



Senator Schumer, Senator Rounds, Senator Heinrich, and Senator Young,

Match Group appreciates the opportunity to directly engage with the Senate to discuss the principles guiding our work and generative AI usage. Match Group continues to believe that guardrails are needed for using the internet, in general, and especially for new, exciting technologies such as generative AI. Because of this belief, Match Group is proud of our public support for both EARN IT and KOSA. We believe that thoughtful, smart regulation of AI—consistent with our principles listed below—will benefit users, businesses, and society at large.

Match Group owns a portfolio of online dating and social discovery brands that are available in the United States and 190 countries, in more than 40 languages. Some of the brands in the portfolio include Tinder, Hinge, BLK, Chispa, Stir, and Match.

At Match Group, sparking meaningful connections is at the heart of what we do. As leaders in incorporating new and emerging technologies – everything from creating the digital dating category to the jump from web-based dating to mobile – we remain committed to delivering best-in-class apps and features to our users.

We believe the recent advances in generative AI have the potential to be transformational, making dating apps more safe, effective, and engaging, so singles can find meaningful connections more efficiently. While we are excited about this technology, we are also committed to taking a thoughtful approach to how AI will be used across our platforms with a focus on user safety and privacy.

We maintain a deep belief in ethical and responsible innovation, all of which serve as the foundation for our AI Principles, which we released publicly earlier this Fall.

Our AI Principles

Authenticity

We are committed to developing features that enhance individual expression and the authenticity of human connections. Our AI work is rooted in helping users better showcase their personality and put their best foot forward in presenting themselves to potential matches.

We want to increase user confidence in the connections that they make online and help them meet in real life.

Accountability

We strive to continually improve based upon feedback and assessment of impacts. We're just at the start of our generative AI journey. We're committed to tests, exploration, and development work alongside industry partners, third-party experts, and our communities, both before sensitive new features or tools are deployed and throughout their use.

Equity

We believe generative AI technologies should not perpetuate harmful biases or unfair practices. As we continue to dive deeper into generative AI, we are being thoughtful on how we can layer in protections throughout our apps' development lifecycles, such as regular audits and algorithmic adjustments.

Explainability

Although intent and outcomes are easy to understand, dating is predicated on trust. As we bring new technology to the dating experience, we will seek to educate our members on its applications and highlight the features that utilize these technologies.

Integrity

We are passionate about advocating for better experiences and outcomes. Fostering meaningful and engaging digital and real-world connections is the foundation of our company. Our investments and innovation in generative AI are laser-focused on furthering that mission and improving the lives of our users around the world.

Privacy

Protecting the privacy, security, and personal data of our users is of the utmost importance to our business and our users. Data that we collect – including in relation to generative AI technologies – is used to provide the best services possible for our users and communities. We do not sell user data to third parties, and we will be transparent about how we use data to improve generative AI outcomes.

Safety

We know that safer connections mean better connections. In tandem with incorporating generative AI technology into our profile, discovery, and post-matching experiences, we're committed to leveraging the latest advancements in our safety tools and features, while

developing policies and investing in development that will help protect our users from AI-enabled risks and bad actors.

Our Investments and Impact

While these principles serve as a compass informing our work, the task of keeping our platform secure and our users safe is never over, which is why we are constantly engaging with trust and safety experts and investing in innovation.

It's also why we engage with governments across the globe. Technology is at the heart of how we interact at virtually every juncture. Communicating has never been easier and more convenient, but this convenience and omnipresence has given rise to new societal challenges with which AI regulators, policy makers, and tech companies must grapple.

As part of our work to provide our users with tools to keep them safe and secure, over the last several years, we have pursued a series of investments to help build new innovative AI-powered safety features and tools across our portfolio with the primary objective of helping our users date safely.

Because we live in a society where socialized harassment is, sadly, endemic, we have invested in technology to disrupt harms as they occur, spending nearly \$250 million in the last few years alone on technologies, programs, and resources dedicated to keeping our users safe.

For example, our brands have pioneered an innovative new safety technology called "Are You Sure?", a first-of-its-kind safety feature that uses AI to detect harmful language and warn the sender to stop online harassment before they send it.

The feature was first launched on Tinder in 2021, and has since expanded to Plenty of Fish and Meetic. Since the initial roll out, more than 500 million messages have been either revised or deleted by users after the feature flagged potentially harassing or problematic language.

Over time, there has been an 84% decrease in the feature being triggered to users on Plenty of Fish, indicating the tool is effectively guiding users to learn from the intervention prompts and change their behavior. The tool was built based on language members have reported in the past, and has continued to evolve and assimilate behavior over time to flag new words and phrases. It is now available in 18 languages around the world.

We are proud that even more of our brands including Match, Stir, OurTime, BLK, Chispa, and Upward will soon incorporate "Are You Sure" into their platforms by the end of the year, helping another 4 million users have safer interactions due to this innovative feature.

Furthermore, we encourage our users to let us know of issues they experience on the platform so we can respond and take action. Tinder’s feature “Does This Bother You?” provides proactive support to members when harmful language is detected in a message they received. When a Tinder member responds ‘yes’ to the “Does This Bother You?” prompt, after receiving a potentially inappropriate message from a match, they will have the option to report the person for their behavior. Any user can also report any other unwanted behavior in our apps and these reporting and response flows have been informed by guidance from experts like RAINN to be survivor-centered and trauma-informed.

Societal Benefits of Online Dating

In addition to helping protect our users from online harassment and abuse, we have also observed the real, tangible benefits of a more interconnected society.

Today, online dating is a huge part of the fabric of modern society. Half of U.S. singles have tried online dating. 44% of all single adults worldwide will use online dating, and over 40% of all relationships and 1/3rd of all marriages in the US start online.

Scholarly research has shown that couples who met online are more likely to be in interracial marriages, and more likely to be in interreligious marriages than those who first meet offline.¹

In a 2017 study, researchers used real-world data to show that evidence suggests online dating contributes to the rapid diversification of society by creating ties between people that otherwise would not have existed. Controlling for racial diversity, they found that places in the United States with better internet access had higher rates of interracial marriage. This suggests that online dating is at least partially responsible for the uptick of interracial marriages.²

Reports also found that not only has online dating resulted in more diverse relationships, but stronger marriages as well,³ and that “couples who meet online tend to communicate better and have longer, happier relationships.”⁴

¹<https://www.unm.edu/~reubenjthomas/onlineexogamy.pdf>

² https://arxiv.org/pdf/1709.10478.pdf?itid=lk_inline_enhanced-template

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janetwburns/2017/10/25/theres-now-evidence-that-online-dating-causes-stronger-more-diverse-relationships/>

⁴ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/dating-apps-are-making-marriages-stronger-11567094310>

Additionally, 24% of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults who are partnered – that is, married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship – say they met their significant other through online dating.⁵

We are proud to operate a platform substantively impacting society elevating diversity and inclusion within new pathways to finding meaningful connections.

Our Liability and Privacy Perspective

User safety and privacy is of paramount importance to Match Group.

In terms of liability, specifically, Match Group supports reforms to Section 230, and is pleased to continue to lead – often as a lone voice in the tech sector – in favor of reform.

We have publicly supported the bipartisan EARN IT Act, with our Chief Legal Officer testifying in support of the bill. Match has also supported legislation / laws in Europe to increase internet safety, such as the Digital Services Act. In the United Kingdom and in the EU, we have supported the creation of a “duty of care”, whereby platforms have an obligation to conduct risk assessments, and then mitigate those risks.

Regarding data and consumer privacy, Match has been an industry leader in implementing robust privacy standards in compliance with GDPR internationally, and domestically in the form of CCPA. It is simply good business to protect our users and empower them to be their authentic selves on our platform as they pursue meaningful connections.

We implement strong privacy standards globally at all of our brands, regardless of where the brand or their users are located. We collect only necessary and proportionate data, are transparent in the way we process it, and obtain strong security and confidentiality commitments from our vendors.

Incorporating safety and privacy into the design of products is the best way to effectively move the ball forward on AI. But this truly does need to apply across the board – if there is one weak link in the fence, the sector will not live up to its greatest potential. As such, we support reasonable legislation that incorporates industry standard safety and privacy by design in the AI context to receive protections like those found in Section 230. Doing so would properly incentivize everyone to take the actions necessary to make our internet safe and functional for the future.

⁵ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/06/26/about-half-of-lesbian-gay-and-bisexual-adults-have-used-online-dating/>

While the future of AI presents great challenges, it also presents great opportunities to continue to advance society. However, Match Group firmly believes that technology companies must all do more *in partnership* with our elected representatives, regulators, NGOs, advocacy groups, and other experts to protect online users in furtherance of common-sense rules of the road that enhance the safety of not just Match Group brand users, but all online users.

Thank you again for asking Match Group to share our views on these matters. We look forward to working with Congress, the White House, and the States as this important policy discussion moves forward.