

April 20, 2026

TO: RAILS Board Consortia Committee
FROM: Anne Slaughter, Director of Technology Services
SUBJECT: Consortia and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

As a topic of continued interest and exploration, we'd like to return to our discussion of how consortia are using or planning to use AI tools. In addition to the items below, we invite open discussion of any experiences, resources, and questions your organizations have encountered in areas such as the development of AI ethics policies, best practices for its use in cataloging and other workflows, AI tools in vendor products, member library adoption, or anywhere else you're seeing impacts.

[AI and the Library Records Confidentiality Act](#)

Have your consortia encountered any difficulties around patron data privacy and AI—in relation to vendor tools, member library or patron concerns, your own use, or other areas? Have you engaged in conversations with vendors, produced any formal member communications on the issue, or sought legal advice that others may find helpful?

[RAILS Staff AI Pilot](#)

RAILS IT and Data staff are working through initial setup and early testing of Copilot, Microsoft's embedded AI tool, in preparation for rollout to a larger pilot group. In this current phase, we are learning about and testing how Copilot interacts with our data, determining strategies and configuration parameters to protect confidential and sensitive records, and identifying decision points and discussion issues for the pilot group. Each facet of this process is a learning experience for staff, for which we intend to seek outside expertise in addition to adhering to the guidance of RAILS' Ethical Artificial Intelligence Policy.

[RAILS Continuing Education](#)

The RAILS Continuing Education team recently offered a three-part series focused on AI safety. Recordings are listed below; a login to the RAILS website with L2 account credentials is required.

1. [Foundations of AI Safety & Short-Term Risk](#)
2. [How AI Works and What Library Staff Need to Know: Understanding Medium- & Long-Term Risks of AI](#)
3. [How AI Affects Work and Life: High Risk AI & Leading Community Workshops](#)

[Selected Resources from the Field](#)

The [American Library Association \(ALA\) AI Policy Working Group](#) (link requires ALA member login) has released a draft AI Policy Statement for member comment, open through May 8. The final version will be presented to Council at the 2026 Annual conference in Chicago. The document's introduction states its twofold purpose: "to recommend that libraries develop local guidelines or policies for AI use within

their institutions, and as they do so, to encourage the utilization of this living document as a touchstone reference from ALA.”

Two interrelated projects, [LibraryReady.AI](#) from the School Library Systems Association of New York and [TeachingAbout.AI](#) from School Library System of Genesee Valley BOCES, are producing resources centered around a “curriculum [that] aims to empower students with essential skills in AI literacy, critical thinking, and information seeking practices.” [This slide presentation](#) and their set of [“provocations” exploring wider issues](#) around AI provide useful and broadly applicable insights.