Policy on the Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence

Purpose

This policy establishes rules guiding the acceptable use of artificial intelligence (AI) on platforms managed, owned, and/or operated by the Maryland Library Association (MLA), as well as in communications and content used in MLA programs, events, and services. While recognizing the potential gains that the thoughtful use of AI can offer, MLA prioritizes its members and seeks to remain a library association that is for humans and by humans. This policy aligns acceptable use with MLA's values, Code of Conduct, and Code of Professional Ethics.

Further guidelines may be developed to address specific scenarios and/or users.

Scope

This policy applies to all covered persons who use or interact with AI systems. Covered persons are defined as employees, members, contractors, speakers, authors, program attendees, and partners of MLA.

Definitions

Artificial Intelligence: “a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. Artificial intelligence systems use machine- and humanbased [sic] inputs to perceive real and virtual environments; abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner; and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.” [1]

Algorithm: “A series of logical steps through which a computer or software program turns particular inputs into particular outputs.” [1]

AI system: “Any system, software, sensor, or process that automatically generates outputs including, but not limited to, predictions, recommendations, or decisions that augment or replace human decision-making. This extends to software, hardware, algorithms, and data generated by these systems, used to automate large-scale processes or analyze large data sets.” [1]

Agentic Artificial Intelligence (Agentic AI): “A system designed with the capability to proactively and autonomously pursue defined goals within a specific environment (real or virtual).” [1]

Generative AI: “AI algorithms and models that can create new content, including audio, code, images, text, and video, based on the data they are trained on.” [2]

Harm: “NIST’s AI Risk Management Framework (AI RMF) defines AI harm as encompassing impacts on individuals, organizations, and ecosystems, including harm to civil liberties, rights, physical/psychological safety, economic opportunities, reputation, business operations, and global systems.” [1]

Guiding Principles

Covered persons must use AI systems responsibly and ethically, using the following principles to guide acceptable use:

- Trust: AI systems should be used in ways that engender trust in MLA rather than leading our members and partners to question our trustworthiness.
- Transparency: The use of AI systems must be disclosed, including details about the extent of use, systems used, and steps taken to ensure human oversight.
- Human Responsibility: The human author, regardless of the method of creation, is responsible for all content where they claim authorship or otherwise seek to be attributed as the content's owner. Content that is generated by AI systems must be reviewed by a human.
- Intellectual property: AI systems must be used in a manner that respects copyright and intellectual property.
- Privacy: AI systems must be used in a manner that respects every individual’s right to privacy.
- Reproducibility: when used in research, the use of AI must be documented in a manner that allows for research methods to be reproduced by others.

All uses of AI must comply with other MLA policies, including MLA's Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics.

Prohibited Uses

The following uses of AI are expressly prohibited:

- Malicious activities that could harm others, violate privacy, or provide misinformation
- Using a 3rd-party AI system with MLA’s association management system through direct integration, data export, or other methods
- Inputting privileged, confidential, and proprietary data into AI systems without prior authorization from the MLA Executive Board
- Inputting names and likenesses of other individuals into AI systems or included in generative AI output
- Using content that is generated solely by AI, without meaningful human review, in carrying out MLA business or programs

Exceptions to these prohibitions may be made with prior authorization, through formal vote, from the MLA Executive Board. Any exceptions should be made in alignment with the Guiding Principles listed above and must be communicated to membership. Authorized exceptions should be tracked and used to inform future revisions of this policy.

Reporting and Enforcement

Any suspected violations of this policy or any potential ethical, legal, or regulatory concerns related to AI use must be reported following the procedures outlined in MLA's Code of Conduct.

Individuals and units charged with oversight for MLA programs and services have both the right and responsibility to determine the acceptable extent of AI usage within their programs and services, as long as such usage does not violate this policy. Scenarios needing further adjudication should be reported to the MLA President and/or Executive Director for review by the Executive Board.

Related Resources

The following MLA governing documents inform this policy and should be considered in the adjudication of reported violations and future revisions to this policy:

- MLA Values
- MLA Code of Conduct
- MLA Code of Professional Ethics

All listed documents are included in the MLA Manual.

References

[1] From State of Maryland. Department of IT. (2025). *The State of Maryland's Responsible AI Policy*. https://doit.maryland.gov/policies/ai/Pages/maryland-responsible-ai-policy.aspx
[2] From State of Maryland. Office of the Governor. (2024). Executive. Order No. 01.01.2024.02: *Catalyzing the Responsible and Productive Use of Artificial Intelligence in Maryland State Government*. https://governor.maryland.gov/media/741/download

Approved by the MLA Executive Board
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