Guide to Best Practices for the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Editorial Activities at FMM
Adopted in November 2023, revised in May 2025

Preamble
It should first be emphasized that generative AI tools can under no circumstances replace the editorial work of journalists.

Artificial intelligence tools are developing and becoming more prevalent every day, across all fields. Already, some of these tools can be used to collect, format, or disseminate information.

However, it is important to establish the principles and limits for the use of these tools, particularly generative AI, within the scope of our companies' various editorial activities.

This is the purpose of this document, which has been collectively developed based on a proposal from the relevant departments (editorial, digital, technical, legal), in consultation with the SDJ (Journalists' Societies) and submitted for review to the CHIPIP (Committee for Honesty, Independence and Pluralism of Information and Programs).

This document is subject to periodic review, considering technological and legal developments. The present text is its second version.

This text, listing FMM's commitments regarding the use of AI, has been made available to our audiences on the France Médias Monde corporate website and via the networks and applications of the channels.

These recommendations are fully in line with the rules of ethics and editorial security contained in the "Compendium of Texts Defining Our Editorial Framework," and in particular with the "FMM Journalists' Code of Ethics" dated July 12, 2017.

Furthermore, regardless of how these tools are used, editorial productions that make use of them fall within the missions of the FMM group and its public service media: to provide people around the world with free, independent, verified, honest, balanced and expert information, produced by professional teams who prioritize field reporting and journalism, in French and in 20 languages.

It is essential, as a preamble, to recall the very nature of these generative AI tools and thereby to define their limitations, and thus the possible, desirable, or prohibited fields of use. Two main points should be noted:

1 / A major distinction must be made between generative AI and search engines.

At this stage, results obtained using generative AI tools are based on the frequency and probability of a given response, not on the relevance, credibility, or authority of sources, as is the case with search engines. Thus, this is not a technology for searching for information. It is a language processing tool, not a knowledge tool. It is also important to keep in mind that a query to an AI is much more energy-intensive than a query to a search engine.

2 / Providing information to a generative AI tool is akin to publication

In other words, any sensitive or confidential information that must remain so cannot be processed by such open tools, except when its use strictly abides by the framework defined by FMM (see point 4. Confidentiality).

Moreover, any information processed by a public generative AI tool cannot be withdrawn, unlike what is possible with a search engine. Generative AI tools amalgamate data without, in most cases, making any reference to sources in their results.

Key Principles Guiding the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Editorial Activities:

1. Systematic Human Supervision

The model for AI use must always be: Human > Machine > Human.
In other words, the use of artificial intelligence must always be decided by a human, and the result obtained must be validated by a human.
No publication or dissemination of content created by or with AI may take place without review, verification, and editorial validation.

2. Responsible Use

In general, the use of AI should aim to assist editorial production (upstream in preparation, during production, or downstream in dissemination).
It can help to improve quality and originality, and to reduce the time needed to process and analyze documentary bases, the reliability of which must be ensured by the journalist. In no case can it replace the editorial work of journalists, and especially not the work of source verification and cross-checking with reality on the ground.

Within this framework defined by FMM, AI may be used for: spelling and grammar correction; transcription of interviews to identify the most relevant passages; automatic translation of texts or interviews for documentation or as a working base; summarizing texts or complex files for documentation; editorial exploitation of large datasets (data journalism); assistance in writing optimized posts for different social networks or SEO-optimized headlines; assistance in identifying information circulating on social networks; assistance in detecting false information using specific, validated tools; indexing and enhancing archive content; extraction and suggestion of keywords; automatic subtitling and synthetic voice reading to address accessibility for visually impaired audiences; editing assistance via sequence identification; reformatting assistance via automatic video cropping; automatic and simplified improvement of sound quality; assistance in generating illustrations and infographics. At this stage, we strictly prohibit the use of synthetic voices for dubbing (except for anonymization; see point 4).

In general, AI must never be used to generate images, sounds, or videos whose realism could mislead the public or leave room for ambiguity.
The generation of images and videos is permitted only for illustrative purposes, without photorealism that could raise doubts about their authenticity. Such use must include a clear mention (see below) and comply with editorial validation processes.

AI may never be used to recreate the **voice or appearance** of public figures or journalists.

3. Transparent Use

Transparency must be total, **both internally and with the public.**

The use of AI for certain tasks must be known to everyone on the team, particularly the editorial manager.
It is essential to clearly "label" for the public any content generated by or with a generative AI if:
- texts were written mainly by AI, even if they are always editorially validated
- texts were fully translated by AI, even if they are always editorially validated
- illustrative images or videos were created by or with the help of AI
- audio was partially generated by AI when it replaces the original audio (e.g. voice synthesis to anonymize a testimony)

When this mention cannot be made visible (in text, image, or video), it must be indicated in the contextual elements (e.g., announced on air).
If one of our pieces of content relays an image produced by AI (for example, to denounce a "fake"), the labeling must be even more visible, occupying a sufficient part of the image so that it cannot be erased by another tool (which could allow us to be associated with the "fake" through a screenshot).

4. Confidentiality for the Protection of Data and Sources

Great caution must be exercised when transmitting information to external platforms (e.g., ChatGPT) or using confidential content in generative AI tools. This is to protect the sources and sensitive information held by journalists.
For any professional use, it is necessary to use secure and dedicated platforms, internal to FMM, especially when confidential and/or personal information or data is involved.
The current state of technology and the prospects for AI development make traditional means of protecting/anonymizing sources (blurring, voice alteration, etc.) less and less effective. More robust anonymization methods must therefore be used, which do not allow for subsequent re-identification.
It is also recalled that inserting content protected by copyright or related rights* into generative AI tools is prohibited, unless the consent of all rights holders has been obtained.

**Related rights are rights granted to those involved in the creation of a work, but who are not considered the main author.*

5. Careful and Responsible Experimentation

Constant innovation and progress in AI are conducive to experimentation, curiosity, criticism, and innovation. But such experimentation must be conducted with caution, to avoid the risks of data leakage and error.
Any use of AI beyond the principles set out in this Guide requires prior validation by the editorial manager and technical contacts.
Any experimentation intended to be generalized requires validation by the AI steering committee, which will consult the DAJ (Legal Affairs Department), the DPO (Data Protection Officer), and the CISO (Chief Information Security Officer) in order to carry out a legal and IT risk assessment and will request an evaluation of the social and environmental impact of the project.

6. Training and Monitoring

Training editorial teams on the issues and tools of AI is essential to mitigate the risks associated with generative AI and to promote responsibility and transparency. It is also essential for communicating these issues to the public.
Internally, information sharing and feedback should be encouraged.

Revision of this text

These “best practices” will be reviewed periodically, in line with technological developments and the experience of editorial teams. This revision will be conducted in the same framework as the initial drafting and the present version.