

Eurodoc Statement on AI in Science

The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc) supports the introduction of the guidelines for responsible use of [AI in Science](#). The guidelines proposed by the ERA Forum serve as a good starting point for future work. We are pleased to see that the guidelines are designed with the purpose of being a living document. We look forward to following this work.

Eurodoc recognises that the use of (generative) AI in science is likely to at least partly disrupt the current research ecosystem. We agree that researchers, research performing institutions (RPOs), and research funding organisations (RFOs) all have distinct responsibilities for ensuring responsible use of AI within the research sector. In the further development of the guidelines, Eurodoc stresses that particular attention must be paid to the following:

1. **An emphasis on the importance of training researchers in responsible use of AI.** We fully align with the guidelines' recommendation that the researchers themselves are responsible for undertaking training to improve their knowledge and understanding of AI within their field of science. However, for researchers to be able to do so, especially RPOs have a responsibility in providing such training, not least to ensure its quality. The current guidelines are still missing this point. It is important that researchers receive support throughout their research careers and that AI-related training is integrated at different career stages. Responsible AI training plays a particularly important role in the research socialisation phase and doctoral training training should not only equip early-stage researchers with practical tools, but equally foster awareness of the ethical and epistemological dimensions of AI use.
2. **Alignment with Open Science (OS) principles.** All actors involved (researchers, RPOs, and RFOs) must align with the principle of "as open as possible, as closed as necessary" if responsibility and trustworthiness is to be at the core of the use of AI in the research sector. Eurodoc finds it disconcerting that in the current document, the principles of Open Science are only referenced once in the form of a recommendation to researchers that "*if relevant, researchers make the input (prompts) and output available, in line with open science principles*". To ensure transparent use of AI in science – and to live up to the values of accountability and reliability – openness will be crucial. The use of AI in the research sector at large should be as open as possible, with exceptions made only when strictly necessary, such as for privacy or security concerns. The intense public interest in AI, accompanied by a sense of optimism and threat, place a great responsibility on the scientific community as a whole – including researchers, RPOs, and RFOs – to communicate openly about their findings and their integration of diverse AI tools into research, paying particular attention to science communication and to strengthening trust in science. We thus emphasise the importance of ensuring that the principle of OS remains enshrined in the ERA – particularly also in the age of generative AI.
3. **The use of generative AI in the assessment of research(ers):** The current guidelines fail to explicitly address the use of AI in the assessment of research and researchers. It is disconcerting that the guidelines do not explicitly place responsibility on the organisations (RPOs, RFOs, or others such as scientific publishers) that perform research assessment and assessment of researchers for ensuring that those processes live up to the key values stated also in the age of generative AI. Assessment decisions in the context of entering doctoral education, the awarding of the doctoral degree, a habilitation-like process, or of a job application have severe consequences for the individual. It is crucial to ensure that assessment processes are also in the future not based on AI assessment solely and that the decisions are explainable. It is important to underscore that legal security, fairness, and dignity of the individual must be at the center. In particular we wish

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to underline the importance of ensuring responsible use of AI in the assessment of research and researchers and the alignment with the principles of open science. Thus we wish to draw attention to the indicators developed through the OPUS project.

4. **Acknowledging that the use of generative AI in science transcends any singular discipline.** The use of generative AI in science is interdisciplinary. The research topics and methods affected, potentially disrupted or generated, by generative AI belong to no singular field. Generative AI's reliance on vast data resources means that their development should not nor cannot be considered a subject of one field alone. Of equal importance is an interdisciplinary approach to better understand the effects of generative AI on the research community.
5. **The importance of the social sciences and humanities (SSH).** The SSH are fundamental to further our understanding of the individual, ethical, cultural, and societal impact of generative AI. They provide a crucial basis on which to assess the consequences of generative AI for the world at large. Research in these disciplines delineate the threats and benefits of generative AI for such diverse areas as mental health, changes in media use and environments, questions of accountability and dignity, to political systems.
6. **Encouraging the development of publicly owned and openly accessible LLMs.** To protect Europe's values and principles from erosion, Europe urgently needs publicly owned and openly accessible Large Language Models (LLM) and culturally pluralistic AI tools that protect human rights and the dignity of all. This is not only important for research, but equally so for education, pluralistic societies, and democracy.
7. **Alignment with democratic values:** The recent, more general guidelines "[Ethics guidelines for trustworthy AI](#)", emphasise that trustworthy AI must align with the democratic values of the European Union, such as respect for human rights, ensuring fairness, counteracting discrimination and biases, and ensuring explainability in decision-making processes. This perspective is missing in the guidelines for AI in Science. The disruptiveness of generative AI necessitates that this is explicitly addressed and for broad stakeholder inclusion in the development of further policies and guidelines.

The use of AI in science should come with an understanding of the benefits and possible risks. In order for researchers to be able to use AI responsibly, they need to be equipped with the necessary skills and competencies. Ensuring this is a shared responsibility of research funding organisations, research-performing organisations, and researchers.

About this statement

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Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers, is a grassroots federation of 26 national associations of early career researchers (ECRs) from 24 countries across Europe. Eurodoc was established in 2002 and is based in Brussels. As a representative of doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level, Eurodoc engages with all major stakeholders in research, higher education, and innovation in Europe.

