GenAI Policy Frameworks for Your Library

A plain-language guide to help your library develop thoughtful policies around generative AI tools.

Who Decides?

Governance & Oversight

Who gets to decide which AI tools your library uses? A good policy names the people responsible and explains how decisions get made.

- Form a review committee with diverse voices
- Include frontline staff, not just administrators
- Set a regular schedule to revisit decisions
- Document the reasoning behind each choice

Where Does Data Go?

Privacy & Patron Safety

When patrons use AI tools, their questions and uploads may be stored by the company. Your policy should protect patron privacy.

- Read the terms of service carefully
- Know where patron data is stored and for how long
- Offer opt-out alternatives for AI services
- Be extra cautious with children's information



How Do We Tell People?

Transparency & Communication

Patrons and staff deserve to know when AI is involved. A good policy makes this clear and easy to understand.

- Label AI-generated content clearly
- Explain what the tool does in plain language
- Share known limitations honestly
- Provide ways for people to ask questions

What If Something Goes Wrong?

Accountability & Review

Things will go wrong. Your policy should plan for that with clear steps for reporting and fixing problems.

- Create a simple way to report concerns
- Assign someone to respond to issues
- Review tools regularly for harm or bias
- Be willing to stop using a tool that causes harm

Getting Started: Your First Steps

1

Gather Your Team

Bring together staff from different roles to share perspectives and concerns.

2

Ask the Hard Questions

Use ethics in AI questions as a starting point for honest discussion.

3

Write It Down

Document your decisions, even if they are tentative. Revisit them regularly.

Remember: Not adopting AI is also a valid policy decision. The goal is thoughtful deliberation, not inevitable adoption.