

**PULLING BACK THE CURTAIN ON AI USE
CASES FOR PROCUREMENT PROFESSIONALS**

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E&I's EdPro Virtual Exchange brings members together through a variety of event formats designed to inspire, inform, and connect.



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About Me

@ University of Kentucky for 10 Years, Leadership in the Educational Mission

Background in Digital Humanities, Tech-Enhanced Learning, Writing Studies (e.g., Technical and Professional Writing)

Generative AI Focus since January 2023: how does it work, where is it going, how does it impact work, learning, and life?

Active user of generative AI tools for teaching, educational development, and other tasks (but with a critical approach)



1950: Turing Test

1955: “Artificial Intelligence”

1960s: ELIZA, the first chatbot

2017: “Attention Is All You Need”

2018: GPT-1, the first LLM



Quiz: Traditional/Predictive AI versus Generative AI

Importance of Developing GAI Literacy:

1. technical: how it works (game)
2. ethical: how it affects us & the world
3. practical: how to use it effectively
4. disciplinary: how it resonates with our unique episteme, goals, and values



What has improved about Generative AI since 2022?

And, what is it “good” at?

- “Context window”—the amount of text and data that GAI tools can keep track of at any given time—is exponentially larger.
- “Reasoning”—essentially, GAI talking to itself before it gives you a response—has greatly improved the quality of output.
- “Retrieval”—connecting GAI tools to real data “in the wild” via the web, databases, or other sources—allows for greater accuracy and more applications on real data/issues.
- Multimodality—GAI tools’ ability to deal in many media forms at once—allows for quick translation and pivoting between text, image, audio, video, and composite sources (e.g., webpages).
- Agentic Workflows—which allow GAI tools a degree of autonomy in determining next steps and using both hardware and software—allow for more automated, “long-horizon” tasks.



What are challenges or weaknesses of generative AI?

And, what things is it not “naturally” as “good” at?

- Quality and accuracy of output remain a challenge in many circumstances despite the advancements in the tools and tech.
- Tools can still struggle with longer documents and larger files, especially with precision tasks.
- Issues like “sycophancy” challenge our sense that we’re dealing with a free-thinking entity with a full theory of mind.
- Older wisdom about “prompt engineering” does not hold as true with later reasoning models and larger models.
- Output and behavior can still be inconsistent from moment to moment, prompt to prompt.
- Security, regulatory, and compliance concerns remain as the landscape of use and commercial development outpace the slower process of evaluation and implementation .
- Efficiency may not always be efficient in the deployment of GAI tools.

Strategies for Engaging with AI



Frame the task and set the scene. Specify the situation & audience, state the goal & success criteria, declare scope & boundaries, provide reference points (standards/examples), choose the voice/persona.

Control the AI tool's behavior. Set rules & guardrails, define output format, specify length & quantity of output, calibrate difficulty or rigor, provide (self-)evaluation criteria, require explanations or references.

Improve prompting as you go. Ask for feedback, ask for improvements, require that the AI asks questions before proceeding, rewrite or revise the prompt iteratively.

As the AI to review its own work. Require rationales or explanations, provide criteria for the AI to review its output, ask the AI to test its ideas, tell the AI to verify its output and focus on significant or high-stakes parts, ask for certainty levels and explanations.

Center your own agency. Decide when more or less attention to prompt design is worthwhile, don't give up after only one or two tries with prompting, push back when the AI is not aligning with your needs or expertise, keep in mind that the AI's line of thought is only one possible response to a situation.



Use Case: RFP Generation

Generative AI tools draft RFP documents with custom parameters, reducing the time and effort needed to initiate procurement.

- Automates initial RFP draft creation from basic requirements
- Adapts and fills in standard RFP templates with relevant details and compliance clauses
- Tailors language and scope to different purchase types (commodities, services, etc.) for consistency and clarity
- Generates complete RFP drafts in hours instead of weeks, freeing staff for strategic tasks

Step 1: Procurement officer inputs key requirements (scope, budget, timeline) into an AI drafting tool (with template or precedent documents)

Step 2: GAI produces a detailed RFP draft, including objectives, criteria, and terms

Step 3: Officer reviews and fine-tunes the draft, with manual writing needed, also using GAI to check its work



Use Case: Contract Analysis

Generative AI reviews and summarizes contracts, flagging risky clauses and ensuring key terms meet the university's standards, speeding up negotiations and compliance checks.

- Summarizes lengthy contracts into key points and obligations for easy review
- Identifies high-risk language or deviations from approved terms (e.g. indemnity, data privacy)
- Flags missing standard clauses or compliance issues so nothing important is overlooked
- Suggests alternate wording or improvements for clauses to align contracts with best practices
- Compares multiple contracts or versions side-by-side, highlighting differences automatically

Step 1: Procurement uploads a 30-page vendor contract into the AI platform

Step 2: GAI extracts and highlights critical terms (pricing, deliverables, termination clauses) and flags any non-standard terms (e.g. liability limits below policy)

Step 3: The AI provides a concise summary and even suggests revised wording for risky clauses

[Example](#)



Use Case: Procurement Assistant

An AI assistant guides faculty/staff through procurement processes and answers questions on demand, improving user experience, compliance, and freeing procurement staff from repetitive inquiries.

- Chatbot answers common procurement questions (e.g. “What’s the process to purchase XYZ?”) any time
- Guides users through request intake by asking plain-language questions, then auto-generates required forms or requisitions
- Recommends the right purchasing method (e.g. use an existing contract, get quotes, or issue an RFP) based on the user’s needs
- Provides policy reminders and approval requirements

Step 1: A researcher messages the AI assistant: “I need to buy a microscope, cost ~\$15k. What do I do?”

Step 2: The AI checks procurement rules and responds: “For \$15k, you need three informal quotes (under our \$25k threshold). Preferred suppliers for lab equipment are A, B, C. I can draft an email to request quotes.”

Step 3: The chatbot walks the user through a few questions (specs needed, timeline) and then generates a purchase requisition form and a template quote request email pre-filled with details.



Use Case: Marketplace Benchmarking

Generative AI scans public data, contracts, and proposals to benchmark pricing, features, and terms across similar vendors—giving procurement teams data-driven leverage.

- Extracts pricing and contract data from public RFPs, FOIA disclosures, and vendor websites
- Compares offerings and contract terms across vendors for similar services/products
- Builds side-by-side profiles of competitors: pricing, features, SLAs, support models
- Summarizes procurement trends in peer institutions (e.g. what platforms are popular in colleges of similar size or mission)
- Surfaces cost outliers and negotiation opportunities based on historical pricing or bundling trends

Step 1: Procurement officer uses GAI to gather 15 public contracts and proposals for learning management systems from similar-sized U.S. colleges

Step 2: AI tool extracts: license type, annual cost, user tiers, support terms, and SLA clauses

Step 3: Output: a comparison matrix with per-user pricing, hidden costs, optional modules, and support hours side-by-side

[Example](#)



Use Case: Scenario Modeling

Generative AI simulates multiple sourcing, pricing, or budget scenarios—rapidly testing trade-offs and outcomes to guide decisions.

- Generates cost models for different contract structures (e.g. 1-year vs. 3-year terms, licensing tiers)
- Models total cost of ownership (TCO) across vendors based on different usage or enrollment assumptions
- Forecasts budget impact of inflation, vendor escalators, or bundling options
- Simulates staffing and training needs under different implementation schedules
- Creates executive-friendly “what-if” summaries (e.g. “What happens if we delay purchase to next FY?”)

Step 1: Procurement officer provides baseline data: Vendor X proposal, student enrollment forecast, labor rates

Step 2: GAI models 3 options: (a) 1-year license, (b) 3-year prepay, (c) phased rollout across departments

Step 3: Output: GAI creates a chart showing cost over time, training burden, and risk profile for each option

(show example in ChatGPT)

non-procurement examples of “vibe-modeling” for [astronomical data](#) and [athletic performance data](#)