

AI Fundraiser

Tips & Prompts for ChatGPT

Here are some ideas of the ways in which AI can help to write charity funding applications to Trusts and Foundations. Hope these help and make your life easier!

ChatGPT is OpenAI and the version 3.5 is free to use at chat.openai.com. Sign up and login, then use the message box at the bottom of the screen to start writing. You'll see your conversations saved at the side, and you can return at any time to follow-up.

Talk to ChatGPT like you would a friend or colleague. AI thrives on specific, concise instructions and benefits from constructive feedback. ChatGPT learns from you, so it helps to say thank you, and praise what you want repeating! It might sound strange to speak to a computer like you would a human, but the quality of the responses will improve if you are thoughtful and appreciative. ChatGPT is as a collaborative tool, where the quality of output is significantly influenced by the quality of your input.



You are the knowledge base for your charity, so take the time to gather your stories, impact, activities and what you do. ChatGPT is an expert writer, but not an expert in your charity's work. The richer the information you feed into ChatGPT, the better the results.

Collecting Information to Feed into ChatGPT

Here's a suggestion of 3 documents to collect ready to feed into ChatGPT before asking for help with a funding application:



1. Previous Funding Applications - save into one document and double check that the information, facts and stats are up to date. Check it relates to your project for which you need funding, if not then add in notes and bullet points of the project.
2. Any email correspondence you might have had with the funder (highly recommend making contact with the funder prior to applying to any fund).
3. The Funder's Guidelines, downloaded from their website.

The Funding Questions

Log in to the funder's online portal and copy all the questions into a Word document.
If needed, to progress through the funder's questions, write TBC in answer to the questions.

Separate into two documents:

1. All organisational questions with one word/sentence answers that cover 'Organisational Details and Finances'
2. All Narrative Questions with word counts

ChatGPT will be of most help with the **Narrative Questions Document**, and any additional documents that you might need to create to upload with the application.

Narrative Questions

For your document with the 'Narrative questions':



Under each question write any guidance given by the funder.

Write bullet points of anything specific you want ChatGPT to mention in the answer.

How to Feed this into ChatGPT

Here is a real-life example of a funding application being fed into ChatGPT:

Anne Bickerstaffe (Fundraiser)'s wording **in blue**

ChatGPT responses **in red**

AB You (Anne B)

Hello,

I would appreciate your help writing a funding bid to the FCC Community Action Fund.

I will send you the following:

1. A document with 4 previous funding applications so you can learn about the project
2. Emails from K Tal*** who is the grants officer for the FCC Community Action Fund
3. FCC Community Action Fund Guidelines

Once you have read these, I will send you the 17 Questions that need answering for the Funding Application, that I would like you to answer in the given word counts.

Please let me know if you are happy for me to proceed.



ChatGPT

I'm here to help you as much as I can. You can certainly share the key information or summaries from your previous funding applications, emails from the grants officer, and the FCC Community Action Fund Guidelines. Based on that information, I can assist you in drafting responses to the questions for the funding application.

Please share the essential details or points from these documents, and I'll do my best to help you craft effective responses for your application. Feel free to proceed with sharing the relevant information!

Following this, each of the 3 documents was copied and pasted into ChatGPT to give a full overview of the project (a capital building project in Grimsby).

The Funding Questions

Now it's time to give ChatGPT the questions that need answering.



Feed in your questions 3 or 4 at a time. This avoids overloading ChatGPT and reducing the quality of the answers. Aim for a maximum of 800 words per set of answers.

Here is the real-life example of how these funding questions were fed in:

AB

You (Anne B)

I have 17 questions for the FCC Community Action Fund.

I will break these down into 4 sections for you.

Please use all the information I have given you for the FCC Community Action Fund.

I have written notes under each one, where applicable, to help with the answers.

Here Questions 1, 2, 3 that need answering:

[3 of the funder's questions pasted in with word counts, and brief notes]

Please can you help to answer these questions with the correct word count. Use the information that I have given you about our project. Please write in direct, straight forward language that mirrors my style of writing. Write in UK English (not US spellings). Please use as many direct quotes as possible, and specific facts and information about the project. Good answers will have detail about the project which will help the funder to understand the project and approve it for funding. Thank you.

Following that, the questions were given to ChatGPT, 3 or 4 questions at a time.

In total, it took ChatGPT 13 minutes to answer 17 questions and produce a word count of 3,970 words. It took 1½ hours to edit the questions for the final submission.

Final Editing

When reading through the work produced by ChatGPT, here are some pitfalls to look out for, and things to edit out of the final submission:

Wording

ChatGPT is a large language model that is trained on millions of pieces of writing.



What can happen is that you'll notice certain words are repeated which ChatGPT must think are good words for the charity sector! It's a good idea to remove these from your final funding application to avoid it looking formulaic.

Here are a few, you'll undoubtedly find many more as you start to use it regularly.

- Unwavering
- Grappling
- Haven of support
- Beacon of hope
- Fostering
- Enhance
- We strive
- Impactful
- Entities (instead of organisations)

Words to watch out for:

Not necessarily to change, but be careful how often you use them, as these come up often:

- Transformative
- Lasting difference

- Stand as a testament
- Remarkable
- Profound impact

ChatGPT loves to start sentences with phrases like:

- In summary,
- In addition,
- Additionally,
- Moreover,
- In essence,

Length

You can ask it for a word count, but ChatGPT invariably doesn't keep to the accurate word count. One way round this is to say how many paragraphs you need or how many pages of A4. For example, 500 words is roughly one page of A4.

Be Clear, Concise and Specific

ChatGPT only works well with very specific and clear instructions.

This is often why people give up quickly using AI because it seems too generic and vague, not giving good quality answers. But this is more often due to the quality of information being fed into ChatGPT and the subsequent prompts.



The richer the information, the better the results.
The clearer the prompts, the more detailed the answers

Test different prompts to find what works, but always think about precision and clarity.

Try not to ask questions without a specific goal in mind. For example, if you say "please can you help me write a funding application for my charity working with people in crisis" then ChatGPT will give you an outline of how to write a funding application step by step.

So instead say: "Please can you help me write a funding application for my charity. Can you say go ahead, and then I will give you information about my charity to read".

This is how ChatGPT might reply (although it's never the same reply twice):

"Go ahead, please provide the details about your charity, its mission, the people it serves, and the specific project or need for which you are seeking funding. This information will help to craft a tailored funding application".

You are then free to feed in specific, good quality information about your charity and about the project for which you are seeking funding.



Here's a great prompt for ChatGPT: "Can you say Go Ahead".
ChatGPT always want to give you an answer, it won't just wait for you to go ahead and give more information. But if you want ChatGPT to pause before answering, use this prompt: Please read this information and then say go ahead.

Real-life examples of prompts

Here are examples of prompts that were used to improve the quality of the output from ChatGPT and teach it a good writing style

~~~~~  
Please write in UK English, that is not flowery. Direct and straight forward. Please include one direct quote.

~~~~~  
Thank you. Could you try to rewrite this. Keep the same length of email and the same level of detail. But try to find my voice, which is more straight forward, with less flowery language. No embellishments.

~~~~~  
The next question is longer. I need to write 1 full page of A4. Can you please help with this? Write in the same style as my previous answer. Please use direct quotes from clients. These can be long quotes. Also use information from the Impact report.

~~~~~  
Could you try writing this again, and be more specific with the project, and use more words. This sounds a little boastful, could you try to rewrite in more straightforward language?

Interested to Know More?

Join a practical 2-hour training session with Anne Bickerstaffe, where you'll see ChatGPT in action writing a funding bid, learn more prompts and discuss ways to teach AI your writing style. You'll also receive copies of two successful funding bids written using ChatGPT.

[Book here](#)

Eventbrite: aifundraiser.eventbrite.com

