

Pathways

Pathways are the causal, contributory, or affected vectors within the AI system that connect observed behaviors or failures to specific underlying mechanisms or triggers. Pathways can be traced across different layers of operation, from low level-architecture to high-level execution and interaction, and help localize responsibility, intervention, or reinforcement within the system's total reasoning stack.

Each pathway operates at a different layer of abstraction and is classified into three levels:

- 1. The Root Reinforcement Pathway**
- 2. The Secondary Reinforcement Pathway**
- 3. The Tertiary Affected System Pathway**

Root Pathways identify the first-cause vulnerability. When compounded by Secondary Reinforcement Pathways (environmental or internal pressures), they cascade into Tertiary Affected System Pathways (downstream harms).