

Certificate in Applied AI for Social Good

Course 1: AI foundations: ethics, governance & foundational prompting

When: Monday 6/4/26- Friday 10/4/26 (learn at your own pace) + live session on Friday 17 April 2026 13:00 - 14:00 CET

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Guest expert: Tea Mustać

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Syllabus

Course description

This foundational course equips nonprofits with the essential knowledge they need to adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsibly and effectively, with a particular focus on Generative AI (GenAI). Participants will develop a solid understanding of GenAI, key concepts in AI ethics, and relevant governance frameworks. By the end of the short course, they will be able to identify and evaluate opportunities, use cases, and potential risks associated with AI adoption. Through practical guidance, they will establish an internal ethical and governance framework, and master foundational prompting techniques. This course empowers nonprofits to begin harnessing AI's potential in their work in a responsible and impactful way.

AI tools covered in this course

- Large Language Models: For practicing foundational prompting.
- Remesh: AI-powered research platform for real-time analysis of data provided by large participant groups
- Canva AI Image Generator

Lessons

Lesson 1: Fundamentals of GenAI, risks and ethical considerations: Gain a solid understanding of the core concepts behind GenAI and explore key ethical risks, such as bias, privacy, and accountability, that nonprofits must learn to identify, manage and mitigate as they begin their AI adoption journey.

Lesson 2: Adopt AI responsibly through strong ethics and governance frameworks: Translate ethical principles and regulatory requirements and guidelines into practical organizational policies. Learn about key global and regional regulatory and guideline frameworks, and follow our lead to create an internal framework for responsible and ethical AI adoption within your organization.

Lesson 3: 7 Things to Know About the EU AI Act — and Why It Matters for Nonprofits Everywhere: This 10-minute video introduces the EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act) and explores its far-reaching implications for nonprofit organizations, both within and beyond Europe. In seven key points, it outlines the Act’s background and objectives; its scope and purpose; its horizontal, cross-sectoral nature as the first comprehensive AI regulation of its kind; the EU’s risk-based framework; the classification of AI systems; the roles and responsibilities of key actors; and the mechanisms that ensure compliance through conformity assessments. Beyond its European scope, the AI Act is expected to establish global “gold standards” for responsible AI governance, shaping how NGOs worldwide address issues such as disinformation, transparency, and ethical use of AI tools. With countries outside the EU already adopting similar risk-based approaches, understanding the Act is increasingly valuable for any organization using or procuring AI technologies. No legal or technical background is required, just curiosity about using AI responsibly in the nonprofit sector.

Lesson 4: AI opportunities for non-profits and foundational prompting: Discover high-impact AI applications for non-profits, from fundraising and outreach to data analysis, and learn the essential prompting techniques to ensure AI tools produce accurate, reliable, and mission-aligned results.

Lesson 5: Hands-on activities: Short, step-by-step instructions on how to complete the hands-on activities

Required resources

- World Bank 2024, AI value alignment: How we can align artificial intelligence

with human values, <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/10/ai-value-alignment-how-we-can-align-artificial-intelligence-with-human-values/>

- Paola Galvez Callirgos 2025, Harnessing AI ethically in nonprofits: From policy to practice, <https://globethics.net/harnessing-ai-ethically-nonprofits-policy-practice>

Use cases

- “Amplifying youth voices in conflict zones: AI for inclusive dialogue in Yemen” by CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation <https://cmi.fi/2025/06/04/amplifying-youth-voices-in-conflict-zones-ai-for-inclusive-dialogue-in-yemen/> (A PDF with further information can be downloaded from the link)
- Forus’ members discussing AI and civil society: rethinking communication in a digital age <https://www.forus-international.org/en/news/ai-and-civil-society-rethinking-communication-in-a-digital-age>