AFA Values and Guiding Principles for Responsible AI Use

Background

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems and technologies continue to evolve, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) recognizes their potential to support innovation, while acknowledging the disruption they may pose to the arts community, the economic security of artists and the livelihoods of human creators.

An Artificial Intelligence system is defined as "a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers from the input it receives how to generate outputs (such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions) that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different artificial intelligence systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment. (Source: OECD AI Principles, April 2025, quoted by the Government of Alberta in the "Fact Sheet: Artificial Intelligence and Automated Systems" published as guidance to public bodies in the *Protection of Privacy Act*).

This document establishes values and guiding principles for AI use. When interacting with the AFA, any AI use by stakeholders, grant applicants, expert panel members and AFA staff should not infringe upon the values and guiding principles captured in this document.

The values and guiding principles in this document apply to all existing AFA Policies and should inform how those policies are implemented in relation to AI.

The AFA Values and Guiding Principles for Responsible AI Use aligns with the following legislation:

- *Arts Professions Recognition Act* (2021, Alberta)
- *Protection of Privacy Act* (2025, Alberta)
- Government of Alberta's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance Framework
- The UNESCO *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (adopted in 2021 by all member countries, including Canada)

It will evolve in synchronization with the Artificial Intelligence and Data Act (AIDA), and ongoing consultations regarding the Copyright Act.

Governance

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Board of Directors holds overall governance for the *AFA Values and Principles for Responsible AI Use* and provides oversight into the implementation of the values and principles to ensure alignment with legislative requirements and collective achievement of the objectives.

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Values

The AFA upholds the following values:

Accessibility: The AFA recognizes that AI may help reduce barriers through the use language-support tools or accessibility tools.

Accountability: Human creators remain legally and ethically accountable for all AI generated outputs, delivery outcomes, and solutions.

Artistic integrity: Authentic artistic expression will be protected. AI may not be used to misrepresent authorship, skill, or creative contribution.

Bias: The AFA recognizes that biases are embedded, reinforced and amplified in many AI technologies due to the training data used, potentially resulting in discrimination, inequality or exclusion. When using AI, all reasonable efforts to prevent discrimination, minimize and avoid reinforcing or biased outcomes should be made. Examples of biases to consider include gender, racial, cultural, language, disability, geographic, representation, historical, stereotyping, and socioeconomic.

Consent: Unauthorized digital replicas (unauthorized AI-generated images or voices that realistically depict an individual's likeness), non-consensual imagery, and misuse of a person's voice or likeness are prohibited.

Cultural respect and authenticity: The AFA is committed to protecting against inauthentic cultural representation and harmful stereotypes. Style-mimicking AI generation of "Indigenous Style" works is considered to be cultural appropriation and promotes harmful stereotypes through unauthentic or improperly sourced training data.

Environmental stewardship: The AFA recognizes that some types of AI use may be energy intensive. Consideration of the environmental impact of large-scale AI adoption is encouraged, including steps to reduce the environmental impact of AI.

Fairness: AI use should not create unfair advantages or fraudulent submissions.

Human agency and oversight: AI should support, rather than replace, human judgment, creativity, and decision-making.

Human-Centered Creativity: Artists should maintain primary control, ensuring that their work favors human talent and vision.

Intellectual property rights: The AFA adheres to copyright laws and respects the rights of artists regarding the licensing of content for AI training. Artists' rights related to ownership, licensing, attribution, and use of creative work in AI systems will be respected. AI should be used with oversight and care to avoid inadvertently plagiarizing others' work. Therefore, the use of generative AI is not encouraged.

Public trust: Maintaining confidence in AFA-funded artistic outcomes and assessment processes is a priority.

Right to privacy and data protection: The AFA protects personal information in accordance with the *Protection of Privacy Act*. Application materials will remain confidential.

Transparency: To promote and uphold transparency, AI use should be disclosed. This includes explaining how AI was/will be used, how ethical considerations such as bias, data privacy, authorship and consent were/will be addressed and confirming that appropriate rights or licences have been granted for any AI-generated content.

Principles

AI adoption: Recognizing the right of creators to use AI, AI adoption should not be prohibited in areas where it aligns with artistic goals and preserves human-centered artistry, or where it is used critically and ethically.

Confidentiality: The disclosure or uploading of proprietary, private, or sensitive materials, including grant application materials, into public AI tools is prohibited.

Economic security of artists: The AFA recognizes the importance of protecting artists from labour displacement, precarity, and erosion of livelihoods.

Prevention of harm: AI should be used with care to avoid harm, including harm to artists, communities, creative rights, privacy, cultural integrity, the dignity of individuals and public trust.

Professional judgment: Assessment and decision-making processes will remain human-led, to main integrity, avoid biases inherent in AI systems, and ensure fair, transparent and equitable processes for all AFA programs.

Sector sustainability: Technological adoption should support, not undermine the cultural workforce or broader arts ecosystem.