

iCARDIO Alliance Guidelines' Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in its Global Implementation Guidelines

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy governs the use of artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI, large language models (LLMs), and machine learning tools, in the preparation, submission, review, and editorial handling of manuscripts for the iCARDIO Alliance Global Implementation Guidelines. It applies to Task Force Members, Peer Reviewers, and editorial staff. This policy is aligned with guidance from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), and will be updated as best practices evolve.

2. Guiding Principles

- **Human accountability.** A human author or editor must remain fully responsible for all content, conclusions, and claims in a submission, regardless of what tools were used to help produce it.
- **Transparency.** Any material use of AI in the research, writing, or review process must be disclosed.
- **No AI authorship.** AI tools cannot meet the criteria for authorship and cannot be listed as authors or co-authors.
- **Integrity of the scientific record.** AI use must never compromise data accuracy, patient confidentiality, or the originality of scholarly work.

3. Authorship

- AI tools, including chatbots and LLMs, **do not qualify for authorship.** Authorship requires the capacity to take responsibility and be accountable for the work, which AI tools cannot fulfill.
- AI-assisted content must be attributed to and vetted by a named human author, who takes full responsibility for its accuracy and integrity.
- AI tools may not be listed in the byline, and may not be cited as an author in references.

4. Disclosure Requirements for Authors

Authors must disclose the use of AI tools in manuscript preparation if the tools were used for any of the following:

- Drafting or substantively editing text (including grammar, style, or structure).
- Generating, analyzing, or interpreting data or figures.
- Generating images, graphics, or visual abstracts.
- Literature searching, summarization, or citation generation.

Disclosure must include:

1. The name and version of the AI tool(s) used.
2. The manufacturer/developer.
3. A description of how and where the tool was used in the manuscript.

4. Confirmation that all AI-generated or AI-assisted content was reviewed, verified, and edited by the author(s).

This disclosure should appear in the **Methods** or **Acknowledgments** section, and, if applicable, in the cover letter at submission. Minor use of AI-assisted tools for basic language polishing (e.g., grammar/spell-check) of the authors' own original text is generally exempt from formal disclosure but should still be noted if requested by editors.

5. Authors' Responsibilities

Authors are fully responsible for:

- The accuracy, validity, and originality of all content, including any generated with AI assistance.
- Verifying that AI-generated text does not contain fabricated citations, data, or "hallucinated" content.
- Ensuring AI-generated content does not infringe copyright or intellectual property rights.
- Confirming that no confidential or identifiable patient data was entered into non-secure or public AI tools, in compliance with patient privacy and data protection regulations (e.g., HIPAA, GDPR).
- Ensuring AI tools were not used to generate fabricated, manipulated, or non-representative research data or images.

6. Peer Review

- Reviewers **may not upload manuscripts, in whole or in part, to any AI tool or LLM**, including for purposes of summarization, analysis, or drafting reviews. Manuscripts are confidential documents, and this preserves confidentiality and protects authors' unpublished intellectual property.
- Reviewers may not use AI to generate or draft substantive review content or recommendations.
- Basic use of AI-assisted language tools to improve grammar or clarity of the reviewer's own original comments (without uploading manuscript content) is permitted but discouraged unless necessary.
- Any violation of this policy should be reported to the handling editor immediately.

7. Editorial Use of AI

- Editorial staff may use approved, secure AI tools for administrative tasks such as initial screening for plagiarism, formatting checks, or reference verification, provided confidentiality safeguards are in place.
- AI tools must not be used to make final editorial decisions (accept/reject) or substantive judgments on scientific merit. All such decisions remain the responsibility of human editors.
- Any AI tool used in the editorial workflow must be vetted for data security and confidentiality compliance before adoption.

8. Plagiarism and Originality

- All submissions are subject to standard plagiarism detection screening. AI-generated text is not exempt from originality requirements.
- Submitting AI-generated text as though it were original human writing, without disclosure, constitutes a breach of this policy and may be treated as a form of academic misconduct.

9. Non-Compliance

Failure to disclose AI use, misrepresentation of AI-generated content as original work, or unauthorized use of AI tools by reviewers may result in a request for revision and resubmission with proper disclosure

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or as needed in response to developments in AI technology and evolving guidance from ICMJE, COPE, WAME, and relevant regulatory bodies.

Definitions and Abbreviations:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Computer programs that can do things normally requiring human thinking — like writing text, analyzing data, creating images, or translating languages.
- **Generative AI:** AI that creates brand-new content — text, images, or data — instead of just finding or copying existing material. Chatbots and AI image generators are examples.
- **Large Language Model (LLM):** A type of generative AI trained on huge amounts of text so it can "understand" and write in natural language. Examples include ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini. These are often used to draft text, summarize articles, translate, or answer questions.
- **Machine Learning (ML):** AI that learns from data and gets better at a task over time, rather than following fixed rules a person wrote out.
- **AI-Assisted Content:** Content that a person wrote or created, where AI just helped but ideas and words are still mainly the author's own.
- **AI-Generated Content:** Content that the AI produced on its own after a simple prompt.
- **Material Use of AI:** Any use of AI that has a real impact on the manuscript's content, data, images, or conclusions.

Contact: vdean@tmacademy.org