



**CLEMSON UNIVERSITY DIVISION OF RESEARCH
ACCEPTABLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this *Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy* is to outline the requirements for the acceptable use of AI within Clemson University's Division of Research.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Clemson University Division of Research staff and governs the use of artificial intelligence tools in support of Division of Research activities. This policy does not, in itself, establish requirements for faculty or staff outside the Division of Research. For purposes of this policy, use of AI "in support of Division of Research activities" includes use in connection with research, broadly defined, including proposal development, data analysis, drafting of technical or administrative content, testing or analytical services, and any activity contributing to research outputs, deliverables, or research administration functions.

3. Research {AI}utomation Initiative

Both AI and automation expand opportunities for creative problem solving and efficiency gains, but can also increase risk exposure. An additional concern is the potential for inefficient reliance on unproductive AI tools, making tool choice a strategic consideration for the Division of Research, including the use of approved tools and structured review of non-approved tools.

Vision

The Division of Research is committed to evaluating and supporting the implementation of AI and automation that is both safe and fit for purpose, aligned with institutional expectations, and appropriately governed, including the use of University-approved AI tools by default and the review of AI tools not under University contract prior to use where appropriate, with the overarching goal of adoption in a manner that is beneficial, trusted, and deliberately paced through careful, noncoercive integration.

The Research {AI}utomation Initiative in the Division of Research will focus on reducing inefficiencies through automation to reduce personnel workload, and the creative use of generative and analytical AI in restructured and redesigned workflows.

4. Artificial Intelligence Deployment Concerns

It is the responsibility of all Division of Research staff to continually analyze the effectiveness and safety of AI systems being deployed as part of the Division of Research's {AI}utomation Initiative. When issues arise from the use of AI or automation tools, whether technical or social-technical, the Office of Electronic Research Administration must be notified.

These issues may include:

1. Data security breaches
2. A loss of, not an increase in efficiency
3. A cognitively unsustainable productivity surge
4. A decrease in work-life balance



5. Required Use Practices

In addition to the above, Division of Research staff must adhere to the following practices when using AI systems in support of research activities:

- AI tools not under University contract must not be used for research-related activities unless prior review and approval have been completed through Division of Research and applicable institutional processes.
- Submission of a request for review does not constitute approval. Use of the tool must not proceed until all required reviews and approvals are complete.
- Staff must not assume that use of public, de-identified, or low-sensitivity data is automatically permissible in AI systems. Data classification alone does not determine the appropriateness of use.
- Any known or suspected exposure of Clemson data, sponsor data, or other restricted information through an AI system must be reported in accordance with applicable incident reporting procedures.
- When uncertainty exists regarding appropriate use, staff must pause use and seek guidance from the Division of Research's Office of Electronic Research Administration prior to proceeding.
- Final determinations regarding the use of AI tools not under University contract will be made through established institutional governance processes.

6. Policy Statement and Requirements

Clemson University provides faculty, researchers, and staff with approved AI tools, procedures, and policies to support the safe and effective use of AI. Use of AI tools not under University contract requires prior review and approval through the Division of Research and applicable institutional processes. Use of external AI tools must not be based solely on assumptions regarding data sensitivity or model training settings. Approval of an AI tool or use case does not constitute approval for all data types or activities and must be evaluated in the context of the specific use.

- 6.1. All Division of Research staff must comply with the Division of Research's *Research Policies* provided in the Additional Resources section below.
- 6.2. All Division of Research staff must adhere to several existing policy and procedure documents on research and data security, provided in the Additional Resources section below.
- 6.3. All Division of Research staff must read, understand, and comply with the instructions established in the *Required AI Training and AI Policy*, and the *External AI Tool Disclosure Guidance* documents provided in the Additional Resources section below.
- 6.4. Division of Research staff must not enter Clemson University information or data classified as Internal Use, Confidential, or Restricted into AI systems not under University contract unless such use has been reviewed and approved through Division of Research and applicable institutional processes. This includes AI tools accessed through free, personal, or individually purchased accounts that are not managed under University contract. Submission of a request does not constitute approval. Use of the AI tool must not proceed until all required reviews and approvals are complete.
- 6.5. Division of Research staff will use University-approved AI tools, including ChatGPT Edu and Microsoft Copilot, as the default for AI-supported work, unless otherwise authorized through established review processes.
- 6.6. Certain categories of data, including but not limited to export-controlled information, Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), regulated data, or sponsor-restricted information, may be prohibited from use in any AI system, including University-approved tools, based on applicable requirements.



6.7. **Approved AI Systems**

Division of Research staff may only enter information or data classified as **Internal Use**, **Confidential**, or **Restricted** under Clemson University's Data Classification Policy into University-approved AI systems. These approved AI systems include:

- 1) OpenAI Edu
- 2) Microsoft 365 and Copilot
- 3) Zoom AI Meeting Companion
- 4) Adobe Firefly
- 5) Scite
- 6) JSTOR AI
- 7) Primo Research Assistance

Use of approved AI systems does not eliminate the need to evaluate the appropriateness of specific data for entry into those systems. Staff must ensure that use of any AI system, including approved tools, is consistent with applicable data classification requirements, sponsor obligations, and institutional policies.

- 6.8. In accordance with the *Data Classification Policy*, Data Stewards appointed by the Data Trustee will create an inventory of data under their purview and will ensure relevant information security policies and procedures are followed to protect the confidentiality and integrity of the data when using AI systems.
- 6.9. Division of Research staff must report violations of this *Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy* in accordance with the *Information Security Incident Reporting Procedures*.
- 6.10. Compliance with this policy will be enforced through established Division of Research processes, including proposal review, disclosure requirements, and coordination with institutional governance mechanisms.

7. **Monitoring, Evaluating, and Auditing Approved AI Systems**

- 7.1. The Electronic Research Administration will develop and implement ongoing processes and procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and auditing, or any combination thereof, of all approved and in-use AI systems within the Division of Research.
 - 7.1.1. Red and Blue teaming, and Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) principles will be utilized during evaluations of certain AI tools.
- 7.2. A semi-annual findings report will be developed that details the results of the monitoring, evaluating, and auditing of each AI system being used. The report will be presented to the SVP for Research semi-annually.
 - 7.2.1. Measurements contained in the semi-annual report will focus on identifiable efficiency gains achieved through the adoption of AI. The proliferation of AI adoption will not be the focus of AI integration.
- 7.3. Findings from monitoring and evaluation activities that indicate potential compliance, data protection, or institutional risk concerns will be referred to the appropriate institutional offices for further review and, where necessary, routed through established governance processes for determination.

8. **Recourse for Noncompliance**

Individuals in violation of the informational security policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.



9. Additional Resources

- 9.1. [Research Policies – Division of Research](#)
- 9.2. [Information Security Policy](#)
- 9.3. [Research Information Security Policy](#)
- 9.4. [Data Classification Policy](#)
- 9.5. [Information Security Incident Reporting Procedures](#)
- 9.6. [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy](#)
- 9.7. [Research Misconduct Policy](#)
- 9.8. [Generative AI Guidelines](#) (CU Guidelines)

10. Responsible Department

The Office of the Senior Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors
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11. Approval and Revision History

- 11.1. Last date of revision: (no current revision)
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