



Policy for the Use of Artificial Intelligence



Civic Media

Policy for the Use of Artificial Intelligence for the Generation of Content

Large language models (LLMs) are a type of artificial intelligence (AI) model that use deep learning techniques to perform natural language processing (NLP) tasks. LLMs are trained using writing samples gathered from the past, both what can be found in books and online. That means they are inherently based on the work of other writers. The growing accessibility of these technologies to audiences and consumers is having a tremendous impact on media, content creation and our future in general.

We are actively encouraging our team to experiment with these tools. However, we want to ensure that ethical considerations are brought to bear in all decisions on how to use them for content we present to our audience. **Here are the guidelines you need to stick to in order to avoid any potential harm to our organization or the audiences we serve:**

1. We encourage the use of LLMs for experimental purposes, and to discover novel innovations which may propel our organization forward. This policy is meant to promote that kind of usage, and we welcome any feedback about it. In particular, we welcome feedback about the need for “ChatGPT Plus” or “Claude AI” licenses or similar resources if the reason is compelling.
2. Do not disclose sensitive proprietary material, such as strategic memos, lists of clients, donors, or any other sensitive constituent data, to third-party services like ChatGPT, Claude or Bard. It is crucial to remember that we’re responsible for protecting the data we manage. In cases where LLM use might involve data that could be sensitive or personally identifiable, stakeholders should be informed of potential risks. If in doubt, ask someone in the Civic Media Artificial Intelligence Working Group.
3. News reporters and opinion writers may *not* use LLMs to assist you in the writing of your copy or articles at any time. You may of course use them for research purposes as akin to a web search engine.
4. Content writers, producers, on-air hosts and all others who create editorial content consumed by our audience in areas that are not labeled as blogs may *not* use the by-products of an LLM in work that contains your signature or byline verbatim. The accepted process is to create a copy with the output from the LLM, keep track of your additions and edits and have it reviewed by another team member before publishing it as your own. Blog post writers are encouraged to use this same process, but their work falls out of the jurisdiction of editorial content.
5. We endorse and highly encourage the team to use LLMs to transcribe audio or video, and to use it to summarize these transcriptions when they are presented as informational – not editorial – content to our audience.
6. When using the by-products of an LLM in your work, you are ultimately responsible for those by-products. You should therefore verify any factual claims, check for logical and grammatical errors, and ensure that the content adheres to our organization’s standards and values. When in doubt, ask a team member to help review it.
7. Be cognizant that there are ethical concerns with the use of large LLMs for a variety of reasons. For example, ChatGPT has been criticized for being trained on racially-biased text, and fed data provided by exploitative labor practices. Think carefully about how such criticisms might reflect on our work.
8. Do not use ChatGPT, Claude or Bard for production-quality systems, especially at the free tier. We consider

these systems to be potentially useful augmentations to our internal work rather than a mission-critical and resilient system.

9. Take care in adhering to the ChatGPT, Claude or Bard usage policies. In particular, note that large-scale use of ChatGPT for political purposes is forbidden. Unfortunately, the full meaning of this policy has not yet been made clear.
10. If you intend to use LLMs on an ongoing basis in some clearly-defined process, or if you intend to develop a program around LLMs, please consult with your manager and work collaboratively with your team to ensure the work adheres to these guidelines.
11. Please share this policy with any vendors who may have access to sensitive organizational materials, and ensure that they do not share these materials with cloud-based LLMs.
12. This policy may be updated from time to time, both in response to new developments in LLM technology and as we learn from our experiences. We will make it a priority to keep you informed of these changes and invite open discussions around them.
13. We view AI tools like LLMs as resources meant to augment and enhance the work of our professionals, not to replace them. It's essential to remember that human skills, intuition, and judgment are invaluable. As such, while we encourage the innovative use of AI, we also urge the continued development of human-centric communication skills.

