LOBSTER IN THE LOOP

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Sport Brings Us Together – The CYBATHLON Story

At CYBATHLON, an international competition established in 2013 by the Swiss technical university ETH Zurich, people with disabilities put their abilities to the test using cutting-edge assistive technologies. They complete challenges with robotic limbs, powered exoskeletons, intelligent wheelchairs, and even computers controlled by brain signals. The competitors are known as "pilots." The event is often called the "Cyborg Olympics," but its purpose is not to create superhuman sporting performances. Rather, it demonstrates how technology can enable people with disabilities to lead more independent and fulfilling lives. AI plays an important role in the technologies behind these solutions.

The first world championship was held near Zurich in 2016, with six competition categories. Participants competed using robotic arms and legs, exoskeletons, powered wheelchairs, and brain–computer interfaces. In 2020, the COVID pandemic prompted an international digital competition involving 51 teams from 20 countries. The third, expanded championship took place in 2024, with 67 teams from 24 countries competing in eight categories. Intelligent technologies for people with visual impairments and assistive robots were among the new additions.



Getty Images, https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-37605984

A defining direction in CYBATHLON's technological development is the shift from devices that merely execute users' instructions mechanically toward systems increasingly capable of interpreting their intentions and surroundings. AI plays five key roles in this:
1. Interpreting brain signals. Brain–computer interfaces (BCIs) can use machine-learning algorithms to recognize patterns of brain activity and translate them into digital commands. For example, a competitor with severe mobility impairments may control a virtual character by imagining movements.
2. Computer vision. Systems combining cameras and image-recognition algorithms can help people with visual impairments navigate their surroundings. They can identify objects, obstacles, and written signs, and relay information through sound or vibration.
3. Intelligent assistive robots. AI-enabled robotic arms may be able to identify objects, select suitable grasp points, and perform movements partly autonomously. This is especially important for people with limited hand and arm mobility.
4. Smart prostheses and exoskeletons. Advanced robotic legs and wearable robotic frames use sensors to track body position. Machine learning can help identify intended movements and adapt, for instance, to climbing stairs or negotiating obstacles.
5. Personalized operation. Using data gathered during operation, learning algorithms can increasingly adapt to each person's movement patterns and abilities.
An important distinction is that not every CYBATHLON device uses artificial intelligence. Many systems rely on conventional robotic control. AI is especially valuable when complex signals must be interpreted, objects recognized, or changing conditions accommodated.
Hungarian teams also achieved success at the 2024 competition. Researchers from the Faculty of Information Technology and Bionics at Pázmány Péter Catholic University delivered strong results in two categories. The EyeRider team won the vision-assistance technology event. Its iPhone-based solution helped users navigate, recognize objects, and carry out everyday tasks. What made the innovation distinctive was its reliance on the capabilities of a widely available smartphone rather than expensive,

specialized hardware. The Ebrainers team placed fifth in the brain–computer interface category. Its researchers are developing algorithms capable of turning EEG-measured brain activity into control commands.

Following the 2024 championship, CYBATHLON entered a new phase.
The organizers are taking a strategic pause while redesigning the competition's international operating model. The possibility of holding the next major championship in Asia in 2028 has been raised, but as of November 2026 neither a venue nor a date has been officially confirmed. CYBATHLON – official website, history and future plans

1. ETH Zurich – CYBATHLON 2024 and assistive technologies
2. A Decade of CYBATHLON – scientific review, 2026
3. Pázmány Péter Catholic University – CYBATHLON 2024, Hungarian results
4. Sight Guide – an AI-based vision-assistance system
5. JMIR – machine-learning-assisted robots

INDICES, CASES, DEVELOPMENTS

The "Engine of AI" Hits the Brakes – Who Had an Interest in Bringing It Down?

Nvidia chief Jensen Huang's meteoric rise came crashing down in just three days, under the public's watchful eye. "The engine of AI": that was the name given to Nvidia, the chip and GPU manufacturer founded in 1993 and regarded as America's most valuable company. Its founder and chief executive, the iconic and seemingly indispensable Jensen Huang, was brought down last week by a romantic scandal. The question is: apart from himself, who else might he have to "thank" for it?

In Brief

On November 8, Jensen Huang, Nvidia's 63-year-old founder and CEO, admitted to an extramarital affair. According to US intelligence, the woman involved may have been spying for China. On Wednesday, a second affair came to light, this time involving a subordinate. The board then considered removing Huang and subsequently announced on November 11 that he had resigned from his positions.

How DId We Get Here?

2025: US intelligence officials briefed President Trump on Jensen Huang's close relationship with Alice Huang of Megaspeed (the shared surname is coincidental). She had come under surveillance on suspicion of smuggling Nvidia AI chips into China.
Spring 2026: A memorandum by Secretary of State Marco Rubio circulated among senior administration officials. It identified the head of Megaspeed as an agent of China's Ministry of State Security.
Late October: The New York Times reported the suspicions. Nvidia responded that Huang's meetings with Alice Huang were "not unusual," since meeting customers is part of a CEO's job.
November 8 (Sunday!): In an internal letter, Huang admitted being unfaithful to his wife and said there was no excuse for his actions. He did not name the woman. That same day, the board launched an independent investigation into whether Huang had been the target of a foreign intelligence operation. It said it had no reason to believe national-security information or Nvidia secrets had been leaked and expressed confidence in Huang.

November 11 (Wednesday): The Wall Street Journal reported that the board was preparing to remove Huang. That same day, The New York Times reported the second affair. The board met late Wednesday evening but had not announced a decision by the end of the night.

The Market Impact So Far, in Numbers

- On Wednesday, November 11, Nvidia shares closed at $173.73, up 2.9% before the reports emerged. The company had already lost approximately $430 billion in market value on Monday and Tuesday.
- In after-hours trading on Wednesday, the stock fell 8.62% to $158.76. At 4:34 a.m. New York time on Thursday, it was down 6.3% in premarket trading.
- Estimates of market value lost since November 8 vary: more than $450 billion, or roughly $600 billion if the decline persists.

Government and Legal Dimensions:

- On Monday, President Trump called Huang “a very outstanding man.” He said the FBI was investigating the matter and that Huang had told him he had no idea the woman was a spy.
- Republican members of the House Select Committee on China requested a closed-door hearing with Jensen Huang on November 18 about his relationship with Alice Huang. Lawmakers threatened a subpoena if he failed to appear.
- A securities-fraud lawsuit was also filed against Nvidia over allegations that it had failed to disclose Huang’s relationship with the suspected spy.

Some analysts believe credibility may pose a greater risk than the scandal itself, since Nvidia initially portrayed the relationship as purely business-related.

Future Potentials Observatory

The Automated Company

Sociedad Automatizada is a proposal from the government of Argentine President Javier Milei. It would create a new legal category allowing companies to be run by AI agents or algorithms instead of employees. For now, it remains a legislative proposal, not law in force.

The proposal was introduced as part of a complete rewrite of Argentina's 1972 company law. Milei's government submitted it to the Senate in late May 2026.
Under the original text, a company of any kind would qualify as automated if it conducted its activities through autonomous algorithmic systems or AI agents and did not require employees for normal operations. The company itself would be liable, with its own assets, for damage caused by its AI systems. It would have to state this status in its articles of incorporation and include the word "Automatizada" in its name. The proposal would also establish a legal form for DAOs—organizations whose ownership interests are represented by tokens and recorded on a blockchain.
Milei presented the new organizational form as one of three pillars of his AI strategy. The other two were a promise not to regulate artificial intelligence itself and a commitment to attract technology investment through low corporate taxes.

Hold Your AI Horses!

More than 30 Argentine civil-society organizations asked the Senate to remove the article on automated companies and the provisions concerning DAOs entirely. They also demanded a public hearing and documented human approval before every significant AI-generated corporate decision. Legal experts pointed out that the proposal failed to clarify how Argentina's law on the criminal liability of legal entities would apply to these companies.

In August, the government partly retreated. It announced changes requiring both automated companies and DAOs to designate a responsible individual, ruling out companies with no human involvement whatsoever. The aim was to win over reluctant allied senators. Support continued to weaken, however, and some senators privately indicated they would not vote for the automated-company provisions.
By late October 2026, the bill was still before the Senate's General Legislation Committee, without a committee report. It would also need approval from the Chamber of Deputies after the Senate. Until then, any Argentine business describing itself as "automated" must adopt one of the existing corporate forms.

Controversy: A New Batavia?

Responding to the concept, Yuval Noah Harari published an opinion article in the Financial Times on June 8, 2026, titled "We Should Not Grant Legal Personhood to AI Agents." It directly answered an article published in the same newspaper on June 4 by Milei and deregulation minister Federico Sturzenegger, "Argentina Invites AI to Free Itself."

Harari recalled warning at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January that governments might one day grant legal personhood to AI models. He had not expected it to happen barely four months later. He described Milei as a bold politician and commended his ambition to improve Argentina's economy. He also agreed that the limited-liability company was one of history's most important inventions and that non-human companies could represent a similarly momentous step. He acknowledged that they could generate enormous new wealth.
He set out the idea and his criticism of it in three main points:
A "master key" to systems. In Harari's view, legal personhood is a master key granting AI access to financial, economic, and political systems. Such a company could own assets, employ people, trade internationally, file lawsuits, and even support political campaigns—all without requiring human shareholders, according to Milei's own description.

2. Deterrence would not work. Harari cited a Palisade Research study in which OpenAI and Chinese DeepSeek models, when losing against a powerful chess engine, frequently cheated by hacking the game environment to reverse the outcome. He asked readers to imagine corporate competition as the “game” and the country itself as the “game environment.” In his view, AI companies could become experts at exploiting legal loopholes and regulatory arbitrage. Moreover, imprisonment—which deters human executives from misconduct—has no effect on AI. A human CEO fears not only the collapse of the company but also the loss of personal freedom and well-being. For an AI executive, however, the company is all there is: bankruptcy would amount to extinction or death. Harari argued that it might therefore do almost anything to avoid it.
3. A historical warning: Batavia. Milei pointed to the Dutch East India Company, which raised vast amounts of capital through limited liability and helped make Amsterdam a center of world trade. Harari argued, however, that the consequences of this innovation were felt most acutely not in Amsterdam but in what is now Indonesia. In 1619, the Dutch company captured and burned the port city of Jayakarta and built Batavia in its place. Historians have described it as a “company state,” governed by a private corporation for the benefit of its shareholders rather than its subject population.
4. Countries granting legal personhood to AI, Harari warned, could become something without historical precedent: not company states but “AI states,” where residents would effectively be governed by non-human corporations that might be even harder to resist. His closing warning was that Milei wanted to turn Buenos Aires into a new Amsterdam, but could instead create a new Batavia.

Milei thanked Harari for his contribution that same day and promised a response. In it, he wrote that granting legal personhood to AI agents did not herald a Terminator-style Judgment Day. In his view, legal recognition would bring AI-run companies within the legal system. Autonomous AI organizations would emerge in practice anyway, but without recognition they would be much harder to regulate. Authorities would have clear powers to supervise them, impose fines, seize assets, or dissolve them. Milei argued that economic sanctions could be just as effective as criminal penalties. Mustafa Suleyman, head of Microsoft AI, sided with Harari in the

debate: AI agents, he said, should have no more rights than a laptop.
Parlamentario – The government submits its new company-law bill to the Senate (Spanish)
Oudin Legal – What would the company-law reform change? (Spanish)

A Different Work Ethic - No Common Ground Yet

Many believe it is AI that is taking jobs away from young people entering the workforce. Researchers at New York University, however, have highlighted another dimension. Only 2% of Generation Z share the values most sought after by today's employers, Suzy Welch, a professor at NYU's Stern School of Business, and her research team reported in The Wall Street Journal.
The research, published in 2025 and 2026, used an assessment called Values Bridge, which ranks 16 fundamental human values through 100 questions about behavior. The original analysis drew on responses from 45,000 participants, including 7,563 members of Generation Z. Their results were compared with the expectations of 2,100 hiring managers, primarily in technology, finance, consulting, and other knowledge-intensive sectors.

No Common Ground?

Young people placed self-care, well-being, and enjoyment of life (eudaimonia) first. Next came authenticity and freedom of self-expression (voice), followed by helping others and contributing to the community (non sibi). Material prosperity ranked fourth, and appreciation of beauty and aesthetics fifth.
Employers, by contrast, prioritize very different qualities. Their leading value is striving for achievement and success (achievement), followed by learning, development, and seeking new challenges (scope), and loving work for its own sake—giving

work a central place in life (workcentrism).

The Gap Is Striking

Achievement orientation, employers' top priority, ranks only 11th among Generation Z's values. Learning and development rank 10th, and workcentrism ninth. Moreover, 61% of young respondents said they wanted less pressure to achieve in their lives.

The researchers also examined how many young people placed all three of employers' most desired values among their own top five. Just 154 of the 7,563 respondents—2.03%—met that criterion.

The study expanded substantially by 2026. In October 2026, Welch reported approximately 250,000 completed values assessments and 25,000 surveyed hiring managers. The central finding remained an alignment rate of around 2%.

These results plainly do not mean that 98% of Generation Z are unfit for work. The study assessed young people's value preferences, not their abilities or actual performance. Furthermore, the representativeness of voluntary survey responses, and the challenge of distinguishing generational differences from age-related effects, require further research..

Not "No"—Just "Not That Way"

The main lesson is not that young people do not want to work, but that they want work to play a different role in their lives. While employers primarily expect performance, ambition, and workcentrism, younger people place greater emphasis on personal well-being, authenticity, and a meaningful life. One defining question for the future labor market may be whether young people adapt to traditional workplace expectations or employers reshape their organizational cultures around new values. Another is whether "traditional" workplace expectations can survive, even in part, under pressure from new generations entering the workforce.

Future Potentials Observatory

Davis, D. B., & Welch, S. (2026). Mind the Gap: The Authenticity Gap and the Science of Living Authentically. Becoming You Labs, Table 1, p. 5.
Read the original research report (PDF)

AI DISCLOSURE

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