CIIMAR **GUIDELINES ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

These living guidelines establish the principles and recommendations for the **responsible, ethical, and transparent use of AI at CIIMAR** across research, education, and administrative activities. They are aligned with European Commission principles for responsible Generative AI, University of Porto AI Guidance, and recognised good practices.

Generative and Agentic Artificial Intelligence (**AI**) have become powerful tools to support a wide range of tasks.
CIIMAR recognises the potential of AI to support marine and environmental science, innovation, education, and societal engagement.
These guidelines aim to encourage **innovative use of AI** across CIIMAR activities, while safeguarding the **core values** that underpin **CIIMAR's mission**.

The values guiding **AI use at CIIMAR are**:

- **Academic** and **scientific integrity**
- **Privacy** and **data protection**
- **Trust** and **transparency**
- **Accountability**

The use of AI remains the personal responsibility of each user: **AI should support, not replace, human judgement, creativity, autonomy and critical thinking.** CIIMAR members are responsible for following these guidelines and the applicable law while using any generative or agentic AI tool.

AI is a tool
to support specific tasks.

Accountability
You are fully responsible for the outcomes of AI use.

Human oversight
Decisions are made by humans, even if supported by AI tools.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

01 **Be responsible** for the content you use. Question AI outputs, verify sources, identify biases, assess limitations, and take full responsibility for what you publish or submit.

02 **Build AI literacy** before you rely on it. Train and learn about AI, its capabilities and limitations, to ensure correct and efficient use of the tools.

03 **Be transparent** about AI use and its limitations. Inform your peers before using AI tools, and disclose the model and version and how it shaped the outcome.

04 **Protect confidential and sensitive data.** Check the tool's data policy before use. Be extra careful, or entirely avoid sharing confidential or sensitive data without safeguards.

05 **Verify before you trust.** Don't outsource decision-making: AI output can be biased, wrong, or fabricated information. Confirm facts, figures, citations and challenge any assumption.

06 **Use recent models** and adequate tools for your needs. Older models and free options tend to provide poor results, increasing output errors and other risks.

USE CASES

	✓	!	✗
Writing and language ⚠01	Spelling, grammar and copyediting of your own text.	Drafting administrative or institutional text (e.g. internal notices, emails, grant sections).	Undeclared AI text presented as your own. AI named as an author. Mass-producing scientific outputs for publication.
Literature search and review	Explaining unfamiliar concepts or methods. Suggesting keywords, synonyms, databases or search strings.	Finding, classifying or summarising literature: Every source must be checked.	Citing sources you have not read. Using invented references. Systematic review without a documented protocol.
Research questions and hypotheses	Brainstorming possible questions, variables, alternative explanations or limitations using public or non-sensitive information.	Refining a question or hypothesis using your own non-confidential project data.	Adopting an AI-suggested hypothesis without scientific validation. Entering unpublished or confidential project data to generate one.
Personal, sensitive and confidential data ⚠02	Using public, synthetic or anonymised information.	Processing pseudonymised or internal, non-confidential data, with data-protection safeguards in place.	Entering sensitive (i), confidential or proprietary data into public AI tools.
Data analysis and code ⚠03	Explaining an error message; debugging code you wrote yourself.	Generating or adapting scripts, statistical models, queries or formulas: test, validate, reproduce, understand, and declare it.	Uploading unpublished datasets to public AI tools. Reporting results you cannot reproduce or explain.
Images and Visualisation	Creating clearly labelled illustrative material that is not reported as scientific evidence. Formatting or improving readability of figures built from real data.	Editing research images: the edit must preserve scientific integrity and be disclosed in the methods or caption.	Presenting AI-generated images as observational or experimental data.
Research Data ⚠04	Using published papers, open datasets and released outreach material.	Using internal drafts and non-confidential notes, unpublished data, subject to the sensitive data safeguards above.	Recording, reporting or publishing AI-generated or AI-altered data or results as if they were observations or experimental findings.
Grant proposals and project reports ⚠05	Searching calls, digesting topic requirements. Creating compliance checklists from public call documents.	Drafting proposal or report text: all claims, references, indicators and budgets must be verified, consortium confidentiality respected, and AI use disclosed according to the funder's rules.	Sharing consortium-confidential material with public AI tools without partners' consent. Failing to disclose substantial AI use where a funder requires it.
Inventions, patents and technology transfer	Building knowledge on concepts, processes and requirements. Exploring trends and emerging topics. Consumer and market insights.	Use a confidentiality-compliant AI tool to review non-sensitive sections of a patent application (e.g. background, prior-art). Every claim must be verified.	Uploading or sharing undisclosed Intellectual Property (ii), before protection is secured.
Learning, teaching and training	Clarifying concepts, finding resources or answering questions while you learn.	Drafting training materials, workshop content or guides with AI support. Check for accuracy and declare AI use.	Submitting AI-generated coursework, thesis text or exam answers as your own.
Meetings transcription	Summarising notes you took yourself.	Using recording or transcription tools: obtain participants' agreement first.	Recording or transcribing without participants' knowledge. Processing sensitive meeting content in public AI tools.
Decision-making	Using AI to inform a decision (e.g. summarising options, flagging anomalies) when a human remains accountable for the final decision.	Using AI-supported tools in processes that affect people, provided that a qualified human reviews and can override every output, and the use is disclosed.	Using AI to automatically make decisions that affect people without human review.
Agentic AI and automation	Using AI to propose a task list, draft an action or simulate a workflow without changing institutional systems.	Allowing an approved system to prepare actions that require explicit human confirmation before sending, submitting, purchasing, publishing or changing records. Logs must be maintained.	Granting an AI agent access to CIIMAR files or systems (e.g. sharepoint, email) without IT approval. Allowing AI to autonomously act without human confirmation.

01. AI output might plagiarise other people's work, it is the user's responsibility to ensure no plagiarized work is done.
02. You shall create generic templates without names, contacts, identifiers or any sensitive or confidential data.
03. AI output may contradict your interpretation of results, but the reasoning must stay yours.
04. AI can fabricate data, results, images or citations. Verify everything it produces.
05. Inform partners or co-authors before using AI tools on shared work.

(i) **Sensitive data** means any information whose disclosure could harm a person, CIIMAR or a third party. It may relate to personal, health, genetic or biometric data, HR records, or other. If in doubt, treat it as sensitive.
(ii) **Undisclosed Intellectual Property** means invention disclosures, patent drafts, technical descriptions, and any result whose premature disclosure could destroy novelty or commercial value.

DID YOU USE AI? DECLARE IT

NO USE

No generative AI tools were used in the preparation of this work.

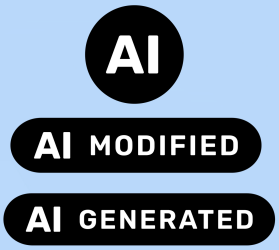
NON-SUBSTANTIVE USE

[Tool, model/version] was used in [month, year] for language editing only. The authors reviewed all output and take responsibility for the content.

SUBSTANTIVE USE

[Tool, model/version] was used between [dates] for literature searching and to generate analysis scripts for the dataset reported in Section X.X. All references were verified against the original sources; all code was tested and reproduced locally. No unpublished, personal or confidential data were entered into the tool. The authors take full responsibility for the content.

AI LABELLING



For AI-generated or manipulated image, audio, or video, or for any content that has not undergone human review.

RESOURCES

- **Universidade do Porto** (2026). Practical Guidelines for GenAI Responsible Use and Adoption in Academia.
- **European Commission** (2026). Living guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research.
- **UNESCO** (2023). Guidance for generative AI in education and research.
- **ALLEA** (2023). The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, Revised Edition 2023, endorsed by CIIMAR on 28 January 2019.

NEED HELP?

If your question is not addressed here, consult the **University of Porto's full AI Guidance**.

If you still need clarification or support, contact **CIIMAR AI Working Group**: responsible.ai@ciimar.up.pt

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Approved by the Board of Directors on September 3, 2026.

This is a **living document.** As AI capabilities and institutional practices evolve, CIIMAR will periodically review and update it. Your feedback is welcomed, send us your suggestions to responsible.ai@ciimar.up.pt .

AI Use Statement: These guidelines were originally conceived and written by the CIIMAR AI Working Group without AI assistance. Claude, Sonnet 5 was used in September, 2026 for final editing: grammar, style, design and formatting. The authors reviewed and approved all content and take full responsibility for the work.