ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
(2025)

Policy Statement

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) recognizes the transformative potential and growing significance of artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool in the field of landscape architecture. ASLA believes AI is not a substitute for human judgment, creativity, or ethical and professional responsibility. ASLA believes that the Professional Landscape Architect must maintain responsibility for all deliverables and services to protect public health, safety, and welfare. ASLA recognizes the community and environmental concerns associated with artificial intelligence infrastructure and believes that landscape architects are uniquely qualified to address these issues.

Justification

Landscape architects play a crucial role in planning, designing, and implementing designs for public and private spaces across the world. By integrating their knowledge of science, technology, and the arts landscape architects understand community needs along with the environmental, cultural, and social conditions of a site. Landscape architects also address specific project parameters to prepare design solutions that are unique and creative and that protect public health, safety, and welfare. Currently, AI does not have the capacity to perform many of these design functions nor emulate empathy, nuance, or other human responses to the complex elements involved in planning, design, and project implementation

Issue

AI technology is evolving rapidly, faster than its effects can be fully understood. Like computational tools, integrating AI and machine learning within the practice of landscape architecture has the potential to transform processes and procedures. From site analysis, climate modeling, and construction documentation, AI presents new opportunities to support sustainable, equitable, and responsive landscapes. However, its growing use also raises important questions around authorship, accountability, equity, and ethics.

AI is a tool only; it is not a replacement for professional judgment. AI is a set of technologies that generate models pulled from data sources that are both curated by the user and scraped from online resources. The use of unsuitable AI models or inadequate prompts can limit the efficacy of design solutions, potentially impacting the health, safety, and welfare of people and the environment. It remains the responsibility of the licensed landscape architect to provide services in conformance with the standard of care.

Unlike computational tools, many of the checkpoints and models used in AI systems are opaque to the user and grounded in biases that impact design. AI tools can help to articulate problems visually and statistically, assisting the landscape architect in generating new ideas. AI lacks the ability to provide the empathetic and site-based care that landscape architects are educated and trained to provide. Furthermore, large centralized data sets that are not reviewed for accuracy and relevance may result in inconsistent and low-quality solutions.

AI is not yet an autonomous intelligence and lacks the full capacity to interpret context, ethics, aesthetics, or stakeholder values, even when provided with precise input. Human-centered design requires the Professional Landscape Architect to exercise informed judgment, navigate regulatory and community processes, integrate cultural and psychological dimensions, and respond creatively to site-specific conditions. These human responsibilities are essential to delivering resilient, inclusive, and forward-looking landscape architecture projects.

In addition to ethical and professional considerations, the infrastructure that supports AI, particularly large-scale data processing centers, poses significant environmental challenges. These facilities require immense amounts of electricity to power servers and maintain cooling systems, often relying on nonrenewable energy sources that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Data centers also consume vast quantities of water for cooling, placing stress on local ecosystems and community resources. As demand for AI expands, the proliferation of such centers risks amplifying carbon footprints and increasing pressure on local resources, adjacent land uses, and raising critical questions about sustainability and long-term environmental impacts in the use of AI technologies.

Resources

https://learn.asla.org/products/asla-skill-ed-exploring-ais-impact-on-landscape-architecture#tab-product_tab_content

https://urbandesignlab.in/the-use-of-ai-in-landscape-urbanism/?srsltid=AfmBOorLSS8Ofc6LuWqDBJbmyoewgeIbfih9DSISZUEDuOEOk7wyM22L

https://land8.com/elevating-landscape-architecture-the-compelling-case-for-integrating-ai-video/

https://www.planning.org/blog/9295637/planning-ethics-and-generative-ai/

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2024.2355305

https://www.planning.org/blog/9269515/augmented-planners-in-an-era-of-generative-ai/

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-licensing-matters-more-ai-era-thearpl-ojace/

Inter-related Policies

Open Space
Visual Character and Scenic Resources
Environmental Sustainability
Livable Communities
Urban Growth and Development