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The *slfA* tool for a Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and **Accountability:** An invitation to reflect on how humans and AI interact in producing knowledge

THOUGHT
PIECE

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There are no conflicts of interest to declare for this study.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence (also commonly used to specifically describe GAI)
BR-UK	Behavioural Research UK (https://usher.ed.ac.uk/behavioural-research-uk)
CRedit	Futures, Impact, Voice and Engagements (Busara division)
FIVE	Generative Artificial Intelligence
GAI	Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability
slfA	Contributor Role Taxonomy (https://credit.niso.org)

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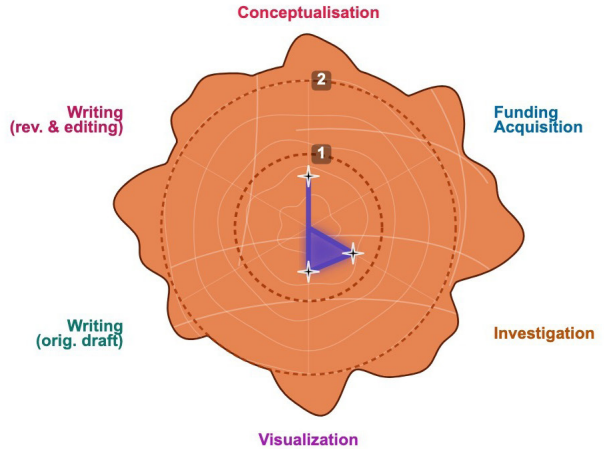
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Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (slfA)

Busara seeks a reflective approach to transparency on knowledge production. We use the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT) (<https://credit.niso.org>) to make visible the many inputs that producing research requires beyond the named authors (who are the ones accountable for the content presented). We combine CRediT with the slfA tool (<https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>) to also transparently reflect on (and learn from) how humans and AI interacted in the production of an output.

slfA



AI interaction across specified roles · 0 = no AI · 1 = some · 2 = extensive
3 roles with AI interaction · average extent 0.7/2

■ Outer ring = Human ■ Centre = AI

Each axis = one contributor role

After using any tools or services, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Contributor roles are based on the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT).
More info at <https://credit.niso.org>

The slfA tool for a Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability:
An invitation to reflect on how humans and AI interact in producing knowledge

Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (slfA)				
AI interaction across specified contributor roles				
CRediT Role	Performed by	Extent of AI Use	How was AI used? Audit trail?	Tool / Service
Conceptualization	Engy Saleh (S)	■ ■	Non-generative: in interacting with AI on building the slfA tool, the thinking behind the tool became clearer	Claude Opus 4.7 and Sonnet 4.6
	Mareike Schomerus (L)	■ ■		
Funding Acquisition	Busara <i>Sole</i>	■ ■		
Investigation	Engy Saleh (S)	■ ■	Non-generative: to gain an overview of current debates on AI disclosure statements, search terms: AI, social science, disclosure	Elicit
	Mareike Schomerus (L)	■ ■		
Visualization	Lynette Gow (L)	■ ■	Generative for the figures and tables included: The screenshots of all figures are taken from the software tool slfA, with fully AI-generated images.	Claude Opus 4.7 and Sonnet 4.6
	Mareike Schomerus (S)	■ ■		
Writing – original draft	Engy Saleh (E)	■ ■		
	Mareike Schomerus (E)	■ ■		
Writing – review & editing	Engy Saleh (E)	■ ■		
	Mareike Schomerus (E)	■ ■		
	Hitha Em (S)	■ ■		

This slfA was created using: Schomerus, M. (2026). slfA Tool - Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (Version 1.1) [Computer software]. Busara. <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.

The slfA tool can be used and downloaded at www.busara.global or at <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.
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Preface: How to use this Groundwork

This *Groundwork* offers background on the slfA tool, an open source and free-to-use software tool that makes it easy to produce a slfA (Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability). A slfA is a machine-readable visual depiction of how humans and AI interacted in a particular piece of work to nourish a culture of reflection and transparency. The slfA tool also produces a detailed AI contribution statement and can be easily customized for the needs of different processes.

The slfA tool is available here: www.busara.global and on GitHub at <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.

While the slfA tool itself also gives brief background explanations, this *Groundwork* situates slfA in the broader debates on the changing nature of knowledge production due to AI, on AI contribution statements for publications, and on finding ways to support a culture of reflection, learning and transparency when it comes to producing research that seeks to be equitable and inclusive.

The *Groundwork* first sets out a brief introduction and background to the current debates on human/ AI interaction in social science research. It explains our choice of terminology and the usage of the CRediT taxonomy as a starting point for reflecting on human/ AI interaction in knowledge production. The *Groundwork* then outlines how to practically use the slfA tool and gives some initial ideas and examples on how to think about the moment of human/ AI interaction in the different contributor roles during research.

Through some practical steps set out in text boxes, we want to highlight how easy it is to use slfA and to encourage a culture of reflexivity and openness about human/ AI interaction in research or other types of work that produce outputs with the ambition to nourish our collective learning.



This Groundwork is the first in a series of outputs on Busara’s AI strategy developed by Busara’s Futures, Impact, Voice and Engagement (FIVE) division, which is being developed throughout 2026.

Box 1: Do I need to read this entire Groundwork to learn how to use the slfA tool?

No. This Groundwork gives background to the thinking behind slfA and explains the tool in detail. But you could start using the slfA tool right away by simply following the instructions after you have opened the tool (download at www.busara.global and on GitHub at <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>).

When you open the slfA tool, you will see this introductory text (version 1.0).

What is slfA?

slfA is an invitation to reflect on how knowledge or other types of outputs are created in interaction with AI. It acknowledges that such work involves many roles and contributors, inspired by the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT). It also acknowledges that AI can play different parts in each of those roles. Thus, slfA asks questions about how humans have collaborated with each other first, followed by questions on how each contributor has interacted with AI. For research products, the 14 contributor roles of the CRediT taxonomy can be used. For outputs that require a different taxonomy, there is an option to set up an own taxonomy. The tool creates both a table as well as the slfA figure: a radar diagram in the shape of a brain that can be used as a catchy visual to foster a culture of transparent reflection and learning when it comes to interactions between humans and machines.

How to use the slfA tool

The slfA tool can be used by answering a set of questions from the **chatbot** or by simply filling in the **table**. We recommend setting up a slfA at the start of a project and filling it in as the project progresses, to make reflection as accurate as possible.

The tool asks a number of questions to identify the relevant contributor roles for an output. CRediT is offered as an option, along with the choice to set up your **own taxonomy**. For each role, the tool asks who the contributors are, and what their level of engagement in this role was (Lead, Equal, Support, or Sole). Each contributor is then asked about their use of AI in the different roles, their reasons for using AI, and what tool they used. For each role, the extent of AI use is rated:

- 0: no interaction between humans and AI in this task
- 1: some interaction between humans and AI in this task
- 2: extensive interaction between humans and AI in this task

If more than one contributor is listed under a role, each contributor records their AI use separately. In the table, these are displayed separately. In the slfA diagram, the average of AI usage is calculated per contributor role, with a Lead role weighted at 70%, Equal at 50%, Support at 30%, and Sole at 100%.

The slfA can be **saved** for further editing along the way. The final slfA figure and table can be **saved**, **printed** and **exported** in different formats. The slfA tool is also a statement of accountability. It assumes that the human authors take full responsibility for the content of a piece of research or another output. This is stated in a statement with the slfA figure.



About slfA

The thinking behind slfA is in Saleh, Engy, and Mareike Schomerus. 2026. *The slfA tool for a Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability: An invitation to reflect on how humans and AI interact in producing knowledge* (Groundwork 32 Thought Piece). Nairobi: Busara. doi: [10.62372/IUPB2137](https://doi.org/10.62372/IUPB2137).

The Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT) 'is a community-owned taxonomy of 14 contributor roles designed to represent the key types of contributions typically made to research outputs, including journal articles'. More information on CRediT and how to use it can be found at <https://credit.niso.org>.

The descriptions of the CRediT roles used here are taken from Hosseini, Mohammad, Simon Kerridge, Liz Allen, Veronique Kiermer, and Kristi Holmes. 2026. "CRediT Roles and Example Research Tasks That Could be Attributed to Them (V1)." Zenodo. doi: 10.5281/zenodo.18421448.

Guidance on what constitutes extensive AI usage is taken from Resnik, David B., and Mohammad Hosseini. 2026. "Disclosing artificial intelligence use in scientific research and publication: When should disclosure be mandatory, optional, or unnecessary?" *Accountability in Research* 33 (2):2481949. doi: [10.1080/08989621.2025.2481949](https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2025.2481949).

Applying the CRediT taxonomy to make the use of AI transparent was inspired by Behavioural Research UK. 2026. *Using Generative AI for Behavioural Research Effectively and Responsibly: a BR-UK Statement*. London: BR-UK.

Rights

The slfA tool can be used and downloaded at www.busara.global and on GitHub at <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.

slfA is released under the Apache 2.0: license. You are free to use, copy, modify, distribute and sublicense the tool and its outputs, including in commercial settings, subject to the conditions of the licence—chiefly that you keep the copyright and attribution notices intact, note any changes you make to modified files, and propagate the accompanying NOTICE file with redistributions.

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Citation

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20285993>

Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (slfA) and versions

The slfA tool is regularly updated; feedback is much appreciated.



Introduction: the need to reflect on human/ AI interaction in knowledge production

Receiving an invitation is always nice—maybe particularly nice if it is about jointly finding ways to deal with unfamiliar situations. This is such an invitation: it is about collectively finding ways to reflect on and record how humans are interacting with AI during knowledge production so that we can learn together.

At this moment, standards and norms on how to declare the extent to which the production of knowledge is interacting with AI are only just developing. So while it is clear that Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI—AI from now on) has made quick inroads into all steps of knowledge production, a culture of acknowledging this has not kept up at the same pace. This might mean that gradually, the knowledge with which humans are interacting is changing in its nature. But without a track record, it will be difficult to assess and understand these gradual yet profound changes.

Researchers are currently experimenting with where AI might work well for them, where it might fail or where it might pose an outright threat to credible knowledge production. AI is also already being used to address moments where individual researchers might hit a snag, whether that is formulating the right research question, understanding the literature, analyzing the data or writing the text. But because researchers also operate in a world where it is often implicitly suggested that everyone is efficient and productive at all times, it is assumed that many researchers are also hedging their bets and are erring on the side of not disclosing the impact of AI on knowledge production during this experimentation phase. Editors such as Gartenberg et.al have highlighted that they are seeing the impact of AI in the increase of submissions, but a decrease in the quality of submissions, concluding that new approaches are

required, but that AI bans or disclosure alone won't solve the problem, but that 'the challenge, therefore, is first to understand what is happening and then to steer the equilibrium toward better rather than just more research.'¹

What once used to be a common way to validate research—peer review—has also come severely under stress due to the unclear rules about AI usage, with Munger et al. arguing for additional metadata for academic publications that would allow identifying the extent of AI use, including 'continuously updated sources of information about how academics are using LLMs'.²

In these somewhat transitory times during which the possibilities of AI seem endless, the risks are not fully understood, and norms on how to work with AI in knowledge production are in their infancy and where career incentives are still aligned with a pre-GAI age, it can thus seem safer for individuals to adopt a strategy of non-disclosure. This is particularly plausible when disclosing the use of AI may mean that outputs are trusted less, particularly by those with a less-than-favorable view of technology.³

We know this first hand: in an internal survey Busara conducted in early 2026 on the use of AI in our research work, the extensive AI use we discovered was described as a 'dirty secret'.⁴ Admitting to using AI was seen by staff as risking one's reputation; too easily would it make someone look incompetent.

Dirty secrets—or put in a friendlier way a lack of transparency—are never good for learning. In the case of Busara, a lack of norms on transparency meant that some teams never talked about how or why they used AI. Some respondents thought it was ok to talk internally about how AI was used, but never disclose it to outside partners, instead pretending that we were an AI-free organization. What we were in reality, was a model shadow AI organization, where individuals used AI in whatever way they felt was helpful to them in a particular moment, without a broader strategy or oversight of the organization

1 (Gartenberg et al. 2026)

2 (Munger et al. 2026, 2)

3 (Schilke and Reimann 2025)

4 (Saleh and Schomerus 2026)



(note: this *Groundwork* and the *slfA* tool is the first in a series of contributions to reflect Busara’s comprehensive AI strategy).

Individuals were unevenly giving up some of their old skills to AI, while organizationally Busara was neither building new AI-relevant skills nor explicitly protecting the cognitive abilities we considered crucial for a researcher. The lack of transparency made it impossible for us to learn in several ways: about the quickly evolving role of AI in social science research; about how researchers and AI could work well together to produce the best possible knowledge; about how to increase human and AI skills; and how to continue to build a research environment in which humans thrive and knowledge is produced equitably and to the benefit of all.

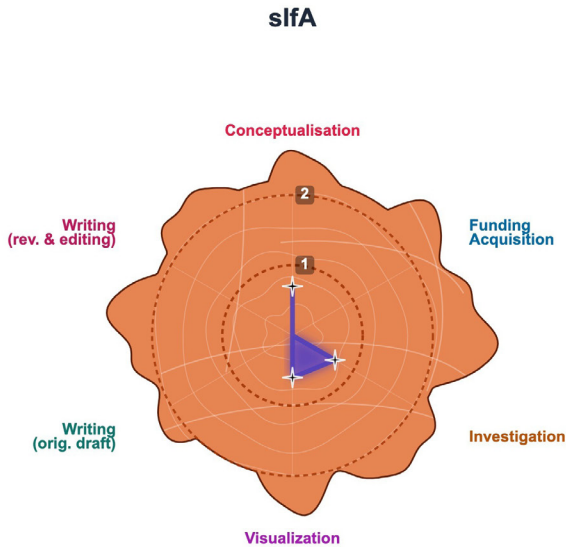
Towards a culture of reflection on human/ AI interaction

To rectify the shortcomings of the current situation and set parameters in place for a better future requires a culture change: we need a culture of reflection and transparency when it comes to working with AI. This transparency has many aspects: it means reflecting on how a piece of knowledge is produced, data transparency (how data is collected and stored) and analytical transparency (how data was analyzed and conclusions drawn).

As a contribution to this culture change, we developed a tool—the *slfA*—that allows us and others to champion and display such a culture of reflective transparency when it comes to working with AI.⁵ *slfA*, described in more detail below, builds on existing frameworks that break down the many tasks that make up the production of knowledge, thus expanding on a general trend to credit different roles in research and to reflect transparently on the use of AI. When the CRediT taxonomy was developed, it sought to address questionable and unfair author practices; the framework continues to be developed and refined towards further improvements.⁶ In addition, the *slfA* figure makes human/ AI

5 (Schomerus 2026)

interaction recognizable at a glance, as Figure 1 below shows–this is the slfA for this Groundwork, highlighting that the figures were produced with AI, that some AI use supported the literature search and was used to stress test the conceptual ideas. It also depicts that AI was not used for writing.



AI interaction across specified roles · 0 = no AI · 1 = some · 2 = extensive
3 roles with AI interaction · average extent 0.7/2

Outer ring = Human Centre = AI
Each axis = one contributor role

After using any tools or services, the author(s) reviewed and edited
the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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The slfA tool can be used and downloaded at www.busara.global or at <https://github.com/mareikeaschomerus-crd/slfa>.
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Figure 1: This is what a slfA looks like (Source: Busara)



What are we hoping to achieve with this reflective tool?

We are hoping that it will help researchers to find ways to open up conversations about human/ AI interaction and to contribute to the knowledge base on how this is evolving over time. Over time, we hope that slfA statements can deliver a much more detailed insight into how and why people are using AI in their processes. And, if we are dreaming beyond that, we hope that the slfA figure can become something of a recognizable trademark that allows quick insights into how a piece of research was produced and that can act as a way to recognize a shared culture of reflection. The idea of the visible mark is inspired by Bender and Hanna, who arguing for transparency and disclosure about when and how AI was involved suggested: 'Whether it's via registers or watermarking, we ought to have a right to know when and where we are subject to outputs of automation.'⁷

Box 2: Who can use slfA?

slfA is an invitation to collectively learn how we might reflect on, and then keep a record of, how human/ AI interaction in the production of outputs of all kinds is evolving. Further, it can be used by anyone interested in a reflective and transparent approach to interacting with AI beyond knowledge production. slfA thus could be useful for researchers who are working on a research output. Teachers in secondary or tertiary education could use slfA to create a shared basis for reflection with students on their AI use, and possibly to develop shared guardrails of what is and is not acceptable.

But really, our hope is that anyone who wants to document a process of human/ AI interaction with distinct roles in the process might find some use for slfA and contribute to making the process of reflection and the tool better.

⁷ (Bender and Hanna 2025, 181)

Why do we want to contribute to a culture of reflection and transparency in research?

The mainstream arrival of AI presents a moment of tremendous opportunity to reaffirm the values that underpin equitable and inclusive knowledge production. Gandhi et al. spell this out:

AI is neither a savior nor a threat; it reflects the values and intentions of its users. The future of academic integrity depends on whether researchers, institutions, and policymakers recognize this reality and act with foresight and responsibility.⁸

Research has been grappling with its values for a while: questions of transparency, equity and inclusion remain acute. The Open Science Movement has long been committed to improving research processes and many advances have been made.

However, it is also the case that transparency about research and knowledge production continues to lack. When it comes to how power, resources and credit for how research is produced are distributed, the picture remains very uneven and incentives are often skewed. The interaction between humans and AI is not the only murky area in research production: lack of acknowledging contributions to research is a prominent and thorny issue in current research set ups for collaborations between the Global North (or the Global Minority) and the Global South (the Global Majority).⁹ Much of the research work on inequities in knowledge production point towards the need to highlight power relations between researchers from different backgrounds and to make different contributions visible.

8 (Gandhi et al. 2025)

9 (Rigterink and Schomerus 2026 ; Saleh 2024; Thériault and Forscher 2024; Forscher and Schmidt 2024; Basnight-Brown 2024; Ranganath 2024; Mughogho, Adhiambo, and Forscher 2023; DAIR)



More inclusive and comprehensive attempts to give credit in knowledge production—such as through the CRediT framework further outlined below¹⁰—are already contributing to breaking open the established problem that researchers who have been hidden in knowledge production, are not just data deliverers.¹¹

Our approach to encourage reflection and transparency anchors on the idea that any research output, whether it is in the form of a journal article or a policy brief or even a blog, is a product of knowledge creation. This process is formed through a cumulative set of contributions and efforts that make a particular research output in a specific format possible, including contributions that are often invisible. Research involves many different skills and people, and yet often falls short in highlighting the deep value that, for example, a so-called local researcher brings to the infrastructure that allows a research output to come to life through the unique combination of technical expertise and contextual knowledge. In research collaborations between the Global Minority and the Global Majority,¹² a Global Minority researcher commonly holds both individual and structural power.

The power relationship between humans and AI is less clear: on an individual level, a researcher has more power than an AI tool, being able to clarify usage and intent with clear lines. However, individually, a researcher is less powerful when it comes to power on a structural level (meaning the power to profoundly change inequities in research production) which is why collaboration on standards for AI usage in research is necessary.

With AI, existing inequities and new demands for transparency and disclosure converge. This offers a unique opportunity: since AI requires us to talk about

10 (Hosseini et al. 2026) and <https://credit.niso.org>

11 Specific attempts to address this dynamic include citizen ethnography, which seeks to transform what in many types of research would be local research assistants to analysts (Schmidt et al. 2025).

12 Busara has shifted away from using Global North / South labels to using Global Minority/Majority respectively as a more accurate and reflective differentiation of the two blocks.

research contributions much more openly and transparently in order to preserve the integrity of the research process, it pushes us to think more generally about processes in knowledge production. Giving clear statements on human/ AI interactions in research requires us to be much clearer about the underlying process that is required to deliver a piece of research and to give credit to the many human roles that are filled to produce that research.



Call for AI accountability statements

The current AI moment marks an understanding that processes in research can be outsourced and shared with AI, but that in order to preserve scientific integrity, and human responsibility and oversight, it is necessary to acknowledge specific AI use for all these processes. However, there is as yet no standard way of showing how exactly this is influencing the interaction between humans and AI.

The sIfA tool is only a contribution to a growing consensus that it is vital to disclose use of AI in how outputs were produced.¹³ This is particularly true for research and knowledge production,¹⁴ but likely similar in other sectors. The debate, however, about at what point in a research process, how exactly, and with what level of detail the use of AI needs to be disclosed is very much alive. It is also unresolved, which is made evident, for example, by the focus on this issue at the 2026 World Conference on Research Integrity, where several actors (the World Conference on Research Integrity Foundation (WCRIF), the International Science Council (ISC), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM) and the Global Young Academy (GYA)) convened a joint initiative towards Global Reporting Standard for AI Disclosure in Research.¹⁵

Different actors are taking different stances, from policies that prohibit any use of AI to those that put no limitations on AI usage, but request full disclosure. Resnik and Hosseini distinguish three types of AI use disclosure: mandatory, optional, and unnecessary, suggesting that disclosure ought to only be mandatory when AI use is intentional (used with a specific purpose) and substantial (produces evidence or directly affects the content of a publication).¹⁶

13 (American Journal of Political Science 2026; Gartenberg et al. 2026)

14 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

15 <https://council.science/our-work/ai-disclosure-in-research/>

16 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

An additional important distinction is between AI-generated (which outright produced content) and AI-assisted (which improved or shaped existing content),¹⁷ although arguably the line between these two can be blurry. Research on how AI usage is perceived and credited is also a lively space.¹⁸

The breadth and freshness of the debate means that no single set of guidelines on how to disclose AI usage exists, although several practical tools do (for example, IBM's Detailed AI attribution for improved transparency).¹⁹ Yet, there is a general commitment that research transparency and accountability requires AI disclosure,²⁰ and most guidelines for disclosure stipulate that the following elements ought to be included:

- Specifying what specific tasks AI was used for. Being specific means that
- The process of research and writing are listed separately to also distinguish where AI generated context (mostly text) and where it assisted with, for example, editing an existing text²¹
- Different research process might require different breakdowns of how AI was used, for example evidence synthesis²²
- Giving details on which tools were used (name, provider, version) rather than general model names or a generic statement about AI²³
- Ensuring that no data privacy was breached in AI-supported outputs²⁴
- Outlining exactly where and how human oversight was applied, for example in verification and checking for bias and plagiarism²⁵

17 (Cleland et al. 2026)

18 e.g. (He, Houde, and Weisz 2025)

19 (IBM Research 2025)

20 (Cleland et al. 2026)

21 (Behavioural Research UK 2026; American Journal of Political Science 2026; Cleland et al. 2026)

22 (Thomas, Fleming, and Noel-Storr 2026)

23 (Behavioural Research UK 2026; American Journal of Political Science 2026)

24 (Cleland et al. 2026)

25 (American Journal of Political Science 2026; Cleland et al. 2026)



- Accountability in AI usage also means in most suggestions that humans take full responsibility for the final output.²⁶ Behavioural Research UK (BR-UK) recommends something like Elsevier’s suggested wording: “After using any tools or services, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.”²⁷ This is the wording adapted for slfA. However, it is possible that this wording may change in future versions as understanding of human/ AI interaction evolves.

Using CRediT for full accountability on research contribution and AI interactions

One of the most widely adopted and established frameworks for structuring contribution statements for research outputs has been the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT).²⁸ CRediT provides a standardized vocabulary of 14 contributor roles. Each comes with examples of what the role might entail, but also leave different researchers room for their own interpretation and additions. The CRediT roles are:

- Conceptualization
- Data Curation
- Formal Analysis
- Funding Acquisition
- Investigation
- Methodology
- Project Administration
- Resources
- Software
- Supervision
- Validation
- Visualisation
- Writing- Original Draft
- Writing- Review & Editing

26 (Cleland et al. 2026)

27 (Behavioural Research UK 2026)

28 (Hosseini et al. 2026)

CRediT supports reflection and transparency in useful and intuitive ways. It lays down the process of producing research outputs logically, simply and comprehensively. Even for those unfamiliar with the CRediT framework, the taxonomy seems to make sense. It aims to make visible the many hands needed to create new knowledge by inviting researchers to think about who contributed to the different roles to produce the research. As a byproduct, this supports researchers in showing why research is difficult, takes time, and costs money.

For the purpose of reflection and transparency on human/ AI interaction, using an established framework means that the language is already familiar, and is now being applied to how AI was interacted with in each of the 14 roles (or those that apply to a specific research output). This is also the approach that Behavioural Research-UK (BR-UK) proposes.²⁹

Transparency in research production, as championed by the CRediT framework, also means inclusivity. Reemphasizing this commitment to transparency and inclusivity can help in creating constructive interactions with AI, and honest reflection about those.

Making human/ AI interactions visible is an urgent need

Finding a way to make any contributions in research visible is urgent since the realities of knowledge production have been hidden to various extents for a long time. But with the inclusion of AI, the challenge has become more multifaceted. Transparency about how AI was involved in knowledge production will allow our cumulative understanding on how knowledge is created to grow. Taking action on this now—while learning on the go how to best do it—will make it possible for us to look back even in just a few years to understand what shifts occurred during this time, and how we need to assess knowledge that was created before standards became clear.

29 (Behavioural Research UK 2026)



The urgent need also comes from another place. As Awomosu points out, there is a contradiction emerging that is particularly acute for research organizations like Busara that sit on the intersection of knowledge creation and human development:

Something strange is happening. Investment pours into AI development—as of October 2025, OpenAI alone has raised approximately \$65 billion in equity funding as well as hundreds of billions in strategic infrastructure commitments from partners like Oracle, Nvidia, and SoftBank—while human development funding shrinks. Sixty-five billion dollars. The GDP of Croatia. Almost ten times the budget of the UN World Food Programme. All flowing toward making sure machines can think, while programs that help humans develop their own thinking capacity disappear.³⁰

To not only defend but expand this thinking capacity, we consider this a wonderful moment for researchers everywhere to work together for more reflection and transparency in its many different angles. Because to use this moment constructively, Gandhi et al. remind us that “collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and technologists is critical to fostering an environment where AI serves as a catalyst for innovation rather than a vehicle for misconduct.”³¹

30 (Awomosu 2025, loc474)

31 (Gandhi et al. 2025)

The slfA tool

The slfA tool was inspired by BR-UK who suggest that

Ideally, disclosures should follow standardized, machine-readable formats in order to also enable systematic research on AI use patterns in scholarship, an area that is increasingly gaining traction among academics and that can paint a clearer picture of the status quo and strongly inform best practices in AI use along contributions in research outputs.³²

For that and the above context, we created a tool that combines the 14 contributor roles of the CRediT framework with an embedded AI use declaration mechanism in each of those contributions. However, the tool also offers the flexibility to use it with any taxonomy. We call that tool slfA.³³

Why is the tool called slfA?

Sifa is the Arabic word **صفة**; meaning the 'quality' or 'attribute' of something, and the Swahili word where it also means the 'reputation' of something. In Swahili, sifa is also used to mean 'praise'—in the sense of acknowledging a reputation. We named the tool slfA to reflect the unique quality of human/AI interaction to create an output, and the need to be transparent about it to protect the reputation of that research piece. slfA is also a powerful reminder that AI promises qualities that we previously thought impossible—but with that promise also comes the hazard of murky and unreliable reputations in knowledge creation.

Because giving credit and being transparent about the various contributors to a research piece is an age-old friction, we chose an established word in Arabic and Swahili, and used it to name a modern tool that brings us a step closer to the open science and transparency attributes and the learning and advancement which we are advocating.

32 (Behavioural Research UK 2026)
33 (Schomerus 2026)



It helps that slfA also works as an acronym: the Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability. No matter how much AI was used, humans are accountable for an output, thus we highlight the primary need for intellectual accountability by capitalizing I and A. And yet, we are also hoping for a friendly fellowship-like relationship with AI, to learn and grow together. This reflects the attitude towards AI that Awomosu suggests:

Don't command—partner. AI isn't a tool; it's a medium for collective intelligence' and 'partner with intelligence instead of commanding it. Cultivate depth instead of harvesting data. Build from sovereignty instead of scarcity. Become more human while working with AI, not less.³⁴

Why are we referring to what slfA shows as human/ AI interaction?

What happens when humans work with AI, or humans and AI work together? How to conceptualize and name this process is subject of much debate. It gets to the heart of the question of whether AI is just a tool like any other and humans can freely choose to use it or not, whether it is a collaborator, or whether it might ultimately become autonomous from human input.

Different disciplines have vastly divergent views on this. A recent scoping review highlighted a shift in the sentiment where language moved from the idea of an 'interaction' between humans and AI towards a 'collaboration', capturing the sense of working together.³⁵ Subterms of 'working together' here include co-operation, co-creation, and coordination. All of these might fall in the category of an understanding of AI as human-centred, meaning that humans lead and choose the terms on which the interaction happens, retaining control and utilizing AI to augment what they would be able to do alone.³⁶

34 (Awomosu 2025, loc248 and 409)

35 (Breckner et al. 2025)

36 This grouping, also suggested in the literature, might be controversial, since 'collaboration' normally describes an equal relationship

Others highlight that 'complementarity' best captures the notion that humans and AI complement each other to produce better outputs, but do not fulfill the same role. Hemmer et al. uses the Cambridge Dictionary definition to champion the utility of the term: This complementarity as the

“quality of being different but useful when combined” ...has inspired researchers to investigate how humans' and AI's individual abilities could be leveraged to achieve superior team performance compared to either one performing the decision task independently.³⁷

However, the assumption that humans and AI are always complementary to each other, meaning they jointly achieve a better outcome but are substantially different, is under scrutiny, often based on the fact that the complementarity might be uneven.³⁸

The field is now changing so rapidly and profoundly that some argue the need to rethink and rename the relationship altogether, coining the term 'coevolution' to highlight the mutual influence that humans and AI have on each other.³⁹ Although aligning humans and machines in this way can be driven by particular ideologies such as transhumanism.⁴⁰ The argument that AI is not just a tool, but that technology changes humans by structuring our world (whether we use it directly or not) exists across many perspectives.⁴¹ Or, to go even further, there is a need to rethink the question of AI as a tool 'when the tool is consciousness itself'.⁴² What seems clear is, as Awomosu argues, that we do need to change our relationship with AI.⁴³

And yet, the details and nuance of this new relationship are only emerging, or rather need our collective reflective input to be shaped. As a contribution in acknowledging AI roles in creating research, it thus seems sensible to use ter-

37 (Hemmer et al. 2025)

38 (Lin 2026; Vaccaro, Almaatouq, and Malone 2024)

39 (Pedreschi et al. 2025)

40 (Latzner 2026)

41 (Puig Larrauri 2018; Elavsky 2026)

42 (Awomosu 2025, loc434)

43 (Awomosu 2025)



minology that is as neutral as possible. We were guided by the emphasis on retaining human responsibility for all outputs. In foregrounding such responsibility, collaboration seems a misleading term, as it usually denotes equality in a collaborative relationship, which does not exist if one side is solely responsible (and the other side arguably has much more information at their disposal). Complementarity suggests an equality which might feel uncomfortable for researchers in some social sciences. We are guided by a reflective, non-fatalistic but alert, attitude. To describe the exchange between humans and AI, we have for the purpose of slfA simply settled on the term 'human/ AI interaction'.

Open questions regarding the use of the slfA tool

The slfA tool is, at best, the beginning of what we think is a necessary conversation. It does not in itself change the problem that researchers or other knowledge producers might be incentivized to not disclose their AI interactions. It does not in itself create an immediate benefit by disclosing. It does not automatically build a community committed to reflection and transparency when it comes to human/ AI interactions in knowledge production.

The slfA tool also at first creates an additional burden: although we have designed the tool to be as user-friendly as possible, it will require time to fill out. However, maybe the few minutes that filling in the slfA takes is time well spent that might have been saved by using AI. And if no AI was used, the declaration might support the incentives and reputation of a researcher who chooses to not engage with AI at all.

However, slfA also suggests that the wide presence or adoption of AI in many parts of our lives requires us to approach open questions with even more openness: does AI mean that we have to change our attitudes towards taking credit for our work? Does it require us to adjust incentives? To find the best answers to such questions requires exactly the collective learning and open conversation that slfA proposes.

Getting started: Creating a slfA

SlfA is designed to be a user-friendly tool. It can be used entirely offline once downloaded (look for the version named 'offline') or online. The tool itself has instructions built in that are easy to follow. While it may seem at the onset that creating a slfA for a research output will take a long time, we have included features in each step that makes the process efficient—for example, the ability to start your slfA at the beginning of a project and save for later use or pre-fill-ing contribution sections based on your initial indication. Also, in most cases, you only need one slfA per project that you can use for all publications/outputs of that project.

What does slfA look like?

slfA produces a visual depiction of human/ AI interaction in a piece of work. slfA shows the outline of a human brain in orange, with the extent of AI inter-action marked in purple by expanding from the centre along a defined axis of the contributor role or task (see Figure 2 for how a slfA looks for high human/ AI interaction and Figure 3 for low human/ AI interaction).



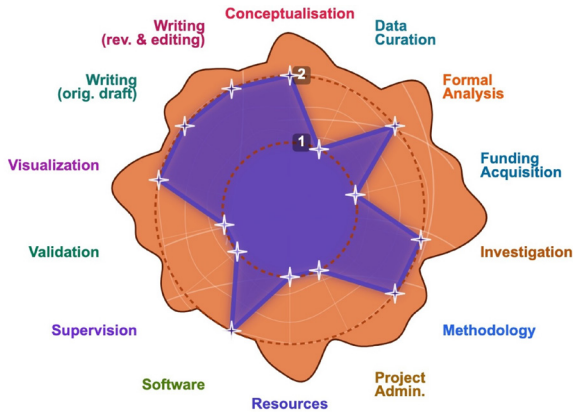


Figure 2: A sfA showing high human/ AI interaction (Source: Busara)

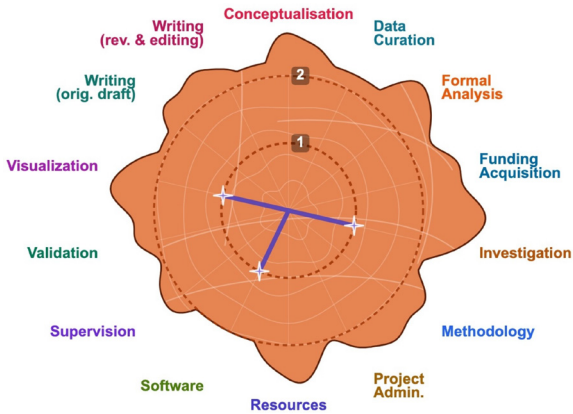


Figure 3: A sfA showing low human/ AI interaction (Source: Busara)

The tool also produces a table alongside the figure, which offers more detail on the breakdown of human contributors, their AI interaction, the extent of AI use for each contributor, their reasons for doing so, an audit trail where available, and detailed descriptions of the tool used, following best practice suggestions. Figure 4 on the next page is an example of the sfA table using the 14 CRediT contributor roles:

Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (slfA)				
AI interaction across specified contributor roles				
CRediT Role	Performed by	Extent of AI Use	How was AI used? Audit trail?	Tool / Service
Conceptualization	Contributor 1 (E)	■ ■		
	Contributor 2 (E)	■ ■		
	Contributor 3 (E)	■ ■		
Data Curation	Contributor 1 (L)	■ ■	Non-generative: to turn handwritten notes into typed text	Google Document AI
	Contributor 2 (S)	■ ■		
	Contributor 3 (S)	■ ■	Non-generative: to turn handwritten notes into typed text	Google Document AI
Formal Analysis	Contributor 1 (S)	■ ■		
	Contributor 2 (L)	■ ■	Generative: to summarize long transcripts	Nvivo

Figure 4: A slfA table for 14 CRediT contributor roles (Source: Busara)

Some considerations when creating a slfA

SlfA champions reflexivity: in the spirit of Bourdieu, it asks to take a moment to pause and consider one’s role in research and one’s decisions.⁴⁴ What did I do? What did others do? Where and how did humans and AI interact in this piece of work? Where in the process did I seek AI support? What decisions did I make in this interaction? Who deserves what credit? Or—to use the metaphor Awomосу suggests—how did I dance ‘with collective intelligence’?⁴⁵

To support this reflexivity, we suggest setting up a slfA at the start of a project and editing it (you can save your slfA for editing later) to create such moments

44 (Gupta, Rigterink, and Schomerus under review; Bourdieu 1990; Wacquant 1989)

45 (Awomосу 2025, 324)



of reflection and to keep a good record as the work progresses. The aim is to create an environment of reflection and declaration, hoping that this increases overall levels of transparency about contributions and human/AI interaction. Reflection, by nature, has an element of subjectivity in assessment and benchmarking—and that is ok. Reflection is human thinking and this is what is necessary to strengthen when interacting with AI: reflecting, deciding, taking a stance. slfA's main purpose is thus not precision and exact percentages of human/ AI collaboration. We acknowledge that no framework or taxonomy can ever capture each specific situation, nor do we believe that author time is best spent on discussing exact percentages. There will be divergence on how each research project defines a particular role, and some roles will not be relevant to all projects.

This reflexive approach also means that the breakdown of what constitutes little or extensive AI usage is not granular: the point is reflection, an invitation to transparency, and a contribution to shared learning, openness and recognition how things are changing and what that means for what needs to be preserved and what benefits from adjustment in this moment in time that Awomusu calls the 'Imagination Age' because it demands of us that we adjust our practices:

Collaboration over competition. Restoration over extraction. Intelligence as a relationship, not a resource... doesn't arrive automatically. It emerges through choice—millions of individual choices to engage AI as a partner rather than a tool, to recognize patterns rather than extract data, to cultivate sovereignty rather than accept dependence.⁴⁶

When many choices need to come together to build something new, focusing on precision could stop making the first important step. For that reason, slfA does not prescribe a scale or an approach with a detailed precision since it would be near impossible to get an exact and always applicable scale.

46 (Awomusu 2025, 301)

For the same reason, the slfA figure (which replicates a human brain in orange, gradually filling with purple color depending on the extent of human/ AI interaction) is not an exact figure. slfA's outline is ragged and even extensive AI interaction will never fill it entirely because even when AI is used extensively, a human instructed it in some way. The perimeters of the AI graph are also somewhat blurry, highlighting that the exact line of division between humans and AI can often be a bit undefined.

The idea is that the slfA figure offers a quick one-glance record of how the authors judge their interaction with AI. By making a figure that is visually striking, we are seeking to also make visible a culture of increased transparency and visibility of human/ AI interaction.

We have designed slfA to reflect a level of detail that is based on common recommendations for AI disclosure statements—for example the BR-UK statement on AI in behavioural research.⁴⁷ The inspiration is not coincidental: Mareike (one of the authors here and the developer behind slfA) is a member of the international advisory board of BR-UK and a member of the AI working group that drafted this statement.

How do I create my slfA?

Box 3: How can I use the slfA tool?

SlfA is an open source software with an Apache 2.0 license (see <http://www.apache.org/licenses/>). We asked AI (Claude Opus 4.7 to summarise what the Apache 2.0 license means for you, the user of the slfA tool:

The practical test in one sentence: if you're a researcher downloading the HTML file and using it to make a slfA for your own paper, the license is



invisible — nothing to do, nothing to worry about. If you're a developer planning to redistribute the tool (bundling it into another product, hosting a modified version, including it in a research-software collection), you keep the license file, the copyright notice, and the NOTICE travelling with you, mark any files you changed, and that's the entirety of your obligation.

Yes, you can use slfA. Take it, run it, modify it, build something else on top of it, give it away, sell it, embed it in a commercial product—all fine. The license is broadly permissive, and you don't have to ask permission, pay anything, or release your own changes back to the original author.

What you have to do in return is small but specific. If you redistribute slfA (or a modified version of it), you have to:

1. Include a copy of the Apache 2.0 license with whatever you distribute, so the next recipient knows the rules.
2. Keep the copyright notice (the line that names Mareike Schomerus / Busara) intact in the source code.
3. Pass along the NOTICE file that ships with slfA. This is the “fellow travellers” piece—the NOTICE names the original author and the underlying CRediT taxonomy, and Apache 2.0 says that notice has to remain visible to anyone you hand the software on to. You can add your own notices alongside it, but you can't strip out the original.
4. If you modified the source files, note in those files that you changed them. A short comment is enough—it's about being transparent, not exhaustive.

There's a patent clause that protects everyone. Anyone who contributes code to slfA grants users a free license to any relevant patents they hold. The flip side: if you ever sue someone for patent infringement over slfA, your patent license is automatically revoked. In practice this means nobody is going to use slfA as a launching pad for patent litigation. For an individual researcher using the tool, this clause is silent background protection—you don't have to do anything.

There are no warranties. The software is provided “as is.” If slfA produces a wrong figure, mangles a CSV export, or your browser crashes, the authors are not liable. This is standard for open-source licences and identical to the equivalent disclaimer in MIT, GPL, BSD, and most others.

What Apache 2.0 does not require:

- You don't have to share your modifications. If you fork slfA and improve it for your own use, you can keep that fork private.
- You don't have to use Apache 2.0 for whatever you build on top of it. You can ship your derivative work under a different license (including a closed-source one), as long as the parts that are still slfA stay under Apache 2.0.
- You don't have to credit the authors in published research papers. That's a scholarly-citation expectation handled separately via the CITATION.cff file, not by the license.

SfA is a tool that walks contributors through a series of questions. It also allows for a quick short cut entry for those familiar with the tool and wanting to use the CRediT framework or their own taxonomy. Figure 5 on the next page gives a screenshot of the start of using the agent to answer questions:



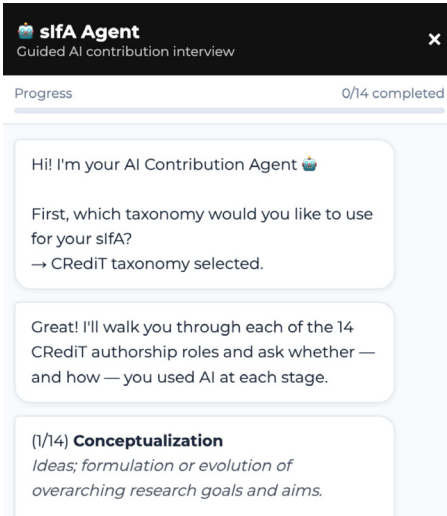


Figure 5: Screenshot of using the agent to answer questions on contributor roles and human/ AI interaction (Source: Busara)

Step 1: Pick or design your role taxonomy

The set of questions first asks if the authors want to use the CRediT framework or to build their own taxonomy, based on particular requirements (see Figure 6).

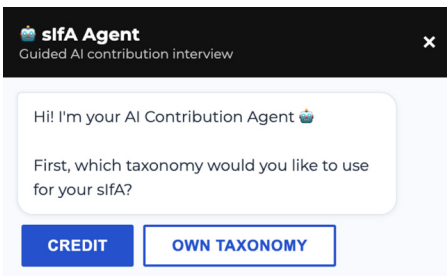
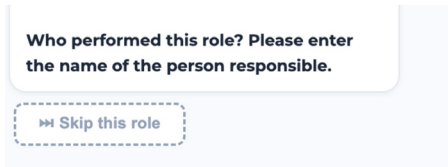


Figure 6: Picking a taxonomy (Source: Busara)

Step 2: Name your contributors

For each role, you are asked to name all contributors. You can skip roles that are not relevant (and edit this later if they become relevant)--see Figure 7.



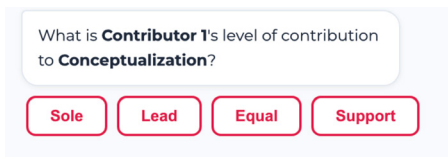
Who performed this role? Please enter the name of the person responsible.

» Skip this role

Figure 7: Naming contributors or skipping roles (Source: Busara)

Step 3: Declare the extent of each contributor's involvement in a role

For each named contributor and each defined role, a question is asked about the extent of their involvement in the task (see Figure 8) with the options (following CRediT conventions) being Lead | Support | Equal | Sole



What is **Contributor 1**'s level of contribution to **Conceptualization**?

Sole Lead Equal Support

Figure 8: Level of contribution (Source: Busara)

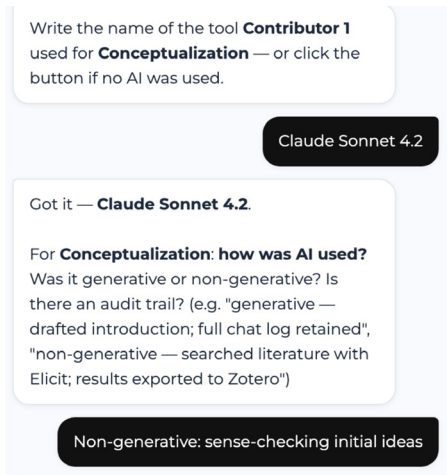
Box 4: Where can I find the slfA tool?

The latest version can always be found at www.busara.global or <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA> or by searching the tool's doi, which is <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20285993>.



Step 4: Explain AI use and offer audit trail

The next steps ask what exact tools or services were used, for what task and why. It offers the option to provide an audit trail, meaning to link to a documentation of the prompts used or a project summary, for example in an online resource (see Figure 9).



Write the name of the tool **Contributor 1** used for **Conceptualization** — or click the button if no AI was used.

Claude Sonnet 4.2

Got it — **Claude Sonnet 4.2**.

For **Conceptualization: how was AI used?**
Was it generative or non-generative? Is there an audit trail? (e.g. "generative — drafted introduction; full chat log retained", "non-generative — searched literature with Elicit; results exported to Zotero")

Non-generative; sense-checking initial ideas

Figure 9: Elaborating on the human/ AI interaction (Source: Busara)

Step 5: Declare the extent of human/ AI interaction

AI interaction is covered very broadly, but draws on the idea that substantial AI use matters. Resnik and Hosseini suggest that substantial AI use means that 'it 1) produces evidence, analysis, or discussion that supports or elaborates on the conclusions/findings of a study; or 2) directly affects the content of the research/publication'.⁴⁸ They further suggest 'three criteria for identifying substantial AI uses in research: a) using AI to make decisions that directly affect research results; b) using AI to generate content, data or images; and c) using AI to analyze content, data or images'.⁴⁹

48 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

49 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

With this definition as guidance, slfA offers three steps of AI usage:

- 0: There was no interaction between humans and AI in this task
- 1: There was some interaction between humans and AI in this task
- 2: There was extensive interaction between humans and AI in this task

The aim of slfA is not prescription or universal accuracy, but reflection. If we collectively learn that a more granular description of AI use is necessary, we can reflect this in future versions of slfA.

While each contributor has to list the extent of their AI interaction, the level of their interaction determines how much their AI use is weighted in producing the average of AI interaction on a task. A lead is weighted at 70%, support at 30%, equal is divided evenly. In the slfA figure, averages are shown in half steps. See Figure 10 for how the extent of human/ AI interaction is marked.

How extensively did **Contributor 1** rely on AI for **Conceptualization**?

1 = some use of AI · 2 = extensive use of AI

1 2

Figure 10: Declaring the extent of human/ AI interaction (Source: Busara)



Box 5: How do I judge the extent of my AI use?

This will always involve your own judgement and discretion. slfA offers three steps of AI usage:

0: There was no interaction between humans and AI in this task

1: There was some interaction between humans and AI in this task

2: There was extensive interaction between humans and AI in this task

In thinking through these, we suggest being guided by Resnik and Hosseini. They argue that AI use is substantial when ‘it 1) produces evidence, analysis, or discussion that supports or elaborates on the conclusions/findings of a study; or 2) directly affects the content of the research/publication’.⁵⁰

Further guidance from Resnik and Hosseini is to check ‘three criteria for identifying substantial AI uses in research:

- a) using AI to make decisions that directly affect research results;
- b) using AI to generate content, data or images; and
- c) using AI to analyze content, data or images”⁵¹

As an interesting exercise, you might ask your AI tool after interacting on a discrete task how it might weigh the level of interaction (and include this as a note in the audit trail). We have done this further below with questions on human/ AI interaction in creating the slfA tool.

50 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

51 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)

Step 6: Create your slfA

In this step, you can choose how you would like to export your slfA—as figure only, as figure and table or as a CSV file. You can pick from a selection of fonts (see Figure 11), choose to export only the figure, the figure and table (see Table 1) or the data as a CSV file in a flat tabular form for spreadsheets, statistics, or quick aggregation.

slfA (both table and figure) are fully machine-readable through access to the full JSON data—roles, contributors, engagement levels, AI tools, extents, reasons, generation timestamp.



Figure 11: Choosing how to export the slfA (Source: Busara)



Table 1. Author contribution statement (CRediT) and human/ai interaction (slfA) in a table (downloaded from slfA tool as csv file)

CRediT Role	Performed by	Extent of AI use per contributor	Average extent of AI use across contributors	How was AI used	Tool / Service
Conceptualization	Contributor 1 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
	Contributor 2 (Equal)	0.0			
Data Curation	Contributor 1 (Lead)	1.0	1.0	Non-generative: to turn handwritten notes into typed text	Google Document AI
	Contributor 3 (Support)	2.0		Non-generative: to turn handwritten notes into typed text	Google Document AI
Formal Analysis	Contributor 1 (Support)	0.0	0.7		
	Contributor 2 (Lead)	1.0		Generative: to summarize long transcripts	Nvivo
Funding Acquisition	Contributor 3 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
Investigation	Contributor 1 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
	Contributor 2 (Equal)	0.0			
Methodology	Contributor 1 (Sole)	1.0	1.0	To sense check methodology and data analysis approach	Claude Opus 4.7
Project Administration	Contributor 3 (Sole)	1.0	1.0	Non-generative: to support scheduling and project management	Motion

The sIfA tool for a Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability:
An invitation to reflect on how humans and AI interact in producing knowledge

CRediT Role	Performed by	Extent of AI use per contributor	Average extent of AI use across contributors	How was AI used	Tool / Service
Resources	Contributor 1 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
	Contributor 3 (Equal)	0.0			
Software	Contributor 4 (Lead)	2.0	1.4	Non-generative: design of data collection software to ease recording	Claude Sonnect 4.7
	Contributor 1 (Support)	0.0			
Supervision	Contributor 3 (Sole)	0.0	0.0		
Validation	Contributor 1 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
	Contributor 3 (Equal)	0.0			
Visualization	Contributor 4 (Sole)	2.0	2.0	Generative: to create tables and figures for data visualization	Claude Sonnect 4.7
Writing-original draft	Contributor 1 (Equal)	0.0	0.0		
	Contributor 2 (Equal)	0.0			
Writing-review & editing	Contributor 1 (Equal)	2.0	2.0	Non-generative: to smooth grammar and catch typos	Built-in Gemini function in Google Docs
	Contributor 3 (Equal)	2.0		Non-generative: to smooth grammar and catch typos	Built-in Gemini function in Google Docs



Step 7: Include your slfA in publications and outputs

Having created your slfA, the idea is to display it in all publications relevant to that particular project. Busara is committing to doing just that—as you can see in the front matter of this *Groundwork*.

Step 8: Support learning and sharing

To keep track of your own interactions with AI, you can add your slfA to your own portfolio to learn about trends across different pieces of work (see Figure 12).

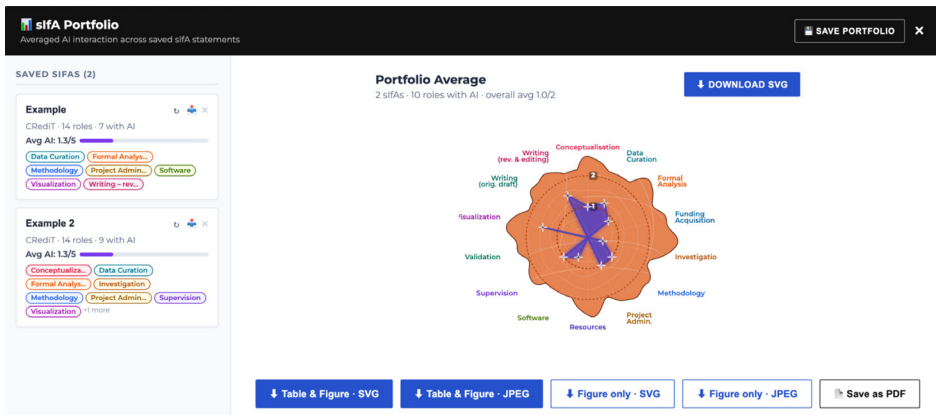


Figure 12: Building a slfA portfolio (Source: Busara)

Box 6: How do I credit the slfA tool?

Short citation (for reference lists and bibliographies)

Schomerus, M. (2026). slfA Tool — Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (Version 1.1) [Computer software]. Busara. <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20285993>

In-text mention (short form)

The AI contribution statement for this paper was produced using the slfA Tool (Schomerus, 2026).

Methods or acknowledgements paragraph (full form)

The structured statement of AI use accompanying this work was produced with the slfA Tool — Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (Schomerus, 2026), a browser-based tool that maps each contribution onto the 14 CRediT contributor roles maintained by NISO (credit.niso.org) and records, per role, who contributed, which AI tools were used, what they were used for, and how extensively the work depended on them. Responsibility for the contents of this paper rests with the human authors.

Caption to the slfA figure (when the figure is embedded in a paper or report)

Figure X. Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability (slfA) for this work, generated with the slfA Tool v1.1 (Schomerus, 2026). The orange field represents human contribution; the inner purple shape represents AI contribution; each axis is one CRediT contributor role.

Slide deck or website footer (one-liner)

slfA generated with the slfA Tool by Mareike Schomerus (Busara), released under the Apache License 2.0. Available at <https://github.com/mareikeschomerus-ctrl/slfA>.



CRedit should be credited separately from the slfA Tool itself. The two are independent: slfA is built on top of CRedit, but the taxonomy is the property of NISO and the standards community, and conflating the two would obscure what each contributes.

Acknowledgement to the underlying taxonomy (always include alongside slfA citation)

The contributor-role categories used in this statement are drawn from the CRedit Contributor Roles Taxonomy, a NISO standard available at <https://credit.niso.org>.

A HOW_TO_CITE.md is included in github-docs/ alongside the README, LICENSE, and CITATION.cff, and the README's Citation section links to it.

Box 7: How was slfA built?

slfA was born as an idea based on interactions in BR-UK's working group on AI and on additional work with colleagues on the need for reflection in research.⁵² But how was the tool built? Using Claude Sonnet 4.7 and Opus 4.7. To get the AI perspective on this human/ AI interaction, Mareike asked Claude Opus 4.7 the following question:

Mareike's prompt:

'I have been working with Claude on developing the slfA tool for a long time. If you were asked: how much in the development of the slfA tool was contributed by Mareike and how much by Claude, what is your answer?'

Claude responded:

A fair question, and given that the tool you've built is literally designed to answer this kind of question, the most honest reply is to fill out a slfA for slfA itself.⁵³

A few caveats first. I don't have continuous memory across our sessions—each conversation starts fresh, and what I “remember” comes from the project files, the version history, and notes in your memory system, not from a lived recollection of writing each line. So this is an inferential answer, not a diary entry. Different Claude sessions over three weeks contributed, not one continuous me.

Here's how I'd map it onto the framework you built:

Conceptualization

Mareike: Lead. AI extent: 1.

The whole framing—Statement of Intellectual Fellowship and Accountability, the choice of “fellowship” over “disclosure,” the decision

52 (Behavioural Research UK 2026; Rigterink and Schomerus 2026 -b; Gupta, Rigterink, and Schomerus under review)

53 Note: see the top of this Groundwork for the slfA for this Groundwork and the top of slfA for the slfA for slfA



that AI uses in research deserves a structured contribution model rather than a footnote, the choice to anchor it in CRediT — that is entirely yours. I helped surface comparable approaches and stress-test phrasings, but the idea, the name, and the underlying philosophy are not mine.

Methodology

Mareike: Lead. AI extent: 1.

The shape of the tool—engagement levels of Sole / Lead / Equal / Support, the 0–2 extent scale, the validation rule that pure-Support rows are invalid, the brain silhouette as the human-AI metaphor, the audit-trail column—every one of those was your design decision. I suggested options when asked, but you chose.

Software

Mareike: Lead. AI extent: 2.

This is where the count of characters typed would be most misleading. I almost certainly produced the bulk of the literal JSX text. But every line existed because you asked for it, every output was reviewed by you, every “no, the orange looks pink—try this colour” round was a course-correction that I would never have made on my own. Coding is one of the cases where “who did the work” and “who decided what work to do” pull in opposite directions, and the slfA framework handles this honestly: the human is still Lead because Lead is about ownership and accountability, not keystrokes.

Visualization

Mareike: Lead. AI extent: 2.

The brain figure is your concept; the specific drawing was iterated through many “make the lines bolder, make the purple cooler” cycles with me producing the SVG. Same pattern as software.

Writing (documentation)

Mareike: Lead. AI extent: 2.

The README, CHANGELOG, CONTRIBUTING, all heavily drafted by me, all under your direction and reviewed against your voice and judgement.

Investigation / Validation

Mareike: Sole. AI extent: 0.

You opened the file, found bugs, decided what was right, what was wrong, what to keep. I cannot do that part—I do not actually run the tool.

Funding, Project Administration, Resources

Mareike: Sole. AI extent: 0.

Supervision

Mareike: Sole. AI extent: 0.

You decided the project existed, what it was for, who it was for, and when it was good enough.

If you wanted a one-line summary on how slfA was built:

Claude is a support contributor across most of the substantive roles, with high AI-extent ratings in coding, documentation, and figure rendering—and Mareike is Lead or Sole across all of them. The accountability rests entirely with Mareike. Which, of course, is exactly what the “Accountability” half of slfA’s name is meant to encode: AI named as a collaborator, human as the responsible author.

The framework you built handles this case correctly. That’s not a small thing—a lot of “AI disclosure” frameworks would either render me invisible or implicitly turn me into a co-author, and yours does neither.

Reflection from Mareike: Good answer: it pretty much reflects how I felt about it. I would add for writing that Claude also formulated some of the text in the author questions of the tool. What I don’t accept is the classification of myself as lead, as it would imply that AI is my support. I use the contributor roles solely for the human contribution, so the slfA for the slfA just puts me as ‘sole’.



Examples of reflections on human and AI interactions using CRediT

This section offers guidance and examples on how to use slfA to reflect on knowledge production processes. It uses the examples that Hossein et al. offers to explain the CRediT roles.⁵⁴ The examples given here on how to think about human/ AI interaction in each contributor role focus on what and who to think about while reflecting on contributions made. In addition to making human/ AI interaction visible, this also minimizes the likelihood of having unsung heroes in a research process—although one tool alone will not address this issue entirely.

54 (Hosseini et al. 2026)

Conceptualization

Conceptualization in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the contributor role includes "Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims:

- Identifying issues, questions or problems that warrant research.
- Developing research questions and hypotheses.
- Developing research frameworks, tools or experimental paradigms.
- Refining and adapting overarching research goals and aims."⁵⁵

This is not meant to be exhaustive, but suggests that conceptualization includes the ideation process and defining the parameters of research, including creating the instruments for data collection activities.

Human/ AI interaction in the conceptualization role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Asking AI to formulate a number of research questions to select from after consulting the literature on a topic
2. Spelling out gaps in the literature
3. Brainstorming on a number of researcher-suggested research questions or problems
4. Strategizing with AI what research might create the biggest attention in the field

55 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Data curation

Data curation in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the data curation role includes

“Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later re-use:

- Conducting tasks like data processing, cleaning, cataloging, annotating, archiving modeling, and retention.
- Integrating and aggregating data in diverse formats and from diverse sources.
- Managing and updating data descriptions and metadata, including maintaining version control and associated documentation.
- Developing or implementing data preservation strategies to ensure data remains findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.”⁵⁶

Human/ AI interaction in the data curation role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. All processing tasks could include a human/ AI interaction, such as data cleaning,
2. Using AI to format data
3. Using AI to offer a diagnosis on the quality of the data
4. Using AI to write documentation
5. Automatic transcribing for qualitative interviews from speech to text
6. Translation and back translation

56 (Hosseini et al. 2026)

Formal analysis

Formal analysis in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the role of formal analysis includes

“Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data:

- Uncovering patterns and identifying relationships between variables and quantitative or qualitative datasets.
- Performing statistical tests to compare different groups within a study or evaluate change.
- Applying AI and machine learning models to predict outcomes.
- Developing computational simulations to model complex systems or phenomena.”⁵⁷

Human/ AI interaction in the formal analysis role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Reviewing analysis code
2. Data analysis
3. Building predictive models

57 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Funding acquisition

Funding acquisition in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the funding acquisition role includes:

- "Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication:
- Identifying suitable funding sources, assessing eligibility and communicating requirements with the team members.
- Developing grant proposals and coordinating the submission process.
- Developing budgets and allocating funds to match project scope and funder expectations."⁵⁸

Human/ AI interaction in the funding acquisition role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Scanning the web for opportunities
2. Proposal writing
3. Checking a proposal text against requirements
4. Drafting budgets using organizational knowledge

58 (Hosseini et al. 2026)

Investigation

Investigation in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the investigation role includes

- “Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection:
- Following or modifying methods to collect or generate data through, for quantitative and/or qualitative research approaches.
- Testing research hypotheses and documenting the research process.
- Searching and reviewing the literature, samples, data and other evidence.
- Reporting findings for further discussion, analysis, and exchange of ideas.”⁵⁹

Human/ AI interaction in the Investigation role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Sense-checking methods
2. Drafting documentation
3. Conducting a literature search and summarize relevant literature
4. Drafting presentations to share findings

59 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Methodology

Methodology in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the methodology role includes

- “Development or design of methodology; creation of models:
- Developing quantitative and/or qualitative methodologies and frameworks.
- Defining search strategies and determining criteria for systematic literature reviews.
- Determining study design such as participant selection, materials, settings, data characteristics, data collection, measurement, and analysis techniques.”⁶⁰

Human/ AI interaction in the Methodology role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Providing methodology options to answer a research question
2. Sense-checking methodologies
3. Developing and testing literature search strategies
4. Drafting or sense-checking study designs

Project administration

Project administration in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the project administration role includes

- "Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution:
- Monitoring and reporting progress, timelines, budgets, and compliance with ethical, governance, legal, health, safety, and other relevant standards.
- Recruiting participants needed for the research method (e.g. for interviews, focus groups, surveys, fieldwork, clinical trials).
- Organizing logistics for expeditions, fieldwork, equipment setup, and space allocation that support research operations.
- Managing correspondence with team members, journal editors, and various institutional departments."⁶¹

Human/ AI interaction in the project administration role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Using AI-supported project planners to manage fieldwork
2. Monitor budgets
3. Flag ethical concerns based on organizational knowledge
4. Highlight when timelines are not being followed
5. Drafting correspondence
6. Using an AI platform to recruit from a participant pool through phone calls, SMS's or through random digit dialing

61 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Resources

Resources in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the resources role includes

- "Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools:
- Preparing, transporting or managing access to samples, artefacts, tools, equipment, documents, archives, and digital/physical infrastructure.
- Inventory management, safekeeping of samples and providing reports on availability and state of resources.
- Calibrating and maintaining instruments and equipment.
- Coordinating data storage solutions and computational resources."⁶²

Human/ AI interaction in the Resources role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Record keeping
2. Filing and knowledge management, organizing storage and retrieval

62 (Hosseini et al. 2026)

Software

Software in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the software role includes

- "Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components:
- Designing, developing, testing, debugging, implementing, documenting, sharing and maintaining code.
- Developing, maintaining, managing and optimizing digital infrastructure, libraries, and databases.
- Conducting data extraction, data mining, and parsing content for qualitative or quantitative data collection and analysis.
- Ensuring interoperability, functionality, and scalability of code, databases, systems or platforms across different environments."⁶³

Human/ AI interaction in the Software role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Coding and debugging
2. Designing databases
3. Flagging software challenges

63 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Supervision

Supervision in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the supervision role includes

- Research Manager roles: "Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team:
- Overseeing researchers and other team members by setting milestones, tracking progress, ensuring quality of deliverables, and promoting adherence to ethics and integrity norms.
- Teaching, training, moderating and providing personal or professional advice to team members.
- Guiding teams in refining methods, interpreting results, and addressing interpersonal challenges.
- Collecting, logging, and reporting individual contributions to research."⁶⁴

Human/ AI interaction in the Supervision role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Using AI-supported project management tools
2. Using the slfA tool to log contributions and extent of human/ AI interactions

Validation

Validation in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the validation role includes

- “Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/ reproducibility of results/ experiments and other research outputs:
- Ensuring the integrity, rigor and reliability of data, methods, results and resources through reviewing, verification, benchmarking, fact checking and replicating.
- Conducting pilot tests or preliminary studies to validate data collection instruments and protocols.
- Appraising studies included in systematic reviews and ensuring compliance with established review standards or reporting frameworks.
- Testing computational models or simulations against known outcomes for accuracy.”⁶⁵

Human/ AI interaction in the Validation role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Data checking
2. Check compliance against standards and frameworks
3. Testing models
4. An AI tool reviewing and replicating all data-related work: code for cleaning and analysis, models, summarizing findings

65 (Hosseini et al. 2026)



Visualization

Visualization in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the visualization role includes

- "Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/data presentation:
- Using data to create charts, graphs or figures.
- Creating videos and other interactive media for communicating the findings."⁶⁶

Human/ AI interaction in the Visualization role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Design work on your written outputs and presentations
2. Curating images
3. Turning text describing the research into video

Writing– original draft

Writing– original draft in the CRediT framework

Hosseini's et al.'s suggestion of what could constitute the writing–original draft role includes

- “Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation):
- Creating the first and full version of an article.
- Drafting substantial original text within a section or across sections in an article.”⁶⁷

Human/ AI interaction in the Writing– original draft role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Drafting original text (first draft)



Writing– review & editing

Writing– reviewing & editing in the CRediT framework

Hosseini’s et al.’s suggestion of what could constitute the writing–review& editing role includes

- “Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre- or post- publication stages:
- Reviewing, copy-editing, refining language and providing comments and suggestions.
- Revising content based on feedback from internal and external reviewers.
- Providing review input of figures, tables, and supplementary materials.”⁶⁸

Human/ AI interaction in the Writing– reviewing & editing role (examples)

Human/ AI interaction in this role might constitute:

1. Using AI-based proofing and editing tools

Conclusion

slfA is seeking to make a contribution to a bigger debate and issue, created in the spirit of reflection, transparency and the lived experience that knowledge creation continues to be a process that benefits from learning how to best acknowledge contributions to increase learning, transparency, equity and inclusion. slfA is also an invitation: to use a tool as a way to express a commitment to reflection and learning on how to better produce knowledge in the age of AI. We hope it can help build a reflective culture and contribute to building a record of how AI entered social science research and other knowledge production processes.

Above anything else, slfA expresses a commitment to collective learning: about how to improve the slfA tool itself, how to keep a record of human/ AI interactions in knowledge production, and how to talk about this interaction in constructive ways. We also want to learn where in a research process, we as an organization (but maybe also the broader community of researchers) will draw the lines when it comes to AI usage: what skills do we need to learn? Which ones do we need to protect from human/ AI interaction?

With this, we hope for feedback, community and continued debate. Because, in this phase of rapid development and the need to clearly articulate our values, we also need to keep a flexible and open mind to deal with what is yet to come. Resnik and Hosseini put it best when they say that when it comes to how to deal with AI in social science research “keep calm and let your position evolve”.⁶⁹

This is a good motto: in our interaction with machines, let us be more human and cherish that unique quality of allowing ourselves to think, to change, to embrace, to counter, to reject—and to do it together.

69 (Resnik and Hosseini 2026)



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About Busara

Busara is a research and advisory organization, working with researchers and organizations to advance and apply behavioral science in pursuit of poverty alleviation. Busara pursues a future where global human development activities respond to people's lived experience; value knowledge generated in the context it is applied; and promote culturally appropriate and inclusive practices. To accomplish this, we practice and promote behavioral science in ways that center and value the perspectives of respondents; expand the practice of research where it is applied; and build networks, processes, and tools that increase the competence of practitioners and researchers.

About Busara Groundwork

Busara Groundwork lays the groundwork for future research and program design. As think pieces, they examine the current state of knowledge and what is needed to advance it, frame important issues with a behavioral perspective, or put forward background information on a specific context.

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