

Professor Chang of Aston University Wins National Technology Award for His AI Work and Impact

Prof Victor Chang's AI/federated learning research, recognised at the National Technology Awards 2026, helps secure funding to extend AI into physical hardware.

BIRMINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM, June 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Professor Victor Chang of Aston Business School, Aston University, has been named [Data and Analytics Project of the Year](#) at the [National Technology Awards 2026](#) for his team's [federated learning](#)

architecture spanning 6G networks, neuromorphic edge computing, and healthcare intelligence. The win — judged across the entire UK technology sector — marks one of three national accolades Professor Chang received in the same month, and comes as he leads Aston's contribution to a new government-backed semiconductor programme.



- National Technology Awards 2026: Professor Chang's federated learning and healthcare analytics platform wins Data and Analytics Project of the Year, judged by a panel covering the full UK tech industry.
- Two further awards in May 2026: Cybersecurity Professional of the Year (Cyber Security Awards, global), and Data Scientist of the Year (Computing's AI and Software Development Awards, UK).
- Innovate UK grant: The Aston team, led by Professor Chang, joins a £989,455 consortium — led by TGO Ltd — to validate AI-driven tactile sensing technology for robotics, building directly on Professor Chang's edge-AI research.

What the Judges Recognised

Centralised machine learning has a structural problem in sensitive sectors. Hospitals, financial institutions, and critical infrastructure operators cannot route patient records or threat data

through external servers, yet they still need powerful AI. The team at Aston built its system around a different premise: rather than gathering data in one place, local devices train models independently and share only encrypted, aggregated parameters. The coordinating architecture is tailored for 6G's distributed topology, where latency and compliance requirements make cloud-centric approaches impractical.

The neuromorphic edge layer pushed this further. By using spiking neural networks with co-located memory and processing — in contrast to conventional GPU pipelines — the team cut power consumption by up to a factor of 100. The healthcare analytics component brought these elements together in a clinical setting, producing an Internet of Medical Things platform whose explainability mechanisms earned clinicians' genuine trust rather than passive acceptance. The National Technology Awards judges described it as a cutting-edge healthcare AI system, citing its efficiency and accuracy as the deciding factors.

“The whole point of this work was to build something hospitals and infrastructure operators would actually use. That means keeping data where it belongs, running inference at the edge, and making the system's reasoning visible to the people who rely on it. That the judges saw that is very gratifying.”

— Professor Victor Chang, Professor of Applied AI and Business Analytics, Aston Business School

A Concentrated Run of Recognition

The National Technology Award arrived alongside two others in May. The Cyber Security Awards



— a global competition — named Professor Chang Cybersecurity Professional of the Year 2026. Computing's AI and Software Development Awards named him Data Scientist of the Year 2026, citing the applied scale and societal reach of his portfolio. Three independent panels, three separate shortlists, three awards in the same month. He has the honour of having three awards and pictures taken together with the Interim Vice Chancellor of Aston University.

A consistent research philosophy connects all three. Constrained environments produce better AI: whether the constraint is a compliance boundary in an NHS trust, a power budget on an edge chip, or a latency ceiling in a 6G network, working within hard limits forces precision that general-purpose AI often lacks. That conviction has shaped deployment work across healthcare, cybersecurity, and financial analytics.

From Recognition to Applied Research

The award recognition sits alongside a new Innovate UK-funded project that reflects the same applied focus. As Principal Investigator for Aston's contribution to the MultiPad consortium, Professor Chang is leading the independent benchmarking and embedded AI work on a tactile-sensing semiconductor chip developed by TGO Ltd. The four-partner programme — which has secured backing from Samsung, Boston Dynamics, and Microsoft ahead of production — received £989,455 in total consortium funding. Aston's role is to validate FPGA performance data and develop edge-deployable classification algorithms that run within the chip's microamp power budget.

The connection to the award-winning research is direct. Running reliable inference on a System-in-Package device with a sub-10 ms latency ceiling and minimal electricity draw is exactly the kind of constraint-driven AI problem that Professor Chang's team has been solving in healthcare and security contexts. The semiconductor setting is new; the underlying methodology is not.

“Robots have had vision for years. What they still cannot do reliably is feel. This project is about closing that gap — and the work we've done on edge-constrained inference in clinical settings turns out to be directly relevant to what a tactile chip needs to do.”

— Professor Victor Chang

ABOUT PROFESSOR VICTOR CHANG

Victor Chang is Professor of Applied AI and Business Analytics at Aston Business School, Aston University. His research spans federated learning, responsible AI, healthcare analytics, and cybersecurity. His federated learning architecture has been deployed in NHS trusts, financial institutions, and critical infrastructure settings across the UK. He holds fellowships of the Institute of Physics and the Royal Society of Public Health, and has received multiple international and national research honours.

ABOUT ASTON UNIVERSITY

Aston University is a public research university in Birmingham, UK. It ranks 42nd nationally and within the global top 400 in the QS World University Rankings 2026, holds a Triple Gold Teaching

Excellence Framework rating, and places second in England for social mobility. Seventy-nine per cent of its research is rated world-leading or internationally excellent in REF 2021. For more information: www.aston.ac.uk.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AWARDS

The National Technology Awards celebrate outstanding achievement across the UK technology sector. The Data and Analytics Project of the Year category recognises research and applied programmes that demonstrate measurable impact through innovative use of data, analytics, and artificial intelligence.

Yulin Yao

Top Applied AI & Data Scientist, Aston University

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