,](#)
New York City Economic Development Corporation

[NYC Artificial Intelligence Action Plan,](#)
NYC Office of Technology and Innovation

[Maximizing NYC’s AI Opportunity,](#)
Center for an Urban Future

[2025 State of the State Book,](#)
Office of Governor Kathy Hochul

References

1: [Artificial Intelligence Index Report 2025](#), Stanford HAI, April 2025

2: Accenture Economic Analysis

3: [NYC’s Artificial Intelligence Advantage](#), New York City Economic Development Corporation

4: [Maximizing NYC’s AI Opportunity](#), Center for an Urban Future

5: [NYC Artificial Intelligence Action Plan](#), NYC Office of Technology and Innovation, October 2023

6: [City Meetings](#)

7: [New York City AI Action Plan Annual Progress Report](#), NYC Office of Technology and Innovation, October 2024

8: [“JPMorgan says AI helped boost sales, add clients in market turmoil,”](#) Reuters, May 5, 2025

9: [“How pharmaceutical companies are training their workers on AI,”](#) Business Insider, March 10, 2025

10: [Newsroom](#), Accenture, August 6, 2024

11: [“Estée Lauder Companies forms AI innovation lab,”](#) VOGUE Business, April 26, 2025

12: [Decoded Futures](#)

13: [TechConnect](#), The New York Public Library

14: [“New York,”](#) Per Scholas

15: [“Scaling the OpenAI Academy,”](#) OpenAI, March 25, 2025

16: [“Policy Lab,”](#) NYC Digital Learning Initiative

17: [Reinvention in the Age of Generative AI](#), Accenture, 2024

18: [Making Reinvention Real with Gen AI](#), Accenture, 2025

19: [“Strategically Engaging With Innovation Ecosystems,”](#) MIT Sloan Management Review, July 20, 2022

20: [Press Release](#), New York City Economic Development Corporation, March 4, 2025

21: [Company Press Release](#), OpenAI, March 4, 2025

22: [Tech:NYC Ecosystem Snapshot](#)

23: [Empire AI](#)

24: [“Mayor Adams, NYCEDC release groundbreaking report to secure NYC as global leader in applied AI,”](#) NYCEDC, January 31, 2025

25: [“Artificial Intelligence 2025 Legislation,”](#) National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) March 22, 2025

26: [2025 State of the State Book](#), Office of Governor Kathy Hochul, January 2025

27: CB Insights AI Companies, May 2025

28: [“Dataminr Unveils Agentic AI Roadmap, Ushering in a New Era of AI-Powered Real-Time Information,”](#) PR Newswire, April 28, 2025

29: [“NYPD Using Drones to Respond on ‘Select Priority’ Calls,”](#) GovTech, April 2024

30: [“MTA and Google Public Sector Announce Preventive Track Maintenance Pilot Program,”](#) MTA, February 2025

31: [“Waste Management: Our Priority — and Everyone’s Responsibility,”](#) Vantage Group, August 2024

32: [“Cyber Command,”](#) NYC Office of Technology and Innovation

33: [“Inclusivity in Generative AI Should Be an Attribute, Not an Add-On,”](#) Stanford Social Innovation Review, October 2024

34: [New York Robotics Organization](#)

35: [GoAERO Prize](#)

36: [NYC First Robotics program](#)

37: [“AI Degree Programs in New York,”](#) Masters in AI, March 2025

About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company that helps the world’s leading businesses, governments and other organizations build their digital core, optimize their operations, accelerate revenue growth and enhance citizen services—creating tangible value at speed and scale. We are a talent- and innovation-led company with approximately 799,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Technology is at the core of change today, and we are one of the world’s leaders in helping drive that change, with strong ecosystem relationships. We combine our strength in technology and leadership in cloud, data and AI with unmatched industry experience, functional expertise and global delivery capability. Our broad range of services, solutions and assets across Strategy & Consulting, Technology, Operations, Industry X and Song, together with our culture of shared success and commitment to creating 360° value, enable us to help our clients reinvent and build trusted, lasting relationships. We measure our success by the 360° value we create for our clients, each other, our shareholders, partners and communities.

Visit us at www.accenture.com

Disclaimer

The material in this document reflects information available at the point in time at which this document was prepared as indicated by the date provided on the front page, however the global situation is rapidly evolving, and the position may change. This content is provided for general information purposes only, does not take into account the reader’s specific circumstances, and is not intended to be used in place of consultation with our professional advisors. Accenture disclaims, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, any and all liability for the accuracy and completeness of the information in this document and for any acts or omissions made based on such information. Accenture does not provide legal, regulatory, audit, or tax advice. Readers are responsible for obtaining such advice from their own legal counsel or other licensed professionals. This document refers to marks owned by third parties. All such third-party marks are the property of their respective owners. No sponsorship, endorsement, or approval of this content by the owners of such marks is intended, expressed, or implied.

About Accenture Research

Accenture Research creates thought leadership about the most pressing business issues organizations face. Combining innovative research techniques, such as data-science-led analysis, with a deep understanding of industry and technology, our team of 300 researchers in 20 countries publish hundreds of reports, articles and points of view every year. Our thought-provoking research developed with world leading organizations helps our clients embrace change, create value and deliver on the power of technology and human ingenuity.

For more information, visit Accenture Research on www.accenture.com/research.