AI IMPACT REPORT NO. 324 · REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026 · 250 ROLES COVERED

Librarians

AI augmenting information retrieval, content curation, and administrative tasks, shifting focus to patron engagement and strategic resource development.

EXPOSURE	WINDOW	ADOPTION TODAY	READING
54 Elevated exposure	5–10 yrs until change lands	Medium	The role is being reshaped. Exposure is the share of today's work AI can plausibly take on within the window.

§ 01 WHAT IS HAPPENING

What is happening to librarians

Impact

AI tools are autonomously indexing vast digital collections, personalizing recommendations, automating routine inquiries, and streamlining cataloging. This compels Librarians to radically pivot towards high-level community engagement, nuanced information literacy instruction, ethical oversight of AI, and fostering irreplaceable human connections with patrons.

Risk

Radical role overhaul; pervasive automation leading to significant workflow redefinition and specialized human focus.

The Librarian role is undergoing a profound and accelerating redefinition by AI. AI will assume command of vast routine data collection, initial information retrieval, and much of the administrative burden. Librarians must immediately pivot to becoming experts in leveraging AI for hyper-efficiency and enhanced patron insights, intensely validating AI outputs for accuracy and bias, and dedicating their expertise to the irreplaceable human elements of the role: profound information literacy instruction, nuanced patron guidance, and critical ethical decision-making regarding access to information, privacy, and intellectual freedom.

Sector readiness

Rapid & Transformative Integration

The library and information science sectors are cautiously but rapidly integrating AI, driven by overwhelming demand for efficiency, personalized services, and managing vast digital information. AI is moving beyond pilot stages to widespread adoption for cataloging, search, and content recommendation, fundamentally altering traditional workflows and patron interactions.

§ 02 POSITION

Where you stand

i The Librarian role is undergoing a profound and accelerating redefinition by AI, fundamentally restructuring information retrieval, content curation, and administrative tasks.

ii AI will autonomously manage vast digital collections, optimize search, and streamline cataloging, compelling Librarians to pivot to indispensable information literacy instruction and profound patron engagement.

iii Survival and impact will hinge on Librarians mastering AI tools, critically validating AI outputs for accuracy and bias, championing ethical AI, and providing irreplaceable human connection and advocacy at the heart of community knowledge.

§ 03 ACTIONS 15 POINTS

What this means for you

Concrete changes to how the work gets done, in the order you are likely to meet them.

01 **AI-Driven Autonomous Cataloging & Metadata Generation.** Librarians will oversee AI systems that autonomously process new content (e.g., books, digital articles, media), generate metadata, classify materials, and populate library catalogs. This radically frees librarians from manual cataloging, demanding focus on quality control and complex semantic indexing.

02 **AI-Powered Personalized Content & Reading Recommendations.** Librarians will orchestrate AI platforms that autonomously analyze patron borrowing history, reading preferences, and demographic data to provide hyper-personalized book, article, and resource recommendations. This enhances patron engagement and discovery.

03 **Predictive Analytics for Collection Development & Usage.** Librarians will leverage AI models that autonomously analyze borrowing trends, patron demographics, and external data (e.g., local events, educational trends) to predict future demand for specific materials or services. This optimizes collection development and resource allocation.

04 **Automated Information Retrieval & Research Assistance.** AI tools will autonomously sift through vast digital collections, databases, and open-web resources to retrieve precise information in response to patron queries. Librarians will intervene for complex research questions, providing nuanced guidance and validating AI outputs.

05 **Generative AI for Library Programming & Communication.** AI can autonomously draft initial versions of promotional materials for library programs (e.g., reading clubs, workshops), newsletters, and social media announcements. This streamlines content creation, ensuring consistency and reaching diverse community segments.

06 **Focus on Nuanced Information Literacy Instruction.** As AI assumes command of basic information retrieval, the paramount value of Librarians will be their irreplaceable human ability to teach critical information literacy skills—how to evaluate AI-generated information, identify bias, understand sources, and navigate a complex digital landscape.

07 **AI-Driven Patron Service Chatbots.** AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants will autonomously handle a significant portion of routine patron inquiries (e.g., library hours, book availability, renewal dates). This frees Librarians for complex reference questions and high-touch patron engagement.

08 **Ethical AI in Information Access & Bias Mitigation.** Librarians will be at the forefront of addressing the ethical implications of AI in information access. This includes auditing AI search algorithms for bias (e.g., in presenting diverse perspectives), ensuring equitable access, and protecting patron privacy.

09 **Human-AI Teaming for Enhanced Reference Services.** Librarians will operate in seamless human-AI teams. AI will process initial patron queries and suggest resources, while the human Librarian leads complex reference interviews, applies nuanced judgment to information needs, and navigates ambiguous research topics.

10 **AI for Digital Preservation & Archiving.** AI tools will autonomously assist in digitizing historical documents, transcribing handwritten texts, and analyzing digital files for long-term preservation and accessibility. Librarians will oversee these processes, ensuring the integrity of cultural heritage.

11 **Continuous Learning & Information Science Tech Literacy.** The exponential pace of AI integration in library and information science demands that Librarians commit to continuous, aggressive learning of new AI-powered tools, advanced information management systems, and their profound capabilities and ethical implications, as a foundational competency.

12 **Specialization in AI-Integrated Library Systems (ILS).** The field will see a rise in Librarians specializing in managing, optimizing, and maintaining AI-driven ILS platforms, acting as primary points of contact for technology integration and patron data management.

13 **AI-Powered Language Translation for Diverse Patrons.** AI-powered real-time translation tools can assist Librarians in communicating effectively with non-English speaking patrons. This enhances accessibility to library services and fosters inclusivity in diverse communities.

14 **Leadership in Digital Inclusion & Equity.** Librarians in leadership roles will play a crucial role in guiding their institutions through the adoption of AI, advocating for equitable access to information, and fundamentally reshaping the future of community knowledge centers in a digital age.

15 **Strategic Community Engagement & Program Design.** As AI streamlines administrative tasks, Librarians will dedicate more time to fostering profound community connections, designing innovative programs, and adapting library services to meet evolving local needs and digital literacy challenges.

§ 04 CAUSES 10 DRIVERS

What is pushing this change

01 **Explosive Growth of Digital Information & Content.** Vast amounts of digital books, articles, media, and user interaction data provide rich input for AI models.

02 **Advancements in AI/ML (NLP, Search, Recommendation Engines).** Breakthroughs in AI fields enable sophisticated text understanding, autonomous search, and intelligent content recommendations.

03 **Urgent Demand for Personalized Information Access.** Patrons demand instant, highly relevant, and personalized access to information and resources.

04 **Rising Patron Expectations for Digital Convenience.** Users expect seamless online experiences, digital resource access, and personalized recommendations.

05 **Complexity of Information Retrieval & Curation.** Managing diverse information formats, vast digital collections, and evolving user needs benefits from AI.

06 **Need for Efficient Resource Management.** AI automation of cataloging, reference queries, and circulation can lead to significant cost reductions for libraries.

07 **Shortage of Librarians & Information Professionals.** The demand for librarians with advanced digital and analytical skills often outstrips supply; AI can augment.

08 **Growth of Digital Libraries & Online Learning.** Digital libraries, online databases, and e-learning platforms are driving AI integration for content delivery.

09 **Mandatory Regulatory Compliance (Privacy, Copyright).** Copyright law, data privacy (e.g., patron records), and intellectual freedom are critical for ethical AI deployment in libraries.

10 **Focus on Information Literacy & Critical Thinking.** Librarians play a crucial role in teaching users how to evaluate information critically in an AI-saturated world.

§ 05 VARIATION 5 SECTORS

Impact by sector

The headline figure is an average. Where you work changes the picture.

Public Librarians	AI for personalized reading recommendations, event promotion, and automated query handling. Focus on community engagement and literacy programs.
Academic Librarians	AI for research assistance, literature synthesis, and data management for faculty/students. Focus on scholarly support and research impact.
School Librarians (K-12)	AI for personalized reading suggestions, content curation for curriculum, and student research guidance. Focus on digital literacy and academic support.
Special Librarians (Corporate/Legal/Medical)	AI for specialized information retrieval, legal/medical research synthesis, and knowledge management for organizations. Focus on highly specialized, efficient information delivery.
Archivists / Digital Asset Managers	AI for autonomous metadata generation, digital preservation, and content analysis for historical collections. Focus on digital curation and long-term access.

§ 06 PREPARATION 8 SKILLS

Skills to build

The skills that keep the human part of this work valuable as the routine part is automated.

01 **Information Literacy Instruction.** The core ability to teach patrons how to evaluate information critically, identify bias, navigate digital sources, and understand AI-generated content.

02 **AI/Information Tech Literacy & Oversight.** Proficiency in using AI-powered search engines, cataloging systems, recommendation engines, and digital preservation tools.

03 **Patron Engagement & Communication.** Building rapport with patrons, understanding their diverse information needs, and effectively communicating resource availability.

04 **Collection Development & Curation (AI-augmented).** Expertise in selecting, organizing, and managing diverse collections (print/digital), leveraging AI for demand prediction and content discovery.

05 **Ethical AI Use & Privacy Advocacy.** Upholding the highest standards of patron privacy, ensuring equitable access to information, and advocating for ethical AI use in library services.

06 **Data Analysis & Resource Optimization.** Ability to interpret data on resource usage, patron demographics, and AI-generated insights to optimize library services and collections.

07 **Problem-Solving & Research Guidance.** Diagnosing complex research problems, guiding patrons through vast information landscapes, and finding creative solutions to information needs.

08 **Community Engagement & Program Design.** Designing and implementing innovative library programs, fostering community connections, and adapting services to evolving local needs.

§ 07 INSTRUMENTS 12 ENTRIES

Tools in use

KINDS OF TOOL WORTH KNOWING

01 **AI-Powered Library Management Systems (LMS).** Integrated software that uses AI to automate various library operations, including circulation, cataloging, and patron management.

02 **AI for Information Retrieval & Search.** AI-powered search engines that autonomously sift through vast digital collections, databases, and web resources to retrieve precise information.

03 **Generative AI for Content & Program Promotion.** Large Language Models (LLMs) used to autonomously draft initial versions of library program announcements, newsletters, and social media posts.

04 **AI for Collection Development & Usage Analytics.** AI models that autonomously analyze borrowing trends, patron demographics, and external data to predict future demand for materials and optimize acquisitions.

05 **AI for Metadata Generation & Cataloging.** AI tools that autonomously process new content, generate metadata, classify materials, and populate library catalogs, based on content analysis.

06 **AI for Digital Preservation & Archiving.** AI tools that autonomously assist in digitizing historical documents, transcribing handwritten texts, and analyzing digital files for long-term preservation.

NAMED TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

FOLIO (with AI integrations) / Alma (Ex Libris, with AI) VISIT
Leading Library Management Systems that are integrating AI for workflow automation, patron management, and personalized services.

Google Scholar (AI features) / Semantic Scholar (AI for research) VISIT
AI-powered search engines for academic and general research, using AI for enhanced relevance and information synthesis.

ChatGPT / Google Gemini (for library comms) VISIT
Generative AI models that can autonomously draft various library communications and promotional materials.

WorldShare Management Services (WMS) (with AI features) / OverDrive (Digital Library) VISIT
Integrated library systems and digital library platforms that leverage AI for collection management and usage analytics.

OCLC (WorldCat, with AI cataloging) / Library of Congress (AI initiatives) VISIT

Organizations and initiatives focusing on AI for automated metadata generation, cataloging, and digital preservation.

Preservica (Digital Preservation) / Arkivum (Data Archiving) VISIT

Leading digital preservation and archiving solutions that use AI to assist in content analysis and long-term data integrity.

§ 08 EXAMPLES 5 EXAMPLES

In practice

Ways people in this role are already using AI, and what they get from it.

Automate Book Indexing & Metadata

EXAMPLE 1

HOW Librarians will oversee an AI system that autonomously processes new books or digital content. The AI will automatically generate keywords, subject headings, and other metadata, then index the material in the library catalog, drastically reducing manual cataloging time.

GAIN Significantly reduces manual cataloging time, ensures consistent metadata, and improves the discoverability of library resources.

Personalize Reading Recommendations

EXAMPLE 2

HOW Librarians will configure an AI-powered recommendation engine within the library's digital platform. Based on a patron's borrowing history and preferences, the AI will autonomously suggest new books, articles, or events tailored to their interests, maximizing engagement.

GAIN Dramatically increases patron engagement, promotes diverse reading, and enhances the personalized discovery of library content.

Predict Popular Borrowing Trends

EXAMPLE 3

HOW Librarians can leverage an AI model that autonomously analyzes historical borrowing data, local demographics, and external trends (e.g., best-seller lists, local school curriculum changes). The AI will predict which books or genres will be most popular, informing purchasing decisions.

GAIN Optimizes collection development, reduces uncirculated materials, and ensures library resources align with community interests and demand.

Generate Library Program Announcements

EXAMPLE 4

HOW Librarians can instruct a generative AI tool to draft a promotional announcement for an upcoming library program (e.g., a children's story time, a tech workshop). By providing key details, the AI will autonomously generate compelling copy for newsletters and social media.

GAIN Saves significant time on content creation, ensures consistent messaging, and allows librarians to focus on program design and community outreach.

Enhance Research Assistance EXAMPLE 5	HOW	Librarians will utilize an AI-powered research assistant. When a patron has a complex query, the AI will autonomously sift through vast databases and digital collections, summarizing key information and suggesting relevant resources, allowing the librarian to provide nuanced guidance.
	GAIN	Accelerates research assistance, provides comprehensive information synthesis, and frees librarians for more complex reference interviews and information literacy instruction.

§ 09 CONTEXT

How this role compares

Three neighbouring roles chosen to show the direction of travel.

Library Assistants (Routine shelving, circulation) / Catalogers (Basic data entry) MORE EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	Catastrophic (Robotics can autonomously manage shelving; AI can autonomously perform basic cataloging and data entry.)
	WORK MOVES TO	Immediate need for radical re-skilling into AI oversight, robot management (if applicable), or specialization in complex patron support.
AI Information Scientists / Computational Linguists (Library Focus) DIFFERENT SKILLS, GROWING	AI IMPACT	Foundational (They design and build the AI algorithms and systems that power advanced information retrieval and library automation.)
	WORK MOVES TO	Deep expertise in AI/ML algorithms, NLP, data science, and software engineering, with a focus on information science applications.
Educators (Curriculum development) / Community Organizers (Local engagement) COMPLEMENTARY, LESS EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	Low-Moderate Augmentation (AI assists in research for educators; AI helps with data for organizers), but core pedagogical strategy, human connection, and direct community building remain paramount.
	WORK MOVES TO	Designing curriculum, teaching students (Educators); Fostering local engagement, building community networks, and advocating for social change (Community Organizers).

§ 10 VERDICT

Closing judgement

> For Librarians, AI is not merely a tool but a radical force of transformation that will fundamentally redefine their role. It will autonomously manage the mundane, amplify information retrieval, and streamline content, compelling librarians to pivot to indispensable information literacy instruction, profound patron engagement, and ethical oversight. The future Librarian will be a visionary orchestrator of human-AI collaboration, providing irreplaceable connection and advocacy at the heart of community knowledge.

§ 11 BASIS REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026

Evidence and revisions

What the exposure figure rests on, what changed when it was last revised, and the published work cited for this role.

SCORE

50 to 54

WINDOW

5-10 years (unchanged)

The 5 October 2026 review moved the score up by 4 points.

Exposure Index v2. Inputs: task applicability 51/100 (Microsoft AI applicability score 0.25 for Librarians and media collections specialists); observed usage 27/100 (Anthropic observed exposure 0.20); official exposure tier 100/100 (BLS: very high); labour-market trajectory 44/100 (BLS projects employment to grow 2.6% over 2025–35); published adoption rating 40/100 (medium adoption). Weighted base 53.6. Final score 54. The previous figure of 50 was raised by 4 points, a small change that comes from moving off scores rounded to the nearest five. The change window is unchanged.

HOW THE FIGURE IS BUILT (EXPOSURE INDEX V2)

Task applicability — Microsoft Research, AI applicability score	51 × 35%	17.8
Observed usage — Anthropic Economic Index, observed exposure	27 × 20%	5.4
Official exposure tier — US BLS AI-exposure category	100 × 20%	20.0
Labour-market trajectory — US BLS projected employment change 2025–35	44 × 10%	4.4
Published adoption rating — This report's adoption level	40 × 15%	6.0
Weighted base		53.6
Exposure score		54

MEASURES BEHIND THE SCORE

US Bureau of Labor Statistics · *Employment Projections 2025–35 and AI Exposure Categories* (27 August 2026)

AI-exposure tier: Very high. Projected employment change 2025–35: +2.6%. Matched to Librarians and media collections specialists.

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Microsoft Research · *Working with AI: Measuring the Applicability of Generative AI to Occupations* (10 July 2025)

AI applicability score 0.25 (percentile 81 of 785 occupations) for SOC 25-4022.

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Anthropic · *Anthropic Economic Index report: Cadences* (26 June 2026)

Observed exposure 0.20 for SOC 25-4022 (percentile 85 of 756 occupations).

PUBLISHER PDF

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology · *Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (28 January 2026)

UK context: around 70% of UK workers are in occupations with tasks AI could perform or enhance, above the US average; a one-standard-deviation rise in exposure was associated with a 3.9% fall in UK job postings.

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ALSO CITED FOR THIS ROLE

International Monetary Fund · *Bridging Skill Gaps for the Future: New Jobs Creation in the AI Age* (14 January 2026)

Teaching is treated as high-complementarity work: AI changes preparation and assessment tasks while the in-person role persists.

PUBLISHER PDF

OECD · *OECD Employment Outlook 2026* (7 July 2026)

OECD evidence points to transformation rather than displacement in education, with teacher shortages persisting across member countries.

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Archived copies are served only where the licence permits; otherwise the link goes to the publisher. Full research library: https://www.careerguard.ai/sources

§ 12 APPENDIX

Method and sources

Each report was written from a large body of published research. The exposure score itself is computed, not written: it is the CareerGuard Exposure Index, a weighted average of occupation-level measures from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (AI-exposure classification and 2025–35 projections), Microsoft Research (AI applicability scores) and Anthropic (observed exposure), together with the adoption rating published on the report. The organisations and publications below are the standing literature behind the narrative sections. Every source, with dates, licences and archived copies where we are permitted to hold them, is catalogued in the research library.

Exposure Index v2 (October 2026). Each input is scaled to 0–100 and weighted: task applicability 35% (Microsoft AI applicability score ÷ 0.5), observed usage 20% (Anthropic observed exposure ÷ 0.75), official exposure tier 20% (BLS very high = 100, high = 70, moderate = 40, low = 10), labour-market trajectory 10% (50 2.5 × projected % employment change), published adoption rating 15% (very high = 85, high = 70, medium-high = 55, medium = 40, low-medium = 25, low = 10). Inputs not measured for an occupation are dropped and the remaining weights renormalised. An editorial adjustment of at most ±12 points is allowed only for automation channels the measures cannot see (robotics, self-service, machine vision, medical imaging, RPA/OCR, generative video) and is always

logged with its reason. Scores are whole numbers, not rounded to five. The change window shifts one notch (a year at each end) per ten points of movement.

I GLOBAL AND MACROECONOMIC IMPACT OF AI ON WORK

World Economic Forum

The Future of Jobs Report series — Employer survey of expected job growth and decline, skill shifts and technology adoption (2020, 2023 and 2025 editions); Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Entry-Level Work (2026).
AI governance and transformation reports — Frameworks on ethical AI, talent strategy and industry transformation.

McKinsey Global Institute

AI, Automation and the Future of Work series — Research quantifying automation potential by task, sector and demographic, from "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained" to "Agents, robots, and us" (2025).
Industry-specific reports — Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing and others.

PwC

Global AI Jobs Barometer — Annual analysis of job postings and productivity by AI exposure (2024–2026 editions).
Upskilling Hopes and Fears survey — Employee perceptions and readiness.

Microsoft Research and Anthropic

Working with AI (2025); Anthropic Economic Index (2025–2026) — Occupation-level usage data from Copilot and Claude conversations, the two observed-usage measures behind the 2026 revision.

Stanford Digital Economy Lab and Stanford HAI

Canaries in the Coal Mine? (2025–2026); AI Index Report (annual) — Payroll evidence on early-career employment in exposed occupations; annual measurement of AI capability, investment and adoption.

Deloitte

Human Capital Trends series — Workforce, talent and HR technology trends.
Tech Trends series — Emerging technologies and their business implications.

Accenture

Technology Vision series — Forward-looking analysis of emerging technology, with emphasis on AI.
Fjord Trends — Design, innovation and human experience in a digital world.

Boston Consulting Group

AI/ML insights and industry solutions — "The AI Revolution in the Workplace" and related research.

EY

AI and workforce reports — Adoption, talent strategy and ethics.

IBM Institute for Business Value

AI and automation studies — Business models, workforce evolution and leadership.

OECD

AI Policy Observatory — International data and policy on AI, labour markets and skills.
Employment Outlook — Labour-market trends including technological impact (2023–2026 editions).

International Labour Organization

Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure (2025) — Task-level exposure gradients for every ISCO occupation; successor to the 2023 global index.

International Monetary Fund

Staff Discussion Notes on AI and work (2024, 2026) — Complementarity framing: where AI augments and where it substitutes.

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market (2026) — UK occupational exposure and job-posting evidence.

Brookings Institution

AI and automation research — Economic and social implications, displacement and skills.

Yale Budget Lab and Goldman Sachs Research
Tracking the Impact of AI on the Labor Market; AI and the US labour market (2026) — Aggregate labour-market monitoring; macro displacement estimates.

Oxford University (Oxford Martin School)
The Future of Employment — Frey & Osborne and subsequent research on susceptibility to automation.

MIT Technology Review
AI & Work — Reporting on AI research and its implications for industries and jobs.

Gartner
Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence — Maturity and adoption of AI technologies.
Future of Work reports — Workplace models and talent strategy.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Employment Projections 2025–35; AI Exposure Categories; Occupational Outlook Handbook — Ten-year employment projections and, from the 2025 cycle, an AI-exposure tier for every detailed occupation.

Indeed Hiring Lab
AI at Work Report (2025) and posting-market updates — Skill-level transformation estimates and job-posting trends by occupation.

II CORE AI AND MACHINE-LEARNING RESEARCH

OpenAI
Research papers, blog and API documentation — Large language models, generative AI, safety and societal impact.

Google DeepMind
Research papers and blog — Reinforcement learning, AI for science, AGI and ethics.

Meta AI
Research papers and blog — Large language models, computer vision, AI for social good.

Hugging Face
Transformers library and model hub — Open-source state-of-the-art NLP models.

TensorFlow and PyTorch
Documentation and community forums — Core frameworks illustrating practical capability.

arXiv
cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CV, cs.CL — Pre-print research.

NeurIPS and ICML
Conference proceedings — Top-tier academic research.

ACM and IEEE
Journals and proceedings — ACM Computing Surveys; IEEE Transactions on AI.

Kaggle
Datasets and competition solutions — Applied machine learning on real-world problems.

The Alan Turing Institute
Research and reports — Responsible and applied AI.

III ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE AI DEPLOYMENT

NIST
AI Risk Management Framework — Voluntary framework for managing AI risk.

European Commission
AI Act — Risk-tiered legal framework for AI.
Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI — Principles for responsible development.

Partnership on AI
Research and best practice — Responsible AI development.

AI Now Institute
Annual reports — Social implications: power, inequality, rights.

ACM FAccT
Proceedings — Fairness, accountability and transparency.

Data & Society
Publications — Social implications of data-centric technology.

WIPO
Conversation on IP and AI — Intellectual-property implications of AI.

IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of A/IS
Ethically Aligned Design — Recommendations for ethical AI design.

Center for AI and Digital Policy
Policy briefs — Accountable AI policy.