Policy # 900-4
Adopted Date: November 18, 2026
Revised Date: N/A

Policy on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

Purpose

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are becoming common in libraries and daily life. This policy explains how Seymour Library may use AI responsibly while protecting privacy, intellectual freedom, public trust, equitable access, and professional judgment.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors, vendors, and patrons when AI is used in connection with Library services, work, equipment, or networks.

Definitions

AI includes software that generates, summarizes, recommends, classifies, predicts, or assists with decisions. Generative AI creates new text, images, audio, video, or code. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) means information that can identify a person. Human-in-the-loop review means a staff member reviews and approves AI-assisted work before it is used.

Data Privacy, Confidentiality, and Security

Staff, volunteers, and contractors may not enter patron information (names, dates of birth, or other information that would potentially identify a person), personnel records, or other confidential information into unapproved AI tools. Any approved use involving sensitive information must be reviewed by the Library Director. AI accounts used for Library work must use approved Library credentials and security practices. The library may not implement systems using AI facial recognition for privacy reasons, subject to local law and the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

Staff Use of AI

Approved AI tools may be used to help draft communications, marketing, grant materials, summaries, metadata, accessibility aids, and other routine work. Staff must review all AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and appropriateness before it is used. Staff remain responsible for all final work products. AI may not be used to make final hiring, disciplinary, or personnel decisions, bypass copyright restrictions, or replace professional judgment.

Transparency and Disclosure

The Library will explain significant public-facing uses of AI in plain language. Patrons may ask whether AI was used in a recommendation or decision that affected them and may request assistance from a staff member for human-in-the-loop review.

Public and Patron Use of AI

Patrons may use publicly available AI tools on Library computers and networks subject to Library policies and applicable law. Staff may help patrons understand how AI tools work, including their benefits, limitations, privacy concerns, and potential inaccuracies. Library staff may provide general information about AI tools but may not create, enter, or refine prompts, inputs, or content on behalf of patrons. Patrons are responsible for evaluating the accuracy and appropriateness of AI-generated content and assume any risks associated with their use of AI tools.

Collection Development and AI-Generated Materials

Selection of materials that are known or reasonably identifiable as primarily AI-generated (including books, images, audiobooks, and vendor database content) remains a matter of professional collection judgment under the Library's Collection Development Policy. Staff will apply the Library's existing selection criteria: quality, accuracy, authenticity, transparency of authorship, and relevance to community needs and are not obligated to acquire materials solely because they are inexpensive to produce or widely available. Declining to acquire primarily AI-generated material that does not meet these standards is a legitimate exercise of collection judgment and fiscal stewardship, not a form of censorship. AI may assist with collection development research and recommendations, but AI may not make final material selection decisions.

Copyright and Intellectual Property

Staff should assume AI-generated content may have uncertain copyright status. Staff must not use copyrighted or licensed materials in ways that violate agreements or terms of service. Questions should be directed to the Library Director.

Liability and Risk Management

AI is a tool, not a decisionmaker. Final responsibility for Library decisions and communications remains with Library staff, the Director, or the Board. Any data exposure involving AI must be handled as a security incident. Public-facing AI tools should clearly indicate that results may contain errors and are not professional advice.

Training

The Library will provide regular training on approved AI tools, privacy requirements, and responsible use. New employees will receive training during onboarding.

Review

To keep up with trends and changes, the Seymour Library Board of Trustees will review this policy no less than annually.

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Reviewed: