

## **WFIU/WTIU News guidance and policies on using AI in our work.**

**Adopted April 2025**

**Adapted from Poynter's Basic Newsroom Generative AI Policy** developed by [Kelly McBride](#), [Alex Mahadevan](#) and [Tony Elkins](#). **Some of the language is taken straight from that policy.**

*Generative artificial intelligence is the use of large language models to create something new, such as text, images, graphics and interactive media. Although generative AI has the potential to improve newsgathering, it also has the potential to harm journalists' credibility and our unique relationship with our audience.*

### ***These principles will guide our work***

#### **Transparency**

If AI is used in journalism we offer externally, we will document and describe the tools with specificity. This may be a short tagline, a caption or credit, or for something more substantial, an editor's note. When appropriate, we will include the prompts that are fed into the model to generate the material.

As noted by Poynter, communication and disclosure ideally create opportunities to get feedback from the audience, as well as educate consumers. As journalists, part of our job is to empower the audience with news literacy skills.

#### **Accuracy and human verification**

All information generated by AI requires human verification. Everything we publish will live up to our standards of verification. Increasingly in all of our work, it is important to be explicit about how we know facts are facts. This will be particularly important when using AI.

**Audience service** - Our work in AI should be guided by what will be useful to our audience as we serve them. We have made a promise to our audience to provide them with information that helps them live their lives. When we use AI, it should be for that purpose.

**Exploration** - We will embrace exploration and experimentation. We should strive to invest in newsroom training — internal or external — so every staff member is knowledgeable in generative AI tools.

#### **Overview of editorial uses:**

All uses of AI should start with journalism-centered intentions and cleared by the lead newsroom supervisor. Questions to ask include:

What is the journalistic purpose of this work?

How can you gather knowledge on audience needs and attitudes about your intended use?

How should the audience's needs and attitudes inform your AI use?

How will you fact-check the results?

## **Approved Editorial uses**

Generative AI is generally permitted for the following purposes:

*Research* - It's fine to ask a publicly available large language model to research a topic. However, you'll want to independently verify every fact. So be wary. As Poynter stresses: It is common for AI to "hallucinate" information, including facts, biographical information, and newspaper citations.

*Headline experimentation* - Asking AI to generate headlines is a form of research. Be sure to put prompts in the query that's specific to our story and one from another news outlet.

*Searching and assembling data* - You are permitted to use AI to search for information, mine public databases or assemble and calculate statistics that would be useful to our audience. Any data analysis should be checked by an editor

*Visuals* - Do not use AI to manipulate photos unless they are for illustration purposes and clearly defined. Visual journalists need to be aware of software updates to photo processing tools to ensure AI-enhancement is not being used according to our policies. Do not publish any reader submitted content without first verifying its authenticity.

*Fact-checking* - Use of AI alone is not sufficient for independent fact-checking. Facts should be checked against multiple authoritative sources that have been created, edited or curated by human beings. A single source is generally not sufficient; information should be checked against multiple sources.

## **Not approved**

*Summary paragraphs* – Reporters do not use AI to generate article summaries that appear at the top of our work.

*Writing in general* – Reporters do not prompt a large language model to take facts we gather and write them into stories.

## **Under consideration**

*Addressing news deserts* - We are considering the use of generative AI to capture information talked about in public meetings in our communities in which no other news outlets exist. Specifics of such an initiative would be established before launching.

## **Ongoing training**

Regular training on AI tools and experiments will be available.