

AI Preferences
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AIPREF Vocabulary Exclusions
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Abstract

This document proposes an update to the AI preferences vocabulary [VOCAB] in order to establish protected uses (exclusions).

About This Document

This note is to be removed before publishing as an RFC.

The latest revision of this draft can be found at <https://TimidRobot.github.io/ietf-aipref-exclusions/draft-zehta-aipref-exclusions.html>. Status information for this document may be found at <https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-zehta-aipref-exclusions/>.

Discussion of this document takes place on the AI Preferences Working Group mailing list (<mailto:ai-control@ietf.org>), which is archived at <https://mailarchive.ietf.org/arch/browse/ai-control/>. Subscribe at <https://www.ietf.org/mailman/listinfo/ai-control/>.

Source for this draft and an issue tracker can be found at <https://github.com/TimidRobot/ietf-aipref-exclusions>.

Status of This Memo

This Internet-Draft is submitted in full conformance with the provisions of BCP 78 and BCP 79.

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This Internet-Draft will expire on 8 October 2026.

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1. Introduction

This proposal establishes exclusions within the AI preferences to protect public interest activities. These exclusions help balance content holder agency, end user priority, and public interest activities that remain essential for the open web. Creating explicit exclusions from AI preferences for public interest activities will create certainty and, therefore, strengthen their position.

This proposal can also be viewed as a [DIFF].

2. Conventions and Definitions

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in BCP 14 [RFC2119] [RFC8174] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

3. Statements of Preference

See [VOCAB].

3.1. Conformance

See [VOCAB].

3.2. Public Interest Exclusions

Regardless of the preferences expressed, the following public interest uses are excluded:

- * Anyone can use the assets for malicious content detection
 - For example: A website that permits user uploads may use the assets to develop or use tools that detect harmful content according to established terms of use.
- * Any end user can use the assets for internationalization and localization, and for accessibility tools to aid individuals with accessibility needs
 - For example: Individuals with accessibility needs may utilize software that uses the assets to access automated captions or generate accessible formats.
- * Organizations that preserve expressed preferences can use the assets for public archiving
 - For example: An archive that preserves preferences may use the assets to improve the metadata associated with assets or help with discoverability.
- * Cultural heritage institutions and not-for-profit research and/or educational organizations can use the assets for analysis and research
 - For example: A cultural heritage organization may use the assets to provide more useful, reliable, or discoverable access to historical web collections.

3.3. Applicability and Effect

This specification provides a set of definitions for different categories of use, plus a system for associating simple preferences to each (allow, disallow, or unknown; see Section 3).

This specification does not provide any enforcement mechanism for those preferences, and conformance to it does not encompass whether preferences are actually respected during data processing.

Preferences do not themselves create rights or prohibitions, either in the positive or the negative. Other mechanisms—technical, legal, contractual, or otherwise—might enforce stated preferences and thereby determine the consequences of following or not following a stated preference.

An entity that receives usage preferences MAY choose to respect those preferences it has discovered, according to an understanding of how the asset is used, how that usage corresponds to the usage categories where preferences have been stated, and the applicable legal context.

Usage preferences can be ignored due to express agreements between relevant parties, explicit provisions of law, or the exercise of discretion in situations where widely recognized priorities justify doing so. Priorities that could justify ignoring preferences include—but are not limited to—free expression, safety, education, scholarship, research, preservation, interoperability, and accessibility.

Because enforcement is not provided by this specification, the consequences of ignoring preferences could vary depending upon how a given legal jurisdiction recognizes preferences.

4. Security Considerations

See [VOCAB].

5. IANA Considerations

This document has no IANA actions.

6. References

6.1. Normative References

- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", BCP 14, RFC 2119, DOI 10.17487/RFC2119, March 1997, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc2119>>.
- [RFC8174] Leiba, B., "Ambiguity of Uppercase vs Lowercase in RFC 2119 Key Words", BCP 14, RFC 8174, DOI 10.17487/RFC8174, May 2017, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc8174>>.

[VOCAB] Keller, P. and M. Thomson, Ed., "A Vocabulary For Expressing AI Usage Preferences", Work in Progress, Internet-Draft, draft-ietf-aipref-vocab-05, April 2026, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-ietf-aipref-vocab-05>>.

6.2. Informative References

[AIPREF-IMPACT] Badii, F., Bailey, L., and J. Levy, "AI Preferences Signaling: End User Impact", Work in Progress, Internet-Draft, draft-farzdusa-aipref-enduser-00, 26 November 2025, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-farzdusa-aipref-enduser-00>>.

[DIFF] "Proposal as diff Issue #1 TimidRobot/ietf-aipref-exclusions", n.d., <<https://github.com/TimidRobot/ietf-aipref-exclusions/issues/1>>.

[ENDUSERS] Nottingham, M., "The Internet is for End Users", RFC 8890, August 2020, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc8890.html>>.

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