

A GUIDE TO PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS FOR AI IMPLEMENTATION

AI Governance Group: The Executive Function

Providing strategic direction, accountability, and responsible leadership for AI in transportation organizations

The Executive Function is the cornerstone of successful AI adoption in transportation organizations. It establishes a clear AI strategic direction aligned with organizational goals and ensures initiatives deliver meaningful and responsible impact.

Executive Function roles include:

- Executive Director
- Director of Transportation Planning
- Chief Technical Officer
- Chief Data Officer
- Chief AI Officer
- Other senior leaders responsible for aligning AI with transportation priorities

The Executive Function is accountable for:



1

Defining AI Strategic Direction



2

Championing a Responsible AI culture



3

Establishing AI governance structures

1 Define AI Strategic Direction

Leadership sets the tone for AI success.

Executives must:

- Assess how AI advances priorities and align AI strategy with organizational goals and readiness.
- Approve pilots and proofs of concept with clear business cases and measurable KPIs.
- Rely on operational assessments to guide decisions, ensuring AI deployments meet safety, effectiveness, and responsibility standards.
- Ensure ongoing AI implementation aligns with strategy, safety, effectiveness, and organizational priorities.

WHY IT MATTERS

Strategic direction serves as a roadmap for aligning AI efforts with organizational goals and informs all other functions on priorities, actions, and integration.

2 Champion a Responsible AI Culture

Leaders must prioritize Responsible AI principles, including safety, transparency, accountability, and security, in decision making and organizational culture. This includes empowering teams, monitoring culture programs, and fostering trust across the workforce.

WHY IT MATTERS

Responsible AI and transparent decision-making build trust and foster the confidence and stakeholder alignment crucial for success.

3 Establish AI Governance

Executives should consider appointing a Chief AI Officer (CAIO) or AI Governance Lead and establishing an AI Governance Group with defined roles and coordination channels across Data, IT Governance, Regulations and Cybersecurity Governance. Regular assessments and monitoring of the Governance structure are necessary for incorporating enhancements as needed.

WHY IT MATTERS

A strong governance structure informs strategic decisions and aligns efforts with an organization's transportation priorities.

Through these actions, the Executive Function builds strong foundations, drives strategic alignment, and fosters responsible governance—unlocking AI's transformative potential for the transportation sector.



For more detail on these concepts, please refer to the full **[A Guide to Practical Next Steps for AI Implementation](#)** developed by ITS America in partnership with Cambridge Consultants.

