



# AI and Grant Writing



# How to Use AI

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## A Brief Overview of AI Basics

- **Open AI Platform-** Go to ChatGPT, Claude, or an AI platform of your choice
- **Start a Chat-** Click “New Chat” and type your question or request.
- **Be Clear and Specific-** Tell AI exactly what you want.
- **Use Prompts-** Prompts are just instructions for AI. Use the adjustable prompts for grant writing seen on the slides throughout this presentation
- **Check the Results-** AI can make mistakes. Always read what it gives you and make edits as needed.
- **Ask Follow-Up Questions-** You can refine results by asking more questions.
  - Examples: “Make it sound more persuasive” or “make this sound more natural and human”
- **Copy, Paste and Edit-** Once you like the result, copy it into your grant application, email, or document

# AI: Safety Reminder



## Remember: Protect Privacy

**DO NOT** upload or include personally identifiable information (PII) such as:

- Names of staff or clients
- Addresses, emails, or phone numbers
- Financial account details or EINs
- Instead, use general descriptions like: “the program coordinator,” or “the family served.”

## Tips:

- **Always add your organization’s real stories and data**
- Be sure the tone is friendly and warm, ensure writing appeals to the heart and your organization’s voice is prominent
- Fact-check everything AI creates
- Ask it to rephrase if you want to keep your voice
- Think of AI as a writing partner, not the final author
- Always check word count, AI **often** miscounts

# Step 0: Prompting AI

**Purpose:** Tell the AI its role what it needs to do before you start writing. This helps it respond with the right expertise and tone.

# Priming AI



## Why is it Important?

- Prompts guide AI's tone, clarity, and focus, the more context you give, the stronger the response.
- Helps AI understand your organization's mission, project goals, and audience.
- Reduces time spent rewriting or correcting off-topic answers.
- Builds consistency across multiple drafts or team members.

## What Information to Include

- Organization name and mission (or type of work you do)
- Project name and goals
- Target population and location
- Funder name or type (e.g., state agency, private foundation)
- Word or page limits for each section
- The tone of the requested response (formal, persuasive, or simple)
- Past feedback or examples of strong writing (to match tone or structure)
- you can upload prior applications, be sure there is not personally identifiable information

# Step 0: Priming AI



**Purpose:** Tell the AI who it is and what it needs to do before you start writing. This helps it respond with the right expertise and tone.

## Prompt 1

- “You are an experienced grant writer with 20 years of experience helping nonprofits create clear, compelling proposals. You are tasked with writing a grant application for [organization name], which serves [population] in [location]. The project is called [project name] and aims to [describe goals/activities]. The funder is [name/type] and their priorities include [list]. Your role is to help me plan, write, and edit this application step-by-step. Before we begin, please ask clarifying questions about my organization, project, or the funder to make sure you have everything you need.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 1: Outlining Your Proposal

**Purpose:** Organize your ideas before writing.  
Helps AI generate a clear, structured framework.

# Step 1: Outlining Your Proposal



**Best Use Case:** Starting a new proposal, getting a clear framework.

## Prompt 1: Basic Outline

- “Help me create an outline for a grant proposal. Our organization, [name], serves [population] in [location]. We focus on [area]. The project will [describe activities and goals]. The funder is [name/type of funder]. The total word limit is [insert]. Please ask me clarifying questions if you need more details before creating the outline.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 1: Outlining Your Proposal



**Best Use Case:** Beginner who wants guidance on what to include in each section.

## Prompt 2: Section-by-Section

- “Create a suggested outline for a grant proposal with the following sections: [Needs Statement, Goals, Methods, Evaluation, and Budget Narrative]. The project focuses on [brief description]. Please give 2–3 guiding questions under each section that will help me gather the right information.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application**

# Step 1: Outlining Your Proposal

**Best Use Case:** Comparing approaches before deciding on proposal length or format.



## Prompt 3: Multiple Options Outline

- “Create two outline options for a grant proposal for my project, [project name]. Outline 1: full, detailed version with headings and 2–3 bullet points per section. Outline 2: concise version with main headings and 1 key bullet point per section. My organization, [name], serves [population] in [location]. Project activities/goals: [describe]. Funder: [name/type]. Ask clarifying questions if key details are missing.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application**

# Step 1: Outlining Your Proposal

**Best Use Case:** Projects with multiple steps and/or partners or the application requires a timeline-focused structure.



## Prompt 4: Timeline-Focused Outline

- “Design an outline for a grant proposal including a project timeline with milestones, expected outcomes, and deliverables. My organization, [name], serves [population] in [location] and focuses on [mission/area]. Project period: [start date – end date]. The funder is [name/type]. Ask clarifying questions if staffing, partners, or activity details are missing before creating the outline.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application**

# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections

**Purpose:** Draft strong, clear, and persuasive sections that can be refined.

# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections

**Best Use Case:** Communicating why the project matters and who benefits.



## Prompt 1: Needs Statement

- “Write a needs statement for a grant proposal. My organization, [name], serves [population] in [location]. The main problem we address is [problem]. Include relevant statistics or examples if available. Keep it under [insert word limit]. Ask clarifying questions before drafting if anything is unclear.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections



**Best Use Case:** Translating general goals into fundable, measurable objectives.

## Prompt 2: Goals and Objectives

- “Turn these goals into SMART objectives: [paste goals]. Each objective should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Keep it under [insert word limit]. Ask clarifying questions if any information about the project, population, or timeframe is missing.”

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# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections

**Best Use Case:** Drafting the Methods/Activities section.



## Prompt 3: Project Description

- “Write a project description for a grant proposal. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location], focuses on [mission/area]. Project goal: [describe]. Activities: [list]. Partners (if any): [list]. Project period: [start date – end date]. Word limit: [insert]. Ask clarifying questions before drafting if anything is missing.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections

**Best Use Case:** Drafting the Methods/Activities section.



## Prompt 4: Budget Narrative

- “Write a budget justification for a grant proposal. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location]. Budget items: [list]. Explain why each is necessary for project success. Word limit: [insert]. Ask clarifying questions if details are missing.”

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# Step 2: Writing Proposal Sections



**Best Use Case:** Funders who want measurable, community-focused outcomes.

## Prompt 5: Impact Statement

- “Write an impact statement for a grant proposal describing expected outcomes and benefits to the community. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location]. Project activities/goals: [describe]. Include measurable outcomes if possible. Word limit: [insert]. Ask clarifying questions before drafting.”

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# Step 3: Editing & Strengthening Writing

**Purpose:** Refine drafts, clarify language, and improve persuasiveness.

# Step 3: Editing & Strengthening

**Best Use Case:** Beginners reviewing a first draft for readability.



## Prompt 1: Clarity & Flow

- “Review the following grant paragraph for clarity and flow. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location], mission/area: [describe]. Paragraph is intended for [section, e.g., Needs Statement]. Word limit: [insert]. Suggest plain-language edits, remove unnecessary words, and highlight unclear sentences. Ask clarifying questions if more context is needed. Text: [paste].”

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# Step 3: Editing & Strengthening

**Best Use Case:** Strengthening the tone and impact of key sections.



## Prompt 2: Tone and Persuasiveness

- “Make the following grant section more persuasive without changing its meaning. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location]. Section: [e.g., Goals]. Word limit: [insert]. Highlight sentences that could be stronger and provide alternative phrasings. Ask clarifying questions if anything is unclear. Text: [paste].”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 3: Editing & Strengthening

**Best Use Case:** Preparing a draft for submission with professional consistency.



## Prompt 3: Consistency & Formatting

- “Check the following text for consistent formatting, tense, and tone. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location]. Section: [e.g., Project Description]. Suggest improvements and ask clarifying questions if text seems incomplete. Word limit: [insert]. Text: [paste].”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 3: Editing & Strengthening

**Best Use Case:** Meeting funder word limits while keeping the content strong.



## Prompt 4: Condense & Summarize

- “Shorten the following paragraph while keeping the key message and tone. Organization: [name], serves [population] in [location]. Section: [e.g., Needs Statement]. Target word limit: [insert]. Provide a concise version and a ‘key points’ summary. Ask clarifying questions if needed. Text: [paste].”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Step 4: Post Application Feedback

**Purpose:** Locate opportunities to improve and adjust for future applications.

# Step 4: Post Application Feedback



**Best Use Case:** After receiving funder comments or rejection notices. Builds learning and confidence for the next funding cycle

## Prompt 1: Feedback Review and Improvement Plan

- “I received feedback on a grant application. Please review the comments and my submitted application text to identify where it can be strengthened for future submissions. Here is the funder feedback: [paste feedback]. Here is the original application text: [paste text]. Please: Summarize the main areas of weakness mentioned by the funder, suggest specific improvements or clearer explanations, and recommend how to adjust tone, structure, or evidence for future applications. Ask clarifying questions if any key information is missing.”

**Remember to change [bracketed] information and input information that is relevant to your organization or the application.**

# Additional Tips and Tools

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- [YouTube video](#) giving overview of grant writing with ChatGPT including helpful tips and prompts
- [Candid Learning Guide](#) on AI Powered digital storytelling
- [Candid Blogpost-](#) Where do foundations stand on AI-generated grant proposals

**Thank You**