Statement on use of AI in Evidence Synthesis

With a mandate to manage and enhance Library support for evidence synthesis (ES) research projects, members of the Evidence Synthesis Working Group provide expert support grounded in professional values and expertise and enhanced by deep knowledge of relevant research methods and technologies. Accordingly, we engage in continuous professional development to advance our understanding of ES processes, software, platforms, and tools, including artificial intelligence (AI).

The field of AI applications within ES research is rapidly evolving and holds some promise for enhancing efficiency within some stages of the process, such as article screening, data extraction, and preliminary search strategy development. However, much caution must be exercised when using AI within a research method which is focused on reducing bias and enhancing transparency and reproducibility, given these tools often operate in a matter contrary to these principles. Examples of problematic characteristics include opaque processes and lack of replicability for AI-generated outputs; inconsistent disclosure of sources used; poorly constructed search strings, including hallucinated subject headings; and bias within the data used by AI tools.

Members of the Library's evidence synthesis team will support Brock researchers in meeting these objectives by providing informed guidance on AI use which is tailored to specific ES projects and user needs.To ensure that our approach reflects both emerging innovations and upholds best practice standards, our working group endorses the following position statement on AI use in evidence synthesis across Cochrane, the Campbell Collaboration, JBI, and the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence 2025[1]:

- Evidence synthesists are ultimately **responsible for their evidence synthesis**, including the decision to use artificial intelligence (AI) and automation, and to ensure adherence to legal and ethical standards.

- Cochrane, the Campbell Collaboration, JBI, and the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence support the aims of the Responsible use of AI in evidence SynthEsis (RAISE) recommendations, which provides a **framework for ensuring responsible use of AI and automation across all roles within the evidence synthesis ecosystem**.

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[1] Flemyng, E., Noel-Storr, A., Macura, B., Gartlehner, G., Thomas, J., Meerpohl, J. J., Jordan, Z., Minx, J., Eisele-Metzger, A., Hamel, C., Jemioło, P., Porritt, K., & Grainger, M. (2025). Position statement on artificial intelligence (AI) use in evidence synthesis across Cochrane, the Campbell Collaboration, JBI, and the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence 2025. *JBI evidence synthesis*, *23*(11), 2162–2166. https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-25-00480

- Evidence synthesists developing and publishing syntheses with Cochrane, the Campbell Collaboration, JBI, and the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence **can use AI and automation as long as they can demonstrate that it will not compromise the methodological rigor or integrity of their synthesis**.

- AI and automation in evidence synthesis should be used with **human oversight and intervention**.

- Any use of AI or automation that makes or suggests judgments should be **fully and transparently reported in the evidence synthesis report.**

- **AI tool developers should proactively ensure their AI systems or tools adhere to the RAISE** recommendations so we have clear, transparent, and publicly available information to inform decisions about whether an AI system or tool could and should be used in evidence synthesis.

We highlight, in particular, elements of the statement which call upon ES researchers to only use AI when it supports methodological rigor, complies with ethical standards and is fully and transparently reported in any outputs related to the review. Researchers must take full responsibility for their approach to every element of the ES process, including any use of AI.

As members of Library Council, librarians within the Evidence Synthesis Working Group also support and endorse the Library Council statement on AI.