“From AI ambition to AI reality: Moving from ‘interesting ideas’ to enterprise impact”

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Why AI excitement isn’t translating into results

Challenges in Scaling AI

Organisations struggle to scale AI due to fragmented delivery and multiple pilots that don’t reach production.

Inconsistent Value Measurement

Different teams use varied metrics, making it difficult to compare success and measure true AI impact.

Governance Bottlenecks

Governance can hinder AI deployment either through slow approvals or insufficient oversight.

Organisational Readiness

Successful AI scaling requires clear roles, ownership, and integrated workflows beyond technical sophistication.

Three pillars of success

Board-Backable Bets

- Focus on outcomes and economics that attract board support. Clear strategic bets drive business growth and confidence.

Operating Model

- Ownership and delivery are central. Establish a robust model to ensure clear roles and efficient execution.

Enabling Governance

- Governance provides guardrails and speed. Balance oversight with agility for sustainable success.

Failure patterns to spot early

Use-Case Overload

Pursuing too many AI initiatives at once dilutes resources and weakens focus, reducing project success.

Lack of Ownership

Absence of a single accountable owner causes fragmented responsibility across teams and slows delivery.

Data Friction

Difficulty accessing high-quality data delays AI model development and impedes progress.

Low Adoption

Excessive paperwork without practical controls and poor integration into workflows leads to low AI adoption.

Board-Level AI Investment

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Decision 1: The board test

Board-Fundable Use Case

- AI projects must demonstrate clear, quantifiable business outcomes to gain board approval beyond just model performance.

Outcome Measurement & Accountability

- Use cases need defined baselines, targets, and timelines to track progress and establish accountability for results.

Operational Change & Risk Controls

- Successful AI initiatives require clear operational changes and practical risk controls for scalability and sustainability.

Viability Through Unit Economics

- Demonstrating positive unit economics at scale ensures the AI initiative remains viable beyond pilot phases.

(Impact × feasibility) How to select?

Strategic Portfolio Approach

Treat AI initiatives as a portfolio to focus resources on value-generating projects rather than isolated pilots.

High Impact & Feasibility

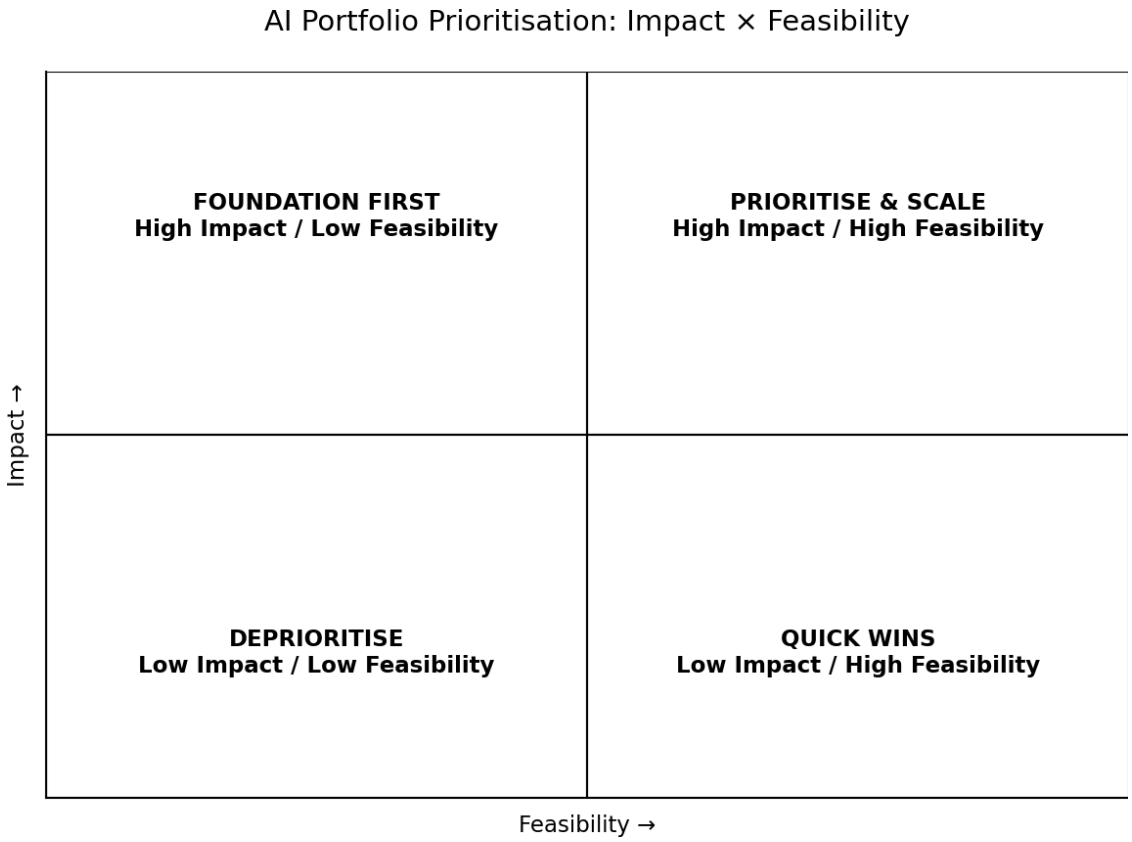
Prioritise initiatives with high impact and feasibility for immediate scaling to maximize returns and manage complexity.

Foundational Investments Needed

High-impact but low-feasibility projects need foundational improvements like data quality and system integration first.

Managing Low Impact Initiatives

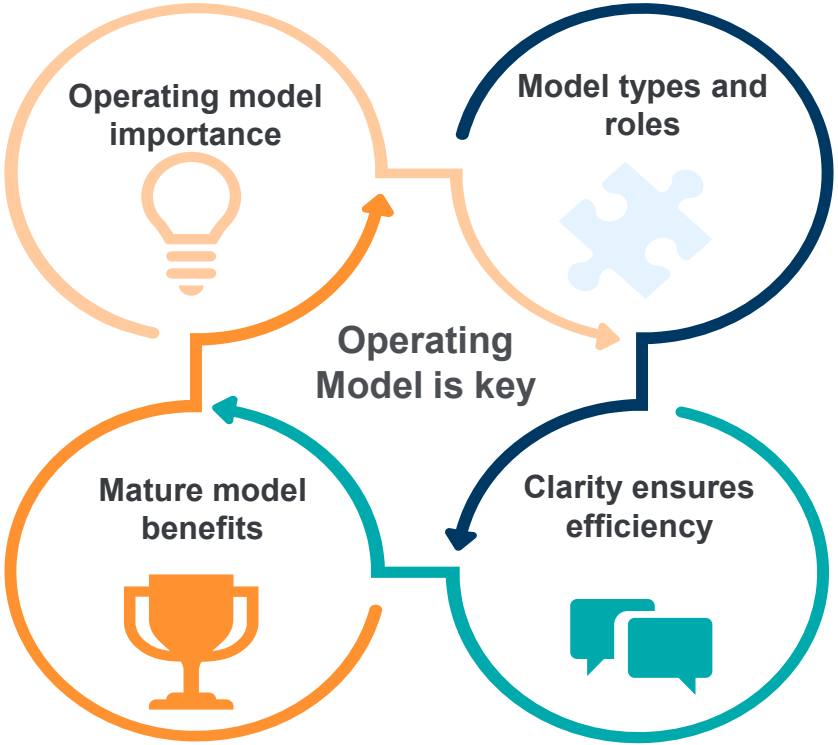
Quick wins come from low-impact, high-feasibility projects, while low-impact, low-feasibility ideas should be deprioritised.



Decision 2: Operating model beats algorithms

AI programme success relies more on a clear operating model than just strong algorithms.

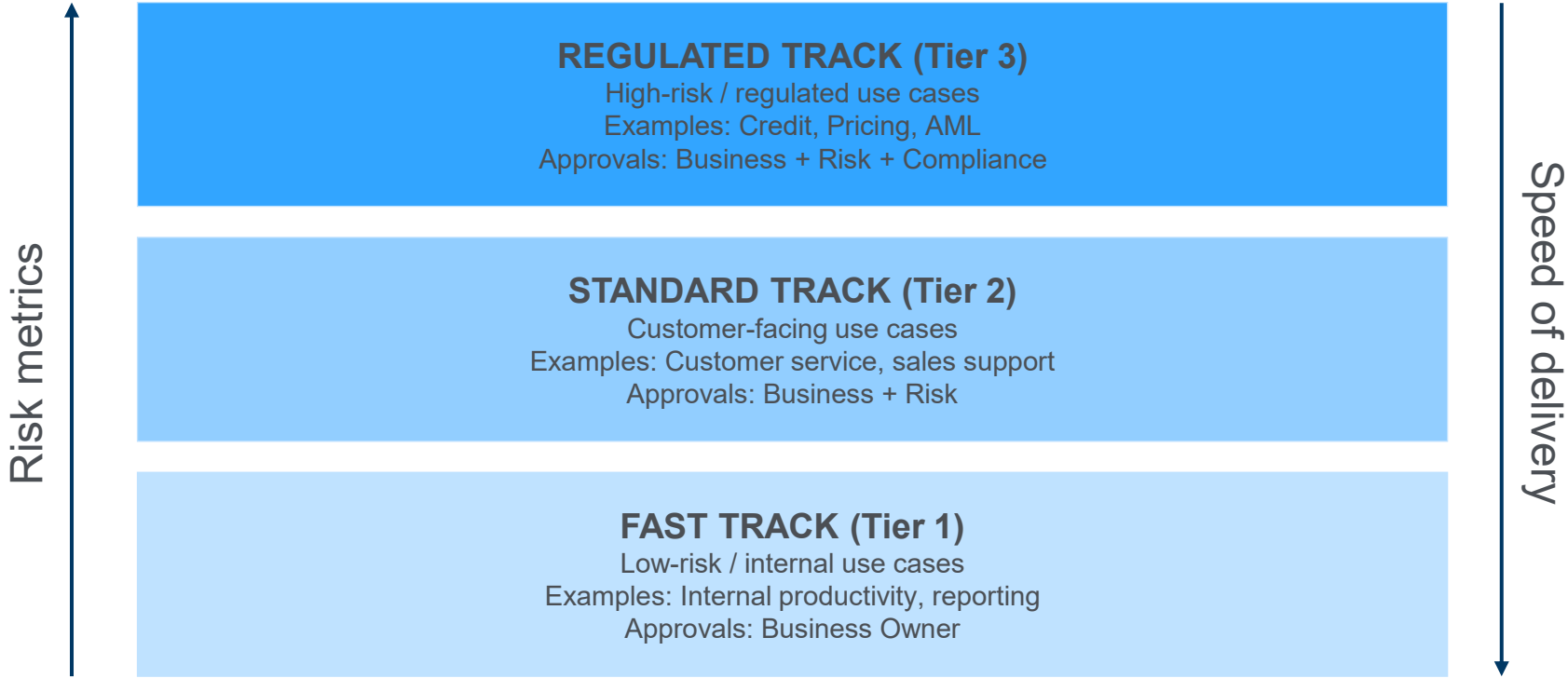
Mature operating models create predictable pathways from idea to impact, enabling confident team execution.



Choosing between centralised, federated, or hub-and-spoke models clarifies roles and responsibility.

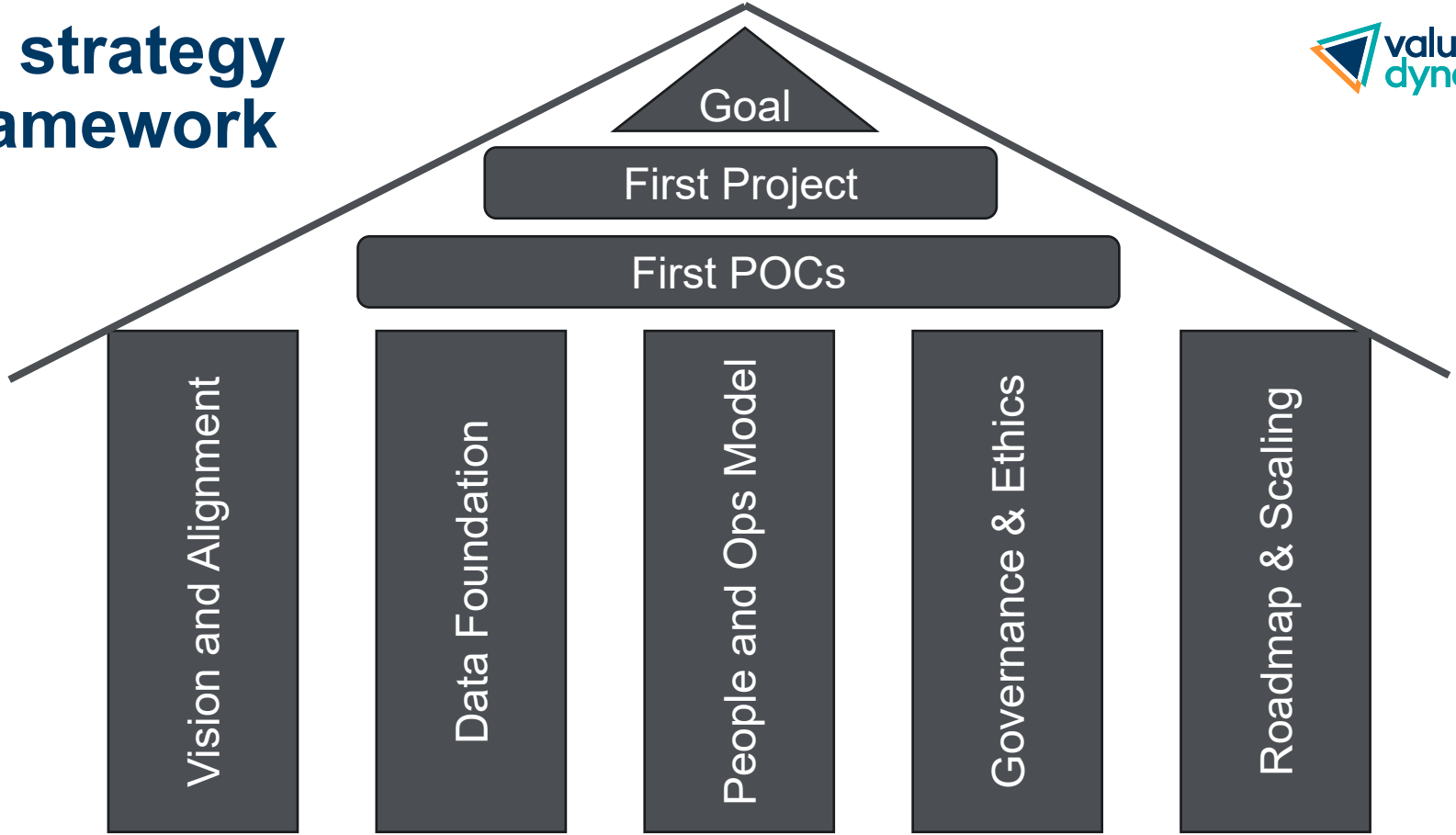
Clear ownership of intake, prioritisation, data access, and risk sign-offs speeds delivery and reduces negotiation.

Decision 3: Governance that enables delivery



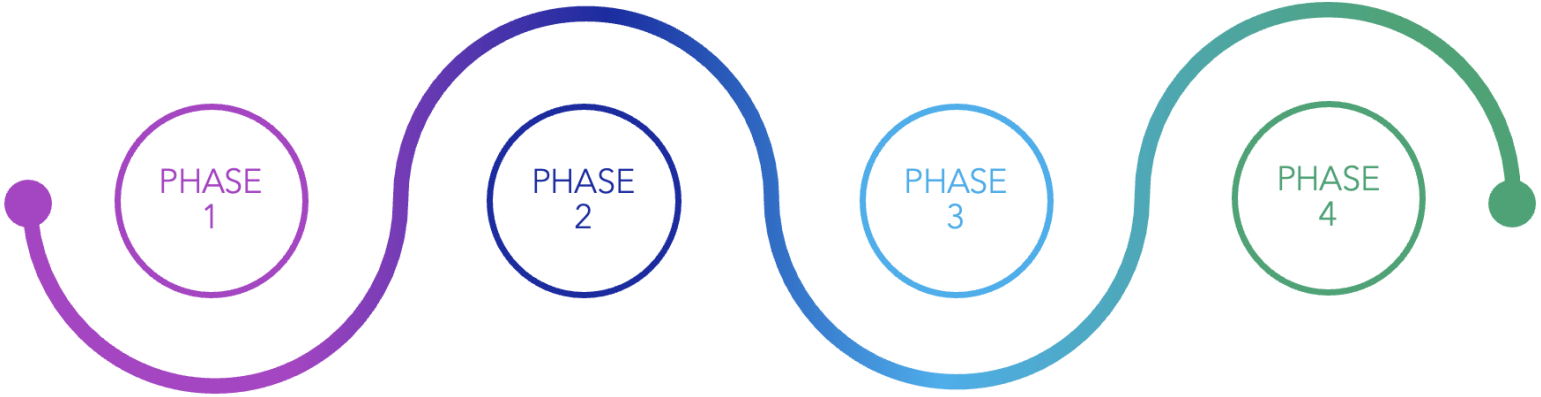
Common controls across all tiers: data boundaries • audit trails • testing • live monitoring

AI strategy framework



"Your first AI project should be the *test case* for your governance, not the *exception* to it."

90 days path to impact



Initial planning and alignment

- 2 weeks
- Needs stakeholder buy in and correct project set up

AI POC R&D period and Business case

- Quick 2 weeks intensive POC phase per project, objective to get a solid business case if applicable

AI Product development, testing

- This phase length depends on the project,
- Small projects ~6 weeks
- Complex projects, opt for Pilot/MVP rather than full solution

AI deployment and scaling

- 2 weeks for deployment, testing and scaling
- Complex projects, develop scope for full solution

Playbook for AI projects

Five basics that make AI use cases repeatable

1. **Use-Case Narrative**
   A one-page narrative outlines outcomes, measurement, operations, and risk.

2. **Named Initiative Ownership**
   Dedicated owner spanning product, operations, and risk — full accountability.

3. **Clear Decision Rights**
   Defined approvals for data access, deployment, risk sign-off, and prioritisation.

4. **Tiered Governance Model**
   Fast lane for low-risk initiatives; stronger scrutiny for higher-risk projects.

5. **Adoption Plan and Feedback**
   Integrated into workflows with feedback loops to drive continuous improvement.

Three truths about AI success

Pilots as Learning Exercises	• AI pilots are valuable for learning but must lead to measurable outcomes to avoid becoming stagnant demos.
Operating Model and Governance	• Failures often come from poor governance and unclear ownership rather than technology limitations.
AI as Strategic Capability	• Embedding AI at the board level ensures alignment, investment, and accountability across the enterprise.

Thank you

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