Use of artificial intelligence (AI) at SRG SSR

Purpose and scope

The SRG AI Guidance sets out the fundamental principles applicable to the use of artificial intelligence tools within SRG. It also provides concrete answers to real-world questions relating to the use of AI in the day-to-day work of all SRG departments in the form of practical guidelines. It allows innovation to be harnessed responsibly and safely for both audiences and public broadcasting.

This document aims to explain why and how AI is regulated within SRG in order to safeguard public trust, guarantee our editorial credibility and provide a clear operational framework for teams in a context of rapid technological advancement.

The use of AI at SRG can support content creation, production, distribution, archiving, audience analytics, accessibility services, and administrative processes. In all these areas, the same standards of due diligence, accountability, compliance, and responsibility apply.

SRG uses AI responsibly to fulfil its public service mission. AI is never used as an end in itself. Its use must serve a clear, justified, and demonstrable business purpose, such as enhancing journalistic quality and user experience, improving understanding and accessibility, increasing relevance for the public or increasing efficiency to support a responsible use of resources.

Given the rapid evolution of technology, use cases, and the needs of the company, employees, and users, this guidance shall be continuously reviewed and refined as a living document. A review is carried out at least every six months under the direction of Data & AI Business.

Contents

1 Fundamental principles

1.1 Public trust

The use of AI must not undermine credibility or confidence, and should ensure that the authenticity, integrity, and reliability of SRG are never called into question.

1.2 Responsibility and human oversight

AI tools are deployed with human oversight and in a responsible, ethical, transparent, and risk-aware manner to safeguard public trust, credibility, editorial independence and impartiality. Each system requires a designated AI owner with clearly assigned accountability for the quality and integrity of all output.

1.3 Transparency

We are transparent with the public about the use of AI whenever it materially influences content or how it is perceived. Transparency should always serve to ensure clarity and trust, rather than encouraging unnecessary labels that can create a false impression.

1.4 Confidentiality and contractual and legal framework conditions

When using AI, confidentiality (e.g. business secrets of SRG and its partners), the SRG procurement process (including compliance with SRG application governance), as well as the contractual (e.g. terms of use of the AI applications or tools used) and legal framework conditions (e.g. data protection, protection of privacy, copyrights) must be observed. This applies in any case and regardless of whether these regulations refer to compliance with these requirements again. Wherever personal data is processed, the SRG Data Protection Policy also applies.

1.5 Impartiality and fairness

SRG's internal AI systems and their output must be regularly monitored to detect potential bias that could affect fairness, diversity or editorial integrity, and to prevent, mitigate or eliminate their effects as much as possible. Particular attention must be paid to training data, algorithm-generated output and its impact on different audiences.

1.6 Security

We ensure the security of all AI systems by protecting data, models, and infrastructure from misuse and unauthorised access. Through strong safeguards, compliance measures, and continuous monitoring, we protect our audiences, partners, and editorial integrity.

1.7 Innovation and learning culture

SRG promotes an innovation culture in which curiosity, continuous learning and experimenting with AI is encouraged across all levels of the organisation. Within a secure framework, we empower our teams to be innovative and to transform their work in a way that serves audiences, while remaining vigilant regarding risk management and maintaining public trust.

1.8 Continuing staff training

SRG commits to supporting AI literacy across the organisation by combining training, the exchange of best practice, and supporting teams in a media environment that is undergoing rapid and profound change.

Training programmes are introduced in collaboration with internal experts. Managers at all levels are responsible for supporting learning, providing the necessary resources, and promoting a responsible, creative and user-orientated AI culture.

1.9 Environmental impact

SRG commits to find, build and use efficient AI solutions in order to reduce environmental impact.

2 Operational framework

2.1 Public trust

AI systems must not be used in ways that create ambiguity about whether content is authentic. Audiences must be able to clearly distinguish between human reporting and AI-generated or modified material.

2.1.1 Examples of prohibited use

- AI-generated photorealistic images or videos depicting real news events, people, places or situations (e.g. motorway accident, crime scene)
- Synthetic media that could be mistaken for real recordings or footage of actual people or events.

2.1.2 Examples of permitted use

- Clearly non-photorealistic illustrations (abstract, symbolic, schematic, artistic).
- Satirical or fictional content, provided it is clearly identifiable as such and does not appear in factual reporting.

2.2 Responsibility

As public trust, credibility, and editorial independence are core assets that must be safeguarded, AI tools are deployed in a responsible, ethical, transparent, and risk-aware manner. Every AI deployment requires a designated AI owner, who is formally appointed before the development or implementation of the AI tool. Responsibility is formally assigned to the respective author, producer, or another clearly defined role, ensuring accountability for the quality, transparency, and integrity of all output.

2.2.1 Editorial responsibility and verification in the use of AI

Content is never published without appropriate verification; it is always subject to editorial sign-off. Depending on the use case, verification may take the form of pre-publication validation (audio, video, text) or continuous human oversight and review (autonomous systems).

AI tools, including conversational agents such as chatbots, may be deployed to support user interaction, editorial assistance, direct public engagement, or internal efficiency. These tools operate with meaningful human oversight and clear accountability for the quality, transparency, and integrity of all outputs.

SRG embraces responsible innovation with AI, while upholding its mission of public trust, editorial independence, and democratic dialogue.

2.3 Transparency and mandatory labelling

2.3.1 Content labelling

Text: For text-based content, where the normal editorial validation process applies (human in the loop), no specific AI labelling is required.

Image/video: Mandatory labelling is required for AI-generated visual content (e.g. 'AI image: Adobe Firefly / SRF'). Labelling is not required for clearly identifiable satire within its original programme context. However, when such content is published separately or in decontextualised excerpts on social media, labelling becomes mandatory.

AI-assisted post-production (e.g. enhancement, colour correction, noise reduction) does not require labelling, provided the factual meaning is not altered.

Audio: Use of synthetic voices in audio and video must be labelled.

2.3.2 Labelling of AI systems

Chatbots: Users must be clearly informed when interacting with a chatbot. If it is based on generative AI, this must be expressly labelled, and a contact must be indicated (email address).

Autonomous translation: Where content is translated using AI without human review or oversight prior to publication or distribution, this must be clearly labelled as AI-generated translation.

AI agents: Autonomous AI agents must be clearly identifiable as automated systems if they interact with users or external systems.

Automated subtitling: Users are clearly informed when (live-)subtitles are automatically generated.

2.4 Confidentiality and data protection

All personal, sensitive, confidential, financial or protected data (editorial plans, unpublished content, internal communications) may only be processed using expressly approved, verified, and validated tools. Personal data relating to individuals (names, contact details, voices, images) should be handled with extra care, even when using verified tools. Entering any of the above types of data into unauthorised or unapproved applications is prohibited. Confidential or classified internal information should never be entered into such tools.

Personal data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. This includes names, voices, images, contact details, behavioural data and any information that enables a person to be identified.

Before implementation, any AI application (e.g. chatbot) that processes personal data must undergo a data protection assessment. If elevated risks are identified, the SRG Data Protection Officer must be involved.

2.4.1 Prohibited uses

- Entering personal or confidential data into public or consumer AI tools that have not been expressly approved.
- Uploading internal documents, scripts, or raw material to unapproved external AI services.

3 Permitted use of AI tools by use case

3.1 Text

3.1.1 AI as an editorial tool

AI tools are permitted for support tasks such as research and brainstorming (including fact-checking); topic monitoring; generating titles / headlines; creating social media posts, summaries and key points; as well as editing, rewriting, speech to text, optimisation (including SEO, AEO), OSINT, investigative research, large database analysis and error or grammar checking.

Any result of research conducted using AI tools must always be independently verified by a journalist.

3.1.2 AI translation

AI translation tools may be used to support content production and internal workflows, provided that responsibility for accuracy and integrity remains clearly assigned. Translations must be integrated into a defined quality-control process to ensure reliability and consistency.

3.1.3 Automated subtitling

(Live) automated subtitling based on automatic speech recognition (ASR) may be used to improve accessibility and widen access to content, provided that high quality thresholds are defined (acceptance check in user testing) and reached through continuous monitoring and improvements (e.g. error rate, intelligibility).

Due to the sensitive nature of the content, a particularly high quality threshold shall be applied in news and current affairs (e.g. “19h30”, “Tagesschau”): continuous human oversight is required until technical capabilities demonstrably achieve a level of quality comparable to that of a human subtitler.

3.2 Audio

3.2.1 Speech synthesis

The use of artificial voices is permitted for tasks such as reading text content or providing audio descriptions or dubbing, if the use does not mislead the audience.

Where appropriate labelling (see 2.3.1) cannot reasonably ensure transparency about the use of synthetic voices without significantly affecting the user experience or impairing content clarity (e.g. short news pieces), the use of AI should not be pursued. In such cases, an alternative solution must be considered.

3.2.2 Voice cloning

Cloning of a real person's voice is prohibited, except in satire and topics related to AI. This means SRG may not use a real person's recorded voice to create an AI-generated version for dubbing their videos in another language or for producing other audio or video content with it (e.g. using the voice of a TV presenter for a chatbot or voice-over).

3.2.3 AI-generated musical elements

It is permitted to generate musical elements or use artificially generated musical elements for layout, mood pieces, trailers and logos. If we generate the musical elements ourselves, a tool approved by SRG must be used.

3.2.4 Editing and processing of music

Minor adjustments to music recordings and musical elements that are necessary (e.g. cuts, fades, or volume adjustments) may be made using an AI tool, as these are not generally considered to be adaptations under Swiss copyright law. The decisive factor is that the individual character of the work remains unchanged.

3.2.5 Playing AI music

The broadcast of partially or fully AI-generated music provided by an artist or a music company is in principle permissible, provided that such works comply with SRG's applicable legal requirements. Given that it is not always technically feasible to determine whether a work has been generated fully or in part by AI, SRG cannot assume systematic detection responsibility.

As there is enough music of every genre on the market that fits the concept and editorial standards of our channels – and copyright issues over AI have not been resolved within the music industry, SRG refrains from creating artificial songs for its music rotation. Creating songs using generative AI for editorial purposes (e.g. a show about AI music) or in satire is allowed.

3.3 Video

3.3.1 Video extension

The extension of interviews or sound bites as well as video material with a concrete reference to reality is not permitted (e.g. extension of live traffic jam images in front of the Gotthard).

AI may be used to extend and use original, symbolic video sequences without any specific reference to reality (e.g. raindrops on a windowpane). The editorial guidelines and the journalistic duty of care apply.

3.3.2 Repurposing of content

Long formats may automatically be converted into short vertical formats for social media. This includes intelligent cropping (to keep the subject in the centre) and caption generation. The results must be checked before being published.

Clips and sequences (e.g. trailers or social content) may be automatically produced using AI, if they are completely based on original footage (e.g. sports-highlight) and the SRG editorial standards are met.

3.3.3 Avatars

The use of avatars is currently only permitted for accessibility purposes and for reports on the topic of AI.

3.3.4 Lip-synching

AI-assisted lip-synching may be used in drama and fiction (e.g. dubbed or synchronised productions). Its use is strictly limited to drama. All legal and contractual requirements, including actors' rights, must be respected.

3.3.5 Audio in video

The rules applying to audio also apply to audio in video.

3.4 Images

3.4.1 Image creation

AI-generated images cannot be a substitute for photojournalism and must not be used to depict a real-life situation. AI-generated images may also not be used to misrepresent content as factual through realistic depictions of living beings, landscapes or situations as this misleads audiences.

AI-generated images may be used provided they do not create ambiguity about whether the content represents real events or reality. Caution is required when depicting faces or people, recognisable places or objects, and brands, as the risk of misleading the audience is highest in these cases.

3.4.2 Image processing

Generally, the use of AI applications for image processing is allowed (e.g. enhancing image quality, cropping).

The use of AI applications for image editing in authentic reporting (news, sports, documentaries, etc.) is not permitted if it distorts the reality. This includes adding, altering, or removing image elements using AI, as well as excessive edits, such as exaggerated colour correction, that materially change the visual impression.

Elements may be added, supplemented or deleted using AI only in places where this was standard practice before AI, for instance collaging for a YouTube thumbnail or in a clearly understood drama or satirical context.

The use of generative fill (or 'outpainting') outside of authentic reporting is allowed, if used with caution.

3.4.3 Image generation for internal use

AI-generated images may also be used to speed up internal processes when they are not intended for direct publication (e.g. storyboarding, images in PowerPoint presentations).

3.5 Visual design

AI tools may be used for visual design purposes such as weather maps, virtual sets, educational animations, infographics, or to illustrate abstract concepts provided that misleading photorealism is avoided and that such uses are reviewed and validated in accordance with SRG editorial standards.

AI tools are permitted for verified data visualisation.

When creating illustrations, graphics and animations, care must be taken to ensure that the AI model does not imitate or replicate the style of protected works by third-party designers if this could lead to a violation of copyright or trademark rights.

3.6 Technical enhancement and restoration

AI tools may be used for audio and video restoration, assistance with rushes, and technical adjustments (such as noise or colour correction), provided that the editorial content or visual message is not altered. Removal of irrelevant objects in images and video is permitted in this use case – except in authentic news and factual reporting.

The same principle applies to historical material: AI-based enhancement must not remove characteristic features (e.g. background noise in archival audio from 1952) where such elements form part of the historical authenticity.

3.7 Anonymisation

To anonymise a source (for example, replacing their voice with a synthetic voice), AI tools may be used to mask or transform the characteristics that identify them. The original personal data is only used to produce the anonymised version and must never be disclosed.

3.8 AI as an administrative support tool

AI applications may be used to support administrative and financial tasks, including forecasting, reporting, document processing, and workflow automation. However, the use of AI does not replace established audit trails, internal controls, or accountability mechanisms. AI-based forecasts and recommendations must remain subject to human review and validation.

Fully automated approval of payments, financial bookings, or legally binding transactions is prohibited unless expressly authorised within a defined control framework that ensures traceability, compliance, and oversight.

AI tools may support administrative HR tasks, but must not be used for final candidate evaluation, selection decisions, or any automated decision-making that directly affects individuals. As HR data can be especially sensitive, it is particularly important to adhere to the privacy and data protection rules.

3.9 AI for coding

AI coding tools may be used to automate technical tasks (development, testing, documentation), provided that they are used in a way that complies with the organisation's ethical, transparency, and accountability principles. All AI-assisted code must be reviewed, validated, and approved by a qualified developer, who remains fully accountable for its accuracy, security, legal compliance, and alignment with internal technical standards.

3.10 Services and support

Chatbots and conversational agents: Conversational agents may be used for internal and public-facing purposes, including audience interaction and content access, provided they comply with data protection requirements and operate within clearly defined use cases. They must be supervised, regularly monitored and audited, incorporate structured feedback and fact-checking processes, and have a clearly identified human owner responsible for maintaining trust and editorial standards.

3.11 AI audience tools

AI may be used as a tool to better listen to and understand audience needs, expectations, and behaviours. Such use must respect data protection principles and serve SRG's public service mission by improving relevance, accessibility, and quality of content.

3.12 Content indexing and tagging

AI tools may be used for content indexing and tagging, hashtag analysis, trend identification and related metadata enrichment tasks, provided editorial meaning is preserved and governance and data protection rules are respected.

3.13 AI agents

SRG authorises the deployment of autonomous AI agents to support its processes, provided they operate within a strict mandate defining their goals and scope of action. Use of the agent is limited to its initial use case. Additional use cases must be tested and reviewed before being shared.

Overall responsibility lies with a designated product owner. In complex architectures, accountability lies at the system level rather than with individual sub-agents.

Appropriate oversight mechanisms, such as monitoring, logging, and, where feasible, human override and an emergency shutdown process must be in place to manage risks (including bias). AI systems may not make final decisions affecting individual rights or the publication of sensitive data without human validation.

If an agent is used to interact with external systems (e.g. automatic requests), it must be identifiable as a machine.

4 Approved tools and secure AI experimentation

AI experimentation is encouraged but must take place in secure, closed, and controlled environments. High-risk use cases require prior validation and specific authorisation. Use of unapproved tools is limited to public data only.

Tests involving interaction with the public (e.g. chatbots or other dialogue-based systems) are not considered closed experiments and may only be conducted following prior risk assessment, with clear identification as a test and under enhanced data protection and result analysis.

5 Final provisions

5.1 Responsibility for reviewing, updating and publishing

Data & AI Business is responsible for reviewing, updating and publishing these regulations. A review shall take place at least every six months. Amendments must be requested from the SRG management if necessary.

5.2 Repeal of other regulations

The existing regional guidelines on the use of artificial intelligence and the SRG's National AI Principles will be repealed as of 31.05.2026.

5.3 Entry into force

The Executive Board issued these regulations on April 21. They enter into force on June 1, 2026.

Susanne Wille, Director General of SRG SSR