

## Facebook Opens Engineering Center Inside London's Chinatown And Hires 100 New AI Specialists

London has become a second home for many of Silicon Valley's tech giants. Facebook has further committed to the city today, with the opening of a quirky new office in Chinatown.

This will be Facebook's third London office, after the company ran out of space in its other two sites, which are packed with engineering, sales and marketing teams.

The new Facebook office—located on Shaftsbury Avenue, which runs through Chinatown in London's Soho district—will be used as a Facebook "engineering centre." It boasts the usual tech office furniture including a pool table and a foosball table, but there's also a wall decorated like the outside of a Chinese takeaway and another that looks like a row of Victorian houses.

And when it comes to Cantonese food, Facebook's workers will be spoiled for choice. The area nearby is packed with eateries known for freshly steamed dim sum and roast duck hanging in the windows.

Facebook had 2,300 people employed in the U.K. at the end of 2018. Now that number is expected to rise to 3,000 by the end of 2019. Of those roles, 1,800 will be tech jobs, according to the company.

One hundred of the new roles will be in the burgeoning field of artificial intelligence. Identifying and removing harmful content on Facebook's platform will be a priority for a significant number of the new hires.

"Safety is our top priority at Facebook, and over the last two years we've substantially increased our investment in this area," said Nicola Mendelsohn, Facebook's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, in a statement.

"These hundreds of new jobs demonstrate not only our commitment to the U.K. but also our determination to do everything we can to keep Facebook safe and secure."

The fact that Facebook plans to hire even more staff in London may [send a shiver down the spine of recruiters at startups](#) like food delivery service Deliveroo and virtual worlds startup Improbable. Facebook and other Silicon Valley giants are poaching staff from these fast-growing companies, often luring them away with significantly higher salaries.

The news comes as part of the London's annual Tech Week celebrations. Welcoming the

news, the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said in a statement:

"This investment is great news for the capital and is further proof that London is open to talent and to new investment in our thriving tech sector. I've been calling for stronger action by businesses and government to tackle malicious and harmful content, so it's good to see Facebook taking further steps to protect its users."

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