PLAID3

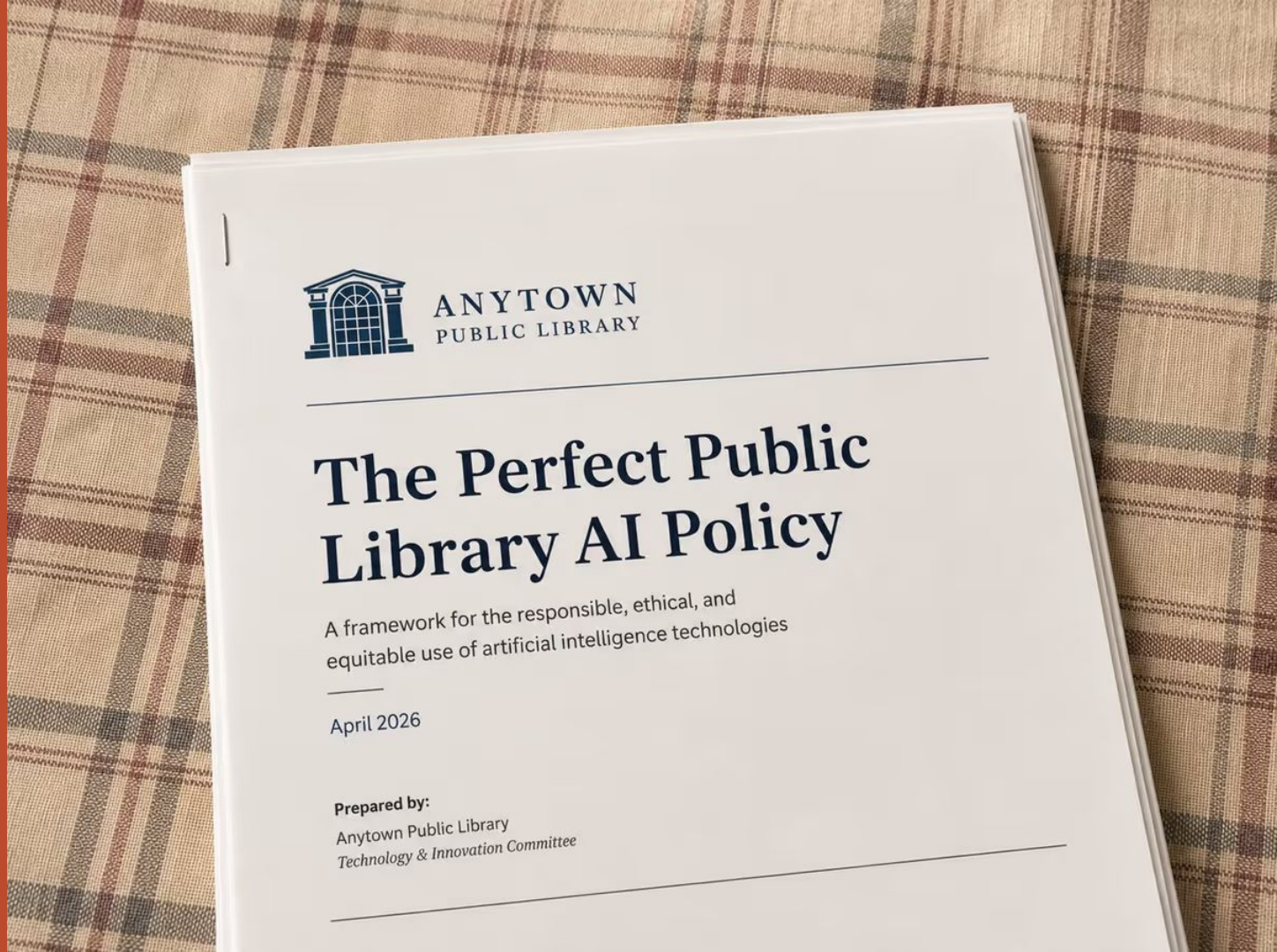
Human-Centered AI Policies for Public Libraries

Jim Craner
jim@galecia.com

12 Aug 2026

Welcome!

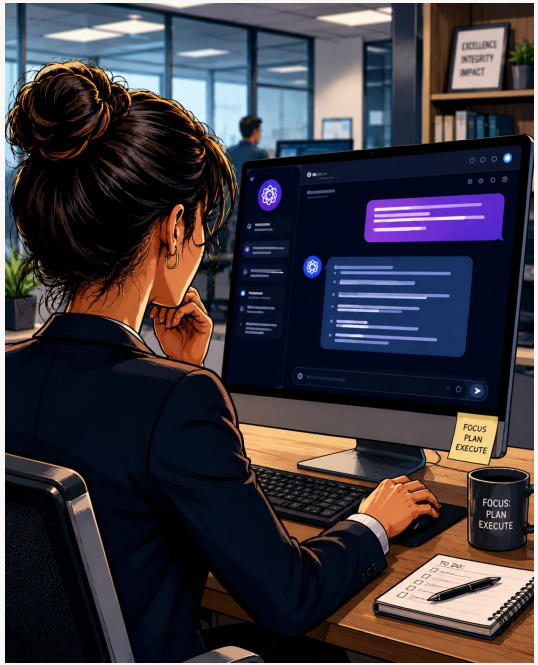
- Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Poll
- Individual Learning Goals


ANYTOWN
PUBLIC LIBRARY
The Perfect Public Library AI Policy
A framework for the responsible, ethical, and equitable use of artificial intelligence technologies
April 2026
Prepared by:
Anytown Public Library
Technology & Innovation Committee

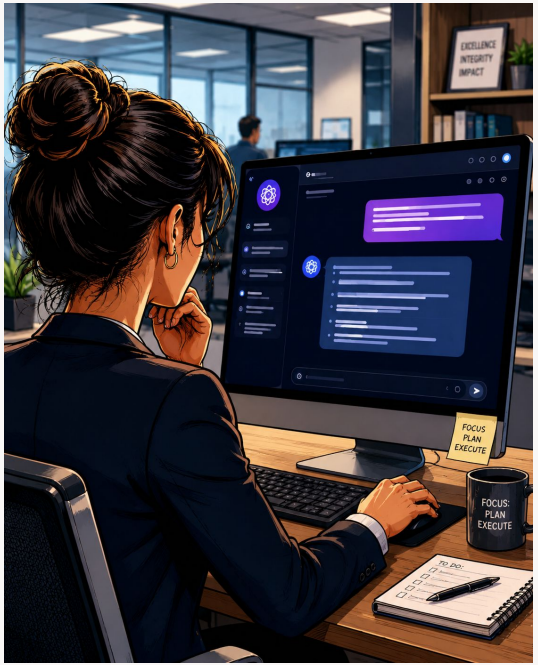
Outcomes

1. Know the three components of an AI policy (usage, adoption, literacy)
2. Have specific language examples based on existing library policies
3. Confidently draft your library's comprehensive policy.

Why It Matters



With an AI policy



Without an AI policy

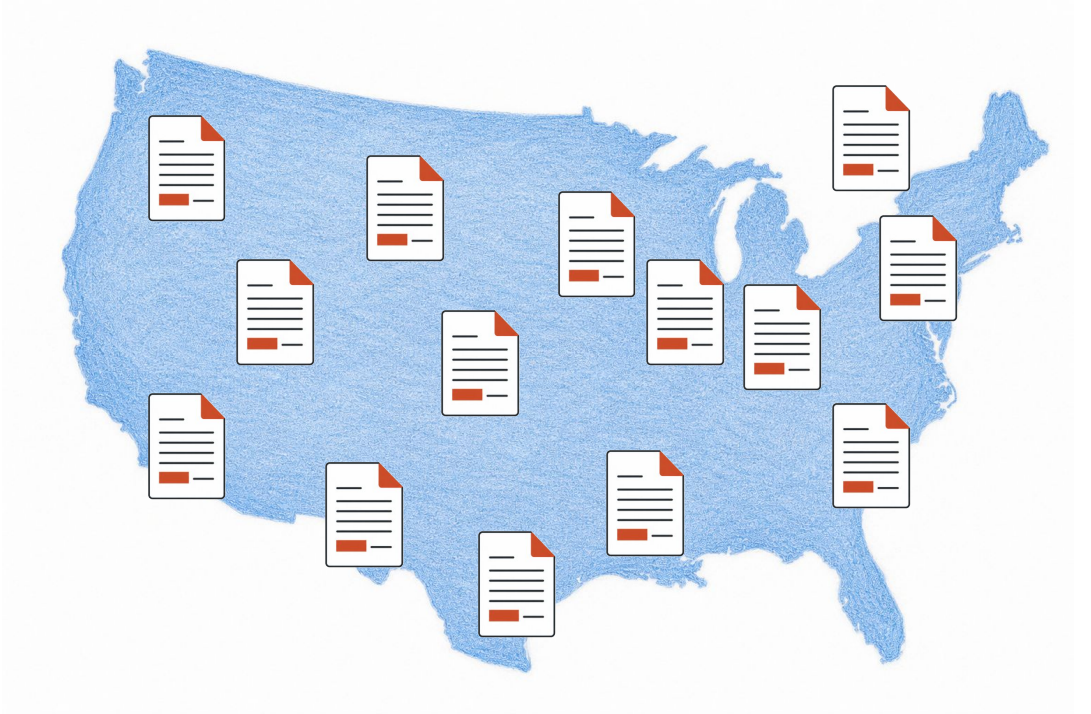
Follow the Leaders:

Automated Analysis of Selected Public Library Policies

Our Process

Our Analysis

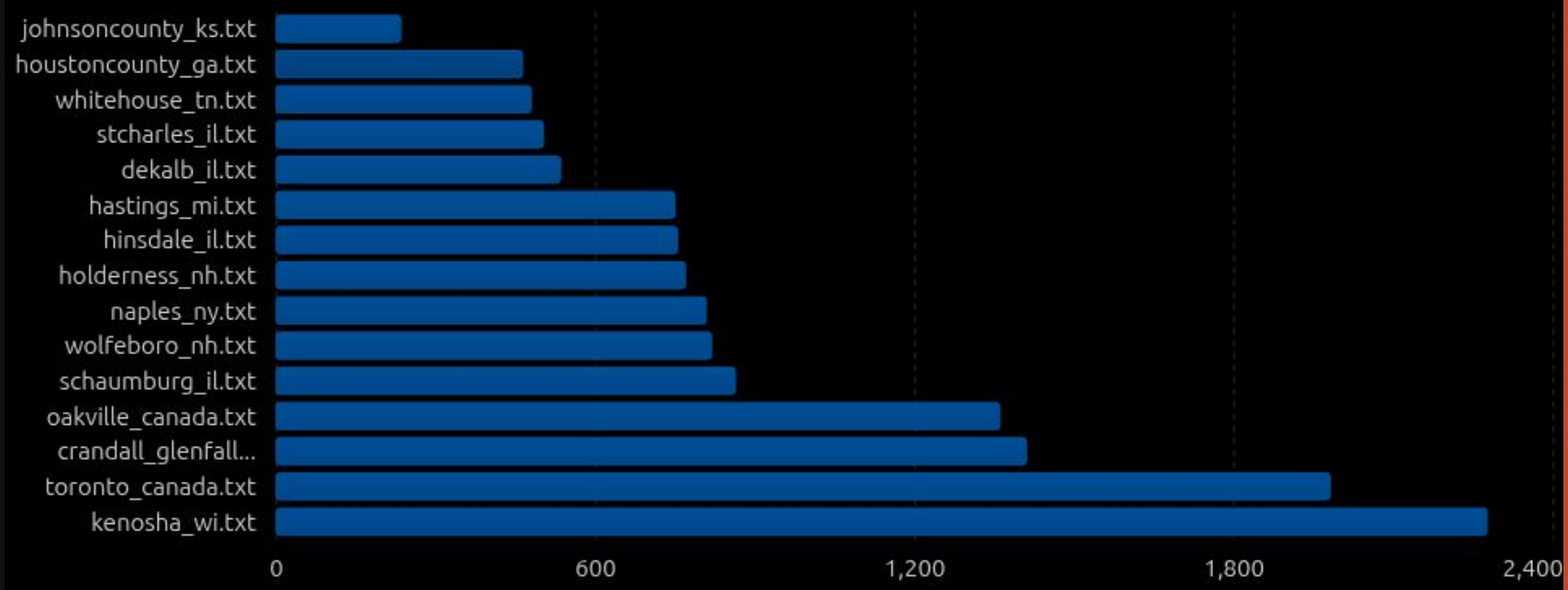
- Fifteen public library AI policies
- Small rural and suburban to large urban systems
- US and Canada
- Published 2023 to 2025
- Gathered by Kathryn FitzGerald and Benjamin Charles Germain Lee*



* https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/79tjb_v1

Selected policies ordered by word length

Policies sorted from smallest to highest word count.



Discover

“Given these sample public library AI policy documents, let's brainstorm a hierarchically grouped list of a few dozen potential questions we can ask when surveying all similar documents. e.g.,

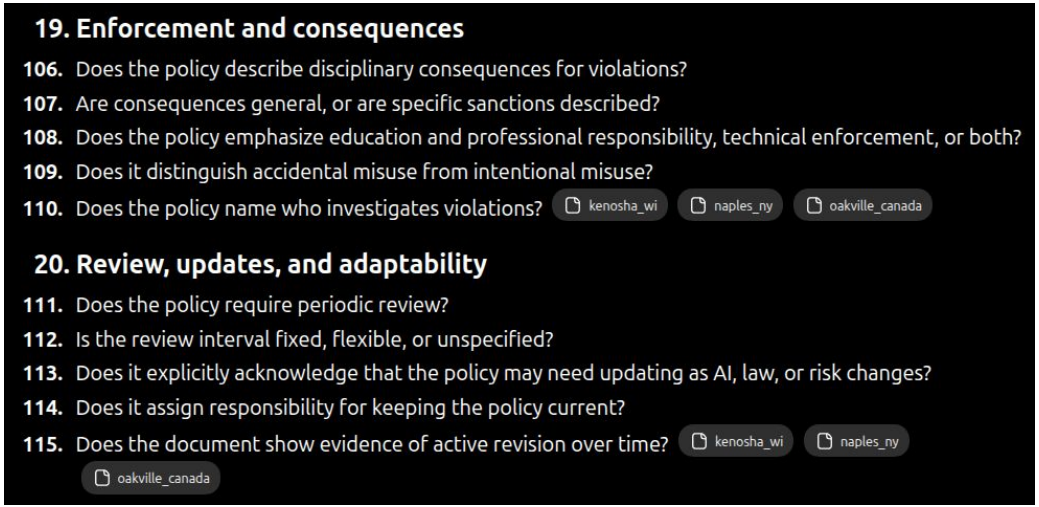
- Does the policy reference local, state, or federal regulations?
- How does the policy handle permitted uses of AI: exclusive list, suggested list, or not mentioned?
- How does the policy handle banned uses of AI: exclusive list, suggested list, or not mentioned?
- Does the policy explicitly reference library values?”



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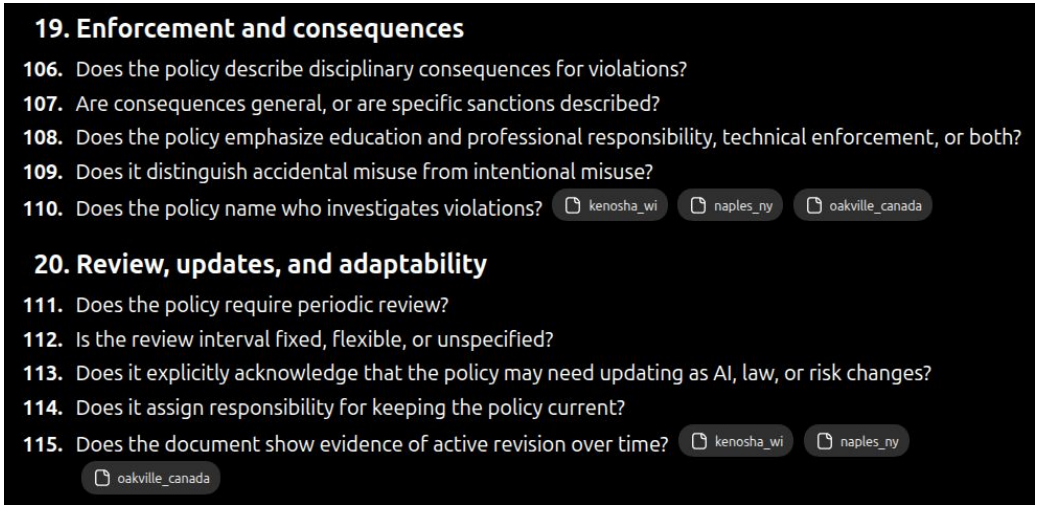
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Curate

“assemble 23, 23, 9, 11, 12, 13 14, 15 (mod to "Which of the following..."), 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 45, 46, 47, 51, 52, 54, 55, 59, 60, 61, 65, 67, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 87, 88, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 203, 204, 106, 108, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122.

Give me a survey instrument in a markdown codefence.”



19. Enforcement and consequences

106. Does the policy describe disciplinary consequences for violations?
107. Are consequences general, or are specific sanctions described?
108. Does the policy emphasize education and professional responsibility, technical enforcement, or both?
109. Does it distinguish accidental misuse from intentional misuse?
110. Does the policy name who investigates violations? kenosha_wi naples_ny oakville_canada

20. Review, updates, and adaptability

111. Does the policy require periodic review?
112. Is the review interval fixed, flexible, or unspecified?
113. Does it explicitly acknowledge that the policy may need updating as AI, law, or risk changes?
114. Does it assign responsibility for keeping the policy current?
115. Does the document show evidence of active revision over time? kenosha_wi naples_ny oakville_canada

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Public Library AI Policy Survey Instrument

Coding unit: One policy document
Suggested coding convention: Choose one response per question unless otherwise noted.
Notes field: Add brief excerpts or comments where useful.

A. Scope, purpose, and framing

Q1. Does the policy explain why the library has an AI policy?
- [ ] Yes - [ ] No - [ ] Unclear
Notes:

Q2. Is AI framed primarily as an opportunity, a risk, or both?
- [ ] Primarily opportunity - [ ] Primarily risk - [ ] Both opportunity and risk - [ ] Neither / not stated clearly
Notes:

Q3. What motivations are emphasized?
Check all that apply.
- [ ] Productivity / efficiency - [ ] Service enhancement - [ ] Innovation - [ ] Privacy / confidentiality - [ ] Legal compliance - [ ] Risk mitigation / security - [ ] Public trust / transparency - [ ] Ethics / responsible use - [ ] Community education / literacy - [ ] Other: _____ - [ ] Not stated
Notes:

Q4. Does the policy explicitly state that AI is an emerging or rapidly evolving technology?
- [ ] Yes - [ ] No - [ ] Unclear
Notes:

Q5. Which of the following does the policy explicitly reference?
Check all that apply.
- [ ] Library mission - [ ] Library values - [ ] Strategic goals - [ ] Public service role - [ ] None of the above
Notes:

Analyze

"Run the survey instrument template against each of the sample policies in the *policies* folder. Save the resulting analysis in a *results* folder."

OR,

```
for each file in Samples:

  analyze(prompt, file)
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Synthesize

“Synthesize these completed survey instruments into a polished, narrative report that explains the landscape of public library AI governance. Write for an audience of practitioners, policy staff, and scholars, and use the survey responses to identify recurring priorities, major policy design choices, and significant omissions. Structure the report around the central questions raised by the survey: why libraries adopt AI policies, who and what the policies cover, what uses are allowed or restricted, how privacy and security are handled, what kinds of oversight and verification are required, how transparency and attribution are addressed, whether patron education and staff training are included, and how compliance is enforced. Do not simply tabulate answers; interpret them, compare them, and explain their significance. Finish with a section that identifies promising practices, weak spots in the current policy landscape, and recommendations for future policy development.”

Public Library AI Policy Analysis: A Comprehensive Report

Prepared: March 31, 2026 **Scope:** 15 public library AI policies from the United States and Canada
Method: Structured policy survey instrument (66 questions, 9 sections) applied to each policy; findings synthesized across all libraries

Table of Contents

1. Overview: The State of Public Library AI Governance
2. The Policy Landscape: Who Has What
3. Why Libraries Are Developing AI Policies: Framing and Purpose
4. Who These Policies Govern: Scope and Actors
5. Legal Grounding: How Policies Connect to the Law
6. What Staff Are Allowed to Do: Permitted Uses
7. What Staff Are Forbidden from Doing: Prohibited Uses
8. Keeping Humans in Charge: Oversight and Output Quality
9. Being Honest About AI: Transparency, Disclosure, and Attribution
10. Learning and Teaching: Staff Training and Patron Education
11. Accountability: Records, Reporting, and Consequences
12. Cross-Cutting Themes
13. Standout Policies Worth Learning From
14. Common Gaps and Missed Opportunities
15. Key Takeaways for Practitioners

https://github.com/galecia/ai-policy-analysis-202605

Framing

Who
does this affect?

- **Staff**
- Board members / trustees
- Volunteers
- Interns / students
- Partners / Contractors / Vendors
- Patrons / public

What
are we talking about?

- Tools - define the technology, roles, etc.
- **Recommended uses**
- **Prohibited uses**
- **Adoption standards and processes**
- **Literacy and training**
- Observation and reflection

When
is this reviewed?

"AI evolves rapidly…"

- **Ongoing** monitoring of compliance, effectiveness
- Periodic **review of new tools** and technologies
- Periodic **review of policy**

Where

does this matter?

- **The entire library** - across ALL departments, operations, workflows, staff
- **Public presence** - programming and materials for community and patrons
- **Spectrum of tools**: ILS, workstations, PAC terminals, cloud services, etc.

Why

are we doing this?

- **Patron Privacy / Data Protection**
- **Ethical and/or Responsible Usage**
- Improve Service to Patrons
- Risk / Legal / Security

How

do we do this?

- **Inventory current AI use**: Staff workflows, vendor tools, patron-facing services, public programs.
- **Identify risks and gaps**: Privacy, bias, transparency, accessibility, procurement, accountability.
- **Draft policy language**: Usage rules, adoption checklist, literacy/training commitments.
- **Review and revise regularly**: AI evolves rapidly, so the policy needs a maintenance plan.

Our Findings

Three Pillars:

- Usage
- Adoption
- Literacy



USAGE

- Permitted uses
  - Use cases, e.g.,
    non-sensitive grammar check
- Prohibited uses
  - Use cases, e.g.,
    analyzing patron data
- Conditions on usage

USAGE TYPES

Staff Productivity uses are generally permitted: text editing, brainstorming, AI-assisted research.

Kenosha, WI: "AI Usage for Reference:
Library Staff may use approved AI tools to enhance information searches. Staff will disclose AI use verbally. [continues]**"**

Closed list approval

Houston County, GA

“Approved Uses/Actions

The following uses and actions are approved for HOUPL Staff:

✓ Use for text creation (in-house use ONLY)

✓ Use for text editing (fixing grammatical errors and rewording)

✓ Use for photo editing (adjusting color, saturation, etc.)

✓ Providing models with generalized, non-sensitive information for use in question/answer exchanges*

*Note: AI models have been proven to provide biased and untrue information, and the chance of this occurring is always present. Always double check the information you receive from an AI model, especially in regards to translations, instructions, or quotes.”

Illustrative open list

Hastings, MI

“Appropriate Tasks for AI Usage

This list includes examples of appropriate situations, tasks, and projects where AI might be leveraged. The list is not exhaustive. If a new use is discovered that aligns with these examples, please proceed. If a unique or novel usage is identified, staff should review it with the Director or Assistant Director before implementing.

- Generating programming ideas and/or names
- Generating marketing blurbs promoting programs and the Library
- Generating inspirational ideas or writing prompts
- Rewriting existing marketing or other content, such as job descriptions, policies, procedures, etc.
- Generating generic imagery, signs, posters and other marketing materials
- Generating alt-text for images used online
- Searching and/or summarizing the web, such as looking for information for a patron or finding material recommendations
- Generating summaries of uploaded documents (see Rules related to documents)”

General OK plus limits

Toronto, ON

Broad applicability statement:

”The policy applies to the use of AI tools in all of TPL’s service pillars and administrative functions, including programming, collections, technology, data analysis, human resources, and procurement.”

Guardrails

Approved Tools Rule (s.1.3)
PII/confidential Restrictions (s.2.4)
Human Review Req’t (s.3.3.)
Disclosure / Transparency (s.3.5)

The “One Rule” EVERYONE Has

Don’t put patron data* into unapproved AI* tools.

*Definitions

- Technology: AI, GenAI, LLM, etc.
- Concepts: Hallucination
- Data: confidential, sensitive, PII, etc.

Runner up for most popular usage rule:

Review AI output before use!

“Always review and validate AI generated results" – Hastings, MI

"No AI-generated work product will be used or published without oversight from a [Library] staff person" – Toronto, ON

“To ensure a human-centered approach to service, Kenosha Public Library follows the Human-AI-Human model. This approach emphasizes that human staff members initiate interactions, utilize AI as a tool to assist or enhance the service, and then interpret and communicate the AI's output with a human touch.” – Kenosha, WI

Human > AI > Human

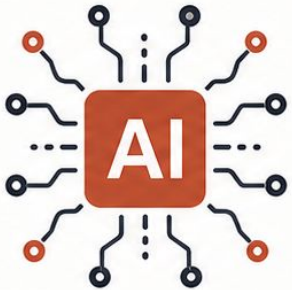
A simple model for AI governance

1. Human sets goals and provides guidance



People define the purpose, context, and boundaries.

2. AI generates analysis or content



AI assists by producing draft outputs, analysis, or recommendations.

3. Human evaluates, edits, and makes the final decision



People review, revise, approve, or reject the result.

AI supports decision-making, but people remain accountable.

AI and HR Concerns

St. Charles, IL

"Employees should not use AI alone to make employment decisions. This includes decisions regarding the hiring, discipline, suspension, termination, promotion, demotion or salary increase/decrease of employees. AI should not be used to evaluate or conduct performance reviews."

AI and Collection Development

White House, TN

"Staff will not purchase books or other pieces of literature written by AI."

Transparency / Disclosure

Kenosha, WI

- **Published content:** "All original work in which AI plays a role in its creation will link to a statement (See Appendix B) indicating the use of AI."
- **Reference service**: "Employees must disclose AI-generated answers in reference interactions" / "Staff will disclose AI use verbally."
- **Calibrated scope:** disclosure is not triggered by trivial use — "NOT required when AI is used solely for spelling/grammar correction or brainstorming/inspiration."

Enforcement

- Few policies recommend technical solutions (e.g., blocking, monitoring, etc.)
- No penalties, etc.
- General gist is:
  - Here are the rules
  - Follow the rules
  - Violations may result in discipline

ADOPTION

Specific tools:

- Vetting (evaluation and approval)
- Inventory
- Review cycle

VETTING - Simple

- Request by employee
  - Description, justification
- Basic research and/or privacy check
- Director approval

VETTING - Formal

- Computer & Network Services security evaluation (Kenosha)
- Triple gate (Toronto)
  - IT Security Assessment
  - Privacy Impact Assessment
  - Human Rights Impact AI

Evaluation Tools:
NIST AI RMF

- Govern
- Map
- Measure
- Manage

https://www.nist.gov/itl/ai-risk-management-framework

Approved Tool List

- Internal list of approved tools
- Published transparent list of all tools: https://mykpl.info/privacy/
- Tool review cycle similar to policy review cycle

Records Retention

- Is your library subject to statutory record retention?
- May be encompassed by existing data retention policies

LITERACY

- Staff training
- Patron education

Staff Training

- Ethics & responsible use
- Privacy
- Security
- Bias
- Output verification

- **Actual Tool Usage!**

Staff Training

Kenosha, WI

“‘staff training will be tailored to different position groups... staff will also be provided training to give them a greater understanding of AI including:

- The history of AI & current day to day usage;
- General Information Literacy to aid in answering patron questions;
- The Library AI System vetting process;
- A more in depth understanding of biases & hallucinations”

Patron Literacy

Holderness, NH

“AI Literacy and Public Education

- **Educational Programs**: Offer regular workshops and resources on AI topics, including ethical considerations, risks, and opportunities.
- **Critical AI Literacy**: Empower patrons to critically understand and assess AI tools they encounter in everyday life.
- **Intergenerational Learning**: Design programs that make AI literacy accessible to all ages and technological comfort levels.”

Patron Literacy

Kenosha, WI

“The Library's AI Literacy targets include but are not limited to:

- Knowledge of the data and methods that were used to train this AI system or tool;
- Perception of data privacy, security while using AI tools;
- Understanding of copyright and fair use in regards to AI tools;
- Consideration of how datasets, including their accessibility and representation, reproduce bias in society;
- Examination of the credibility of outputs, the efficacy of algorithm, and questioning the biases inherent in the use of AI systems and tools; and
- Distinguishing between human made and AI generated works.”

Drafting Workshop

PLAID3

Thanks!

Email jim@galecia.com with questions and feedback!