Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat | Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada

Canada

Responsible AI in the Canadian Federal public service

2025-10-23

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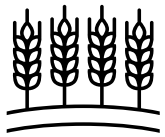
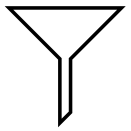
Office of the Chief Information Officer, TBS

Examples of AI Use in the federal public service

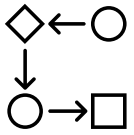
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
AgPal search tool for agricultural information and resources



Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Automated seed classification to improve crop quality control



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Triage applications, make positive eligibility determination



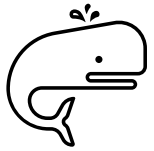
Employment and Social Development
Streamline EI applications

Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Human trafficking and child exploitation investigations

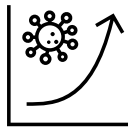
Shared Services Canada
Generative AI chatbot

Transport Canada
Pre-load air cargo risk evaluation and mitigation

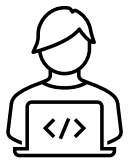
National Research Council
Indigenous language reclamation and stabilization



Fisheries and Oceans
Detect marine mammals using aerial, drone and satellite imagery

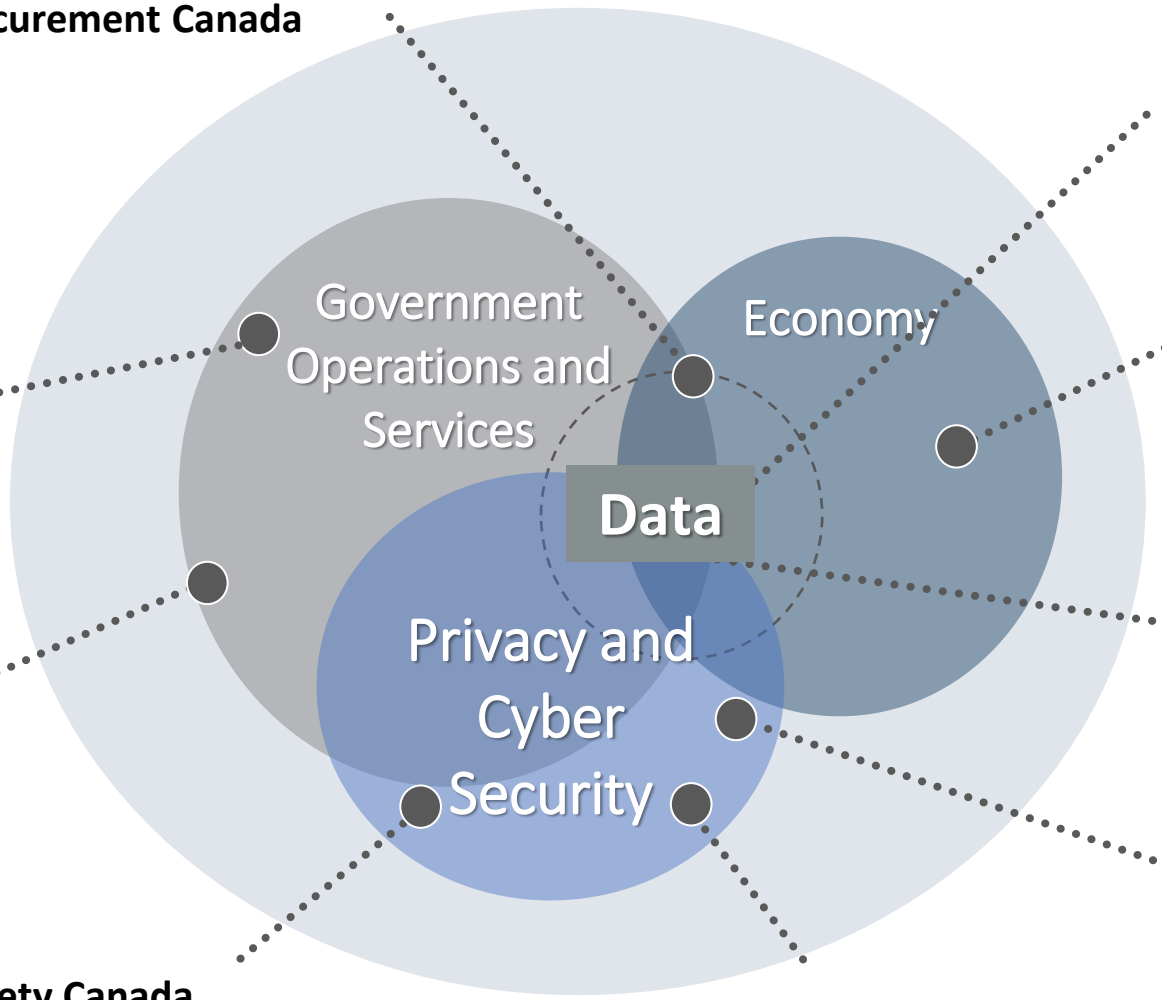


Public Health Agency
Disease prediction and detection



Public Services and Procurement
AI assistant for case management to reduce backlogs

Key Federal Partners



Public Services and Procurement Canada

Statistics Canada

Shared Services Canada

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Departments and Departments (Science, Service Delivery)

Library and Archives Canada

Communications Security Establishment & Canadian Centre for Cyber Security

Public Safety Canada

Justice Canada

Note: This list is illustrative, not exhaustive.

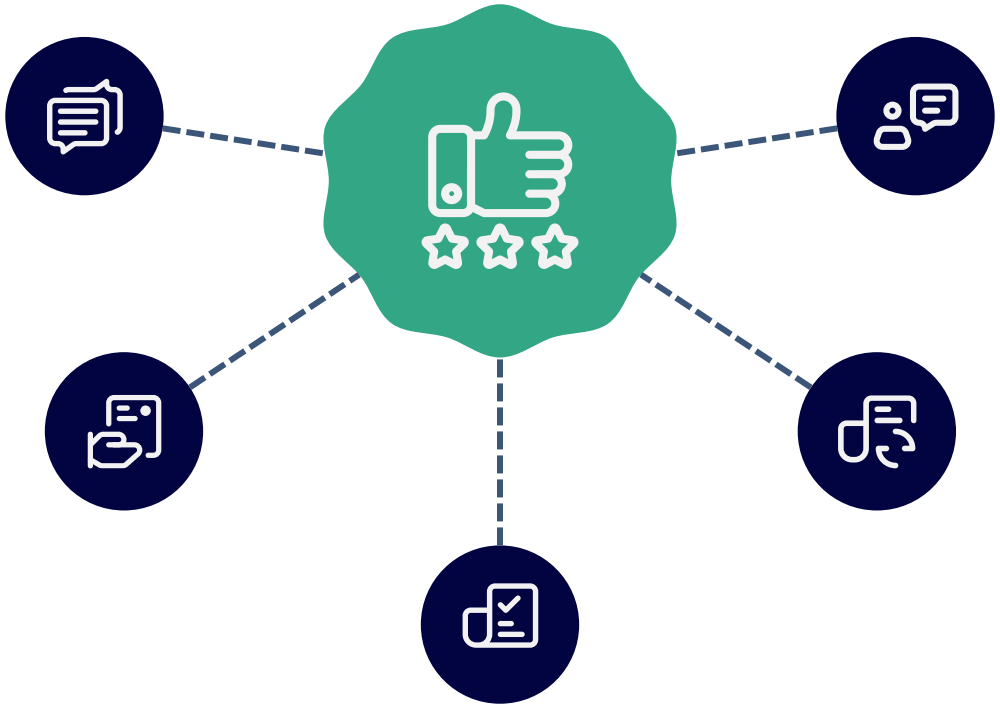
Responsible AI in the federal public service

TBS supports the President of the Treasury Board on digital responsibility

AI Strategy for the Public Service 2025-27

A comprehensive plan for accelerating the integration of AI into government operations. Includes actions for public service modernization:

- Establishing an AI centre of expertise
- Embedding a “think AI” approach in planning and funding requests
- Providing departments with common access to infrastructure and tools
- Addressing obstacles to recruitment, retraining and upskilling public servants



Directive on Automated Decision-Making

- Mandatory policy instrument
- Scope: automated decision systems (including but not limited to AI) that make or support officers in making decisions that impact clients
- Issued 2019. Fourth review is complete, and updates published June 2025.

Guide on the use of generative AI

- Guidance to assist employees in using and departments in deploying generative AI tools responsibly
- Based in responsible use principles
- Issued fall 2023, updated winter 2024; 2025 update ongoing

Algorithmic Impact Assessment

- Risk and impact assessment tool required under the directive
- Helps departments understand and manage the risks associated with automated decision systems.

Strategy, policy and guidance for the responsible use of automation and artificial intelligence by federal government departments

Responsible use of artificial intelligence in government

Directive on Automated Decision-Making

The directive sets rules for how federal departments can use automated systems (including AI) to make or support decisions that impact the legal rights, privileges or interests of clients.

The directive seeks to ensure transparency, accountability and procedural fairness in the use of automated decision systems in the federal government.

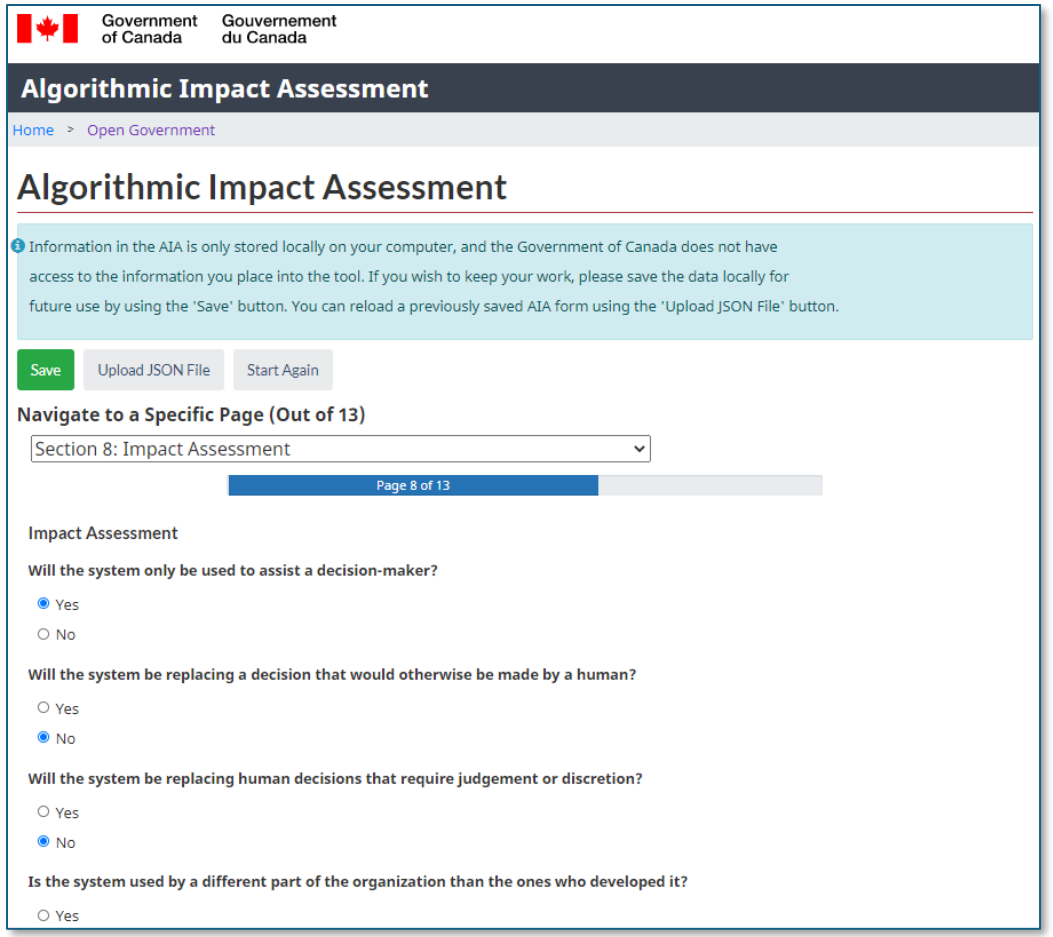
It requires departments to:

- assess the impacts of automated decision systems
- be transparent
- ensure quality
- provide recourse on decisions
- report publicly on system effectiveness and efficiency

The directive came into effect in April 2019 and applies to systems developed or procured after April 2020.

Algorithmic impact assessment (AIA)

- mandatory risk assessment tool
- questionnaire determines the impact level of an automated decision-system
- composed of risk and mitigation questions
- assessment scores are based on many factors including systems design, algorithm, decision type, impact and data
- developed based on best practices in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders
- developed in the open, and available to the public for sharing and re-use under an open license



https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai/algorithmic-impact-assessment.html

Principles for responsible use of generative AI

To uphold public trust, the use of these technologies in the GC should adhere to the “FASTER” principles:

Fair

Accountable

Secure

Transparent

Educated

Relevant

Generative AI in your daily work

A summary of the guide with concise do's and don'ts is available on canada.ca and as a placemat.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in your daily work

October 2024 | Unclassified

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is a type of AI that produces material such as text and images based on what you ask. Examples include: ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini or Claude.
Notice: Generative AI (Copilot) was used in the editing of this document.

Purpose
This information will help you use generative AI responsibly and in line with the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector*.

Attention!
Never input protected, classified or personal information into public generative AI tools. Use these tools **only** for suitable unclassified information.

What AI CAN be used for:
- Drafting presentations, outlines, speaking notes, meeting minutes and other written material
- Editing documents for plain and inclusive language
- Preparing draft translations of internal documents
- Doing initial research and generating a list of sources to consult
- Brainstorming for creative ideas
- Providing support for personalized learning
- Summarizing and analyzing documents, articles and meeting transcripts
- Helping write computer code
- Creating images for presentations

What AI CANNOT be used for:
- Generating inappropriate, harmful, illegal or unethical information
- Legal and policy advice
- Fact-checking
- The only source of information for important business decisions
- Creating images of people
- Creating material that will deceive people or spread misinformation
- Processing client cases on public tool

Tips: Use a work email address when registering for and using generative AI tools in your job. Think critically and use your judgment and expertise when using generative AI.

Tips to use AI Responsibly

Respect the "FASTER" principles to reduce risks and make sure you use generative AI tools responsibly.

	DO	DON'T
Fair	✓ Write your instructions in a way that will produce comprehensive, impartial responses ✓ Check that the generated output is representative and inclusive and doesn't contain harmful stereotypes	☒ Use outputs that are biased or exclusionary, or that misrepresent population groups
Accountable	✓ Take responsibility for what you prepare using AI ✓ Review generated content to make sure it's accurate ✓ Check that it doesn't contain material that is protected by copyright; to do this, search the Internet and compare the output with published materials	☒ Assume the output is correct ☒ Delegate tasks that should be completed by a person
Secure	✓ Use public tools with unclassified data only ✓ Understand the terms of use of the tool ✓ Set the tool so it does not save your conversations	☒ Input personal, sensitive or protected information into public tools ☒ Try to find ways around the tool's safety rules
Transparent	✓ Indicate on the final product that you used generative AI ✓ Let your manager know that you used an AI tool in your work	☒ Pass off AI-generated content as your own work
Educated	✓ Learn how to use generative AI ✓ Find out about the strengths, weaknesses and risks of generative AI ✓ Take courses and read articles on using generative AI	☒ Use generative AI tools to generate material you don't have the expertise to verify ☒ Assume that a single training session is enough (keep learning as the tools evolve)
Relevant	✓ Remember that generative AI isn't appropriate for all uses ✓ Use it only when it helps you do your work	☒ Use generative AI tools for tasks that research shows they don't do well, such as arithmetic and tasks involving nuanced or emotional language ☒ Overly rely on generative AI tools

Additional Resources:
- Follow departmental guidance on generative AI
- Contact the TBS Responsible Data and AI team (ai-ia@tbs-sct.gc.ca)
- Take the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) course Using Generative AI in the Government of Canada
- Refer to: *Guide on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence*, Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Government, and CSPS Busrides "Working with AI" series

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada — Canada

An AI Strategy for the Federal Public Service

Purpose

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat has developed an AI Strategy for the federal public service to ensure that AI adoption is accelerated responsibly, inclusively, and safely.

Vision

Responsible adoption of AI empowers the Government of Canada to deliver world-class services, achieve a more innovative and efficient workplace, protect its interests, and accelerate scientific discovery for the benefit of all.

Scope

All adaptive AI technologies, at any stage of the AI lifecycle, that are developed or procured for use by any GC department for internal or external purposes.

AI Strategy tenets

Human centred: We focus on the needs of our clients and public servants in deciding where we adopt AI and how we integrate it into our work.

Collaborative: We work together on AI adoption with the public, stakeholders, Indigenous partners, other Canadian and international jurisdictions, and our GC colleagues.

Ready: We have the infrastructure, tools, culture, talent, skills and policy we need for responsible, safe, secure, and successful AI adoption.

Responsible: GC clients and public servants know when and how we use AI and can trust that our use of AI respects privacy and is responsible, ethical, fair, safe, and secure.

AI Strategy Priorities

Central AI Capacity through an AI Centre of Expertise: GC-wide AI adoption is supported by providing project guidance, helping to identify use cases, encouraging experimentation and scale-up, advising on common processes, and sharing best practice, experience, knowledge and code.

Policy, legislation and governance: Responsible AI adoption needs clear, up-to-date legislation and policy. Together, they mark out not only the necessary guardrails for identifying and mitigating risk, but also the space within which developers are free to experiment and innovate.

Talent and training: Benchmark current workforce talent needs and develop plans to meet needs through training of existing personnel and recruitment and retention of specialist talent.

Engagement, transparency, and value to Canadians: Meeting Canadians desire for more involvement in designing government AI systems, especially from those affected by algorithmic bias; this includes greater transparency through labeling AI-generated products and ways to seek explanations or recourse for decisions.

Consultations

From May to October 2024, the GC held in-person and online consultations to engage the public, federal public servants, and stakeholders from research, industry, civil society, bargaining agents, and Indigenous organizations on the Strategy's proposed areas of focus. Their feedback has helped shape the Strategy.

Next steps

January 2025: Publication of GC AI Strategy Consultations What We Heard report
March 2025: Publication of GC AI Strategy
Fall 2025: Implementation Plan

Questions?

Please reach out to:

TBS Responsible Data and AI team (ai-ia@tbs-sct.gc.ca)