
INCOSE AI Policy

DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY

Ver.	Date	Author	Summary of Changes
1.0	October 2026	INCOSE AI Working Group	Initial release

Introduction

Artificial intelligence represents one of the most significant opportunities to advance systems engineering practice, accelerate research, improve member services, and expand INCOSE's global impact. This policy establishes a principled foundation for AI use across INCOSE activities — one that supports innovation while maintaining the integrity, transparency, and professional standards that define the INCOSE community.

This policy applies to INCOSE volunteers in their INCOSE-related activities, including authoring publications and submissions, leading working groups, serving in chapter or committee roles, and producing content on behalf of INCOSE.

INCOSE staff AI use is addressed in the INCOSE Employee Handbook; however, staff are also expected to uphold the principles set forth in this policy.

This is a living document. As AI technologies, standards, and applicable regulations evolve, INCOSE will review and update these guidelines accordingly.

Section 1: Core Principles

INCOSE adopts foundational AI principles that mirror the broader engineering ethos and align with international frameworks:

- **Human Safety and Public Welfare:** AI use must prioritize the safety, health, and well-being of people. Any application of AI in INCOSE activities must hold paramount the safety and welfare of the public, consistent with foundational codes of engineering ethics.
- **Fairness and Bias Mitigation:** INCOSE strives for fair outcomes in AI-assisted work. Those using AI tools should be mindful of potential biases in AI outputs and take reasonable steps to identify and mitigate them, consistent with OECD principles on human-centered AI.
- **Transparency and Human Oversight:** INCOSE values openness about when and how AI is used. Human judgment must remain central to significant decisions; AI is a tool that augments rather than replaces professional expertise. Meaningful human oversight is required, consistent with UNESCO's global AI ethics standards.
- **Human Accountability:** Humans remain accountable for the outcomes of AI-assisted actions. The use of AI does not transfer, reduce, or excuse responsibility. If AI produces an error, the human involved must take responsibility to correct it and cannot shift accountability to the technology.

These principles align with the OECD Principles on AI (2019), UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI (2021), and professional codes of ethics from IEEE and ACM. They also reflect practical industry guidance on maintaining data confidentiality, applying independent human review, and holding AI outputs to the same quality standards as human work.

Section 2: Ethical AI Use

All uses of AI in INCOSE activities shall adhere to high ethical and professional standards:

- **Human-Centric Augmentation:** Use AI to augment, not replace, human judgment. AI tools may automate tasks or provide recommendations, but final decisions — especially those affecting people — must be made or approved by a qualified human. The role of AI is to support and enhance the expertise of INCOSE professionals.
- **Risk Awareness:** Those using AI in INCOSE work should be mindful of risks including errors, biases, and unintended outputs. Higher-stakes applications warrant proportionally greater human review and validation. INCOSE recognizes recognized frameworks such as the NIST AI Risk Management Framework as useful guidance.
- **Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** AI usage must comply with applicable laws across relevant jurisdictions, including data protection and privacy regulations. Volunteers working internationally should be aware that legal requirements may vary by region.

Section 3: Transparency and Accountability

INCOSE is committed to openness about AI use and clear lines of accountability:

- **Disclosure of AI Use:** INCOSE members should inform relevant stakeholders when AI has played a material role in INCOSE-related work. Volunteer leaders should disclose if AI was used in preparing official reports, analyses, or communications. Transparency enables others to interpret outputs with appropriate context and builds trust in the INCOSE community.
- **Explainability:** Where AI informs decisions or outputs, those involved should be able to provide a plain-language explanation of how AI contributed. INCOSE favors AI applications that support explainability and permit meaningful human understanding of AI-assisted conclusions.
- **No Abdication of Responsibility:** AI may never be used as an excuse to avoid accountability. If AI-assisted work contains errors or causes harm, the responsible person must take corrective action. The presence of AI in a workflow does not diminish the professional obligations of INCOSE volunteers.

Section 4: Publications and Submissions

INCOSE embraces AI as a legitimate and valuable aid in research, writing, analysis, and editing. The goal of this section is not to restrict AI use but to ensure that its use is disclosed honestly, consistent with the standards of scholarly publishing and the expectations of the INCOSE community. These requirements are enforceable through the submission review process.

4.1 AI as a Writing and Research Aid

The use of AI tools to assist with literature review, drafting, editing, translation, data analysis, coding, and similar tasks is permitted and encouraged where it improves the quality and accessibility of work submitted to INCOSE. AI is a professional tool like any other; its use reflects the skill and judgment of the author who applies it.

4.2 AI May Not Be Listed as an Author

AI systems may not be listed as authors or co-authors on any INCOSE publication or submission. Authorship is reserved for human contributors who can take intellectual and ethical responsibility for the work, including signing copyright agreements and standing behind claims made in the paper. This requirement is consistent with standards across the publishing community (COPE, IEEE, Wiley).

4.3 AI Assistance Disclosure Requirement

All authors submitting to INCOSE publications, symposia, and proceedings must disclose any use of AI tools in the preparation of their submission. Non-compliance with this requirement may result in rejection before review, consistent with INCOSE submission guidelines.

The disclosure must be included as a brief statement in the acknowledgments section or as a footnote and must address the following three elements:

REQUIRED DISCLOSURE ELEMENTS

- (1) Which AI tools were used (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Grammarly)
- (2) How the tools were used
- (3) The author's level of involvement and oversight

Common categories of AI use to reference in the disclosure include:

- **Conceptual** – idea generation, hypothesis development, research design
- **Analysis** – literature review, statistical support, data analysis, coding assistance
- **Content generation** – drafting sections, creating abstracts, methodology development
- **Editorial** – grammar correction, formatting, citation management, translation

For content generation and conceptual use, the disclosure should provide additional detail about the author's intellectual contributions. The following examples illustrate compliant disclosures:

EXAMPLE 1:

"ChatGPT (GPT-4) assisted with grammar correction and code generation for simulations. All analysis and conclusions are original author work."

EXAMPLE 2:

"Claude Sonnet 4 helped summarize literature and draft methodology sections, which were extensively revised by the authors. Grammarly provided editing support. Research design and interpretation are entirely author-generated."

4.4 Integrity of Published Content

Authors are fully responsible for the accuracy and integrity of all content submitted, including any portions generated or assisted by AI. The following are prohibited:

- Fabricating data, results, or citations, whether AI-generated or otherwise
- Submitting AI-generated text as the author's own work without disclosure
- Including unverified AI-generated references (so-called "hallucinated" citations)

Peer reviewers and editors handling INCOSE submissions should not input unpublished manuscript content into public AI tools, in order to protect author confidentiality and intellectual property.

Section 5: Volunteer Use of AI in INCOSE Activities

INCOSE encourages its volunteers to leverage AI tools to enhance the quality and impact of their contributions. The following guidelines apply to volunteers acting in their INCOSE roles, such as in chapters, working groups, technical committees, and governance bodies.

- **AI is a valued tool:** Volunteers are encouraged to use AI to improve their effectiveness, including for drafting documents, preparing presentations, analyzing information, and supporting communication. INCOSE does not view AI assistance as diminishing the value of volunteer contributions.
- **Disclose AI use in official outputs:** When producing official INCOSE materials — such as committee reports, chapter newsletters, website content, or formal recommendations — volunteers should note where AI played a material role in the content's development. A simple acknowledgment is sufficient (e.g., "Drafted with AI assistance and reviewed by the committee").
- **Exercise professional judgment:** AI outputs should be reviewed and assessed by the volunteer before use. Volunteers remain responsible for the quality and accuracy of any work they submit or publish under INCOSE's name.
- **Protect confidential information:** Volunteers should not input confidential INCOSE information, unpublished member data, or non-public organizational details into public AI services. When in doubt, treat an AI platform as a third party with no confidentiality protections.

- **Security awareness:** Volunteers should be aware that AI tools can present security risks beyond data privacy. Inputs to many AI platforms may be logged, retained, or used for model training by the service provider. Do not use AI tools to process export-controlled, proprietary, or otherwise sensitive information. If an AI-generated output will be shared publicly or submitted to a third party, verify that no sensitive information was inadvertently included. Suspected data exposures should be reported promptly.
- **No liability imposed on volunteers:** These guidelines reflect professional norms and expectations, not grounds for disciplinary action. Volunteers contribute their time and expertise in good faith; this policy is intended to support that contribution, not to create personal liability.
- **Reporting concerns:** If a volunteer believes another volunteer or contributor is acting in a manner inconsistent with this policy, they are encouraged to raise the concern with the relevant working group lead, committee chair, or INCOSE staff contact. This policy does not establish a formal disciplinary process for volunteers, but INCOSE leadership may follow up as appropriate when concerns are raised in good faith.

Annex A: References

- ACM. (2018). *ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*. Association for Computing Machinery.
- COPE. (2023). *Authorship and AI Tools: COPE Position Statement* (13 February 2023). Committee on Publication Ethics.
- European Union. (2024). *Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (European Artificial Intelligence Act)*. Brussels: European Commission.
- IEEE. (2020). *IEEE Code of Ethics*. IEEE Board of Directors.
- ISO/IEC 42001:2023 – *Information technology – Artificial intelligence – Management system*. Geneva: ISO.
- NIST. (2023). *Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0)* (NIST AI 100-1). Gaithersburg, MD: NIST.
- OECD. (2019). *OECD Principles on Artificial Intelligence*. Paris: OECD.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Wiley. (2025). *Wiley Releases AI Guidelines for Authors*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

AI Assistance Disclosure

Claude Sonnet 4.6 (Anthropic) assisted with drafting and structuring this document based on a prior draft and editorial direction provided by the human author. The prior draft had used ChatGPT (GPT-o3 with Deep Research) for background research and initial content development. All content was reviewed and substantially revised by the authorship team. Policy positions, editorial decisions, and final content are entirely done by the authorship team.