AI in HEIs: moving from pilots to strategic adoption

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AI in Higher Education Institutions: "Mad men have taken the hospital"

AI-generated image

- **AI is widely accesible to everyone**. Students, faculty and staff are using existing solutions for whatever they consider interesting based on their own criteria.

- **There's still many people unaware of the risks.** Some of the early adopters recommend and even teach other colleagues on the use of tools that do not provide the guarantees by their instituion.

- **Even those institutions that promptly promoted the use of AI are facing issues.** Different units are using tools based on different technologies and vendors, without any coordination. How can we scale?

- **The great challenge is how to evolve from uncoordinated pilots to a governed adoption of AI.**

When Adopting AI, strategy and value proposition should come first

Customer
intimacy

Operational
excellence

Product
leadership
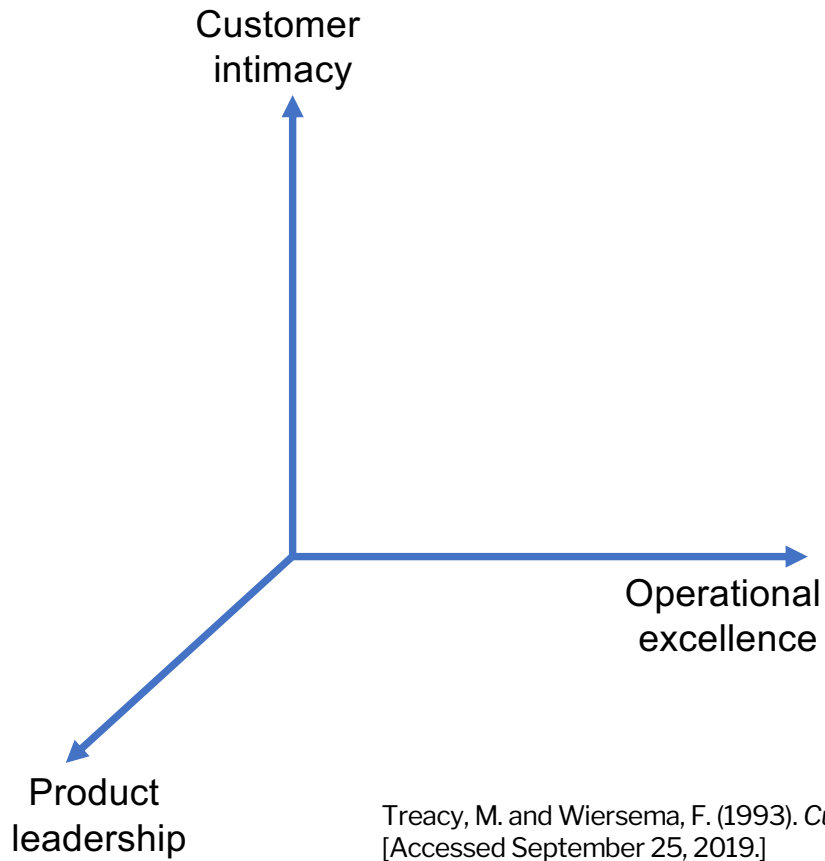
Basic processes	Differentiating processes

Treacy, M. and Wiersema, F. (1993). *Customer Intimacy and Other Value Disciplines* [online]. Available here. [Accessed September 25, 2019.]

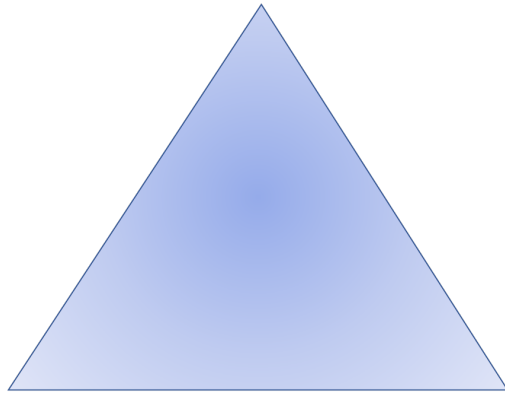# But institutional strategy is not enough…

Customer intimacy

Operational excellence

Product leadership

Illustration: Hans Møller, mollers.dk
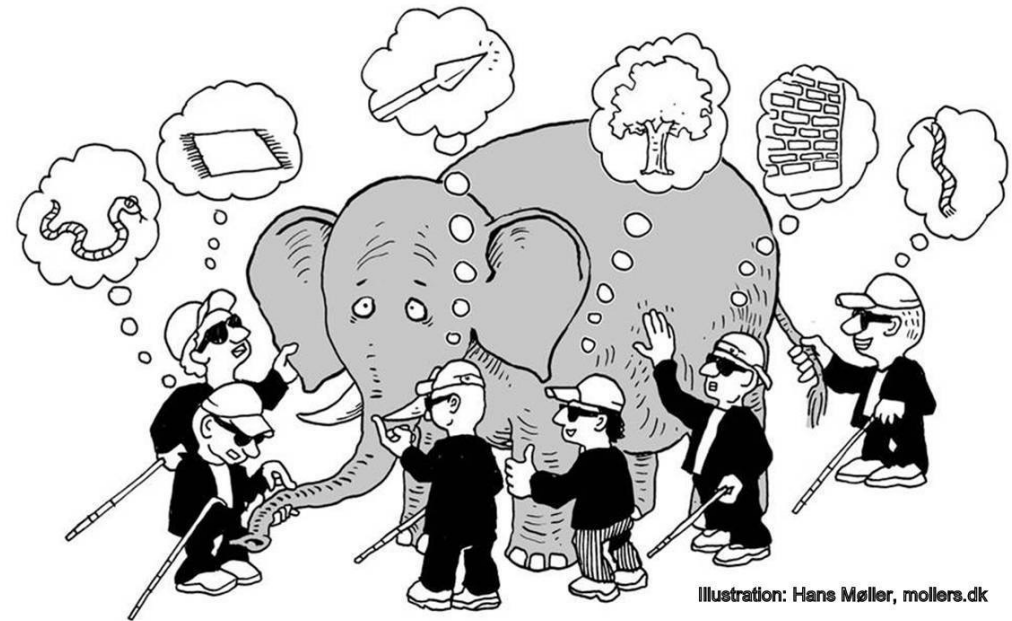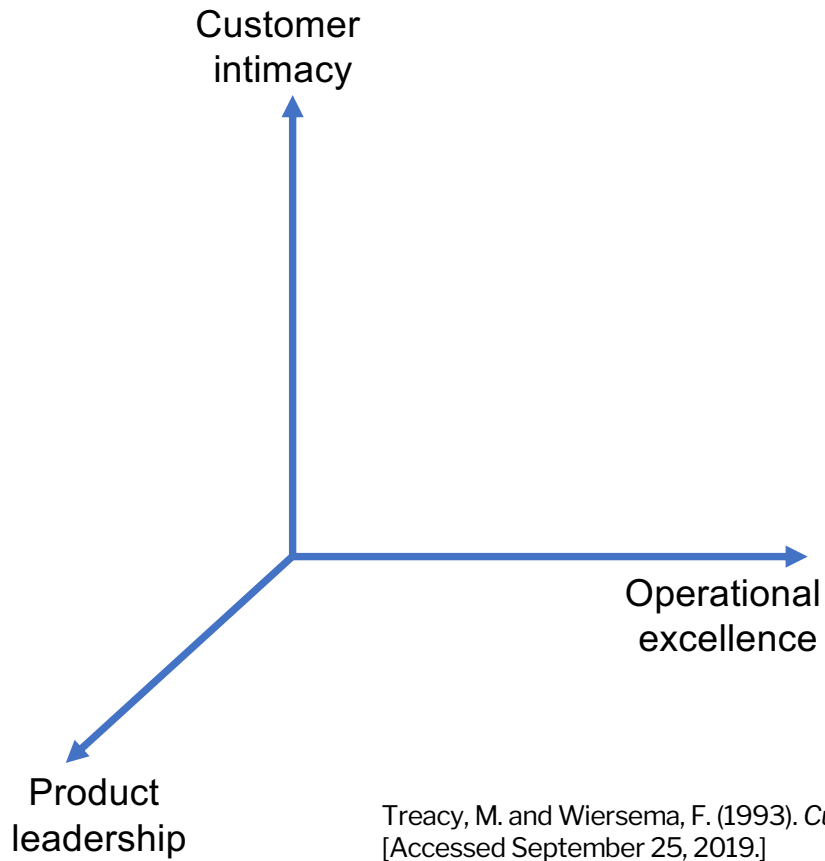
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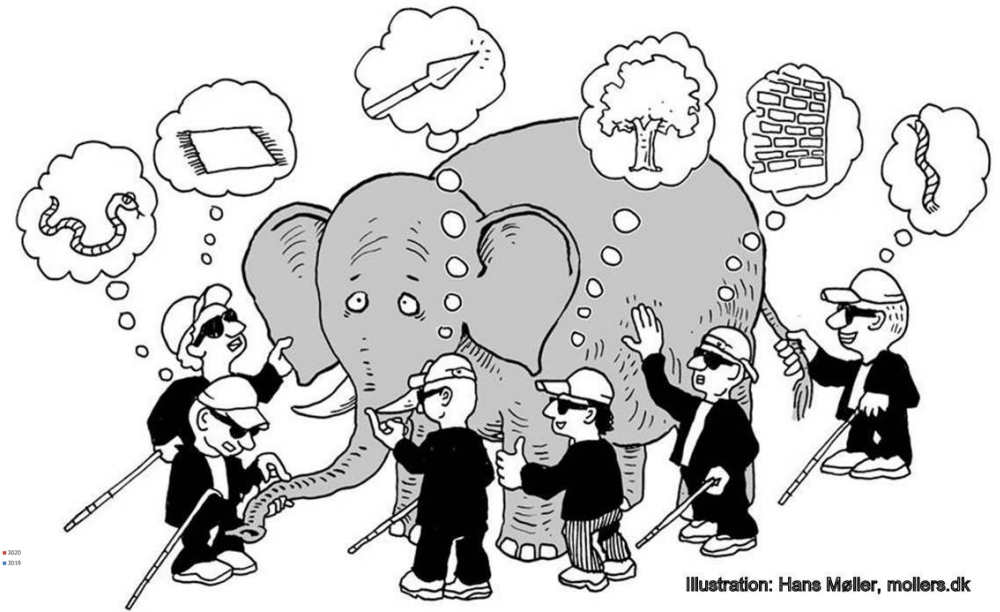
But institutional strategy is not enough…

Culture

Strategy

Capabilities

Illustration: Hans Møller, mollers.dk

Recommendations for AI adoption in HEIs

PREPARE THE PLAYFIELD:

1. Ensure adequate **data governance and management**
2. Optimize IT portfolio and free up enough **resources** for AI
3. Define your institutional **AI strategy**

TRAIN YOUR TEAM:

4. Define a **multidisciplinary team** to lead AI initiatives
5. Develop **internal AI capabilities** by teaching your faculty, staff, students and IT department
6. Establish a **normative framework** that guarantees a secure, ethical and responsable use of AI
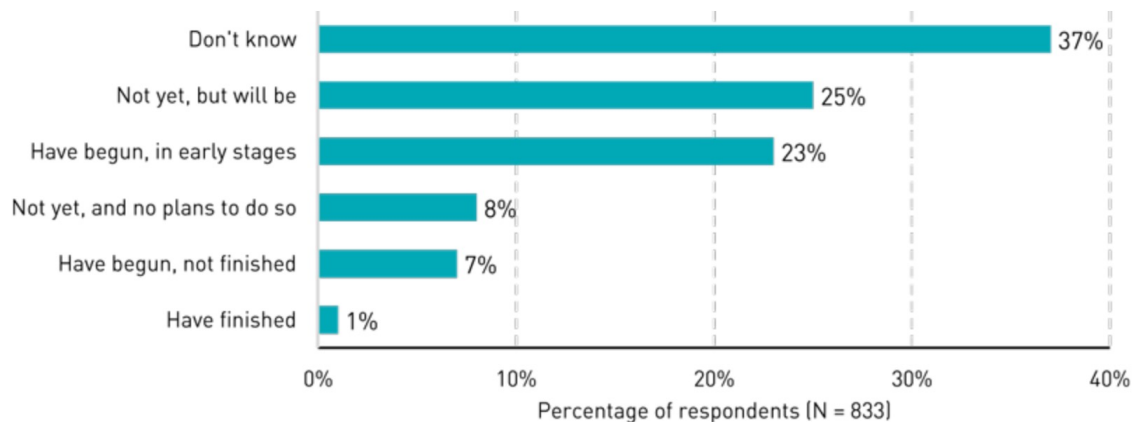
SCORE GOALS:

7. Identify **oportunities** and prioritize **use cases**
8. Establish **alliances** and collaborations
9. Define and develop **pilots**
10. Evaluate and **scale successful pilots** intitution-wide

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1. Establish data governance and management processes

- **Foundation of AI:** The quality of data directly affects the quality of the results generated by AI or even the viability of using it.

- **Protection of sensitive information:** Proper data governance ensures that this information is protected and that its use complies with data protection regulations.

- **Facilitating collaboration:** Good data governance ensures that data is interoperable and accessible to those authorized, promoting collaboration and innovation.

- **Foundation for scaling and maintenance:** A solid data governance framework allows for the updating, maintenance, and expansion of AI projects in an efficient and effective manner.

Figure 16. Extent to Which Institutions Are Preparing Data to Be AI-Ready

	Percentage of respondents (N = 833)
Don't know	37%
Not yet, but will be	25%
Have begun, in early stages	23%
Not yet, and no plans to do so	8%
Have begun, not finished	7%
Have finished	1%

Fuente: EDUCAUSE AI Landscape study 2024

2. Optimize IT portfolio to leave room for AI projects

- **Goal:** to obtain the necessary resources to create the required space for AI.

- To align institutional objectives with the development and approval of an AI Strategy.

- Try to reduce daily operation to develop more projects

- **Make serious efforts to simplify processes, applications and focus on proyects that provide institutional value**

43% maintenance
57% projects

Inversión 11.307.078,00€

29.4%

43.4%

143 PORTICOs

12.6%

14.7%

■ Run ■ Grow ■ Transform ■ Operación

3. Define AI-Strategy, not only reccommendations

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Train your team

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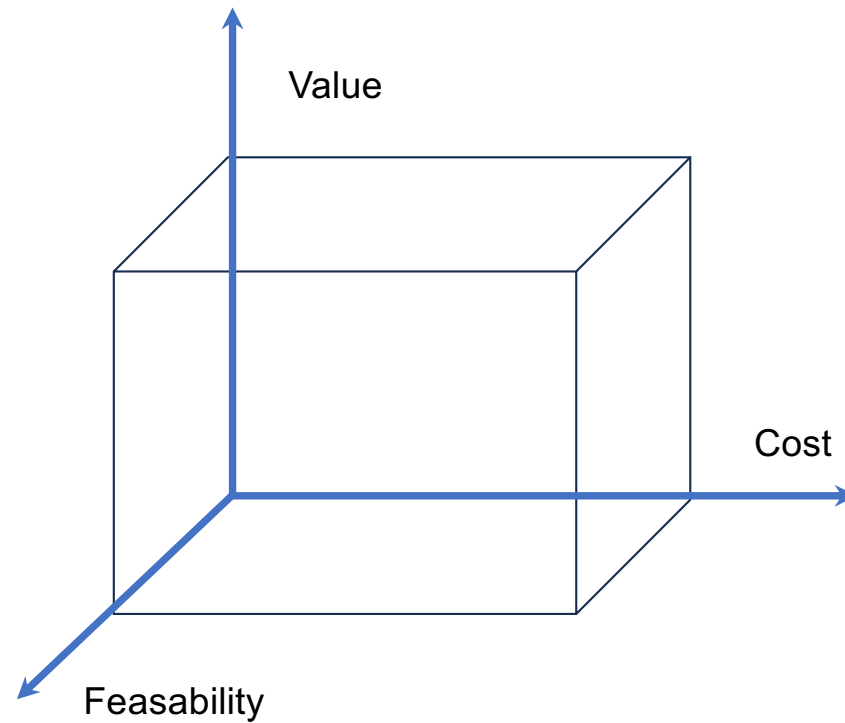

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7. Identify oportunities and prioritize use-cases
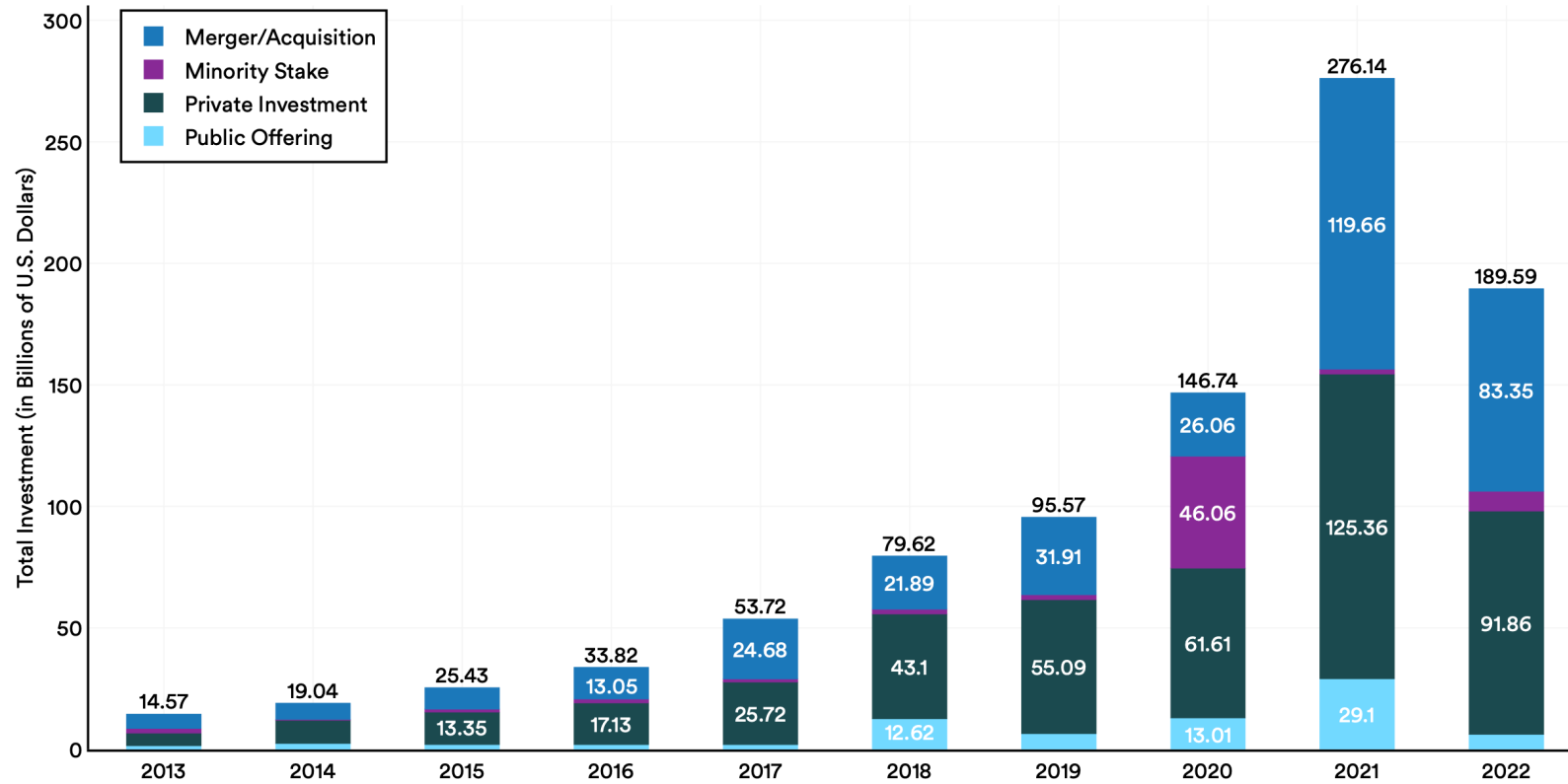
Aspects to consider:

1. Strategic alignment

2. Value

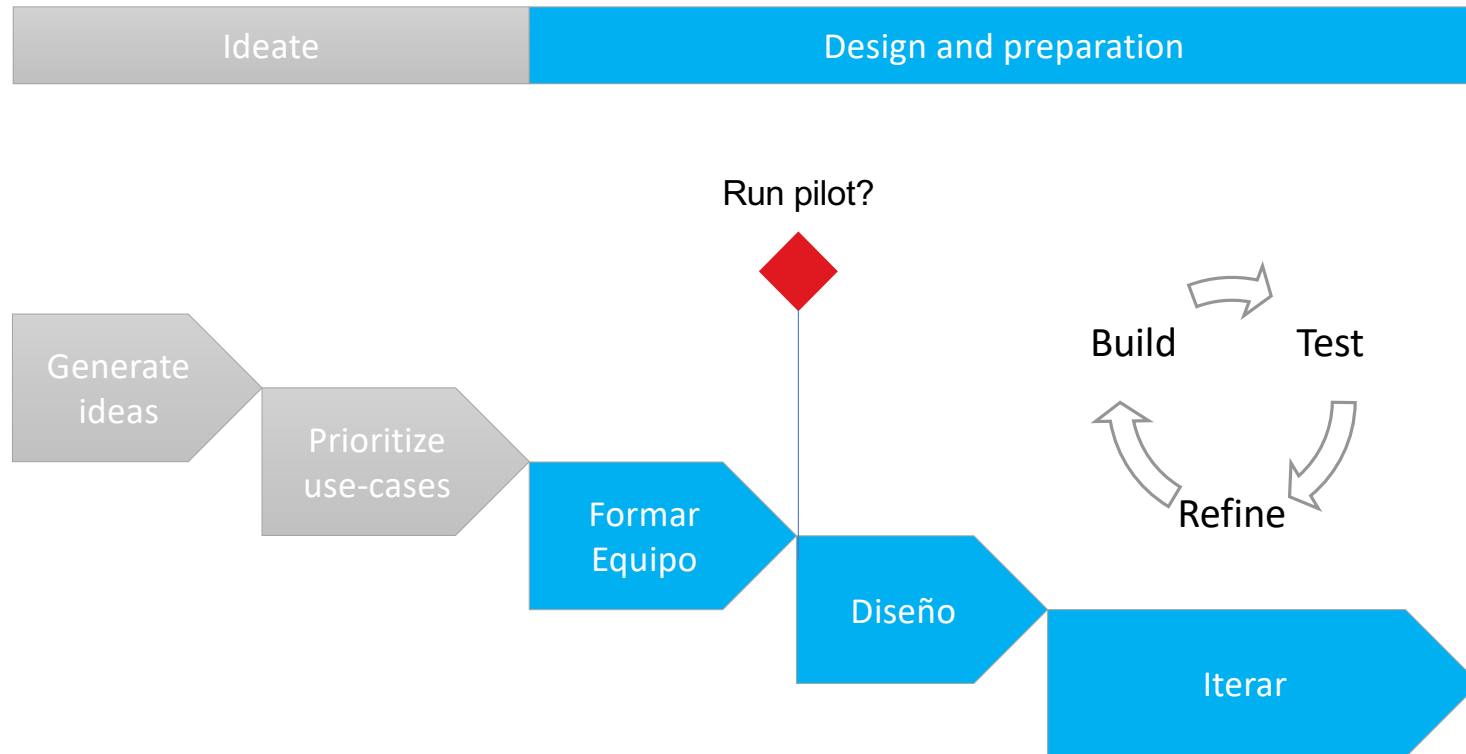3. Costs

4. Feasability

5. Sustainability

8. Establish alliances and collaborations

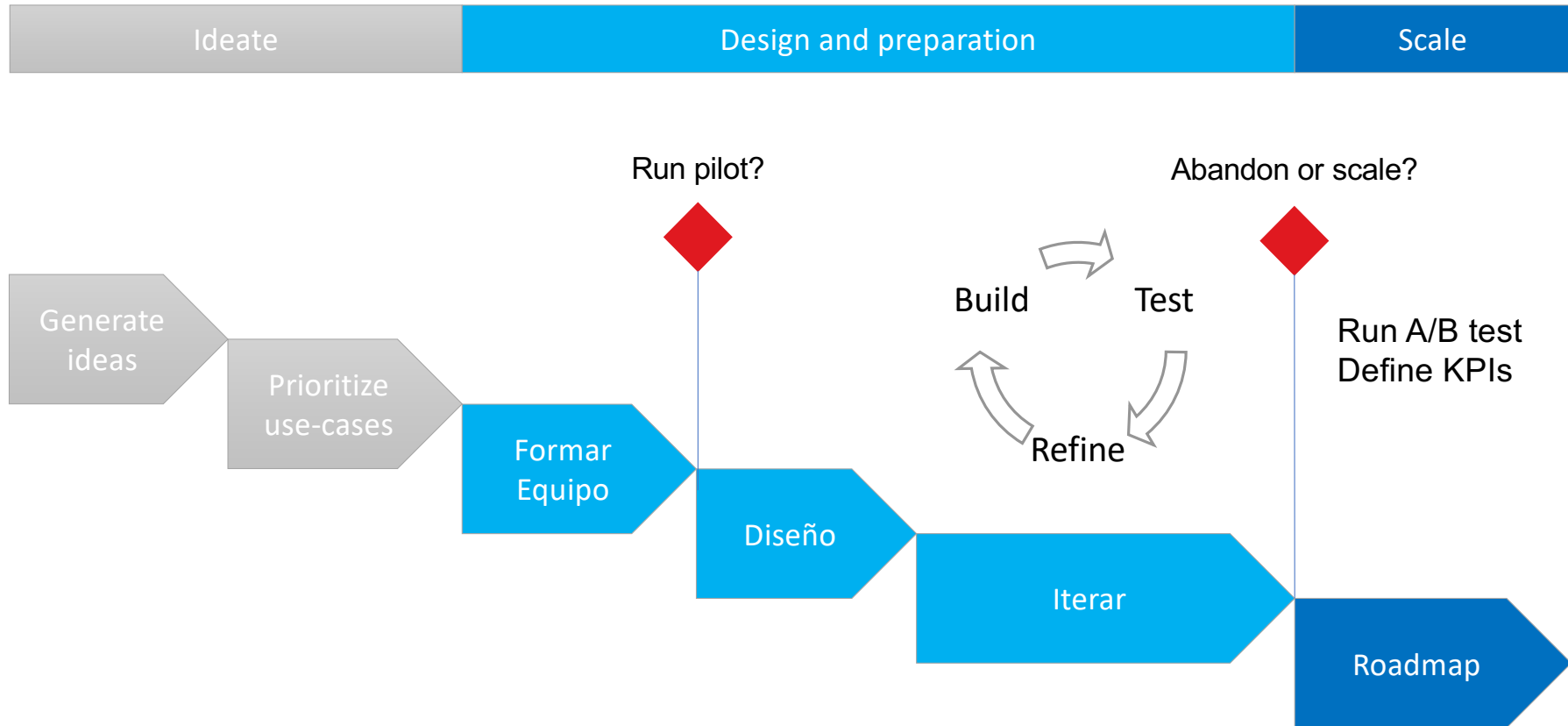**Global Corporate Investment in AI by Investment Activity, 2013–22**
Source: NetBase Quid, 2022 | Chart: 2023 AI Index Report

9. Define and develop pilots

10. Evaluate and scale up successful pilots

Ideate	Design and preparation	Scale

Run pilot?

Abandon or scale?

Build   Test

Refine

Run A/B test
Define KPIs

Generate ideas

Prioritize use-cases

Formar Equipo

Diseño

Iterar

Roadmap

10. Evaluar y escalar pilotos exitosos al resto de la institución
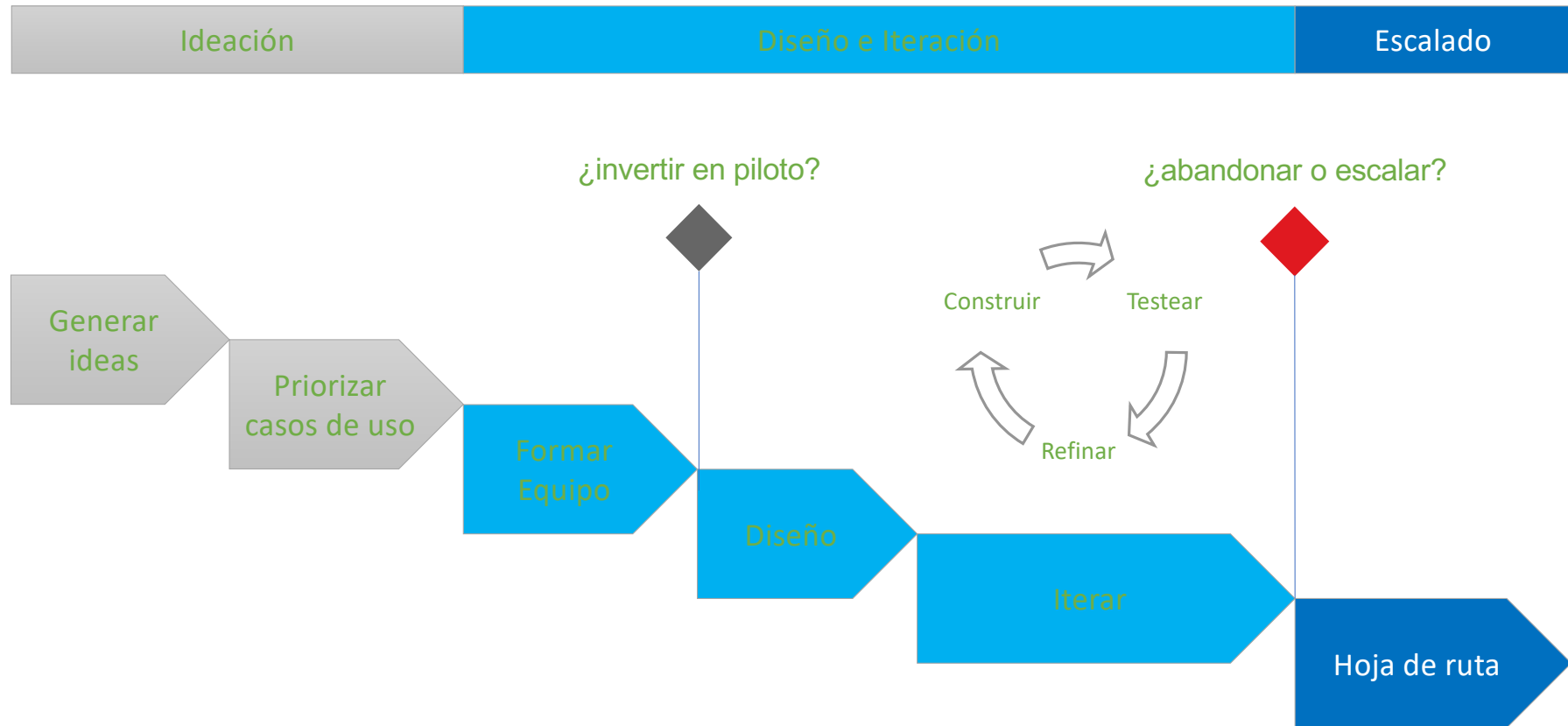
Conclusions

- AI is currently the technology with the greatest transformative potential in the context of higher education. Not taking advantage of its opportunities can mean being left behind.

- The adoption of AI in the university must have clear leadership from the management team and a well-defined strategy that allows for an orderly, controlled implementation with the necessary resources.

- We must build solid foundations on which to support AI initiatives both in terms of internal training and the regulatory framework that ensures ethical, responsible, and safe use.

- It is essential to experiment in an agile manner, prioritizing those pilots that contribute to institutional improvement and scaling only those that are viable and sustainable.

- In the current context, it is impossible to adopt advanced AI solutions without the establishment of partnerships and collaborations.