



Guidelines on the use of AI to prepare Grant Applications for the Sir Halley Stewart Trust (the Trust)

AI Use in Grant Applications

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Trust recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and others are becoming increasingly common in professional environments and can offer benefits for applicants. However, we also understand the potential risks AI may present to the accuracy and integrity of an application and more broadly to the privacy and confidentiality of data.

This document sets out the Trust's position on the appropriate use of AI in the preparation and submission of grant applications and guidance on the potential risks to consider when using AI in the application process.

While AI tools may be used to assist in the preparation of a grant application to the Trust, applicants remain solely responsible for the accuracy, originality and integrity of all content submitted

2. Our Position on AI Use

The Trust supports the responsible and appropriate use of AI to help applicants communicate their ideas effectively, provided the integrity and authenticity of the application process is maintained. We recognise AI can enhance accessibility, particularly for applicants for whom English is not their first language or who have less experience writing grant applications.

Grant applications will not be rejected solely because AI tools were used in their preparation. However, you are required to make a mandatory disclosure of whether AI tools were used in preparing your application as part of the application process.

Our standard application guidelines remain applicable whether or not you use AI tools. The fundamental elements of a strong application remain the same regardless of how you prepare your submission.

- **Evaluation focus:** Applications will be evaluated based on their content, clarity, feasibility, and alignment with funding priorities—not on whether AI was used. Our reviewers are looking for compelling projects that demonstrate need, thoughtful planning, and potential for meaningful impact, regardless of how the application was prepared.
- **Authenticity matters:** Regardless of how your application is prepared, it must authentically represent your organisation, community, and project. The application should reflect genuine knowledge of your context, realistic understandings of what your organisation can accomplish, and honest assessments of your capabilities and resources.

3. Appropriate Uses of AI in Applications

We encourage the following uses of AI in the application process:

Language and Accessibility Support

- **Improving grammar, readability, and flow of your writing:** AI can help polish language, correct grammatical errors, and enhance sentence structure to make your application more professional and clear.
- **Translating content from other languages into the application language:** For organisations working in multilingual contexts AI can help translate content gathered in different languages into the language required for the application, making the process more inclusive.
- **Simplifying complex ideas for clearer expression:** Technical concepts or specialised knowledge can be rephrased by AI to be more accessible to grant reviewers.
- **Formatting text to improve readability:** AI can help structure information with appropriate headings, bullet points, and paragraph breaks to make your application easier to navigate and digest.

Process Efficiency

- **Generating initial drafts that you substantively revise and personalise:** AI can provide a starting point to overcome writer's block or help organise thoughts, but these drafts should always be extensively customised to reflect your organisation's specific context and voice.
- **Organising information into logical structures:** AI can help arrange existing content into a coherent sequence that builds a compelling narrative about your project and its potential impact.
- **Summarising longer documents for inclusion in applications (with verification):** When you need to incorporate information from lengthy reports or research, AI can help condense this material while preserving key points, though you should always verify the accuracy of these summaries.

4. Guidelines for Using AI

To ensure your AI-assisted application effectively communicates your project's unique value, you should follow these guidelines:

- **Mindful usage:** Use AI tools judiciously, only when they will meaningfully enhance your application process or outcome. Consider limiting AI use to specific sections where you need the most help rather than running your entire application through these systems.
- **Start with the organisation's voice:** Begin with the specific needs, hopes, and feedback from your stakeholders before engaging AI tools. Collect real stories, conduct surveys or focus groups, and document actual stakeholder input first—then use AI to help organise this authentic material .
- **Personalise AI output:** Edit AI-generated content extensively to reflect your organisation's distinctive voice, values, and approach. Replace generic terms with language that your organisation actually uses, include specific examples from your work, and ensure the tone matches your organisational culture.
- **Include authentic evidence:** Incorporate consultation feedback, and data that AI cannot generate. Real evidence of stakeholder engagement and support is far more compelling than general statements about hypothetical benefits.

Be Specific and Detailed

- **Avoid generic content:** Replace vague statements or buzzwords with concrete examples from your work. Instead of saying "we will empower the community," describe exactly how—such as "we will train 25 community members in digital skills through our 10-week workshop series, enabling them to access employment opportunities."
- **Provide clear details:** Specify exactly what you will do, why, when, where, and how your project will operate. Include timelines, locations, participant numbers, session frequencies, staffing arrangements, and partnership details rather than broad descriptions.
- **Demonstrate uniqueness:** Highlight what makes your project different from others addressing similar issues. Explain your organisation's distinctive approach, methodology, relationships, or insights that give you a special capacity to create impact in this area.

Ensure Budget Accuracy

- **Develop budgets independently:** Create project budgets based on real costs rather than AI suggestions. Research actual expenses for your specific location and project type, get quotes where appropriate, and calculate staffing costs based on real salaries.
- **Verify all figures:** Double-check that all budget items reflect actual costs in your specific context. Consider regional variations, inflation factors, and any special circumstances that might affect pricing in your community or sector.
- **Justify expenses:** Check that each budget item connects to project activities and outcomes. Show the logical relationship between your spending plans and the impact you intend to create so reviewers understand the necessity of each expense.
- **Consider value for money:** Ensure your budget demonstrates efficient use of resources to achieve impact. Be prepared to explain why your approach is cost-effective compared to alternatives and how you've minimised unnecessary expenses.

5. Risks and Considerations

Be aware of these potential issues when using AI tools and take steps to address them:

Content Risks

- **Inaccuracies:** AI may generate incorrect information or "hallucinate" facts that sound plausible but are false. For example, an AI might create statistics about your cohort, community or group of stakeholders that seem reasonable but aren't based on actual data, or reference programs or initiatives that don't exist.
- **Generic content:** AI often produces standardised language that lacks the specificity needed for strong applications. Generic statements like "we will empower the community" or "create sustainable impact" without concrete details can make your application blend in rather than stand out.
- **Overreliance:** Excessive dependence on AI may result in applications that lack authentic voice or fail to address specific programme criteria.

Data Privacy & Confidentiality Concerns

- **Information security:** Many AI tools, especially free versions, may store data you input, potentially compromising confidentiality. Information entered into AI systems may be retained and used to improve the AI vendor's models, which means sensitive details about your organisation or community might not remain private.
- **Legal compliance:** Ensure any use of personal or sensitive information in AI tools complies with relevant data protection legislation. Be particularly cautious with information about vulnerable populations, children, or anything covered by data protection laws.
- **Confidentiality:** Consider whether the information you're sharing with AI tools is permitted by your organisation's privacy, security or AI policies and if it should remain internal to your organisation. Avoid inputting proprietary strategies, confidential community information, or sensitive details about your partnerships or financial situation.

Review of Guidelines

These guidelines reflect the Trust's current understanding of AI technology and its applications in the grant application process. As technology evolves and best practices emerge, we will periodically review and update these guidelines accordingly.

This set of guidelines was last updated on [Date] and is subject to periodic review.