# SoundCloud’s terms update raises AI training concerns among artists despite safeguards



In a move that could affect its user base, SoundCloud recently updated its terms of service, allowing the potential for audio uploaded to its platform to be used in training artificial intelligence (AI). This change, reported by TechCrunch, has raised significant concerns among artists and creators regarding the future use of their content.

According to SoundCloud's updated terms, users must agree that their uploaded content could be used to inform or train AI technologies. However, in an effort to alleviate fears, SoundCloud clarified that it does not currently utilise user audio for AI training purposes. Marni Greenberg, SoundCloud's Senior Vice President and head of communications, emphasised this point when she stated, “SoundCloud has never used artist content to train AI models, nor do we develop AI tools or allow third parties to scrape or use SoundCloud content from our platform for AI training purposes.” She reassured users that technical safeguards are in place, including a 'no AI tag' designed to prevent unauthorized use of content.

While the company has implemented several protective measures, including prohibiting the use of major label music for AI training, concerns about the broader implications remain. The risk lies in the potential future application of these updated terms, particularly as the music industry grapples with the emerging role of AI. SoundCloud's Terms of Service for artists explicitly bar the distribution of materials generated solely through AI, ensuring only content that involves human creativity is shared on the platform.

Beyond addressing user concerns, SoundCloud has taken steps to enhance its offerings in the AI space. In January 2024, the service announced partnerships with various AI companies, including Fadr and Soundful, enabling artists to upload songs created with assistive AI tools directly. This initiative illustrates SoundCloud's aim to empower creators while being mindful of the potential threats posed by unchecked AI development. However, the ramifications of these partnerships, particularly regarding the originality and ownership of works produced with AI assistance, are areas of ongoing debate within the industry.

SoundCloud's commitment to artist protections has also led it to join the 'Principles for Music Creation with AI' ethics initiative, which aims to ensure that artists receive appropriate credit and compensation for AI-assisted tracks. Collaborations with content identification services like Audible Magic and Pex further demonstrate SoundCloud's stance on protecting creators' rights amidst the growing influence of AI in the music industry.

As the landscape evolves, users who wish to maintain control over their music and podcasts may need to reconsider their engagement with SoundCloud. The question remains: how will the platform balance its innovative aspirations in AI with the cultural and ethical responsibilities toward its artist community? As it stands, while current protections seem robust, the industry must keep a vigilant watch over the implications of AI on creative expression and intellectual property rights in the future.

Ultimately, as content creators navigate the increasingly complex relationship between AI and artistic integrity, platforms like SoundCloud must tread carefully, ensuring that their policies genuinely safeguard user interests without stifling technological innovation. The ongoing dialogue surrounding this issue will be crucial in shaping a future where both art and technology can coexist harmoniously.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2
2. Paragraph 2
3. Paragraph 3
4. Paragraph 4
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraph 6
7. Paragraph 7

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://mashable.com/article/soundcloud-ai-train-policy-users> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://developers.soundcloud.com/docs/api/terms-of-use> - SoundCloud's API Terms of Use explicitly prohibit the use of user content to train or develop artificial intelligence technologies. The terms state that user content accessed through the API may not be used to train AI models, create identifying digital files, or serve as input to AI technologies, unless explicitly licensed for such use. This policy aims to protect user content from unauthorized AI training and development.
3. <https://artists.soundcloud.com/terms> - SoundCloud's Terms of Service for artists specify that materials systematically generated through artificial intelligence or other means are not eligible for distribution. The terms outline that covers, remixes, mixes, mashups, DJ sets, audio recordings, podcasts, and recordings exclusively computer-generated through AI are not accepted. This policy ensures that only content with proper rights and human involvement is distributed on the platform.
4. <https://m.soundcloud.com/terms-of-use> - SoundCloud's Terms of Use state that by uploading content, users grant SoundCloud a license to use their content for various purposes, including informing, training, developing, or serving as input to artificial intelligence technologies. However, the terms also prohibit the use of content to impersonate individuals or entities, including using AI to impersonate voices or likenesses without authorization, ensuring ethical use of AI in content creation.
5. <https://musically.com/2024/01/26/ai-music-update-soundcloud-deals-google-questions-ftc-probe/> - In January 2024, SoundCloud announced partnerships with AI companies Fadr, Soundful, and Voice-Swap to allow artists to upload songs created with assistive AI tools directly to its platform. The company emphasized its commitment to artist empowerment and introduced measures to prevent AI abuse, including blocking AI bots from crawling its site and training models on its catalog, addressing concerns about unauthorized AI training on user content.
6. <https://musically.com/2024/11/20/soundcloud-adds-more-ai-tools-and-signs-up-for-ethics-pledge/> - In November 2024, SoundCloud expanded its AI partnerships by adding six more tools, including Tuney, Tuttii, AIBeatz, TwoShot, Starmony, and Ace Studio, to assist artists in music creation. The company also joined the 'Principles for Music Creation with AI' ethics initiative, launched by Universal Music Group and Roland, and collaborated with Audible Magic and Pex for content identification, ensuring rights holders receive proper credit and compensation for AI-assisted tracks.
7. <https://cirrkus.com/news/formal-office-fashion-style/soundcloud-adds-new-ai-tools-commits-to-artist-protections/21292936/> - SoundCloud has introduced new AI tools and committed to artist protections by joining the 'Principles for Music Creation with AI' ethics initiative. The company has partnered with Audible Magic and Pex for content identification solutions, ensuring rights holders receive proper credit and compensation for AI-assisted tracks. These efforts aim to address concerns about unauthorized AI training on protected works and emphasize the importance of human artistry in music creation.