



THE FULCRUM POINT
AN OPINION ARTICLE

Your Nonprofit Needs an AI Policy. Now.

One Page. Clear Expectations.
Leadership Responsibility.



STRATEGY. LEADERSHIP. GREATER IMPACT.



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One Page. Clear Expectations. Leadership Responsibility.
The Fulcrum Point – An Opinion Series

Artificial intelligence is already at work inside your nonprofit organization. The question is whether your leadership has established the expectations necessary to guide its responsible use.

Employees are using AI to draft communications, research prospective donors, develop grant proposals, analyze information, and streamline administrative responsibilities. Some are doing so with organizational approval. Others are experimenting independently, often with the best intentions.

Yet too many nonprofit organizations have not established even the most basic guidelines for how AI should be used.

That is a leadership failure we can no longer afford to ignore.

Through her presentations to the Fulcrum Nonprofit Leadership community, Tara Quarrie has reinforced an important and practical message: Every nonprofit needs an AI policy, and the time to establish one is now.

Not next year. Not after another strategic planning retreat. Not after assembling a committee to produce a comprehensive 25-page document.

Now.

One Page Is Enough to Start

Nonprofit leaders sometimes make the mistake of believing that responsible governance requires elaborate policies, extensive documentation, and prolonged deliberation.

It doesn't.

A simple, thoughtful, one-page AI policy can establish essential expectations around confidentiality, data protection, accuracy, transparency, human oversight, and acceptable use.



It can clarify what employees are encouraged to do, what requires approval, and what is prohibited. It can establish who is accountable when questions arise.

Most importantly, it can begin an organizational conversation that is already overdue.

The pursuit of a perfect policy should never become an excuse for having no policy at all.

Policy Should Enable, Not Inhibit

The purpose of an AI policy is not to discourage innovation or frighten employees away from technology that can make them more effective.

Quite the opposite.

A good policy creates the confidence necessary for responsible experimentation. It gives employees permission to explore new capabilities while understanding the boundaries that protect the organization and those it serves.

Nonprofits should embrace opportunities to become more productive, efficient, creative, and capable. Our missions deserve every responsible advantage we can provide.

But innovation without accountability is not leadership. It is simply experimentation without direction.

Our Responsibilities Have Not Changed

Artificial intelligence introduces new tools, but it does not change our fundamental obligations.

We remain responsible for protecting donor information, safeguarding confidential organizational data, maintaining public trust, ensuring accuracy, and exercising sound judgment.

Consider a practical question Tara has encouraged leaders to ask: Would you be comfortable explaining your organization's use of AI to a journalist tomorrow?

If the answer is no, perhaps that use deserves reconsideration.

No technology can assume the ethical responsibilities of organizational leadership.



Leadership Cannot Delegate This Away

An AI policy is not simply an IT project or an administrative assignment. It is an expression of organizational values and leadership expectations.

Executive leaders must own it. Boards should understand it. Employees must be educated about it. And everyone should recognize that the policy will evolve as technology and organizational experience advance.

Start with one page. Share it with your team. Invite questions. Encourage learning. Revisit it regularly.

We do not need to have every answer before taking the first responsible step.

The greatest risk is not that your first AI policy will be imperfect. It is that your organization will continue operating without one.

One page. One conversation. One leadership responsibility.

Start now.

For more information about Fulcrum Nonprofit Leadership, please visit our website at www.fulcrumleader.com or reach out to us directly via email at hello@fulcrumleader.com.