DIABETES UK
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DIABETES UK – USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN RESEARCH FUNDING APPLICATIONS & ASSESSMENT

As a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC), Diabetes UK upholds the Research Funders Policy Group Joint Statement on the use of generative AI tools in funding applications and assessment.

We recognise that generative AI can support application preparation and administrative activities. Its use must protect research integrity, confidentiality, intellectual property and fairness, and must not replace human expertise or accountability.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out Diabetes UK's expectations for the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) by funding applicants and their host organisations, external reviewers, committee and panel members, and Diabetes UK staff involved in research funding.

2. What is generative AI?

Generative AI creates content, such as text, images, audio, video or code, in response to prompts. Examples include ChatGPT, Google Gemini and Microsoft Copilot.

These tools can produce inaccurate, fabricated, misleading or biased outputs, including references that do not exist. Their data handling arrangements vary, and information entered into a tool may be stored, shared or used in ways that are inappropriate for confidential research material.

3. Expectations for applicants and host organisations

Applicants may use generative AI to support preparation of their funding applications. Applicants and their host organisations remain fully responsible for all submitted content, regardless of whether AI has been used. **Applicants must:**

- **Remain accountable** for the application**.** Ensure that all content is accurate, original and consistent with research integrity requirements. AI must not replace applicants' expertise, intellectual contribution or understanding of the proposed research.
- **Verify AI-generated material.** Check factual claims, references, calculations, code and other outputs before including them. Remove fabricated, misleading, plagiarised or inappropriate content, and consider potential bias.

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- **Protect confidential information, personal data and intellectual property.** Follow their host organisation's information governance requirements. Sensitive or confidential material, including unpublished findings, commercially sensitive information and material belonging to others, must not be entered into AI tools unless the tool and proposed use are authorised for that information.
- **Declare substantive use of generative AI.** State which tools were used and how they contributed to the application, as described below.

Host organisations must provide appropriate guidance to their staff on responsible AI use and support compliance with relevant research integrity, data protection, confidentiality and intellectual property requirements.

Declaring AI use

Substantive use must be declared in the application. This includes using generative AI to:

- Develop research ideas, hypotheses or study designs.
- Generate substantive application content, including a scientific or plain English abstract.
- Interpret or synthesise data or research literature.
- Generate or substantially refine code used to develop or support the proposed research.

Applicants do not need to declare use solely for spelling or grammar correction, translation, formatting, improving readability or reducing word count, provided this does not introduce or materially change the scientific content.

Where required, the declaration should briefly identify the tool, the parts of the application it supported and the nature of its contribution.

Declared, permitted use of generative AI will not, in itself, disadvantage an application. Declarations are collected for transparency and monitoring. All applications remain subject to the same assessment criteria and research integrity requirements.

Applicants must not use generative AI tools:

- For uses that would breach our standard research integrity expectations. Examples include:
    - fabricating, falsifying, manipulating, duplicating, altering original data, images or results
    - plagiarism – using other people's ideas, intellectual property or work without acknowledgement or permission
    - breaching data protection rules or intellectual property rights
    - misrepresenting or falsifying information, for example, qualifications gained

    - faking citations or references
- To generate an entire application, or sections of an application, without human involvement

4. Expectations for reviewers, committee and panel members

Diabetes UK selects reviewers, committee and panel members for their expertise and experience. Assessments must reflect their own independent judgement.

To protect confidentiality and the integrity of assessment, reviewers, committee and panel members must not:

- Use generative AI to review, summarise or analyse confidential applications or assessment materials.
- Enter confidential funding materials into generative AI tools, including institutionally provided tools. This includes application text, figures, unpublished findings, review documents, applicant responses and panel discussions.
- Use generative AI to generate assessments, scores or funding recommendations.
- Enter their own review text into AI tools for editing, translation or other assistance where it contains or reveals confidential information.

These restrictions apply whether material is uploaded directly, copied into a prompt or paraphrased in a way that reveals confidential information. Removing names or other identifying details does not, by itself, make application content suitable for use in an AI tool.

Generative AI may be used for general background learning or other non-confidential supporting tasks, provided no confidential information is disclosed or reconstructed through the prompts. Reviewers must verify any information they rely on and remain responsible for their assessment.

Use that breaches these requirements may also breach the reviewer's confidentiality agreement with Diabetes UK.

5. Diabetes UK's use of generative AI

Diabetes UK may use approved generative AI tools to support administrative and operational activities. Examples include drafting general communications, preparing promotional or fundraising content from information authorised for that purpose, and identifying potential reviewers using public information or non-confidential research descriptions. The following safeguards apply:

- **Funding assessment and decisions:** Generative AI must not generate scientific assessments, scores or funding recommendations, or decide whether an application

receives funding. These responsibilities remain with the relevant reviewers, committees, panels and authorised decision-makers.

- **Human oversight:** Staff must check AI-generated outputs for accuracy, bias, appropriateness and compliance with relevant requirements before using them.
- **Reviewer identification:** Staff must independently check potential reviewers' suitability, relevant expertise and conflicts of interest. AI-generated suggestions must not be treated as verified recommendations.

6. Reporting concerns and responding to misuse

Applicants, host organisations, reviewers, committee and panel members must report suspected misuse of generative AI, including accidental disclosure of confidential information, promptly to the Diabetes UK Research Funding Team. Diabetes UK staff must also follow the relevant internal incident reporting procedures.

Concerns will be considered under the applicable confidentiality, data protection and research integrity procedures. Diabetes UK will seek clarification where appropriate and take proportionate action where a breach is established.

A declaration of permitted AI use is not, in itself, evidence of misuse.

7. Policy review

Diabetes UK will review this policy annually, or sooner where changes in technology, regulation or sector guidance require it.

Policy owner: Kamini Shah, Head of Research Funding
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