

Background

UF already provides several resources on the responsible use of AI:

- **EDIS Guidelines for Authors Using AI Tools (2025):** Focused on open-access, educational content, with strong emphasis on disclosure, citation, and ethical use.
- **UF Information Technology's AI Services (UF IT):** Guidance on approved platforms (e.g., UF GPT/Microsoft Copilot) and security considerations.

- **UF Brand Center Generative AI Guidelines:** Ethics and best practices for UF communications and marketing, stressing that AI should enhance, not replace human work, and that transparency and editorial oversight are essential.

These resources establish a foundation of ethical principles, disclosure, and responsible use. However, UF/IFAS publications that are made commercially available require additional layers of guidance because they are sold to the public and often serve as scientific reference materials.

Where EDIS and UF Guidelines Leave Off

While current UF guidance is strong, it does not fully address the unique concerns of commercial publications. Commercially available publications require:

- **Commercial Liability:** Sold works carry a greater risk if an AI image is later found to be derivative or infringing.
- **Scientific Accuracy:** Many UF/IFAS publications (field guides, ID decks, manuals) rely on visuals for precise identification; AI images are unreliable for this without verification.
- **Editorial Approval:** AI-generated visuals are subject to a “disclose → review → approve” process as part of the standard editorial review before inclusion in a commercial publication.
- **Brand and Market Credibility:** Commercially available publications reflect UF/IFAS in the public marketplace, so standards must exceed those for internal communications or free-access resources.

UF/IFAS Interim Guidance for Authors

1. Preferred and Best Practice

- Use original images, author-created figures, or visuals designed by UF/IFAS Communications graphic designers.
- This ensures accuracy, professionalism, and freedom from copyright concerns.

2. Conditional Allowance

- AI-generated visuals may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Review of AI-created images will occur as part of the standard manuscript evaluation process.

3. Requirements for Consideration

- **Use of University-Approved AI Tools:** The use of images generated with Copilot through our university

account for commercial publications is permitted, provided all other requirements in this guidance are met, including disclosure and prior approval.

- **Full Disclosure:** Authors must state what AI tool was used, how it was used, and for what purpose.
- **Copyright Confirmation:** Authors must confirm that no copyrighted or proprietary content was copied or imitated.
- **Accuracy Verification:** Graphs must be based on verifiable data; illustrations must be reviewed by subject matter experts.

4. Restrictions

- AI-generated visuals may not be used for diagnostic/field identification images.
- Graphs or charts created by AI without a verifiable dataset will not be accepted.
- Any submission without full disclosure will not be accepted.

Bottom Line

UF's existing AI guidance provides the ethical foundation, but commercial UF/IFAS publications demand stricter standards. Until a university-wide policy is finalized, IFAS Communications will apply a “disclose, review, and approve” approach, with a strong preference for images created by our design team.

Resources

EDIS Guidelines for Authors Using AI Tools (2025): ics.ifas.ufl.edu/media/icsifasufledu/docs/edis/EDIS-AI-Factsheet.pdf

UF Information Technology – AI Services: it.ufl.edu/ai

UF Brand Center – Generative AI Guidelines: brandcenter.ufl.edu/genai-guidelines