

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

Public Summary





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Monash Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

INTRODUCTION

Monash Council (Council) recognises the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the organisation to generate value for the community, stakeholders and Council staff. Council also recognises that, as with all technologies, AI comes with risks that need to be understood and managed.

Council has adopted an internal AI Policy that outlines the guidance and guardrails supporting AI use that is safe, responsible and effective, aligning with Council values and improving services to the community.

Through this Public Summary, Council is committed to maintaining transparency, accountability and trust with our community regarding our use of AI.

Purpose of this Summary

This document is a public summary of Monash Council's internal AI Policy. The internal AI Policy is an operational document intended to guide day-to-day staff use of AI.

This Public Summary reflects the principles, commitments and safeguards of the internal AI Policy in a plain-language format for the community.

Who the AI Policy Applies To

The AI Policy applies to all staff, volunteers, work experience students and contractors who access Council information assets and Digital & Technology (DT) systems and use AI for work-related purposes.

Councillors are encouraged and supported by Council staff to apply the Guiding Principles outlined in the AI Policy (Public Summary) and to apply the ethical use of AI.

AI POLICY POSITION

Council will use AI to improve community and customer service delivery, support staff productivity, and innovate processes. AI will be used as a tool that assists, enhances or otherwise improves human efforts and decision making, but is never a substitute for human judgment.

Council takes a data-focused approach to AI governance, meaning our controls are based on the sensitivity of the information being used, not simply on which tool is used. Council approved platforms are available to staff for everyday work, while stricter rules apply to sensitive and confidential information, regardless of the tool.

In using AI, Council seeks to maintain trust, transparency and accountability with our community and people.

OUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Council's use of AI operates within Victoria's legislative framework, including:

- > Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) — Council is required to handle personal information in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles. AI tools used by Council must comply with these obligations. Council will not input personal or sensitive information into public or unapproved AI tools.
- > Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) — Council is committed to the principles of public transparency, accountability, community engagement, and good governance. Council's use of AI will uphold these principles, including ensuring the community is informed and has the opportunity to raise concerns.
- > Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic) — Council has completed a Gender Impact Assessment for its AI Policy and is committed to ensuring AI use promotes gender equality and does not reinforce bias or disadvantage across gender or other intersectional characteristics.

BENEFITS AND RISKS OF AI

Below are some of the potential benefits and known risks of AI that Council will actively manage and balance through this AI Policy.



POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- ✓ Faster processing times through automated systems
- ✓ Greater accessibility to Council services with potential for out-of-hours inquiries and reporting
- ✓ Smarter improvements over time, as AI helps Council to spot patterns so services can be improved
- ✓ Providing personalised support and helping community navigate complex systems by translating and providing plain text summaries



KNOWN RISKS

- ✗ AI can sometimes 'hallucinate' and generate incorrect or misleading information
- ✗ Personal information can be mishandled if strong safeguards aren't in place
- ✗ AI systems can reflect biases and deficiencies present in the data they are trained on including gender, racial, cultural, disability, age and socio-economic biases
- ✗ It may be unclear when AI was used or how an outcome was reached without clear disclosure

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COUNCIL	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNITY
Transparency, accountability and trust	Council will be open and transparent about the use of AI, particularly where it supports services, decisions or outcomes that affect community members.	> You will be told when AI has materially helped produce a decision or influence an outcome that affects you.
Human-centred decision making	Council decisions and advice will remain grounded in human judgment and Council values. AI will only be a support tool.	> Council (not AI) remains responsible for final decisions that impact you. > Human support will be available, particularly for complex or sensitive matters.
Privacy, security and data protection	Council will ensure that AI use protects the privacy and security of the community and Council information to the standard required in applicable privacy legislation.	> Your personal and confidential information is not entered into public AI tools.
Fairness and inclusion	AI-supported work will support accessible services, will not unfairly disadvantage any community group, and will be checked to reflect the diversity of Monash.	> Council will actively check AI-generated content for bias, stereotyping and exclusion before it is used and ensure it reflects the diverse perspectives, identities and needs of our community. > Council will not use AI to make assumptions about a person's gender identity, cultural background, sexuality, disability or other personal characteristics based on other information.

PRINCIPLE	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COUNCIL	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNITY
Accuracy and quality control	AI outputs must be checked and verified, ensuring Council information, advice and communications are consistent, current and supported by reliable sources.	> Information you receive (letters, website content, advice) is checked by people to ensure it is correct and consistent with Council policy. > Council does not use AI in ways that could spread misinformation or create confusing guidance.
Ethical, social and environmental responsibility	Council will use AI in ways that align with its values, community expectations, and applicable standards of conduct, and will consider broader social and environmental impacts.	> Council use of AI upholds fairness, respect, and integrity in its service to the community to the community. > Council will monitor whether the use of AI is genuinely beneficial to the community in any given situation.
Balanced risk approach	Council will enable responsible innovation with AI, allowing experimentation with low-risk use cases and approved tools and escalating governance and oversight as impact and risk increase.	> Council does not 'test' AI in ways that could be potentially harmful to the community or are above Council established risk thresholds.

COUNCILLORS AND THE USE OF AI

Council acknowledges that, like staff, Councillors may benefit from the use of AI in undertaking their roles as elected representatives.

Councillors are not subject to the operational controls that apply to Council staff under the internal AI Policy, reflecting the distinct role and independence of elected representatives.

Council staff will support Councillors in the ethical and responsible use of AI, including by making available guidance aligned with the Guiding Principles set out in this Public Summary.

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED

Through this Public Summary, Council will ensure our community are appropriately informed of Council AI use. We commit to:

- > Clearly indicating when AI use has impacted a decision or outcome that affects community members
- > Explaining the purpose of AI use and the safeguards in place, including privacy, security, human oversight, bias and inclusion checks
- > Providing accessible information and updates through Council channels, including maintaining a dedicated AI transparency page on the Monash Council website, updated regularly.

REPORTING AN ISSUE

If you have an issue or concern about how AI was used in a Council service or interaction, you can report it and request a review by contacting Council:

Email: mail@monash.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 9518 3555

Mail: PO Box 1, Glen Waverley 3150

Council takes concerns seriously, and reports will be assessed by an appropriate staff and the community member informed back of the outcome.

COMMITMENT TO REVIEW

This Public Summary will be reviewed every one (1) year, in line with the internal AI Policy review cycle, or sooner where significant changes in AI technology or regulation occur.

KEY DEFINITIONS

These definitions express Council's understanding and approach to AI use as outlined in the AI Policy.

WORD	DEFINITION
Artificial intelligence (AI)	Technologies that enable computer systems to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, often representing traits similar to perception, reasoning, analysis and decision making. AI technologies include various domains that perform different tasks, including generative AI, machine learning and automation.
Generative AI	A domain of AI that creates new content such as text, writing, images and videos by learning from data patterns. Often referred to as GenAI.
Bias (in AI)	When an AI system produces results that unfairly favour or disadvantage particular groups of people. Bias can come from the data an AI system learns from and can reflect existing inequalities. For example, based on gender, race, culture, disability or age.
Hallucination	When an AI system generates information that sounds convincing but is inaccurate, misleading or made up. This is why Council checks and verifies AI outputs before relying on them.



Monash Civic Centre | 293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, 3150 | 8.30am to 5pm | Monday to Friday
Oakleigh Service Centre | 3 Atherton Road, Oakleigh, 3166 | 8.30am to 5pm | Monday to Friday
9518 3555 | www.monash.vic.gov.au | mail@monash.vic.gov.au | NRS 1800 555 660

Monash Interpreter Service

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