# Getty v. Stability AI heads to trial in key copyright test



The High Court case of Getty Images v. Stability AI has quickly emerged as a landmark in shaping legal standards for artificial intelligence and copyright. At its core is a pivotal question: can AI systems lawfully train on copyrighted material without explicit permission from rights holders? The outcome is expected to influence not only UK law but global approaches to copyright in the age of AI. Getty Images claims that Stability AI unlawfully used millions of its images to train Stable Diffusion, a prominent AI model. Stability AI denies any infringement, arguing that its technology enables creative expression and aligns with fair use principles. The case touches on broader issues, from how training data is sourced and who benefits from AI to the need for protecting the rights of original content creators. One company urging ethical practice is Photoroom, which supports training AI models on authorised data. Its stance reflects a growing industry consensus that respecting copyright and maintaining transparency are essential to building public trust and fostering responsible innovation. This view aligns with wider calls for a strong legal framework to balance innovation and creators' rights. The court has rejected Stability AI’s bid to dismiss the case, allowing it to proceed to trial—a clear sign that Getty’s claims raise serious legal questions. The trial is set to explore complex areas including copyright infringement, database rights, trademark issues and passing off—all crucial to the evolving landscape of AI-generated content. Stability AI argues that the training occurred on servers in the US and that only a small fraction of outputs closely resemble Getty’s images. How the court assesses jurisdiction and the nature of AI-generated content will have far-reaching implications for global AI operations and intellectual property law. Getty, meanwhile, continues to back AI ventures that respect copyright. Among them is BRIA, an AI image generator that recently raised $24 million. BRIA licenses its training data from stock image providers, offering a lawful and commercially viable path forward that avoids trademark infringement and preserves creative integrity. The case carries wider significance for how societies govern AI’s role in content creation and licensing. A ruling in favour of Getty could lead to stricter licensing requirements for training data, potentially reshaping how AI systems are built and deployed. A decision supporting Stability AI, by contrast, might endorse broader use of copyrighted material in training—raising questions about the sustainability of creative industries. Legal observers are also watching how the court handles procedural hurdles, such as identifying claimants and specific works used in training. These challenges highlight the difficulties in applying traditional copyright rules to fast-evolving AI technologies and may prompt reforms in how intellectual property is defined and enforced. As the trial unfolds, it represents more than a legal dispute. It is a defining moment for the future of AI and copyright—a test of how innovation can proceed without undermining the rights of creators. The verdict will be closely watched by stakeholders across law, technology and the creative sector, as it could set the course for responsible AI development in the UK and beyond.

Created by [Amplify](https://www.hbmadvisory.com/amplify): AI-augmented, human-curated content.

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.uktech.news/opinion/the-path-to-a-more-democratic-ai-future-20250623> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/boards-policy-regulation/gettys-landmark-uk-lawsuit-copyright-ai-set-begin-2025-06-09/> - Getty Images has initiated a significant copyright lawsuit against Stability AI at London's High Court, alleging that Stability AI unlawfully used millions of its images to train the AI model Stable Diffusion. Stability AI denies the infringement, arguing that its technology supports creative expression and aligns with fair use principles. This case is part of a broader global discussion on the application of copyright law to AI technologies, with potential implications for future AI development and policy.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/580ba200a3296c87207983f04cda4680> - Getty Images and Stability AI are engaged in a landmark copyright trial in London, marking a critical legal test for the generative AI industry. Getty accuses Stability AI of infringing on its photography collection during the training of its AI image generator, Stable Diffusion. Stability AI contends that the trial should not be held in the UK, asserting that the training occurred on U.S.-based servers, and claims that only a small portion of generated images resemble Getty’s work. The trial could shape future commercial negotiations on content licensing and copyright in AI development.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/technology/getty-backed-ai-image-generator-bria-snags-fresh-funding-2024-02-21/> - BRIA, an AI image generation startup supported by Getty Images, raised $24 million in a Series A funding round, including investment from Publicis Groupe. The funds will be used to expand globally and develop text-to-video capabilities. BRIA's approach, which licenses images from stock providers, aims to avoid legal disputes over the use of copyrighted content in AI models. This method also ensures generated images do not infringe on trademarks, attracting clients in advertising and media.
5. <https://www.reedsmith.com/en/perspectives/2024/02/getty-v-stability-ai-case-goes-to-trial-in-the-uk-what-we-learned> - The High Court has allowed the Getty Images v. Stability AI case to proceed to trial, rejecting Stability AI's application to strike out the claims. The case involves allegations that Stability AI used Getty's images without consent to train its AI model, Stable Diffusion. The court's decision indicates that the claims have a real chance of success, and the trial is expected to address significant issues regarding AI and intellectual property law.
6. <https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/analysis/getty-images-v-stability-ai-implications-copyright-law-licensing> - The article discusses the implications of the Getty Images v. Stability AI case for UK copyright law and licensing. It outlines the claims raised by Getty Images, including copyright infringement, database right infringement, trademark infringement, and passing off. The article also highlights Stability AI's defense and the potential impact of the case on AI development and content licensing.
7. <https://www.penningtonslaw.com/news-publications/latest-news/2025/court-breaks-up-representative-action-romance-getty-images-v-stability-ai> - The article provides an analysis of the procedural aspects of the Getty Images v. Stability AI case, focusing on the court's decision to refuse permission for a representative claim. It discusses the challenges in defining the class of claimants and the practical difficulties in identifying copyrighted works used in AI model training. The article also touches upon the potential future implications of the case for AI and intellectual property law.