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Chapter 1

Introducing the New Power Duo: Writer Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence

In the world of writing grant proposals, the fusion of writer intelligence and artificial intelligence introduces an enticing frontier for crafting successful grant applications.

Artificial intelligence (AI) brings a lightning-fast processing power that can analyze mountains of information more quickly than you can say “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.” It can sift through data, spot trends, and even generate content at a breakneck speed.

Writer intelligence (WI) comes from the proposal writer, armed with empathy, personality, humor, and a knack for storytelling.

Infusing WI's oh-so-human touch with AI's findings is like adding a sprinkle of magic. You get something truly incredible. And it could be just the combination you need to land that coveted funding. Imagine the proposal writer, the imaginative artisan weaving words and adding heartfelt stories, paired with AI as the tech-savvy virtuoso, armed with algorithms and adept at crunching data. This merger forms a dynamic duo, akin to classic pairings like peanut butter and jelly, each contributing their unique strengths to the collaboration.



SHERYL
SAYS

As you dive into this chapter, get ready to discover how AI can become your virtual assistant, doing the heavy lifting to prep various sections of your proposal. And notice how I put WI before AI. It's a playful nod to the power of human smarts over artificial ones: They might help us out, but they'll unlikely take our place!

Using AI as Your Virtual Sidekick

Simply put, AI is like a computer program that can think and learn (somewhat) like a human. AI has access to way more information than any human can have, which helps to process information or answer questions. (Learn more about the wonders of AI in Chapter 2.)



AI
SPOTLIGHT

Why should you consider AI as your virtual sidekick in the quest for that coveted grant? Let me break it down for you with some compelling ways that AI can help:

- » Identifying relevant funding opportunities by analyzing data to find and match potential funding sources with your needs. (Chapter 16 offers more insight on finding funding.)
- » Evaluating the competitiveness of grant applications.
- » Providing recommendations based on historical data and predictive analytics.
- » Uploading the Request for Proposal (RFP) from which to pull requested information. (Learn more about RFPs in Chapter 11.)

- » Analyzing the requirements and matching them with potential reviewers who have relevant expertise.
- » Gathering and analyzing large amounts of data.
- » Analyzing past grant applications and funding outcomes to identify patterns and trends.
- » Leveraging AI *algorithms* (formulas) to analyze funding trends, donor preferences, and past successful proposals so organizations can gain a deeper understanding of what resonates with funders.
- » Optimizing language to appeal to funders' sensibilities and align with grant criteria. (In Chapter 3 you discover how to win hearts and minds of funders through sharing stories.)
- » Creating accurate and comprehensive budgets for the projects by analyzing historical data and in some cases providing recommendations on budget allocation.
- » Providing iterative learning from past funding outcomes.
- » Generating drafts based on predefined templates and guidelines.
- » Proofreading and editing.



AI
SPOTLIGHT

CONSTANTLY CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

Even though AI is relatively new, innovations are constantly emerging. For instance, with Apple's AI, the chatbot is integrated into the technology. This means that if you're writing an email and want to adjust the tone to be more conversational, you can access the AI feature directly within the email application rather than having to cut and paste your text into a separate chatbot. The integrated AI can help refine your message on the spot, making the process more efficient and user-friendly. And who knows, soon we might have AI that not only helps with our emails but also dings us when we'll need a coffee break before we even realize it!

Getting to Know Some Popular AI Tools



AI
SPOTLIGHT

Each of the AI tools (also known as *chatbots*) listed in this section simplifies the proposal-writing process. Although they all offer the same basic functionality, different chatbots can offer varied perspectives and insights based on how they were “trained.” By trying a few, you can get a broader range of answers and find the one that suits you.

- » **AmpliFund:** <https://www.amplifund.com>
- » **ChatGPT:** <https://chat.openai.com>
- » **Fluxx:** <https://www.fluxx.io>
- » **Fundwriter.ai:** <https://www.fundwriter.ai>
- » **Grammarly:** <https://www.grammarly.com>
- » **Grant.io:** <https://grant.io>
- » **Grantable:** <https://www.grantable.co>
- » **Grantboost:** <https://topai.tools/t/grantboost>
- » **Optimy:** <https://www.optimy.com>
- » **SmartyGrants:** <https://www.smartygrants.com>
- » **Submittable:** <https://www.submittable.com>
- » **WizeHive:** <https://www.wizehive.com>

Understanding the Synergy Between WI and AI

AI tools can help you improve the quality and accuracy of your work by detecting and correcting errors, suggesting alternatives, or offering feedback. Furthermore, AI writing tools can help you expand their creativity and diversity by generating original text based on different inputs, data, or models. They can also introduce new words, phrases, or sources to diversify the writer’s vocabulary and references.

Pairing WI and AI from Outline to Finished Proposal

To show you just how powerful AI can be in grant writing, let's look at a real-world example with a proposal writer named Luis. We'll walk through a project of his where traditional expertise and AI teamed up to save a historic building from the 1700s. This case highlights how AI's smart features, such as creating tailored proposals and analyzing data, made a big difference in landing the grant.

You can find out more about grant writing in general by reading Beverly A. Browning's *Grant Writing For Dummies*, 7th Edition (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2022).

Creating an outline

Luis was tasked with writing a proposal to preserve a historical home in Sudbury, Massachusetts, USA. He was working to a very tight deadline. Although Luis was a seasoned proposal writer, this type of proposal was something he'd never dealt with before. Most of the proposals he'd written involved medical research. So he turned to ChatGPT, and prompted it to create an outline for preserving this historical home. (Learn more about writing prompts in Chapter 5.) In Figures 1-1 and 1-2 you see the two-page outline AI generated.

Learning of funding opportunities

Luis then prompted ChatGPT to find several funding opportunities available for historic preservation in the Sudbury, Massachusetts, area. Here are some potential sources of funding AI discovered:

- » Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF)
- » Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)
Preservation Grants
- » Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds
- » Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) grant

Preserving a historical site in Massachusetts is an endeavor that requires careful planning, community involvement, and a clear vision for conservation and accessibility. Here's a proposal outline:

1. Introduction

- Provide an overview of the historical significance of the site.
- Highlight its cultural, architectural, or natural importance.
- State the purpose of the proposal: to outline strategies for preserving and maintaining the site for future generations.

2. Historical Background

- Detail the historical context of the site, including its founding, key events, and notable figures associated with it.
- Include any relevant historical documents, photographs, or maps that help to illustrate the site's significance.

3. Current Condition Assessment

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the site's current condition, including any structural damage, environmental degradation, or accessibility issues.
- Document the findings through photographs, surveys, and expert assessments.

4. Preservation Goals and Objectives

- Define specific preservation goals and objectives for the site, such as conserving its historic features, enhancing public access, or fostering educational opportunities.
- Prioritize these goals based on their importance and feasibility.

5. Preservation Strategies

- Outline proposed preservation strategies, such as:
 - Structural stabilization and restoration
 - Environmental conservation measures
 - Interpretive signage and educational programming
 - Community engagement initiatives
- Detail the estimated costs, timelines, and resources required for each strategy.

6. Funding and Resource Allocation

- Identify potential funding sources for the preservation project, including government grants, private donations, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising campaigns.
- Develop a budget that outlines the anticipated costs for preservation efforts, staffing, maintenance, and ongoing operations.
- Consider leveraging partnerships with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions to maximize resources.

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FIGURE 1-1: Page 1 of the outline generated by AI.

- » Local historical societies and foundations (such as the Sudbury Historical Society and the Wayland Historical Society)
- » Private foundations and donors (such as The Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund, The Stanton Foundation, and The Sudbury Cultural Council)

7. Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage with key stakeholders, including local residents, historical societies, preservation groups, government agencies, and indigenous communities.
- Solicit feedback, input, and support from stakeholders throughout the preservation process.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations to ensure broad community involvement and support.

8. Implementation Plan

- Develop a detailed implementation plan that outlines the steps, responsibilities, and timelines for executing preservation initiatives.
- Establish a project management framework to oversee the implementation process, including regular progress updates, milestone tracking, and evaluation metrics.
- Identify potential challenges and mitigation strategies to address obstacles that may arise during implementation.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of preservation efforts over time.
- Track key performance indicators, such as visitor numbers, site maintenance records, and community engagement metrics.
- Use feedback and data analysis to inform ongoing improvements and adjustments to the preservation strategy.

10. Conclusion

- Summarize the key points of the proposal, reiterate the importance of preserving the historical site, and emphasize the benefits to the community and future generations.
- Call for support and commitment from stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the preservation plan.

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FIGURE 1-2: Page 2 of the outline generated by AI.

Working towards the finish line

Now Luis was ready to write the proposal, but he still felt unsure of how to proceed. Once again he turned to ChatGPT. He prompted the chatbot (see Chapter 2) to write a proposal to preserve The Eric Marks house in Sudbury, Massachusetts, and he included lots of details. It was a place Washington and his troops had spent the night during the Revolutionary War, and the mission of the project is to turn this historical home into a museum.

In Figures 1–3 through 1–8 you see the completed grant proposal. AI created the draft and Luis added his much-needed WI in the following ways:

- » Opening with a heartwarming story. (Check out Chapter 3 to become an ace storyteller.)
- » Adding “Legacy to Liberty” to jazz up the title.
- » Expanding each headline to contain meaningful information.
- » Transforming the text into a more natural tone by blending factual accuracy with approachable language. (Learn more about tone in Chapter 14.)
- » Including ethical considerations.
- » Speaking to the hearts and minds of the grant reviewers.

Spoiler alert: Luis sent this proposal to several of the prospective grantors AI sourced for him. Two of them jointly supplied the needed funding and the restoration was in progress at the time of writing.

Legacy of Liberty: Preserving the Eric Marks House as a Museum

Nestled in the quiet town of Sudbury, Massachusetts – with its ZIP code 01776 depicting the Revolutionary War era – The Eric Marks House has stood as a silent witness to one of the most pivotal moments in American history. It was here, amidst the tranquil beauty of New England's countryside, that General George Washington and his weary troops sought refuge during the harsh winter of the Revolutionary War. As the icy winds howled outside, the flickering flames of the hearth inside provided solace and warmth to those who fought for freedom. Now, centuries later, the echoes of their courage still resonate within these hallowed walls.

Imagine stepping through the doors of The Eric Marks House and being transported back in time, surrounded by the very same rooms where history was made. From the creaking floorboards to the faded tapestries, every detail whispers tales of bravery and sacrifice. Through interactive exhibits and immersive storytelling, visitors will embark on a journey through the trials and triumphs of the American Revolution, gaining a newfound appreciation for the struggles that shaped our nation. The Eric Marks House Museum will not only preserve a piece of our past but will also ignite a passion for history in the hearts of all who walk through its doors, ensuring that the legacy of those who fought for liberty will never be forgotten.

Executive Summary

The Eric Marks House, at One Grand Avenue, is nestled in historic Sudbury, Massachusetts. It stands as a silent witness to a pivotal moment in American history. As the temporary quarters for General George Washington and his troops during the Revolutionary War, it holds immense historical significance. Our proposal seeks \$500,000 to preserve this cherished landmark and transform it into the Eric Marks House Museum, a beacon of education, culture, and community engagement.

Through meticulous restoration and thoughtful museum development, we aim to create an immersive experience that transports visitors back to the days of the American Revolution. From interactive exhibits to educational programs, the museum will serve as a hub for learning and exploration, fostering a deeper understanding of our nation's past. Furthermore, by promoting tourism and economic development in Sudbury, the museum will benefit the local community for generations to come. Join us in honoring the legacy of those who fought for freedom and preserving The Eric Marks House as a testament to their courage and sacrifice.

Introduction: Making History Come Alive

We are submitting this grant proposal to preserve and transform The Eric Marks House into a museum. This house holds significant historical value as it served as a lodging for General George Washington and his troops during a pivotal moment in American history. By converting it into a museum, we aim to preserve its historical significance and educate visitors about its role in the American Revolutionary War.

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FIGURE 1-3: Page 1 of the completed grant proposal.

Objectives: Benefitting the Community through Education, Enrichment, Tourism, Economic Development, and Preservation

The transformation of The Eric Marks House into a museum will bring numerous benefits to the community:

- **Educational Opportunities:** The museum will serve as a valuable educational resource for local schools, providing students with hands-on learning experiences about the American Revolutionary War and the role of The Eric Marks House in that history. Curriculum-aligned programs and exhibits will enhance historical understanding and foster a sense of pride in local heritage.
- **Cultural Enrichment:** By preserving The Eric Marks House and showcasing its historical significance, the museum will contribute to the cultural enrichment of the community. Residents and visitors alike will have the opportunity to explore and appreciate the rich history of Sudbury, Massachusetts, and its connections to the founding of our nation.
- **Tourism and Economic Development:** The museum will attract tourists interested in American history, particularly the Revolutionary War era. Increased tourism will bring economic benefits to Sudbury, boosting local businesses such as restaurants, shops, and accommodations. The museum's presence may also encourage heritage tourism, attracting visitors to explore other historic sites in the area.
- **Community Engagement:** The museum will serve as a gathering place for community events, lectures, and workshops related to history, art, and culture. It will provide opportunities for residents to engage with each other and with experts in various fields, fostering a sense of community pride and cohesion.
- **Historic Preservation:** By preserving and maintaining The Eric Marks House, the museum will ensure the long-term conservation of this important historical landmark. This will contribute to the preservation of Sudbury's architectural heritage and enrich the community's sense of identity and place.

Overall, the museum will play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life for residents of Sudbury and surrounding areas by offering educational, cultural, and economic benefits for generations to come.

Importance of Preservation: Serving as a Bridge between the Past and Present

Preservation serves as a bridge between our past, present, and future, ensuring that the stories, achievements, and struggles of previous generations are not lost to time. It allows us to maintain a tangible connection to our history, heritage, and cultural identity. Here are several key reasons why this preservation is crucial:

- **Cultural Identity:** Preservation helps communities maintain a sense of identity by safeguarding landmarks, artifacts, and traditions that are integral to their heritage. These physical reminders of the past contribute to a shared understanding of who we are and where we come from.

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FIGURE 1-4: Page 2 of the completed grant proposal.

- **Education:** Preserved sites and artifacts serve as invaluable educational resources, offering insights into different historical periods, events, and societal norms. They provide tangible experiences that enhance learning and foster a deeper appreciation for history and its impact on the present.
- **Economic Benefits:** Historic preservation can stimulate economic growth by attracting tourists, supporting local businesses, and revitalizing neighborhoods. Historic sites and museums often serve as tourist destinations, drawing visitors who contribute to the local economy through spending on accommodations, dining, and souvenirs.
- **Environmental Conservation:** Preservation promotes sustainability by encouraging the reuse and repurposing of existing structures, thus reducing the environmental impact associated with new construction. It also helps preserve natural landscapes and habitats by discouraging urban sprawl and development in ecologically sensitive areas.
- **Community Engagement:** Preservation projects can foster community pride and engagement by providing opportunities for volunteerism, civic participation, and cultural events. Historic sites often serve as gathering places where residents can connect with one another and celebrate their shared heritage.
- **Legacy for Future Generations:** By preserving historic sites and artifacts, we ensure that future generations have the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by the achievements and struggles of those who came before them. It allows us to pass on a tangible legacy that enriches the cultural tapestry of society.

In summary, preservation is essential for maintaining our cultural identity, fostering education and understanding, supporting economic growth, promoting environmental sustainability, engaging communities, and preserving a legacy for future generations. It is a vital investment in our collective heritage and a testament to the value we place on our past.

Proposed Activities:

- **Restoration and Preservation:** Conduct necessary repairs and restoration work to ensure the structural integrity of The Eric Marks House.
- **Museum Development:** Design and furnish the interior of the house to create an immersive museum experience, including exhibits, interactive displays, and interpretive signage.
- **Educational Programs:** Develop educational programs for schools and the community to learn about the history of the house, General Washington's visit, and the American Revolutionary War.
- **Public Outreach:** Organize events, lectures, and tours to promote awareness of the museum and attract visitors.
- **Accessibility Improvements:** Make the museum accessible to all visitors by implementing necessary accommodations such as ramps and accessible restrooms.

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FIGURE 1-5: Page 3 of the completed grant proposal.

Budget: From Restoration to Education

This budget allocation ensures that all necessary aspects of the project from restoration to educational programming are adequately funded to achieve the goals outlined in the proposal.

Budget Item	Amount
Restoration and Preservation	\$200,000
Museum Development	\$150,000
Educational Programs	\$50,000
Public Outreach	\$30,000
Accessibility Improvements	\$20,000
Contingency	\$50,000
Total Budget	\$500,000

Environmental Sensitivity: Direct and Indirect

The preservation and transformation of The Eric Marks House into a museum will have both direct and indirect environmental impacts. Here are some considerations:

- **Resource Utilization:** During the restoration and museum development process, there will be a need for materials such as lumber, paint, and other construction supplies. (Many local business have agreed to donate materials for this project.) Careful consideration will be given to sourcing materials sustainably, minimizing waste, and utilizing energy-efficient technologies where possible.
- **Historic Preservation:** The preservation of The Eric Marks House contributes to environmental sustainability by promoting adaptive reuse and reducing the need for new construction. By maintaining existing structures rather than demolishing and rebuilding, the project conserves embodied energy and reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with construction activities.
- **Land Use and Biodiversity:** The transformation of The Eric Marks House into a museum may result in changes to the surrounding landscape, such as parking areas or landscaping enhancements. It will important to minimize habitat disruption and protect biodiversity by incorporating green infrastructure, native plantings, and wildlife-friendly design features into site planning and development.
- **Energy Efficiency:** As a museum, The Eric Marks House will consume energy for heating, cooling, lighting, and other operational needs. Implementing energy-efficient technologies and practices, such as LED lighting, programmable thermostats, and insulation upgrades, can reduce energy consumption and minimize the museum's carbon footprint.

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FIGURE 1-6: Page 4 of the completed grant proposal.

- **Water Conservation:** Water conservation measures, such as low-flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting systems, and drought-resistant landscaping, can help reduce water usage and promote sustainable water management practices at the museum site.
- **Visitor Transportation:** The museum's location and accessibility may influence visitor transportation choices, which can impact air quality and carbon emissions. Encouraging alternative transportation options, such as public transit, cycling, or carpooling, and providing amenities for cyclists and pedestrians can help mitigate the environmental impact of visitor travel.

By integrating environmental considerations into the planning, design, and operation of the Eric Marks House Museum, it's possible to minimize negative impacts and promote sustainable practices that align with the goals of historic preservation and community stewardship

Stakeholder Engagement: From Local Communities to Descendants of the Eric Marks Family

Stakeholder engagement in the preservation and transformation of The Eric Marks House into a museum is essential for ensuring the project's success and sustainability. Here are key stakeholders and how they will be engaged:

- **Local Community:** Engage residents of Sudbury and neighboring communities through town hall meetings, community forums, and surveys to gather input and feedback on the project. Provide opportunities for volunteerism and participation in fundraising events or preservation efforts to foster a sense of ownership and pride in The Eric Marks House Museum.
- **Historical Societies and Preservation Groups:** Collaborate with local historical societies, preservation organizations, and experts in historic conservation to leverage their knowledge, resources, and support. Seek their input on restoration techniques, historical accuracy, and best practices for museum development to ensure the project aligns with preservation standards and community values.
- **Educational Institutions:** Partner with schools, colleges, and universities to develop educational programs, curriculum materials, and field trip opportunities that align with academic standards and promote historical literacy. Invite educators to participate in planning committees or advisory boards to ensure the museum's exhibits and programming meet the needs of learners of all ages.
- **Government Agencies:** Coordinate with local, state, and federal government agencies responsible for historic preservation, tourism, and cultural affairs to secure necessary permits, funding, and regulatory approvals. Advocate for government support and grants to supplement private fundraising efforts and ensure the long-term sustainability of the museum.

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FIGURE 1-7: Page 5 of the completed grant proposal.

- **Businesses and Tourism Industry:** Engage local businesses, tourism operators, and chambers of commerce to promote The Eric Marks House Museum as a tourist destination and economic driver for Sudbury. Collaborate on marketing campaigns, special events, and promotional packages to attract visitors and generate revenue for the museum and surrounding businesses.
- **Descendants and Historical Descendant Communities:** Reach out to descendants of the Eric Marks family and involve them in the preservation effort and honor their ancestors' contributions to history. Many of them live locally and wholeheartedly support this effort. Invite local communities to participate in commemorative events, genealogical research projects, or oral history initiatives to preserve and share their heritage.

By engaging these stakeholders in meaningful ways throughout the preservation and transformation process, The Eric Marks House Museum can cultivate broad-based support, foster community cohesion, and ensure the project's long-term success as a cherished cultural asset and educational resource.

Conclusion: Together We Can Honor the Sacrifices Made by the Heroes Who Fought for our Nation's Independence

The preservation and transformation of The Eric Marks House into a museum will not only safeguard a crucial piece of American history but also provide an educational and cultural resource for the community. Together we can create a lasting legacy that honors the sacrifices made by those who fought for our nation's independence.

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FIGURE 1-8: Page 6 of the completed grant proposal.

Ensuring that You Maintain the Human Touch



REMEMBER

Yes, this book is about AI. But don't forget that without human intelligence there would be no artificial intelligence. It's the creativity, ingenuity, and problem-solving abilities of humans that fueled the development and advancement of AI, making our partnership with technology an essential component of progress and innovation.



WARNING

Although AI can certainly aid in developing a grant proposal, the human touch is what will ultimately tip the scales towards winning the grant. Grantors don't hand out funding for proposals that sound as if they're reciting code, rather they hand out funding that speaks from the heart. Here's why the human element is crucial:

- » **Persuading and connecting:** The human element lets proposal writers establish a personal connection with the grant reviewers, making it more likely that they'll empathize with the cause and be persuaded by the proposal.
- » **Crafting persuasive narratives/stories:** Framing a relevant story within a compelling narrative can capture the attention of the grant reviewers and leave a lasting impression. Humans are skilled at crafting narratives that engage and persuade. They can use their creativity and emotional intelligence to present ideas in a way that captures the grantor's attention and convinces them of the value proposition. (Learn more about storytelling in Chapter 3.)
- » **Understanding the grantor's needs and building relationships:** This requires strong and effective communication, active listening, and empathy. Humans are able to connect with reviewers on a personal level, understand their points, and tailor grant proposals to meet their specific requirements.
- » **Collaborating and teamwork:** Humans can work together, leveraging their diverse skills and perspectives to create comprehensive and well-rounded grant proposals. Collaboration fosters innovation, ensures all aspects are addressed, and increases the overall quality of the proposal.
- » **Bringing flexibility and adaptability:** Sometimes adjustments are needed based on the grantor's feedback or changing circumstances. Humans can quickly respond to changes, devise alternative approaches, and modify proposals accordingly.
- » **Customizing solutions:** Only humans can assess the situation, ask relevant questions, and tailor solutions that address the specific needs of the grantor.
- » **Building trust and credibility:** Anecdotes, stories, testimonials, examples, and other things humanize the proposal and build trust.



Here's another reason why humans remain relevant. I needed to write something quickly and turned to my reliable AI tool — only it turned out to be not so reliable on this occasion. For nearly half an hour I kept getting the following message:

We're experiencing exceptionally high demand. Please try again later.

When my brain is “experiencing exceptionally high demand” I can't make excuses. So I wrote the message myself — the old-fashioned way — using my WI.

Something else happened that totally reminded me of how reliant I've become on technology. My husband and I were off to Spain. Before we left, we made arrangements for a rental car, got an international driver's license, and called my cell-phone service provider to get set up for international service. Easy, right? They even sent me a text confirming that they charged the international fee to my credit card. Perfect, I thought. But guess what? When we landed in Spain, I had no international service!

But it was the bigger picture that jolted me, and here's why: Back in the day — before GPS and smartphones — my husband and I drove around many European countries, New Zealand, Bali, and elsewhere with just detailed maps and our own wits. But now, without my phone, I felt totally vulnerable. Yes, we had the GPS in the car, so finding our way around was no problem, but each time we got in the car I kept having these nagging feelings: What if we need help? What if the car breaks down and we're stranded on a road that's not well traveled? And worse, yet, what if we have an accident? Those questions never entered my mind before the cell-phone era. Anyway, when we got back home, I gave the service provider a call. It turns out that the person I talked to never finished setting up the transaction, and they just credited the fee to my next month's bill.

This incident really got me thinking about our increasing dependence on technology, especially as it relates to AI. Relying too heavily on these tools can undermine our confidence and even dull our natural writing talent. It's like we're outsourcing our skills (and brains) to machines, and if something goes wrong with the technology, we feel abandoned. It's important to strike a balance.



WARNING

We should embrace AI for its convenience and efficiency, but never let it overshadow our own abilities, creativity, and confidence. After all, our talent and confidence are what make us truly capable, unique, and indispensable.

Knowing that AI Dependence Can Be Costly

Imagine a world where chefs rely solely on kitchen robots to cook their meals. At first it seems ideal — perfectly cooked dishes every time, with no risk of burning or under-seasoning. But soon, the charm of human creativity in the kitchen begins to fade. The robots churn out dishes according to pre-programmed recipes, lacking the flair and personal touch that human chefs bring to their craft. Each plate looks identical, tasting fine but lacking that special spark that makes a meal memorable.

People start to miss the unexpected twists, the experimental flavors, and the passion that human chefs infuse into their cooking. In this culinary dystopia, creativity becomes standardized, and innovation takes a backseat to efficiency. The joy of discovering new tastes and techniques fades away as people become accustomed to the predictability of robot-cooked meals. Eventually, they realize that while robots may excel at following instructions, they can never replicate the magic of a human chef. The same holds true for AI-generated output.



WARNING

Grant proposals require precision, accuracy, and persuasiveness to secure funding for important projects. Here's how the pitfalls of relying solely on AI for writing can relate to grant proposals:

- » **Hallucinations and inaccuracies:** *Hallucinations*, in AI-speak, are when a chatbot generates incorrect or fabricated information. Grant proposals need to present accurate information about the project, its goals, methodologies, and expected outcomes. Relying solely on AI for writing may result in inaccuracies or nonsensical statements, which can undermine the credibility of the proposal and diminish the chances of securing funding.
- » **Outdated information:** Grantors often look for innovative and current projects to fund. Using AI without human

oversight may lead to proposals that fail to incorporate the latest research, trends, or best practices in the field, making the proposal less compelling and less likely to receive funding.

- » **Lack of contextual understanding:** Grant proposals require a deep understanding of the project's context, including its relevance to the field, its potential impact, and the needs of the target population. AI may struggle to grasp the nuances of these contexts, resulting in proposals that lack depth or fail to effectively communicate the significance of the project.
- » **Over-reliance on templates:** Some AI writing tools offer pre-made templates for grant proposals. While these templates can be helpful as a starting point, relying too heavily on them may result in proposals that sound formulaic or generic, failing to stand out from the competition.
- » **Ethical concerns:** Grant proposals must adhere to ethical standards, including honesty, transparency, and integrity. Using AI to generate content without proper oversight may raise ethical concerns, such as plagiarism or the misrepresentation of data, which can damage the reputation of the applicant and jeopardize the success of the proposal.
- » **Bias and fairness:** AI systems can sometimes perpetuate biases that are present in the data they were trained on. It's crucial to review AI-generated content for any potential biases that might affect the proposal's tone or content.
- » **Security risks:** Grant proposals may contain sensitive information, such as budget details, project timelines, or proprietary research findings. Relying solely on AI for writing without proper security measures in place may expose this information to unauthorized access or misuse, compromising the confidentiality and integrity of the proposal.

Remembering that Human Grant Writers are Irreplaceable

You can't (and I repeat *can't*) be replaced by AI. No how! No way! The effectiveness of a grant proposal hinges on the nuanced understanding, empathy, and ability to craft persuasive narratives

tailored to diverse audiences and funding requirements — elements that are beyond today's AI's capabilities:

- » **Updated information:** Chatbots spew out what they were programmed to know. That doesn't necessarily include the most current information. Only humans can supply that.
- » **Empathy and human connection:** Beyond presenting facts and figures, successful grant writing often relies on building trust and rapport with funders. Human grant writers can understand the motivations and concerns of funders on a personal level, allowing them to tailor proposals in a way that resonates emotionally. This human touch fosters genuine connections, increasing the likelihood of funding.
- » **Flexibility and adaptability:** Grant writing is dynamic, often requiring quick responses to changes in project scope, funding criteria, or external factors. Human grant writers can swiftly pivot their approach, incorporating new information or adjusting strategies to meet evolving needs. Their ability to think on their feet and adapt strategies accordingly is a valuable asset in the competitive landscape of grant applications.
- » **Storytelling and creativity:** While AI can generate content based on existing patterns and create interesting stories from your prompts, it lacks the innate creativity and emotional intelligence required for original storytelling. Human writers can craft narratives that not only convey the project's objectives but also resonate with the values and interests of the funding organization. Through engaging storytelling, they can evoke empathy, inspire action, and leave a lasting impression on grant reviewers. (Check out Chapter 3 to learn more about storytelling.)
- » **Contextual understanding:** Successful grant proposals go beyond outlining project details; they demonstrate a deep understanding of the broader context in which the project operates. Humans can contextualize their proposals within relevant social, economic, and political frameworks, showcasing how the project addresses specific needs or challenges. This contextual insight not only enhances the credibility of the proposal but also demonstrates the writer's grasp of the project's significance within its larger context.

» **Knowing your organization:** To write a successful grant proposal you must make your organization and the people within it shine. AI without WI intervention spews out text based on patterns and will make everyone blend in with the background noise.



REMEMBER

Human grant writers will always remain the superheroes of funding, swooping in to save the day for important projects and initiatives. With AI as their virtual sidekick, together they form an unstoppable duo in the grant-writing adventure!