

April 7, 2026: AiDiEx Summary

Featured topics:

- Copyright + GenAI
- Digital Preservation and Stewardship

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The sessions began with brief overviews of the key issues related to the impact of artificial intelligence (generative or otherwise) on the featured topic, followed by specific questions. The following notes are brief recaps of each discussion. The [anonymous slides](#) used for discussion are also available to be viewed in full.

Discussion 1: Copyright + Generative AI

1. What general principles of copyright do you think still apply to GenAI? What should evolve?
 - *Strong support for the need for some kind of creator protection emerged through the discussion*
 - *General sense of negative feelings toward GenAI and GenAI companies having fair dealing rights over human-created materials from a moral point of view*
2. Do you think training generative AI on copyrighted materials should be considered infringement? Why or why not?
 - *Initial responses overwhelming considered GenAI training to be infringement*
 - *Opposite viewpoints questioned whether GenAI is actually making any copies, which is the foundation of copyright protection and that fair dealing should apply in order to encourage research and the creation of new knowledge*
 - *Ideas about licensing and opting in discussed as more fair solutions*
3. What path for generative AI training (or text and data mining in general) makes the most sense to you, e.g., licensing, Fair Dealing, a Copyright Act exception, something else?
 - *Licensing was the most popular response, with various conditions including: opt-in/out, as a stopgap while legislation catches up, as part of a different path for commercial vs. non-commercial use*
 - *Some participants also expressed concern for any path that legitimizes GenAI use and consider resistance as a path to eradicate it*
 - *Other ideas included: GenAI content as public domain, the [Open Futures](#) idea of treating GenAI companies as public utilities*
4. Under what circumstances, if any, do you think copyright should apply to AI-generated works?

- *Participants resoundingly felt there were no circumstances where copyright should apply to AI-generated works*
 - *Although there was no support for expanding the definition of copyright to include non-human created works, there was an acknowledgement that the issue may be pushed forward by large companies if there is enough earning potential*
 - *The copyright implications of human-GenAI collaborations were also briefly explored*
5. Scenario: a faculty member would like to create an assignment where students upload a journal article from a library-licensed database to an LLM to produce a summary that they analyze for accuracy. What would you do?
 - *Discussions about licensing, fair dealing, and the moral struggle involved with this scenario were discussed*
 6. Scenario: A vendor has added a new clause in a database licence renewal that states, “Authorized users are prohibited from the input of any licensed content into any Large Language Model (LLM) or related technology regardless of whether the LLM is public or private.” What would you do?
 - *Some participants were supportive of the vendor’s stance against GenAI use*
 - *Questions of enforcement and liability were raised*
 - *Some consider this to be unacceptable and a contracting away of fair dealing rights for research and education*
 7. What other copyright and AI-related issues would you like to discuss?
 - *Participants shared thoughts about dealing with “AI-slop,” how we can collectively take action against predatory GenAI use, and that they enjoyed learning about the copyright perspective of these issues*

Discussion 2: Digital Preservation and Stewardship + AI

1. What types of AI software and/or tools are you currently using in your institution to manage your digital collections? What other software and/or tools would you like to acquire in the future?
 - *Most participants are not currently using an AI tools or are in the early stages of exploring potential tools, one example was a pilot project generating photo descriptions*
 - *Participants felt AI tools could potentially be useful for tasks such as generating collection or object descriptions, recognizing and transcribing handwritten text, and accessibility improvements*
2. What are some examples of digital collections or preservation projects you’ve implemented using AI?
 - *Examples of projects or potential projects included: transcribing handwritten documents, building spreadsheet formulas to clean metadata, audio*

transcription, alt-image descriptions, and comparing traditional OCR tools to generative AI options

3. What benefits and drawbacks are you encountering when implementing AI in your digital collections and/or digital preservation management?
 - *Drawbacks included: integrating AI tools into established workflows, not a lot of collective knowledge to draw from yet, limited time to experiment and the quick rate of change of the tools, accuracy issues and the labour involved with checking the work, output is not specific enough to be useful for descriptions, ethical and environmental concerns, unclear copyright and consent issues*
 - *Benefits included: great for coding, may be helpful for preventing dead links or corrupted files, possibly increasing processing time*
4. In the context of AI and rapid technological changes, what do you think the future of digital collections and preservation will look like?
 - *Participants mentioned that human input and intervention in AI-generated outputs will likely still be prevalent, the labour involved with checking outputs and the incompatible pace between physical aspect of digitization and AI-generated descriptions could be overwhelming*
 - *Concerns about GenAI companies and corporations taking advantage of publicly available collections were raised; [an article on this topic by Dave Hansen](#) was shared in the chat*
 - *Thoughts about “analoguing” materials were discussed (preserving born-digital materials as physical materials)*
 - *Bespoke tools and models for unique collections were mentioned as a future direction*
5. Does your institution’s AI policy outline how it can be used for collections and preservation?
 - *Participants discussed how policy work on general AI guidelines for institutions has been slow with priority been on academic integrity concerns*
 - *Guidance that allows for freedom expressed as a preferred approach*
 - *Guidance from legal departments would be helpful to encourage confidence in how to use AI tools*
 - *Desire for the freedom to explore different tools expressed; the enterprise-only version restrictions at some institutions constrains possibilities*
6. How do you balance accessibility and privacy when using AI for your public collections?
 - *Thoughtfully examining the implications of releasing collections publicly in the GenAI world*
 - *Documented workflows and reasoning*
7. How do you ensure data security and long-term accessibility when using AI?
 - *We ran out of time!*

Follow-up survey:

Please answer this one-question [survey](#) to share your thoughts on how these discussions could evolve.