



**AI Governance Framework for Nonprofits**

# **BOARD TALKING POINTS**

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# How To Use These Talking Points

Many nonprofit boards are curious about how nonprofit organizations are approaching AI – are they actively using it, are they actively not using it, or are they somewhere in between? This document is designed to provide you with a series of talking points to raise AI use with your board, and to have an informed discussion about how your organization will approach AI. It is designed

to complement the AI Governance Framework for Nonprofits: An Overview slide deck and the AI Policy Template by the ANB Advisory Group.

This document contains suggested actions to take in preparation for a board conversation, and talking points for actual meetings.

## Preparatory Guidance

Where your board sits on the governance spectrum (i.e.: brainstorming and supportive vs. approver), can inform the level of detail you need to provide your board. The below talking points are for boards where AI adoption would likely need board sign off or approval before you could use AI.

### **Before your pitch:**

- Choose a compelling use case for your board. That doesn't mean you should start experimentation with a mission-critical function; But your use case should be mission-aligned, rooted in data, and have a measurable impact that you could report out at a later stage.

- Work within your board's bureaucracy to get buy-in. If possible, co-craft the proposal and motion with your board chair. Work to get it included in the agenda weeks in advance. Include your proposal as part of the board packet so all members are sufficiently apprised.
- Make your materials accessible. While you or your principal will voice over the proposal in the actual meeting, make your proposal an accessible deck or one-sheet that is easily digestible for your portion of the meeting.

# Talking Points

## What is AI?

- AI refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and learn like humans.<sup>1</sup>
- AI can also be thought of as advanced data analytics. Using AI can expand our efforts to understand our data and improve our decision-making capabilities.

## Context setting

- AI discussions across the nonprofit ecosystem include discussions about its benefits, drawbacks, and challenges. Several nonprofits feel pressure to adopt and manage AI internally.
- We don't want to react based on pressure or fear. We want to intentionally and strategically define how we will use AI.
- As conversations focus on establishing guardrails and guidance, we are focused on being principled stewards of our resources while considering how the responsible adoption of AI can help us pursue our ambitious mission.
- AI is not without risks and concerns. Algorithmic bias, the creation of a dehumanizing

interaction, and the generation of sub-par or inaccurate content have all been documented; additionally, some have expressed concerns about the environmental impact of AI tools.

- However, AI can also help increase efficiency, support brainstorming and creativity, and contribute to our efforts to deliver on our mission. Nonprofit staff burnout is also well documented. In a world of scarce resources – time, talent, and finances – AI presents an opportunity for us to meet the needs of our community.
- Furthermore, as AI becomes more prevalent in a number of technical tools, and some AI tools are available at little to no cost to individuals, the responsible action is to have a thoughtful way of approaching AI in the organization.
- We think that with intentional decisions about and monitoring of AI, we can responsibly leverage AI within our organization.

## Application of AI inside your organization

- Today, nonprofit leaders are leveraging AI for various tasks, including text generation for emails and reports (45%), policy generation, reviewing for missed steps, hiring research, presentation research, translation (17%), image

<sup>1</sup> The Centers of Excellence defines AI in its introduction as follows and this is paraphrased from this definition: Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the computational techniques that simulate human cognitive capabilities. <https://coe.gsa.gov/coe/ai-guide-for-government/introduction/index.html>

generation (14%), creating slide decks (7%), data visualizations (7%), and other uses (10%).<sup>2</sup>

We have created an AI Policy for our organization based on an AI Policy for Nonprofits Template. It addresses our organizational AI guidelines, data governance & privacy, and AI tools analysis. These all fall within the framework of our overarching **AI principles**:

- **Accountability and responsibility:** We will hold the individuals using AI tools accountable for their decision-making based on the tools. AI tools and systems support the work our staff remains committed to.
- **Equity and access:** We will use AI in ways that do not create new inequities or barriers to accessing vital services. We will maintain safeguards that promote fair access to our services.<sup>3</sup>
- **Fairness and non-discrimination:** We will aim to use AI tools in ways that do not discriminate against the communities we serve. We will seek to use AI tools that minimize bias and ensure fair outcomes for everyone, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or other factors.<sup>4</sup>
- **Reliability and accuracy:** We will use AI tools that perform as intended. We will

select AI tools that consistently produce accurate outputs.

- **Transparency:** We will explain when and how we use AI products when asked by our stakeholder communities.
  - **Trust:** We will use AI in ways that allow us to maintain trust with the community we support.
  - **In service of mission:** We will use AI in support of human decision-making, expertise, and creativity, and not in place of human expertise. AI tools will be selected because there is a way for them to support our mission, not just because it is a new technology.
- We seek your support of our AI Policy.
  - Implementing AI often involves financial costs. In addition to the cost of particular tools, staff time must often be covered. However, as with many technologies, many AI products provide nonprofit discount programs.
  - We seek your support in procuring AI tools and allocating staff time to the work.

### Proposing a specific use case

- If you are also proposing a specific use case for review, support, or approval:

2 This was a poll done among nonprofit leaders for techsoup on 10/23/2023. Here are the results and the key breakdown can also be seen here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=934&v=I8uTKWMkTjo&embeds\\_referring\\_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.techsoup.org%2F&source\\_ve\\_path=MTM5MTE3LDM2ODQyLDM2ODQyLDEzOTExNywyODY2Ng&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=934&v=I8uTKWMkTjo&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.techsoup.org%2F&source_ve_path=MTM5MTE3LDM2ODQyLDM2ODQyLDEzOTExNywyODY2Ng&feature=emb_logo)

3 The USDA has developed a framework for use of AI in public benefit administration. Here they mention key principles that can be found in section 1.4 with equity and access being one of the core principles lifted up for this example: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/framework-artificial-intelligence-public-benefit>

4 This principle is adapted from the [Microsoft AI principles](#).

- Describe the use case you are exploring, and where it sits within your organization's operations and systems. Identify which roles in the organization will be using and/or developing the AI tool.
- Describe the benefits to the organization, focusing on mission alignment and any expected time or resource savings.
- Include an honest estimate of the level of effort required, including the relevant change management activities, such as bringing people on board, providing training, communicating with stakeholders, and making any process changes.
- Include the financial cost, if relevant.

## About the authors

### **ANB Advisory Group**

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This resource was authored by Afua Bruce and Rose Afriyie for the ANB Advisory Group. ANB Advisory Group is a consulting firm that supports a responsible tech ecosystem. We work with clients that fund, develop, or implement responsible tech and data strategies and programs, and we bring a strong equity frame to our work across all sectors. Learn more at [anbadvisory.com](https://anbadvisory.com).



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