

A top-down view of a desk with a laptop, a coffee cup, a notebook, and a pen holder. The desk is made of dark wood. A white coffee cup with a saucer is in the top right. A silver laptop is open in the center. A black notebook with a spiral binding is in the top left. A black pen holder with a white pen is in the middle left. A black pen holder with a white pen is in the bottom left. A person's hands are typing on the laptop keyboard.

6 Smart Ways to Use AI in Your Grant Writing Process

(without losing credibility)

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At TRUE, we've helped mission-driven leaders secure the funding they need—with a 95% success rate—and we've seen firsthand how AI can make the grant-writing process faster, sharper, and more effective.

Using AI in grant writing doesn't replace your expertise—it amplifies it.

Using AI for grant writing might sound risky—but when used strategically, it can be one of your smartest tools. The key is learning how to use ChatGPT for grant writing without losing your unique voice or credibility.

Here are six smart ways to use ChatGPT and other AI tools for grant writing to save time, stay focused, and strengthen your proposals.

Ready to take your grant writing to the next level?

Contact us today to get started!

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Smart Ways to Use AI in Your Grant Writing Process

1

Use AI to Brainstorm Program Ideas

Every funder has specific goals. Your job is to design a program that meets those goals while staying aligned with your mission. AI tools like ChatGPT or Grok can help you brainstorm ideas faster and more strategically.

For example, if you're applying for a grant focused on reducing childhood trauma, try prompting:

- "Suggest five program ideas to reduce youth trauma, based on this RFP." To get stronger results, add more details—your target audience, location, and funding range. Then refine your prompts:
- "Expand on idea three with outcomes and activities."
- "Adjust this for a rural community setting."

***Tip: The best AI grant writers aren't the tools themselves—it's the people who know how to prompt them well.**

2

Use AI for Research and Grant Planning

AI can help you research faster and uncover new opportunities. Tools like **Perplexity** or **ChatGPT** can summarize RFPs, scan open grants, or even identify potential funders that align with your mission.

Try this:

- "Summarize open grants for trauma-informed programs in California."

However, always verify AI-generated information. Ask follow-up questions like:

- "What is the source for this information?"

Use AI to narrow your research—but confirm every fact yourself.

Reliable data is what separates strong proposals from weak ones.

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3

Use ChatGPT to Outline Your Grant Proposal

One of the most powerful ways to **use ChatGPT for nonprofit grant writing** is for outlining. Paste your RFP into ChatGPT and say:

- “Create a grant proposal outline based on these guidelines.”

Then request variations:

- “Give me three outline options that align with this RFP.”

This helps you organize your ideas faster and ensures your proposal mirrors the funder’s priorities. You can even ask ChatGPT to include supporting research—but again, double-check the sources before including them.

4

Use AI to Build Budgets and Supporting Documents

AI can also help you avoid one of the most common grant-writing mistakes—missing key budget details. Try prompting:

- “Create a sample budget for a \$75,000 youth program, including fringe and indirect costs.

”You’ll get a solid draft that includes staff, curriculum, consultants, and facility overhead. Don’t forget to include your fringe or indirect rate (usually 10–15%)

Pro Tip: Always budget for evaluation, reporting, and even grant writing support. We call this **stacking**—using one grant to help you secure the next.

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5

Use ChatGPT for Editing and Polishing

Once your draft is ready, AI can help you refine it.

Try:

- “Shorten this 500-word section to 300 words without losing meaning.”
- “Make this section more formal and persuasive.”

But never skip the human touch. Read your final version out loud. Funders can immediately spot robotic writing. Replace vague buzzwords like innovative with clear, specific language that reflects your organization’s heart and mission.

6

Use AI to Evaluate and Strengthen Your Grant Proposal

Before hitting submit, use AI to self-score your proposal. Paste in the grant scoring matrix and your draft narrative, then ask:

- “Score this proposal based on the matrix and highlight any missing elements.

”This helps you find weak points before reviewers do. Follow up with:

- “What can I add to strengthen the impact section?”

This kind of self-review can turn a good proposal into a winning one.

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Final Tips: How to Use AI for Grant Writing Responsibly

- Be specific with your prompts. Vague in, vague out.
- Iterate and refine. Don't accept the first draft—polish it until it feels right.
- Double-check all facts and data. AI is a helper, not a researcher.
- Keep your voice. The goal is to sound like you, not a machine.
- Stay ethical. No fake data. No plagiarism. Ever.



Our Favorite AI Tools for Grant Writers

- [Grok](#) – great for outlining and editing
- [ChatGPT](#) – best for brainstorming and budgeting
- [Perplexity](#) – for fast, accurate research
- [Grammarly](#) & [Hemingway](#) – for editing and readability
- [Instrumentl](#) – for grant searches and tracking opportunities

TRUE



We understand the tension between a bold vision and limited resources. That's why we exist. We're a team of innovative sustainability consultants passionate about walking alongside purpose-driven leaders of community-based organizations and nonprofits to help turn their vision into reality.

True to our name, integrity and ethics guide everything we do. We don't just consult—we partner with you, becoming part of your mission to create unstoppable impact. Because just like you, we care about the communities you serve.

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