Tool 3

AI Board Discussion Guide

Facilitate productive conversations about AI with your Board

Start here

Lead an initial conversation with board members about how AI can advance your mission.

The insights gained from the conversation will provide a strong foundation for ongoing strategic planning around AI adoption.

Outcomes

- Proactively manage potential risks associated with AI

- Seize opportunities to innovate and increase impact with AI

- Board alignment on one of the most transformative technologies of our time

Instructions

Follow these steps to invite your board members into the conversation:

1. **Before the meeting:** Share prep resources and customize meeting agenda (Page 2)

2. **During the meeting:** Follow the step-by-step Discussion Guide (Pages 3-5)

3. **Don't forget:** Schedule continued discussions so Board members can strategically inform your organization's AI initiatives.

Before the meeting

To prepare a productive conversation about AI with your Board:
First, review and share contextual resources about AI with your group. Second, customize the meeting agenda to fit your organization's meeting culture and process.

Review and Share Resources with Board Members

▶ CONTEXT RESOURCES

Offer Board members resources to gain a basic understanding of AI prior to the discussion. Select and share relevant resources from the list below. You and your leadership team should also be caught up on these materials.

Review the AI Terms Glossary powered by Change City

Listen to Artificial Intelligence—How Does It Work? by the BornCurious podcast

Discuss the book Co-Intelligence by Ethan Mollick

Read 8 Steps Nonprofits Can Take to Adopt AI Responsibly published by the Stanford Social Innovation Review

▶ COMMUNICATING MEETING GOALS

When circulating the resources, provide the goal for the discussion to prompt Board members to review the resources considering their role and responsibilities.

The goal of this conversation is to:
_____

This is important because:
_____

{Example}

The goal of this conversation is to:

begin creating board-level alignment about how AI can help our organization.

This is important because:

we have staff who see time-saving opportunities with AI, we collect sensitive data that needs to be protected, and we don't have an organizational AI strategy.

▶ ENGAGING BOARD EXPERTISE

If you have Board members with AI expertise, ask them provide background on AI to the rest of the Board prior to the meeting. To save time request that they record a quick video that can be shared in advance.

Support your expert Board member by prompting in the following ways:

- Where do your insights about AI come from?

- What is the single most important idea about AI that you'd like the Board to understand?

- How do you look at AI (opportunities and risks) in regard to our organization?

Customize Board Meeting Agenda

Your organization—and your Board—is unique.

Adapt the Discussion Guide in the following section (Pages 3-5) so that the conversation remains relevant to your group and your mission.

During the meeting

Agenda Part 1:
Share how generative AI is relevant to your organization and the nonprofit sector.

Provide Context

▶ **EXTERNAL LANDSCAPE**

Reflect on and evaluate case studies from similar nonprofit impact areas. Use case studies you're aware of or borrow from Stanford Social Innovation Review's Introducing AI-Powered Nonprofits series.

Share recent AI trends and data from the nonprofit sector. The AI Readiness Survey Report from the Generosity AI Working Group is a good place to start.

▶ **INTERNAL LANDSCAPE**

Summarize how AI is currently being thought about and used within the organization:

- How are AI tools or platforms currently being used internally?

- What have been some of the challenges and benefits observed from AI experimentation or integration?

- What are some specific AI projects or initiatives that the organization is considering?

- What's the current level of AI knowledge and expertise within the team? Are there individuals with specific AI skills or experience?

- Are there any plans in place to enhance AI literacy?

During the meeting

Agenda Part 2:
Place Board members in small groups for focused discussion on specific AI topics.

Break into Small Groups

Select topics and questions that are most relevant to your organization. We've provided some options to get you started.

Looking for more discussion options?
This would be a great prompt for an LLM such as ChatGPT, Claude, or CoPilot.

▶ **GOVERNANCE & STRATEGIC PLANNING**

☐ How do you think generative AI can influence, inform, or support our current strategic plan?

☐ How could generative AI impact our organization's existing priorities?

☐ How might we harness AI to transform the way in which we accomplish our mission?

☐ What policies and practices would be helpful for our organization in regards to AI?

▶ **RISK MANAGEMENT, ADVOCACY & FUNDRAISING**

☐ How can we ensure the use of AI in our organization aligns with our values and maintains stakeholder trust?

☐ What risks or challenges do we foresee with AI in our sector?
(Consider ethics and values, security of data, and organizational reputation and trust with community)

☐ How might AI shape fundraising, donor relations, and resource allocation?

▶ **BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

☐ What AI-related skills or expertise do we currently have on the Board?

☐ What skills and backgrounds should we consider adding to our board given the continued influence of AI?

☐ What areas of further research or consultation are needed to support the Board?

During the meeting

Agenda Part 3:
Reflect as a full group. Share insights and prioritize key next steps.

Reconvene

Generative AI is a quickly evolving technology, and this shouldn't be a "one-and-done" conversation.

Here are three things to get Board consensus on before the meeting is over.

▶ **CLOSING OUT THIS INITIAL CONVERSATION**

☐ Identify key areas for further research or expert consultation

☐ Outline any policy or governance considerations to be developed

☐ Schedule periodic reviews of AI strategy as the technology evolves