

AI Glossary of Key Terms

This glossary defines essential terms and acronyms commonly used in artificial intelligence (AI), with a focus on responsible use in human services. It is part of the New York Alliance's AI Learning Community Toolkit and is designed to support providers, self-advocates, and families in understanding the language and practices surrounding ethical, person-centered AI.

Core Concepts

- **AI:** Artificial Intelligence; computer systems that simulate human intelligence to perform tasks like learning, reasoning, and decision-making
- **ML (Machine Learning):** A subset of AI where systems learn patterns from data without being explicitly programmed
- **NLP (Natural Language Processing):** Methods that let computers understand, generate, and respond to human language
- **LLM (Large Language Model):** A very large AI model trained on massive text datasets to generate human-like text
- **Foundation Model:** A broad, general-purpose AI model trained at large scale and adaptable to many tasks

AI Model Types

- **Generative AI:** AI that creates new content such as text, images, or audio based on patterns it has learned
- **Discriminative AI:** AI that classifies or labels input data rather than generating new content
- **Frontier Model:** An advanced, large-scale AI model with capabilities that could pose societal risks if not governed properly
- **AGI (Artificial General Intelligence):** A hypothetical form of AI that can perform any intellectual task a human can do
- **Agentic AI:** A system that can independently take actions or make decisions toward achieving goals, often with minimal human input or oversight

AI Operations & Structure

- **Model Training:** The process of teaching an AI system by exposing it to data and adjusting parameters to reduce error
- **Fine-Tuning:** A process where a pre-trained AI model is retrained on specialized data to improve performance on a specific task
- **Inference:** The stage when a trained model is used to make predictions or generate output from new input
- **Token:** A chunk of text (ex. words, parts of words) used to break language into units an AI model can process
- **Vector:** A numerical representation of words or data that AI uses to understand relationships and meaning

Data Use & Processing

- **Corpus:** A large body of text or data used to train an AI model
- **Training Data:** The information provided to a model during its learning phase
- **Zero-Shot Learning:** The ability of a model to perform tasks that it has never been specifically trained on