

	Gasóga na hÉireann / Scouting Ireland			
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	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidelines for Volunteers			

Related Documents

Revision Schedule		
Revision	Date	Description
1	10/12/2025	Initial Release

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1. Introduction

The use of artificial intelligence is transforming the way we volunteer. Generative AI (GenAI) is a type of artificial intelligence that creates new content by learning from large amounts of existing data. It uses machine learning and algorithms to recognise patterns and generate text, images, or other outputs that resemble human creativity and thinking.

There's an increasing belief that informed and responsible use of GenAI can increase efficiency, improve decision-making, and encourage innovation. However, we recognize it also comes with potential risks, including data protection breaches, copyright issues, disclosure of confidential information, ethical considerations, and compliance with legal obligations.

Scouting Ireland acknowledges that AI can be a valuable collaborator, but not a substitute for human judgement, ethical standards, or professional responsibility. All volunteers play a part in ensuring that AI is used wisely, transparently, and in a way that strengthens trust in Scouting Ireland. All information produced should be fact checked and ensure references pertained within any produced work reflect the values, practices and policies of Scouting Ireland.

2. Definitions of AI tools and technologies

- **Artificial intelligence (AI):** Software that mimics human intelligence to perform tasks like analysing data, making decisions, or generating content.
- **Generative AI:** A type of AI that can produce new content, such as text, images, or code (e.g., ChatGPT, Midjourney, GitHub Copilot).
- **Machine learning:** Algorithms that improve through experience and data exposure, often used behind the scenes in AI tools.

These tools include, but aren't limited to, public or enterprise versions of language models, image generators, automation platforms, and internal AI applications.

3. Key reasons for these guidelines include:

- **Guide responsible use** – ensuring that volunteers know when and how AI can be applied to daily tasks, projects, or decision-making.
- **Protect sensitive information (GDPR)** – preventing accidental sharing of data or content that must remain secure, confidential, or legally protected. This information protection is set out in the GDPR Roll Out Flyer. (https://issuu.com/scoutingireland/docs/gdpr_roll_fold_flyer_final). Sensitive information that is generally protected by GDPR should not be used with any AI applications to ensure the safety of this protected information outside of those with permission to use or view this data.

- **Safeguard quality and accountability** – clarifying that AI can support efficiency and creativity, but does not replace professional judgement, accountability, or compliance obligations.
- **Encourage innovation within safe limits** – signalling that volunteers are welcome to explore AI tools, provided this exploration aligns with Scouting Ireland’s values, regulatory requirements, and customer trust.
- **Create consistency** – giving volunteers a shared understanding so that AI is used in a way that reflects Scouting Ireland’s standards rather than each individual’s interpretation.

In short, these Volunteer AI guidelines exist not to limit people unnecessarily, but to create the conditions in which volunteers can confidently and ethically use AI to enhance their work while protecting Scouting Ireland, its stakeholders, and its reputation.

4. Scope

These guidelines apply to all Scouting Ireland volunteers who use AI tools, whether provided by the Scouting Ireland or accessed independently (e.g. publicly available platforms). It covers both works done on Scouting Ireland systems and activities conducted externally where the outcome will be used for Scouting Ireland purposes.

5. Guiding Principles

Scouting Ireland’s approach to AI is grounded in four principles:

1. **Human responsibility first** – AI may support tasks, but accountability remains with the volunteer.
2. **Confidentiality is non-negotiable** – no sensitive, personal, or restricted data should be placed into AI tools unless explicitly approved.
3. **Quality over speed** – AI may help generate ideas or draft content, but all outputs must be checked for accuracy, fairness, and suitability before use.
4. **Transparency matters** – where AI has shaped the final output in a significant way, this should be made clear when appropriate.

6. Guidelines

Scouting Ireland will review these guidelines regularly as AI technology and regulations evolve. Scouting Ireland does not endorse the use of any specific tools. However, we’ve provided guidelines to help local Scout Groups if they do make the decision to use GenAI at a local level and take on the associated risks. The responsibility for making these decisions sits with Local Trustee Boards. The guidelines are:

- **Personal, sensitive, and confidential data:** Never enter confidential, sensitive, or personal data into GenAI applications, as they may store and learn from the content.

- Intellectual property rights and licensing: Avoid using images, logos, crafted copy or other intellectual property owned by Scouting Ireland or third parties in GenAI applications. This may infringe on the terms of use.
- Discriminatory language: Never input offensive, discriminatory, defamatory or other inappropriate content as prompts. Always make sure that all inputs align with the Scout Promise.
- Security: Apply the same security measures to GenAI applications as you do to all IT applications and comply with your local IT security policies.
- Review outputs: GenAI can produce inaccurate outputs or “hallucinations”. Always fact-check and review outputs to make sure they are appropriate, accurate and unbiased.
- Ethical and responsible use: Use GenAI applications ethically and responsibly. Never generate content to impersonate, bully or harass others, or to create explicit or offensive content.
- Aware of the environmental and sustainability effects of AI.
- Third-party add-ons: Be cautious of third-party services built on top of GenAI applications. Avoid inputting information into these add-ons.
- Transparency: Be honest about your use of GenAI, especially when producing content for Scouting Ireland. Inform your colleagues when you’ve used GenAI. In some cases, there may be a legal requirement to publish a notice or watermark indicating that content was generated using AI.

7. Closing Statement

AI is neither a threat nor a shortcut — it is a tool that can expand our capacity when used wisely. These guidelines are here to make sure volunteers have the confidence to explore AI responsibly, without putting themselves or Scouting Ireland at risk.

