

Tips for Researchers Using AI at MRU

These tips support researchers at Mount Royal University in using AI in ways that align with research integrity, responsible scholarship, and community-engaged research. AI tools may support research work, but they do not replace researcher judgment or responsibility. Expectations may vary by funder, publisher, discipline, method, and data context.

Before using AI in research, consider the following:

1. **Accountability** — You are still responsible

Researchers remain responsible for the accuracy, citations, interpretation, and conclusions in their work. AI-assisted content should be reviewed and verified before use.

2. **Transparency** — Be clear about meaningful AI use

If AI meaningfully shaped drafting, coding, analysis, or another research output, keep a brief record of what was used, how it was used, and whether disclosure is expected by your funder, publisher, or discipline.

3. **Confidentiality** — Protect sensitive information

Do not upload personal data, confidential documents, unpublished manuscripts, peer review materials, grant applications, or other sensitive content into AI tools unless clearly permitted. Even with institutional tools, consider whether AI use is appropriate for the specific content and context.

4. **Verification** — Check outputs carefully

AI tools can fabricate citations, misstate findings, and produce plausible but inaccurate outputs. Verify references, quotations, factual claims, and code before relying on them.

5. **Research quality** — Use AI to support rigor, not just speed

AI may help with brainstorming, organization, plain-language summaries, and early drafting, but it should support rigorous and meaningful research rather than superficial output produced mainly for speed or volume.

6. **Limits and risks** — Know the limits of the tool

AI tools may reflect bias, miss context, or flatten nuance. Treat them as assistive tools, not authoritative sources or decision-makers. Be cautious about AI detection tools, and check whether licence or publisher terms restrict how subscription content can be uploaded or processed in external AI tools.. [See the related copyright FAQ to find out more.](#)

Example scenarios

The examples below are illustrative only. Appropriate use depends on the research context, including ethics, confidentiality, disciplinary norms, publisher policies, and funder requirements.

Example 1. Brainstorming and early planning

Using AI to suggest keywords, outline sections, or generate questions is generally lower risk, but researchers still need to verify sources, refine terms, and shape the argument.

Example 2. Drafting and editing

AI may help improve wording, reorganize text, or create a plain-language summary, but the researcher remains responsible for claims, citations, interpretation, and any required disclosure.

Example 3. Literature searching and source discovery

Tools such as ResearchRabbit, Scite, Elicit, or NotebookLM may support discovery and organization, but they do not replace database searching, source appraisal, careful reading, or citation verification.

Example 4. Working with sensitive or unpublished material

Uploading interview transcripts, unpublished manuscripts, peer review comments, grant text, or confidential data may be inappropriate unless the tool and context clearly permit it. Check ethics, confidentiality, licence terms, and institutional guidance first.

Example 5. Coding, analysis, or interpretation

AI may assist with organization or exploratory thinking, but researchers remain responsible for analytic decisions, interpretation, claims, and any needed documentation or disclosure.

Selected resources. Many AI research tools offer limited free access with additional paid features. Researchers should review pricing and data-use terms before adoption.

- [Generative AI Product Tracker \(Ithaka S+R\)](#) - compares tools, pricing, features, and selected strengths and limitations.
- [Artificial Intelligence Disclosure \(AID\) Framework \(University of Waterloo\)](#): supports documentation and disclosure of AI use in research and writing.
- **When in doubt:** check funder guidance, publisher policies, ethics requirements, and institutional guidance before using AI in a research workflow.