

Principles on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Broadcasting

Background and Introduction

Artificial Intelligence has rapidly expanded over the past two years, significantly transforming how industries use technology for productivity and operational efficiency. Machine learning and generative AI applications continue to multiply, especially in media and broadcasting. Over the last year, many broadcasters have demonstrated AI's role in content development, archiving, newsrooms, and delivery platforms. Conferences and workshops have highlighted these solutions, with members sharing how AI has improved usability and automation. Both large and small broadcasters are increasingly adopting these technologies throughout their operations.

Experts have noted widespread adoption of AI-based tools in forums and discussions, expressing concern over inadequate screening for safety, security, and ethics. Many of these tools, especially those in use in broadcast facilities, are freely available but lack thorough testing and certification. Despite potential risks such as data breaches, security exposures, and legal or ethical issues, their use continues to grow without full understanding of these implications. Many international organisations have developed regulatory frameworks and recommendations to guide the use of these tools. Broadcasters, including our sister unions such as the EBU, ASBU, NABA, and AUB, have organised AI-focused events to share experiences and promote proper use. They have published guidelines to help broadcasters implement these technologies appropriately and share best practices within the industry.

Noting the above developments and the expanding use of AI tools within broadcast and media organisations, including among many of our members, the ABU Secretariat together with the support of many of our members, industry partners, sister unions and the international community have developed the below 'Principles on the use of Artificial Intelligence in Broadcasting and Media organisations'. The principles, recommendations and best practices listed herein are non-binding and simple guiding principles that our members and other broadcasters and media organisations can consider using when developing their own regulatory frameworks within their organisations.

Preamble

Recognizing the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies and their transformative impact on the broadcasting industry, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) aims to provide a responsible and structured approach for AI adoption in broadcasting and media practices. These guidelines are intended to support member broadcasters in embracing AI technologies while ensuring that ethical considerations, transparency, and sustainability are upheld. Given the unprecedented pace at which AI is evolving, this document should be considered dynamic and subject to periodic revisions to remain relevant and effective.

Recalling the essential role that broadcast, and media organisations play in delivering accurate, unbiased, and timely information to the public, it is imperative to integrate AI technologies in ways that enhance these responsibilities without compromising information integrity and public trust.

Considering the vast potential of AI to improve content creation, production processes, distribution methods, audience engagement, and operational efficiency, broadcasters must adopt these technologies but with careful consideration to uphold the trust and integrity with the audience. This involves being mindful of challenges related to data privacy, AI bias, and transparency.

Noting the growing presence of AI in broadcast and media workflows—from automated workflows, content creation, and transcription to personalised recommendation systems and audience analytics—AI serves as both a valuable tool and a source of unethical considerations. It is crucial for broadcasters to balance innovation with accountability.

Emphasising the need for capacity building, ongoing training, and upskilling within the broadcasting industry to ensure media professionals are equipped to work alongside AI technologies, maintaining oversight over automated systems, and adapting to new developments as they arise.

Acknowledging that this working document is only intended as a living guideline and non-binding, with further revisions to be published when necessary to keep pace with technological advancements and evolving regulatory landscapes. Broadcasters are encouraged to actively participate in this ongoing process, contributing insights and experiences to refine and improve these guidelines as needed.

Work on the ABU Principles and its Intent

The basic founding principle which this document is based upon is on **safeguarding public trust** with broadcasters and media organisations, specially for public service broadcasters. The implementation and use of AI technologies and solutions should in no way compromise the accuracy, integrity and credibility of information delivered by the broadcaster which is crucial in safeguarding and preserving public trust.

The principles, recommendations and best practices listed in this document are **non-binding and is provided only as a guideline** to help our members and other broadcast and media organisations when considering using AI applications and its implementation within their operations and workflow.

Considering the increasing use of AI solutions among our members and in line with similar efforts by sister unions and other international entities, the ABU secretariat is of the view that the ABU should commit to guiding its members in this complex area through a holistic approach. These principles are intended to inform members about the various aspects of these tools, including their technologies, potential challenges, security and safety considerations, and industry best practices. Its purpose is to offer direction on the appropriate use of AI technologies and tools within broadcast environments and operations across all relevant areas.

The listed principles will address AI applications in three main areas:

- **Technology and Security**

Understanding AI's technology is challenging but essential for effective implementation. A lack of clarity can lead to issues like unauthorised data use, limited content control, and security risks. Since AI solutions vary in quality, organisations must identify where AI adds genuine value. Focusing on high-impact areas, reviewing industry metrics, and assessing compatibility, data models, provider stability, and credibility are important before adopting AI tools. Some of the most common areas of AI use cases have been in multilingual applications, accessibility, archives management and workflow automation.

- **Governance and Legal**

Effective governance and legal frameworks are essential for implementing AI solutions. Without comprehensive mechanisms, organisations are testing various approaches, from reactive to restrictive methods, depending on each country's regulatory environment. For many, these frameworks remain under development and require expert input and guidance.

- **Ethical and best practices**

Although many international organisations and entities have developed relevant guidelines, ensuring ethical and responsible use of AI remains one of the commonly raised questions. There are several considerations when it comes to ethics, including safeguarding and respect for intellectual property, liability and attribution, data protection and terms of use. The need for human oversight and control is essential to overcome and mitigate any risk of biases and credibility. It is important to make audiences aware when AI based solutions are used in content creation, to maintain the trust and integrity which should never be compromised.

Since it is still a fast-developing area the above maybe further expanded in the future and the guideline will be treated as a living document with the possibility of revisions being published on an annual basis (or more frequent if necessary).

General Principles for the Use of AI in Broadcasting

1. Data, Security and Sustainability

- Given AI's reliance on data, broadcasters adhere to stringent data privacy standards. Safeguarding user data and complying with regional and international data protection regulations is non-negotiable.
- Regular audits of AI systems are necessary to ensure user data is not misused or vulnerable. This includes assessing data storage practices, access controls, and encryption methods.
- Transparency with audiences about how their data is collected, used, and protected fosters trust and aligns with ethical practices.
- Implement robust cybersecurity measures to protect against data breaches and unauthorised access.
- Broadcasters consider the environmental impact of AI technologies, including energy consumption in training models and cloud services. Adopt sustainable practices to minimise carbon footprints.
- Regularly assess and report on the environmental impact of AI operations to identify areas for improvement.

2. AI for Diversity and Inclusion

- Broadcasters leverage AI to enhance diversity in content production and representation, ensuring content reflects the diversity of the audience.
- Monitoring AI tools is essential to avoid exclusionary practices or biased outputs that could misrepresent groups.
- Encourage the development of AI applications that promote inclusive storytelling and give voice to underrepresented communities.
- Collaborate with diverse teams in the development and implementation of AI systems to mitigate unconscious biases.

3. Ethics, Transparency and Accountability

- AI systems should operate transparently, providing clear explanations of their impact on content generation, recommendations, and editorial decisions. This transparency builds trust with audiences and stakeholders.
- Maintaining accountability for AI-generated content is essential. Human oversight must be integrated throughout the workflow to prevent misinformation, manipulation, or bias introduced by AI.
- Establish mechanisms to audit AI systems regularly, ensuring they adhere to ethical and professional standards.
- AI tools should be developed and implemented with strong ethical guidelines, prioritising fairness, accuracy, and impartiality in news reporting and content creation and distribution.
- Addressing and mitigating bias in AI systems is crucial. Algorithms should be tested and monitored to ensure they do not reinforce stereotypes or marginalise any group.
- All content that is generated or substantially altered by AI should be clearly labelled at the time of broadcast to avoid misleading the audience and to ensure transparency in editorial practices.

4. Human Oversight and Intervention

- AI systems should assist rather than replace human decision-making *at the final stage*. Content creators, editors, and journalists retain control over final outputs to ensure accuracy and integrity.
- Protocols for human intervention should be established when AI-generated content does not meet editorial standards or ethical guidelines.
- Training programs should be implemented to help staff effectively collaborate with AI tools, understanding both their capabilities and limitations.
- Encourage a culture where employees feel empowered to question and override AI decisions when necessary.

Practical Use Cases and Best Practices for AI in Broadcasting

We recommend the following practices for member broadcasters

1. Editorial Applications of AI

- Utilise AI tools to streamline content workflows, such as automated transcription, video summarisation, and content indexing. Human oversight is crucial to maintain editorial quality.
- Implement AI-driven recommendation engines that promote diverse viewpoints, avoiding echo chambers and polarisation.
- Consider AI for fact-checking and verification processes to support journalists in ensuring accuracy.
- Use AI to analyse audience feedback and trends to inform editorial decisions.

2. AI in Audience Analytics

- Employ AI to gain insights into audience preferences while maintaining transparency about data collection and usage.
- Use analytics tools to enhance audience engagement through personalised content, without manipulating user preferences for commercial gain.
- Respect user privacy by anonymising data and providing opt-out options for data collection when possible.

3. Automated Content Creation and Distribution

- Apply AI in tasks like generating localised content, subtitling, or dubbing in multiple languages, ensuring cultural sensitivity and accuracy.
- Implement AI-driven distribution to optimise content delivery across platforms, reaching diverse audiences effectively.
- Stay vigilant about the potential for AI-generated deepfakes or misleading content, establishing safeguards to prevent their dissemination.
- Experiment with AI-generated interactive content to engage audiences in new ways.

4. Training and Capacity Building

- Invest in continuous training for staff on AI technologies, including algorithmic processes, data management, and ethical considerations.
- Foster partnerships with AI research institutions to develop broadcasting-specific AI tools.
- Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration within teams to bridge gaps between technical and editorial staff.
- Provide resources and support for employees to stay updated on the latest AI developments relevant to broadcasting.

5. AI in Emergency Broadcasting

- Enhance emergency warning systems with AI to ensure timely, accurate dissemination of critical information during crises.
- Collaborate with governmental and international organisations to develop AI-enhanced systems for real-time emergency broadcasting.
- Test and update these systems regularly to ensure reliability during actual emergencies.
- Utilise AI to monitor and analyse real-time data from various sources to anticipate and respond to emerging crises.

6. Cross-Industry Collaboration

- Encourage collaboration among broadcasters, AI developers, and regulatory bodies to establish common standards for AI usage in media.
- Participate in industry forums and working groups to share best practices and stay updated on emerging trends.
- Engage with policymakers to contribute to the development of regulations that balance innovation with public interest.

7. Continuous Monitoring and Ethical Auditing

- Regularly monitor AI systems for compliance with ethical guidelines, data protection laws, and broadcasting standards.
- Conduct periodic audits to identify potential risks or biases, taking corrective measures to align AI systems with organisational values and legal obligations.
- Establish feedback mechanisms for audiences to report concerns related to AI-generated content.
- Stay informed about advancements in AI ethics and adjust practices accordingly.

Conclusion

In embracing AI technologies, broadcasters are encouraged to adopt a proactive yet cautious approach. The ABU underscores the importance of responsible innovation, ethical AI practices, and preserving public trust. As AI continues to evolve, these guidelines will be revisited and updated to reflect new insights and developments, ensuring they remain relevant and effective. References and Further Readings.

1. **ISO/IEC TR 24028:2020 - Overview of Trustworthiness in Artificial Intelligence**
Provides an overview of aspects related to the trustworthiness of AI systems. [ISO/IEC TR 24028:2020](#)
2. **IEEE P7000 Series - Standards for Ethically Aligned Design**
A set of standards addressing ethical considerations in system design, including AI. [IEEE P7000 Series](#)
3. **UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021)**
Provides a global normative framework for the ethical use of AI. [UNESCO AI Ethics](#)
4. **ISO/IEC 27001:2013 - Information Security Management Systems**
Specifies requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an information security management system. [ISO/IEC 27001:2013](#)
5. **ISO/IEC TR 24027:2021 - Bias in AI Systems and AI Aided Decision Making** Discusses sources of bias in AI systems and methods to address them. [ISO/IEC TR 24027:2021](#)
6. **ITU-T X.1058 - Privacy Engineering Guidelines and Tools**
Outlines best practices for ensuring privacy in the design and implementation of ICT systems. [ITU-T X.1058](#)
7. **ITU-T L.1470 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions of ICT Systems**
Methodology for assessing the environmental impact of ICT systems, including AI. [ITU-T L.1470](#)