25 Ways
Nonprofits and Communities
Can Collaborate with
AI for the Greater Good

Applied Science Edition | Volume 1 of 101 Ways Series

A Coherent Guide to Responsible Human–AI Collaboration

Charles Betterton, MSCED & Zen Benefiel, MA, MBA

25 Ways Nonprofits and Communities Can Collaborate with AI for the Greater Good

Volume 1 of 4

101 Ways to Collaborate with AI for the Greater Good

Applied Science Edition

A coherent, field-ready playbook for responsible human–AI collaboration.

Co-Authored by

Charles Betterton – MSCED

Zen Benefiel – MA, MBA

Contents

Orientation Prelude

The Top 10 Reasons Communities Are Collaborating with AI

Across nonprofit, civic, and funding environments, the same motivations surface again and again. Organizations are learning to collaborate with AI in order to:

- Do more mission with the same staff—automating busywork, not humanity
- Unlock new funding through stronger proposals and clearer outcome narratives
- Include more people via language access, accessibility support, and 24/7 information channels
- Hear communities better by synthesizing meetings, surveys, and feedback into usable insight
- Speed up service delivery by reducing bottlenecks in intake, triage, and follow-up
- Build smarter partnerships through shared data rooms and coordinated workflows
- Protect integrity with transparent guardrails, audit trails, and bias checks
- Up-skill teams with practical, task-based AI literacy
- Measure what matters with real-time learning dashboards
- Tell better stories that connect evidence with lived experience

These reasons are not aspirational. They reflect current, lived pressures—and emerging opportunities.

How This Book Is Meant to Be Used

This book is a practical playbook.

It was written for nonprofit leaders, community organizations, civic partners, and funders who recognize that artificial intelligence is no longer a distant or abstract concern—but a present-day capacity that must be engaged **carefully, responsibly, and in service of real human needs**.

Rather than focusing on tools, trends, or speculation, this book focuses on **practice**.

It translates the idea of "AI for good" into clear, repeatable ways communities and organizations can collaborate with AI to:

- strengthen people and programs
- expand economic opportunity
- improve service delivery and learning
- build trust, transparency, and resilience

All of the practices in this book are grounded in a simple premise: **humans remain accountable for decisions and outcomes, always.**

Who This Book Is For

This playbook is designed for readers at different starting points:

- **Nonprofit leaders and frontline teams** who want to use AI responsibly without sacrificing mission, ethics, or trust
- **Community-based organizations and coalitions** seeking shared frameworks for collaboration

- **Local governments and civic partners** navigating increasing complexity with limited capacity
- **Anchor institutions** (libraries, community foundations, service clubs, chambers, colleges, faith and community hubs) interested in hosting inclusive, trusted local collaboration labs
- **Funders and partners** looking for people-centered, governance-ready approaches to AI adoption and community innovation

You do not need to be technically advanced to use this book. You do need a commitment to learning, care, and accountability.

What This Book Offers

This is not a theory of AI. It is a **playbook for collaboration**.

Inside, you will find:

- **Clear people-first principles** (privacy, transparency, bias awareness, consent, and human accountability)
- **A simple, repeatable structure** for action
- **101 real-world ways** nonprofits and communities can collaborate with AI responsibly
- **Safeguards and success signals** built into every practice
- **A clear path from pilot to funding to scale**, without overreach

The goal is not to automate humanity—but to **support human judgment, dignity, and participation** where it matters most.

Hints on How to Use This Book

This book is designed to be **used immediately**.

You do not need to read it cover to cover before taking action.

A simple starting approach:

- Choose **three to five "Ways"** that match your context
- Run a **30-day sprint** using the provided steps
- Apply the built-in safeguards
- Track the simple success signals
- Decide what to continue, adapt, or stop

Many organizations begin with small, low-risk practices—then expand into stewardship-based pilots or local collaboration labs as confidence grows.

How to Use This Field Guide

This book is not a manual, a checklist, or a prescription.

It is a **field guide**.

Field guides are designed for people who are already *in the terrain*—navigating uncertainty, complexity, and real-world conditions that do not resolve neatly into steps. They help readers recognize patterns, orient themselves, and choose responses with greater clarity.

The Ways that follow are not meant to be implemented all at once, nor evaluated as a menu of features. They are **situational practices**—each one responding to a specific human need that emerges as artificial intelligence enters community life.

Read for Recognition, Not Completion

You do not need to read this book from beginning to end.

Instead, notice which Ways *catch your attention*, provoke discomfort, or feel immediately relevant. That reaction is often a signal that the conditions described are already present in your organization or community.

Some readers will begin with literacy.
Others with governance, trust, or readiness.
Some will return to the same Way multiple times as their context evolves.

This is expected.

Field guides are meant to be revisited as the terrain changes.

What Each Way Contains

To reduce repetition and support deeper understanding, operational guidance has been centralized earlier in this book. Each Way therefore focuses on **meaning, evidence, and insight**, using a consistent structure:

Context / Why This Matters

This section situates the Way within real-world conditions— naming the tension, risk, or opportunity it responds to. It helps the reader recognize *when* this Way becomes relevant.

Micro-Case A

A near-field example showing the Way in practice. These cases are intentionally small, grounded, and human-scale— illustrating subtle shifts rather than dramatic transformations.

Micro-Case B

A contrasting or complementary example that demonstrates how the same Way adapts across contexts. Together, the two cases reveal pattern rather than anecdote.

Points Revealed

Key insights that become visible once the Way is understood. These are not instructions, but *sharpened perceptions*—things readers begin to notice elsewhere.

Why This Works

An explanation of the underlying dynamics that make the Way effective. This section connects practice to stewardship, trust, agency, and human responsibility—without technical framing.

A Note on Readiness and Restraint

Not every Way is appropriate for every context.

Choosing *not* to act, or to pause, or to return later is a valid and often responsible outcome. Discernment—not adoption speed—is the measure of success in this field guide.

If a Way feels premature, confusing, or misaligned, that information matters. It may indicate a need for literacy, trust-building, or shared language before proceeding.

In complex systems, **restraint is a form of intelligence**.

The Deeper Pattern

Taken together, the Ways describe a progression:

- From awareness to literacy
- From literacy to trust

- From trust to governance

- From governance to readiness

- From readiness to responsible collaboration

You are not expected to follow this progression linearly.

You are invited to **locate yourself within it**.

How This Guide Is Meant to Be Used

- Individually, as a reflective reference

- Collectively, as a conversation catalyst

- Iteratively, as conditions evolve

If this guide succeeds, it will not tell you what to do.

It will help you recognize what is already happening—and choose your next step with greater clarity.

A Note on Stewardship

While this book is practical by design, it is not value-neutral.

Every practice is grounded in a stewardship-first approach to human–AI collaboration—one that emphasizes:

- human accountability over automation
- participation over optimization
- transparency over opacity
- learning over control

The next chapters situate these practices within a broader framework of stewardship and shared responsibility, connecting immediate action to longer-term social and planetary coherence.

This book begins with action.
It continues with purpose.

From Vision to Viability

Stewardship as a Practical Path Forward

We are living in a moment when humanity's tools have outpaced its shared capacity to steward them wisely.

Across sectors—civic, nonprofit, economic, educational, and technological—there is growing recognition that **fragmented solutions are no longer sufficient** for challenges that are systemic in nature. Artificial intelligence, climate instability, economic transition, and social polarization are not isolated issues; they are signals that our methods of coordination, governance, and accountability must mature.

This book was written from within that realization.

Planetary Citizens articulates a civilizational context—a way of understanding humanity as a single, interdependent community living within a living Earth system. Yet vision alone does not create change. What has been missing is a **credible bridge between planetary-scale values and field-ready practice**.

That bridge is stewardship.

The Core Challenge: Capability Without Coherence

The defining challenge of our time is not a lack of intelligence, innovation, or goodwill. It is a lack of **coherence across action**.

- Organizations adopt new tools faster than shared norms emerge
- Funders seek systemic impact but receive fragmented proposals
- Communities face accelerating change without shared decision frameworks

- Technology amplifies outcomes while accountability remains diffuse

Without deliberate stewardship, even well-intended innovations risk eroding trust, concentrating power, or externalizing harm.

A Practical Response: Living Earth StewardHeirShip

Living Earth StewardHeirShip exists to address this gap and more.

It is an applied stewardship initiative designed to translate planetary-scale values into **repeatable, accountable practices** that organizations, communities, and institutions can implement now—particularly in contexts involving emerging technologies such as AI.

Living Earth StewardHeirShip is not a philosophical overlay. It is a **field-ready orientation** grounded in:

- Human accountability for decisions and outcomes
- Participation over optimization
- Transparency as a trust mechanism
- Continuous learning rather than static compliance

These principles are not abstract. They are operationalized throughout this book in the form of concrete practices that communities and organizations can adopt, adapt, and scale responsibly.

Alignment With Planetary Citizens

Living Earth StewardHeirShip operates within the broader framework of **Planetary Citizens**, which provides the civilizational lens for this work.

Planetary Citizens frames the *why*:

- Humanity as a planetary community
- Shared responsibility for Earth systems

- Cross-sector coherence as a civic necessity
- Living Earth StewardHeirShip delivers the *how*:
- Applied governance practices
- Ethical human–AI collaboration
- Measurable, funder-aligned implementation
- Community-scale pilots with institutional relevance

Together, they form a coherent pathway from vision to viability.

A Clear Path to Achievement

The work outlined in this book follows a deliberate progression:

Stewardship Literacy
Building shared understanding of limits, responsibilities, and roles.

Participatory Design & Alignment
Engaging stakeholders in shaping how tools are used—not merely adopting them.

Implementation With Accountability
Applying practices that keep decision authority human and outcomes reviewable.

Learning, Scaling, and Adaptation
Expanding successful approaches through feedback, collaboration, and funding partnerships.

This is not a speculative model. It is already being applied in nonprofit, civic, and community contexts where consequences are lived rather than theoretical.

An Invitation to Read With Purpose

This book is written for those who sense that **the future will not be secured by speed alone**, but by care, restraint, and shared responsibility.

What follows is not a prescription, but a **practice-based framework**—one that funders, organizations, and communities can use to steward powerful tools in service of a thriving, equitable, and loving living Earth, our shared home. We're learning how to do better housekeeping.

Quantum Reality - We're Interconnected

Way #1 — Community AI Welcome Circles

Way Description

What it is — Monthly community circles hosted by libraries, community centers, or faith spaces that demystify AI through guided demonstrations, conversation, and shared storytelling.

Stewardship Note: Welcome Circles succeed when they normalize questions more than answers.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator, greeter, safety lead; laptop or tablet; accessibility materials.

Safeguards

No sensitive personal data entered; clear consent and expectations; outputs verified by humans; accountability remains human.

Human Check

Human Check: If conversation gives way to screen focus, redesign the circle.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• Where have you already encountered AI in daily life?
• What questions about AI do you feel hesitant to ask elsewhere?
• What would make an AI interaction feel supportive rather than intrusive?

Context / Why This Matters

Welcome Circles provide social permission to not know, replacing isolation with shared inquiry.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A public library hosted a monthly AI Welcome Circle for residents with mixed familiarity, including seniors and first-time

users.

Tension: Participants arrived expecting either technical instruction or persuasion, and several expressed anxiety about falling behind.

Shift: By prioritizing shared questions over demonstrations, the circle reduced fear and increased participant confidence.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A faith-based community space convened a circle following local concern about AI misuse.

Tension: Early discussion polarized around moral certainty and distrust of technology.

Shift: Facilitated inquiry normalized uncertainty, allowing participants to articulate boundaries without needing consensus.

Points Revealed

• Trust precedes literacy
• Familiar spaces lower uncertainty
• Conversation teaches discernment

Why This Works

When uncertainty is normalized, discernment develops collectively rather than defensively.

Way #2 — Public AI Literacy Sessions

Way Description

What it is — Short, structured public sessions introducing AI in plain language, emphasizing appropriate use, limitations, and human responsibility.

Stewardship Note: Literacy grows when boundaries are understood as clearly as capabilities.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; optional co-host; projector or shared screen; printed handouts.

Safeguards

No live personal data entry; use hypothetical or public examples; discuss outputs without adopting them.

Human Check

Human Check: If participants leave overconfident or reassured without discernment, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What is AI particularly good at?
• Where might it save time but cost judgment?
• What would you want verified before trusting an output?

Context / Why This Matters

Public literacy stabilizes understanding by resisting hype and fear.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A civic group hosted a 90-minute public AI literacy session open to residents with no prior experience.
Tension: Attendees oscillated between exaggerated fears and inflated expectations.

Shift: Examining a real AI failure example grounded discussion and sharpened discernment.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A community center offered recurring literacy sessions for neighborhood groups.
Tension: Participants initially focused on how to use tools rather than when not to.
Shift: Introducing pre-use reflection questions shifted attention toward responsibility and limits.

Points Revealed

• Boundaries reduce fear
• Failure anchors realism
• Repetition deepens judgment

Why This Works

Understanding limits builds confidence that lasts.

Way #3 — AI Help Desks in Trusted Spaces

Way Description

What it is — Designated times and locations where trained staff assist residents with low-risk AI use for everyday tasks while preserving agency.

Stewardship Note: Help Desks should build confidence, not reliance.

Roles & Tools Needed

Trained staff or volunteers; public computer or tablet; safety signage.

Safeguards

No entry of personal identifiers or medical data; resident remains present and engaged; outputs reviewed together.

Human Check

Human Check: If residents return for the same task without learning, redesign the support.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What part of this would you still want to understand?
• How would you notice an error?
• What would help you try this independently next time?

Context / Why This Matters

Help Desks prevent confusion from becoming dependency.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A library established weekly AI Help Desk hours for residents navigating everyday tasks.
Tension: Some patrons returned repeatedly for the same task, expecting the system to replace learning.

Shift: Staff redesigned support to explain outputs collaboratively, reducing repeat dependence.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A community center hosted volunteer-staffed AI assistance sessions.
Tension: Residents hesitated to engage, fearing mistakes or embarrassment.
Shift: Clear scope-setting and prompt starters increased participation and confidence.

Points Revealed

• Presence prevents reliance
• Explanation builds agency
• Shared review preserves accountability

Why This Works

Guided support builds capability without transferring responsibility to a tool.

Way #4 — AI Myth-Busting Workshops

Way Description

What it is — Interactive workshops that address common misconceptions about AI through examples, dialogue, and shared inquiry.

   Stewardship Note: Myths dissolve faster through dialogue than correction.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; discussion prompts; visual capture tools.

Safeguards

Avoid live data use; no shaming or correction; focus on inquiry over certainty.

Human Check

   Human Check: If certainty increases instead of curiosity, slow the session.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What AI claims feel exaggerated?
• What questions shut down discussion?
• Where does uncertainty feel uncomfortable?

Context / Why This Matters

Myths flourish when uncertainty is stigmatized and questions are treated as weakness.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A mixed-experience group attended a workshop focused on common AI myths.
Tension: Participants arrived with strongly held assumptions reinforced by media narratives.

Shift: Dialogue-driven examples revealed limits, replacing certainty with curiosity.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Community leaders participated in a myth-busting session during a retreat.
Tension: Some leaders resisted questioning tools already in use.
Shift: Shared inquiry reframed myth correction as collective learning rather than criticism.

Points Revealed

• Myths signal unmet questions
• Dialogue sustains curiosity
• Examples reveal limits faster than lectures

Why This Works

Inquiry reframes disagreement into shared learning.

Way #5 — AI Safety Cards for the Public

Way Description

What it is — Simple, shareable cards outlining what not to share, when to verify, and when to pause before using AI.

Stewardship Note: Boundaries create confidence; clarity prevents harm.

Roles & Tools Needed

Staff time; printing or digital distribution.

Safeguards

Avoid technical jargon; keep guidance current; align with local policies.

Human Check

Human Check: If cards feel overwhelming, simplify.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would you never share with a tool?
• When would you want a second opinion?
• What signals tell you to pause?

Context / Why This Matters

Safety Cards provide just-in-time guardrails where people actually use tools.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A library distributed AI safety cards at service desks and public events.
Tension: Early drafts overwhelmed readers with technical warnings.
Shift: Simplified language clarified boundaries and increased usage.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A school district shared digital safety cards with families.
Tension: Parents were unsure when AI use crossed into risk.
Shift: Clear pause-and-verify guidance improved confidence
engaging with AI.

Points Revealed

• Simplicity drives adoption
• Timing matters
• Clarity prevents avoidable harm

Why This Works

Clear boundaries empower responsible choice.

Way #6 — Youth AI Literacy Circles

Way Description

What it is — Facilitated circles for young people to explore AI impacts, uses, and limits through age-appropriate discussion and examples.

Stewardship Note: Young people sense incoherence quickly— invite questions first.

Roles & Tools Needed

Youth facilitator; discussion materials; clear safety rules.

Safeguards

No personal data use; adult supervision; clear discussion boundaries.

Human Check

Human Check: If curiosity turns into fear or hype, rebalance.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• Where do you think AI already affects your life more than adults realize?
• What feels helpful about AI—and what feels uncomfortable?
• Who should be responsible when technology causes harm?

Context / Why This Matters

Youth encounter AI early and often; guided dialogue supports healthy skepticism.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A youth organization facilitated AI literacy circles for middle school students using familiar social media examples.
Tension: Early discussion leaned toward hype and exaggerated assumptions about AI capability.

Shift: Peer-led questioning redirected attention toward limits and responsible use.

Micro-Case B

Setting: High school students participated in small-group AI discussions during an afterschool program.
Tension: Students hesitated to challenge dominant narratives about automation replacing human roles.
Shift: Structured prompts legitimized skepticism and increased confidence asking critical questions.

Points Revealed

• Youth notice incoherence quickly
• Peer dialogue deepens insight
• Balance prevents fear and hype

Why This Works

Respecting youth agency fosters discernment.

Way #7 — Senior-Focused AI Navigation Sessions

Way Description

What it is — Guided sessions tailored for older adults to explore AI uses relevant to daily life, paced to comfort and comprehension.

Stewardship Note: Respect pace and lived experience; wisdom precedes fluency.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; accessible materials; patient pacing.

Safeguards

No personal data use; clear opt-in participation; emphasize verification.

Human Check

Human Check: If sessions feel rushed, slow down.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What kinds of technology have been most helpful to you in the past?
• Where would you want human confirmation before trusting a result?
• What would make learning this feel worthwhile rather than stressful?

Context / Why This Matters

Seniors are often excluded from AI conversations; respectful pacing restores confidence.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A senior center hosted guided AI navigation sessions paced for comfort and comprehension.
Tension: Participants expressed anxiety about making irreversible mistakes.
Shift: Demonstrating one use-case at a time restored confidence and curiosity.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Caregivers attended sessions alongside older adults.
Tension: Differing comfort levels created hesitation and frustration.
Shift: Extended Q&A normalized varied pacing and strengthened mutual understanding.

Points Revealed

- Pacing builds confidence
- Verification reduces anxiety
- Experience is an asset

Why This Works

Respecting experience enables learning.

Way #8 — AI in Everyday Life Demonstrations

Way Description

What it is — Short demos showing common, low-risk AI uses in everyday contexts without replacing judgment.

Stewardship Note: Stop before automation replaces thinking.

Roles & Tools Needed

Presenter; simple demo tools.

Safeguards

No live personal data; avoid authoritative framing.

Human Check

Human Check: If awe replaces discernment, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• Where does this seem genuinely helpful?
• Where would you hesitate to rely on it?
• What judgment would still be required?

Context / Why This Matters

Demonstrations shape perception; reflection preserves agency.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A community event featured short demonstrations of AI-assisted everyday tasks.
Tension: Audience reactions bordered on awe, overshadowing judgment.
Shift: Facilitated reflection surfaced practical limits and tradeoffs.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A neighborhood group hosted recurring demonstrations in familiar contexts.

Tension: Participants began assuming outputs were authoritative.
Shift: Explicit discussion of verification restored discernment.

Points Revealed
• Framing matters
• Limits build trust
• Reflection prevents overconfidence

Why This Works
Showing limits keeps responsibility human.

Way #9 — Community AI FAQ Boards

Way Description

What it is — Publicly visible boards (physical or digital) capturing common AI questions and grounded answers.

   Stewardship Note: Good questions are early indicators of literacy.

Roles & Tools Needed

Staff moderator; display space.

Safeguards

Avoid speculative claims; cite sources where appropriate; update regularly.

Human Check

   Human Check: If answers harden into dogma, refresh.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What questions keep coming up?
• Which answers feel incomplete?
• What new questions have emerged?

Context / Why This Matters

Visible questions invite community learning and reduce private confusion.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A library installed a public AI FAQ board based on recurring patron questions.
Tension: Early answers risked becoming static and definitive.
Shift: Regular updates reframed the board as a living inquiry space.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A community center launched a digital FAQ board with public submissions.
Tension: Initial questions focused narrowly on tool capabilities.
Shift: Moderator prompts expanded attention to responsibility and limits.

Points Revealed

• Questions evolve
• Updates sustain curiosity
• Visibility supports shared language

Why This Works

A living FAQ keeps inquiry public and healthy.

Way #10 — Library AI Office Hours

Way Description

What it is — Scheduled times where patrons receive guided assistance with safe AI use for informational tasks.

Stewardship Note: Accessibility and trust matter more than depth.

Roles & Tools Needed

Librarian; public computers.

Safeguards

No sensitive data; clear boundaries.

Human Check

Human Check: If lines grow, add structure.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What brought you here today?
• What would you like to understand, not just finish?
• What would make you feel confident leaving?

Context / Why This Matters

Libraries remain trusted access points for practical learning.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A library offered weekly AI office hours for informational assistance.
Tension: Demand grew quickly, straining staff capacity.
Shift: Clear scope-setting and structured intake preserved accessibility.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Patrons returned for follow-up sessions after initial visits.
Tension: Some sought task completion rather than understanding.
Shift: Prompt starters emphasized learning outcomes over speed.

Points Revealed

• Trust enables learning
• Structure matters
• Guidance builds confidence

Why This Works

Guided access supports confidence without dependency.

Way #11 — AI Literacy for Nonprofit Boards

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A nonprofit board scheduled an AI literacy briefing ahead of a vote on adopting an AI-assisted analytics tool.
Tension: Trustees felt pressure to decide quickly without a shared understanding of implications.

Shift: Scenario-based discussion slowed the process and clarified oversight responsibilities.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A civic organization included AI literacy in annual board orientation.

Tension: Members assumed AI governance was a technical issue delegated to staff.

Shift: Shared language reframed accountability as a board-level responsibility.

Points Revealed

- Clarity precedes confidence
- Context shapes risk
- Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #12 — Staff AI Onboarding Sessions

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A nonprofit introduced AI onboarding during new staff orientation.
Tension: Employees encountered AI tools informally before guidance existed.
Shift: Early framing reduced ad-hoc use and clarified expectations.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A community organization refreshed onboarding for existing staff.
Tension: Some feared AI use was being implicitly mandated.
Shift: Explicit boundaries restored trust and voluntary engagement.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #13 — AI Transparency Briefings

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: An organization disclosed internal AI use during a public briefing.
Tension: Stakeholders worried about hidden automation affecting decisions.
Shift: Plain-language explanations rebuilt confidence and trust.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A nonprofit published an annual AI transparency update.
Tension: Early drafts overwhelmed readers with technical detail.
Shift: Simplified disclosures improved comprehension and
credibility.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces
accidental overreach.

Way #14 — AI Failure Case Reviews

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A community group reviewed a failed AI pilot in a facilitated session.
Tension: Participants feared blame or reputational harm.
Shift: System-focused reflection reframed failure as collective learning.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A nonprofit instituted quarterly failure reviews.
Tension: Initial defensiveness limited honest discussion.
Shift: Normalizing review reduced recurrence and improved resilience.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #15 — AI Decision Boundary Mapping

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A leadership team mapped decision boundaries for AI-assisted processes.
Tension: Unclear lines between human judgment and automation created risk.
Shift: Explicit mapping clarified authority and responsibility.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Boundary maps were revisited after new tools were introduced.
Tension: Automation drift began to blur earlier decisions.
Shift: Periodic review restored alignment and agency.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #16 — AI Literacy for Frontline Workers

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: Frontline staff attended literacy sessions tied to daily service decisions.
Tension: Speed pressures encouraged over-reliance on AI outputs.
Shift: Clarifying limits reinforced judgment at the point of action.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Scenario-based workshops replaced generic training.
Tension: Workers struggled to translate abstract guidance into practice.
Shift: Contextual examples increased confidence and discernment.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #17 — AI and Data Privacy Clinics

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A community clinic hosted privacy sessions focused on AI tools.
Tension: Participants underestimated how data could travel beyond intent.
Shift: Visibility into data flows reduced unsafe sharing.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Privacy clinics were offered to nonprofit staff teams.
Tension: Fear of misuse overshadowed constructive discussion.
Shift: Agency-focused framing balanced caution with confidence.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces
accidental overreach.

Way #18 — Community AI Story Collection

Way Description
What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed
Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards
No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check
   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)
• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters
Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A
Setting: Residents shared short accounts of unexpected AI encounters.
Tension: Many dismissed their experiences as insignificant.
Shift: Pattern recognition elevated lived experience as insight.

Micro-Case B

Setting: An anonymized story archive was opened to the public.
Tension: Early submissions emphasized benefits only.
Shift: Facilitated reflection surfaced overlooked tradeoffs.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #19 — AI Literacy Micro-Lessons

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A nonprofit delivered five-minute literacy lessons during staff meetings.
Tension: Information overload reduced retention.
Shift: Narrow focus improved recall and application.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Micro-lessons were repeated monthly.
Tension: Staff questioned the value of repetition.
Shift: Incremental learning stabilized understanding over time.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces
accidental overreach.

Way #20 — AI Language & Framing Workshops

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A workshop examined common metaphors used to describe AI.
Tension: Language implied autonomy and authority.
Shift: Reframing restored human accountability.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Leaders reviewed internal communications for framing cues.
Tension: Absolutist language obscured responsibility.
Shift: Precise wording improved decision quality.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #21 — AI Confidence Surveys

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A nonprofit administered an internal AI confidence survey prior to expanding tool access.
Tension: Reported confidence was high, but specific understanding was uneven.

Shift: Results prompted targeted literacy sessions instead of immediate rollout.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A community organization repeated the survey six months later.
Tension: Some participants overestimated readiness based on familiarity alone.
Shift: Reflection on results recalibrated expectations and pacing.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #22 — AI Literacy Resource Hubs

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A library launched a centralized AI literacy resource hub for patrons and staff.
Tension: Early versions overwhelmed users with too many links.
Shift: Curated, plain-language resources increased engagement and use.

Micro-Case B

Setting: A nonprofit created an internal hub for ongoing reference.
Tension: Staff relied on outdated or informal sources.
Shift: A trusted hub stabilized shared understanding.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #23 — AI Ethics in Plain Language Sessions

Way Description
What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed
Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards
No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check
   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)
• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters
Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A
Setting: A community group hosted an ethics session using relatable scenarios.
Tension: Participants struggled to connect abstract ethics to daily decisions.
Shift: Plain-language framing made ethical considerations actionable.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Nonprofit staff revisited ethics during project planning.
Tension: Values were acknowledged but not operationalized.
Shift: Scenario discussion translated principles into guidance.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Way #24 — AI Use-Case Vetting Circles

Way Description

What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed

Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards

No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check

Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)

• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters

Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A

Setting: A leadership team reviewed a proposed AI use promising efficiency gains.
Tension: Enthusiasm outpaced consideration of mission alignment.
Shift: Vetting questions led to postponement rather than adoption.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Vetting circles were institutionalized quarterly.
Tension: Members worried deliberation would slow innovation.
Shift: Collective review reframed restraint as strategic stewardship.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces
accidental overreach.

Way #25 — AI Literacy Readiness Assessments

Way Description
What it is — A structured activity designed to build discernment, confidence, and shared understanding around AI use in context.

   Stewardship Note: Clarity about limits is a prerequisite for responsible use.

Roles & Tools Needed
Facilitator; plain-language materials; accessible formats.

Safeguards
No sensitive data use; clear scope and purpose; human accountability emphasized.

Human Check
   Human Check: If the activity increases certainty without reflection, recalibrate.

Inquiry Prompts (Suggested)
• What would responsible use look like here?
• Where are the limits most important?
• What must remain human-owned?

Context / Why This Matters
Shared literacy and boundaries prevent misuse and preserve trust as adoption grows.

Micro-Case A
Setting: A community conducted a readiness assessment before adopting new AI tools.
Tension: Momentum pushed toward adoption despite uneven literacy.
Shift: Assessment results slowed rollout and prioritized preparation.

Micro-Case B

Setting: Readiness was reassessed after several months of use.
Tension: Early success masked emerging gaps.
Shift: Reassessment clarified next steps and support needs.

Points Revealed

• Clarity precedes confidence
• Context shapes risk
• Accountability remains human

Why This Works

Structured reflection creates shared judgment and reduces accidental overreach.

Reconnoitering the Terrain Ahead

Field guides do not end with certainty.

They end with orientation.

By the time you reach this point, you have not been given answers so much as ways of seeing. You have encountered practices that slow decision-making, surface assumptions, and restore human judgment to places where speed and automation often try to take it away.

Artificial intelligence does not enter communities all at once, and it does not stay still. The terrain continues to shift—technically, socially, and ethically. What matters most is not whether a particular tool succeeds or fails, but whether the people using it remain capable of discernment, restraint, and collective responsibility.

Across the four terrains—Literacy, Governance, Readiness, and Stewardship—you may have noticed a quiet progression: from individual uncertainty to shared language; from shared language to collective judgment; from judgment to accountability; and from accountability to ongoing care.

If there is a throughline in this field guide, it is this: responsible collaboration with AI depends less on tools than on the quality of attention a community brings to its decisions.

Rather than asking what should be implemented next, consider different questions: Where is pressure outpacing understanding? Where has silence replaced inquiry? What decisions feel heavier than acknowledged? Which voices are missing? What might restraint protect here?

The terrain ahead will change. Your capacity to orient within it does not have to.

Afterword — Carrying the Guide Forward

Field guides are not meant to be shelved once the journey ends. They are meant to be carried, marked up, revisited, and occasionally set aside—only to be picked up again when the terrain changes.

If you are holding this book now, you are likely already navigating questions without clean answers. Balancing curiosity with caution, innovation with responsibility, urgency with care is the nature of this moment—not a failure of preparation.

This guide exists to support collective sense-making, not certainty. Its value is measured not by how many Ways are applied, but by whether it helps create better conversations—slower, more inclusive, and more attentive to consequence.

Artificial intelligence will continue to evolve. Tools will change. Policies will shift. What endures is the capacity of people to pause, listen, and choose together.

Wherever this guide accompanies you, may it serve as a quiet reminder: you are allowed to move carefully, to ask better questions, and to choose restraint when it protects what matters most.

Stepping Into Stewardship

From Principles to Practice

Every meaningful shift in civilization occurs when responsibility catches up to capability.

If this book has done its work, it has made one truth clear: **Artificial intelligence—and other powerful tools—do not determine our future. Our stewardship of them does.**

The practices outlined here are intentionally modest in form and profound in implication. They are designed to be used where trust matters, where decisions affect real lives, and where accountability cannot be abstracted away.

A Framework Meant to Be Applied

This work is not a closed system. It is a **living practice**.

Through Living Earth StewardHeirShip, the principles and practices described in this book are available for application in:

- Nonprofit governance and program design
- Community innovation and civic engagement
- Workforce and economic transition initiatives
- Ethical human–AI collaboration
- Cross-sector partnerships seeking coherence rather than control

Each engagement begins with the same premise: **Humans remain accountable for decisions and outcomes—always.**

What Stewardship Looks Like in Practice

Funders and partners often ask what distinguishes stewardship-based initiatives from conventional innovation projects. The difference is visible not in tools deployed, but in **how decisions are made, reviewed, and owned**.

A Note on Measurement and Learning

Across these examples, success is evaluated not only by outputs, but by:

- Clarity of responsibility
- Quality of participation
- Durability of trust
- Capacity to adapt without harm

These indicators align with emerging expectations among funders seeking **systems change without unintended consequences**.

Choosing Your Entry Point

The work outlined in this book is intentionally modular. Different readers will step forward from different positions—and at different scales. There is no single right way to begin.

For Organizations and Institutions
Begin with a small, stewardship-based pilot—using the 30-day sprint model—to build confidence, internal alignment, and measurable learning. Some organizations may first engage in strategic realignment or consultancy to clarify governance, accountability, or readiness before implementation.

For Community Hosts and Anchor Institutions
Libraries, community foundations, service clubs, colleges, faith and civic hubs can host local collaboration labs—creating trusted spaces for AI literacy, shared learning, and participatory innovation grounded in human accountability.

For Funders and Philanthropic Partners
Support applied stewardship initiatives that build long-term capacity rather than one-off tool adoption. Investment opportunities include pilot programs, governance and learning infrastructure, cross-sector

collaboration, and replication of proven practices through **Living Earth StewardHeirShip**.

For Collaborators and Practitioners
Contribute to shared learning, case documentation, and refinement of practices. Stewardship improves through use—and through dialogue across sectors and lived experience.

A Shared Responsibility Forward

This book does not belong to a single organization, discipline, or ideology.

It belongs to those willing to practice stewardship together.

The future will be shaped less by what our tools can do than by **how deliberately we decide to use them, limit them, and learn from them—collectively**.

The invitation is simple, and demanding:

- Practice stewardship
- Fund coherence
- Collaborate across boundaries
- Hold the future in trust

The future will not be shaped by technology alone, nor by values without practice. It will be shaped by the quality of stewardship we are willing to exercise together—locally and globally.

This book offers one way to begin.

The responsibility, and the possibility, now passes to you.

The future is not automated.
It is stewarded.

About the Co-Authors

Charles Betterton, MSCED

Charles Betterton is founder and practitioner of StewardHeirShip; applied stewardship, systems thinking, and responsible human–AI collaboration. His work focuses on helping nonprofits, communities, and civic institutions engage emerging technologies in ways that preserve human judgment, strengthen participation, and maintain clear accountability.

With a background in community economic development and applied systems practice, Charles brings a field-tested perspective to innovation—one grounded in lived consequences rather than abstract theory. He is the principal architect of the *101 Ways* framework, which translates ethical principles into repeatable practices that organizations can adopt, adapt, and scale responsibly.

Charles's contribution to this work ensures that stewardship is not merely aspirational, but operational—capable of being practiced where trust, equity, and long-term impact matter most.

Zen Benefiel, MA, MBA

Zen Benefiel is the founder of **Planetary Citizens**, a global nonprofit initiative dedicated to advancing planetary responsibility, cross-sector coherence, and conscious collaboration at scale. With decades of experience as a facilitator, author, and organizational strategist, Zen works at the intersection of human development, systems thinking, and civilizational evolution.

His work supports organizations and leaders navigating complexity—helping them align vision, values, and action across cultural, economic, and technological domains. Zen brings a long-horizon perspective to this collaboration, situating applied stewardship within the broader context of humanity's transition toward a more integrated and life-affirming civilization.

Together, his partnership with Charles Betterton bridges **vision and viability**, ensuring that planetary-scale values are matched by grounded, actionable practice.

Further Engagement

The work described in this book is intended to be practiced, tested, and refined in real-world contexts. Readers and institutions interested in further engagement may explore the following pathways.

Applied Stewardship & Pilot Initiatives
Organizations and communities interested in implementing stewardship-based practices may engage through Living Earth StewardHeirShip, which supports governance-ready pilots, local collaboration labs, and measurable learning initiatives.

Consultancy & Organizational Alignment
Institutions navigating responsible AI adoption, governance readiness, or strategic realignment may inquire about facilitation and consultancy services designed to support clarity, accountability, and cross-sector coherence.

Funding & Strategic Partnership
Philanthropic partners and funders seeking to support stewardship-based innovation may explore opportunities to fund pilots, shared learning infrastructure, and capacity-building initiatives aligned with long-term community impact.

Collaborative Learning & Practice Development
Practitioners, researchers, and collaborators may participate in shared learning, case documentation, and the ongoing refinement of stewardship practices.

Additional information is available through this partnership, Planetary Citizens and StewardHeirShip which provides the broader civilizational context for this work.

A Closing Reflection

The future will not be shaped by tools alone, nor by ideals in isolation.

It will be shaped by **how deliberately we steward power, possibility, and responsibility—together**.

Those who recognize this moment are already part of the work.

The invitation remains open.

StewardHeirShip

Passing on a restored planet, generation to generation.