Event summary: UKRIO subscriber roundtable
AI and research integrity

10:00–11:30, Thursday 27th February 2025

On Thursday 27th February 2025, UKRIO hosted *AI and research integrity,* the third event in its 2024/2025 roundtable series – virtual forums where representatives from UKRIO's subscriber organisations convene to participate in shared, secure, solutions-focused conversations on key topics in research integrity.

At this event, 36 participants met to discuss the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in research and the integrity-related challenges and opportunities it presents. UKRIO also shared a draft version of its forthcoming guidance *Embracing AI with integrity* (published in June 2025), as well as plans for training in this area. Attendees were invited to offer feedback based on their institutional experience and expertise.

The following is a summary prepared by UKRIO. As such, it reflects UKRIO's assessment of the discussions and does not contain content that can be attributed to any individual attendee. A list of participants who consented to be named is included at the end of the report.

Topics of discussion

Following an introduction by UKRIO Chief Innovation Officer (CIO) James Parry, attendees engaged in a discussion that explored **three key topics**, each of which is outlined below.

1. Research integrity and the use of AI in research

Attendees were invited to reflect on the needs of researchers in their institutions and to identify key risks, knowledge gaps and strategies to address them. Several themes emerged.

Guiding questions:

- What help are you finding that your researchers need in order to support them in the responsible use of AI in their research?
- What key messages on AI do you want to get across to your researchers?
- What are you finding that your researchers don't know about? What are the gaps in their knowledge and are these (relatively) common across all disciplines or limited to some subjects or methodologies?
- Are there any particular uses of AI in research that are generating significant research integrity challenges?

Discussion notes:

- **Uncertainty and inconsistency** – Participants emphasised a growing demand for practical support with the responsible use of AI in research. They described many researchers as being 'unsure of what's allowed' or unaware of the risks AI poses to research integrity. The diversity of available AI tools, pace of development, and lack of sector-wide standards were all seen as contributing to confusion and uneven practices and acting as a potential driver of questionable practices.

- **Tensions between legitimate use and over-reliance on AI** – Participants acknowledged that AI tools can offer important support to researchers. However, they noted that researchers may struggle to distinguish between legitimate uses of these tools and inappropriate reliance that risks outsourcing creativity and critical thinking.

- **Raising awareness through dialogue and case studies** – Participants stressed the importance of raising awareness about responsible AI use. They called for more guidance, training, and dialogue within organisations to help researchers develop a reflective, risk-aware approach. Sharing examples of acceptable and unacceptable AI use in specific research contexts was identified as a particularly helpful strategy.

- **Clarifying responsible use through declarations** – Participants highlighted that organisations, funders, and publishers are already requiring formal declarations of AI use in their policies. It was felt that such declarations can support transparency and accountability and prompt researchers to reflect on their use of AI.

- **Encouraging system-wide responses** – Participants emphasised the need for more coordinated approaches to addressing AI across teams and departments. Several organisations are already exploring university-wide guidance, lists of approved tools, or centralised sources of advice to support researchers in navigating the fast-moving landscape.

2. Draft publication: *Embracing AI with integrity*

Participants reviewed and commented on a draft version of UKRIO's guidance for researchers using AI in their work, providing feedback on its scope, content, and format. While the document was welcomed as a timely and helpful resource, participants offered constructive suggestions to support its further development.

Note: *In June 2025, UKRIO published the finalised version of the guidance, incorporating feedback from roundtable participants. The guidance can be accessed [here](#).*

Discussion notes:

- **Feasibility of expectations** – Participants raised concerns about the practicality of some expectations outlined in the guidance, such as verifying the provenance of training data or fully assessing the IP risks of AI tools. They stressed that many researchers lack the technical knowledge or institutional support needed to meet these requirements. Effective implementation would therefore need to be supported by relevant expertise and training – which some organisations would find challenging to provide, especially at scale.

- **The need for practical tools** – Attendees suggested including practical tools in the guidance, such as principles, practical advice, and questions to ask that researchers could use to assess their use of AI.

- **Balancing specificity with adaptability** – While participants valued the wide scope of the guidance, they cautioned against including any overly-specific information about individual tools or platforms, given how rapidly these technologies evolve. As an alternative, they recommended including example use-cases accompanied by the relevant research integrity and ethical considerations.

- **Deployment and organisational use** – Attendees stressed the importance of supporting local implementation of the guidance. They encouraged UKRIO to assist institutions in embedding the guidance within local policies and systems, to adopt a format that allows for easy adaptation and updates, and to provide links to a regularly updated, curated set of additional resources.

3. Draft curriculum: *Research integrity and the use of AI in research*

Participants gave feedback on the scope, content, and format of the proposed training curriculum UKRIO is developing.

Discussion notes:

- **Refining content and delivery** – While the three-hour format was seen as suitable for in-depth audiences, most attendees recommended shorter, modular versions (e.g. 30–90 minutes), allowing institutions to tailor delivery formats to their own needs and capacity. Institutions reported varying levels of capacity and appetite for in-person training as opposed to virtual sessions and requested materials that could be adapted accordingly.

- **Focus on use cases and core competencies** – Attendees encouraged UKRIO to focus the curriculum on the common and high-risk topics related to AI in research. Suggestions included:
  - Researcher responsibilities and accountability
  - Declarations of use and authorship issues

- Tool assessment and responsible selection

- Recognising and addressing unintended misuse

- Encouraging transparency and cultural change

- **Encouraging cultural change** – Attendees suggested that the training should go beyond compliance, encouraging researchers to be open, curious and reflective in their use of AI. The inclusion of examples of good practice and real-life dilemmas was seen as an effective way to prompt discussion and foster positive research culture.

- **Provide delivery support** – There was strong interest in UKRIO's plans to produce facilitator notes and pre- and post-session materials. Some institutions expressed interest in the training being delivered directly by UKRIO staff, while others preferred a 'train-the-trainer' model that could be delivered by their staff.

Next steps for stakeholders in research integrity

Within the discussion, participants identified several key actions stakeholders across the research system can take to support the responsible use of AI in research – promoting good practice, preventing misuse, and fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and ethical awareness.

Actions for UKRIO

Action	Deliverable
• **Refine draft guidance to address feedback** given by attendees.	Updated version of the *Embracing AI with integrity* published in June 2025.
• **Develop practical tools** to support researchers in applying the guidance.	UKRIO has included use-case examples, guiding questions for researchers, and links to curated external resources in its guidance.
• **Tailor training materials to meet different organisations' needs**, offering modular lengths, formats, and content.	UKRIO will provide full-length and abridged versions of the training, along with supporting materials for use by organisations – such as slide decks, case studies, pre- and post-session resources, and facilitator notes.

Actions for organisations that employ researchers

- **Develop or revise organisation-wide guidance on the responsible use of AI in research,** ensuring alignment with UKRIO's *Embracing AI with integrity* guidance.

- **Develop clear mechanisms for declaration and oversight**, such as standardised templates or systems for declaring AI use in research and dissemination.

- **Embed AI-related content into existing training and development materials –** for example, CPD for research staff and students, induction materials, and training for supervisors and research leaders.

Acknowledgements

UKRIO extends its sincere thanks to all attendees who contributed to this roundtable discussion. The insights shared were both valuable and constructive, and they will help shape UKRIO's ongoing work programme. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with our subscribers and other stakeholders across the research community to promote the responsible use of AI in research.

Attendee list

- Prof. Dawn Arnold, ADVC Research, Harper Adams University
- Dr. Martin Brooks, Head of Research Excellence and Research Strategy, Liverpool John Moores University
- Dr. Victoria Carpenter, Head of Research Development, University of Bedfordshire
- Dr. Lauren Cantos, Research Integrity and Assurance Officer, UCL
- Ms. Helen Castley, Senior Manager Research Governance, The Open University
- Dr. Yuen-Li Chung, Research Operations Manager - Operations Governance, The Institute of Cancer Research
- Mrs. Anjana Choudhuri, Research Integrity Manager, Swansea University
- Dr. Camelia Dijkstra, Director Research and KE Services, Leeds Beckett University
- Dr. Jackie Green, Research Governance Officer, Loughborough University
- Mrs. Catherine Hitchens, Ethics, Integrity and Compliance Manager, University of East London
- Mrs. Debbie Knight, Senior Research Ethics Officer, Lancaster University
- Dr. Simon Kolstoe, Associate Professor of Bioethics, University of Portsmouth
- Dr. Mary Beth Kneafsey, Head of Research Governance, Policy and Integrity, University of Glasgow
- Ms. Sophie Krumins, Research Ethics and Integrity Manager, Coventry

- Prof. Linda la Velle, Professor of Education, Bath Spa University
- Dr. Sarah Lee, Deputy Director of Research (Strategy), Birkbeck, University of London
- Mrs. Louise Jones, Research Integrity and Governance Manager, Newcastle University
- Mr. Stuart Morris, REF & Research Policy Manager, Leeds Beckett University
- Ms. Marie-Anne O'Neil, Research Governance & Culture Manager, University of Chester
- Dr. Samantha Oakley, Research Governance and Integrity Manager, University of Glasgow
- Ms. Nicole Palmer, Research Ethics and Integrity Manager, University of the Arts London
- Miss Julie Scott, Research Ethics and Integrity Manager, Anglia Ruskin University
- Ms. Elinor Toland, Research Integrity Adviser, University of Glasgow
- Dr. Birgit Whitman, Head of Research Governance & Integrity, University of Birmingham
- Prof. Xiangming Xu, Director of Research, NIAB