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I am the Grants Manager for Excellence Project and have been a grant writer for four years. During my time in this field, in which I have secured grants ranging from \$1 million federal grants to \$1,000 mini-grants, I had never found success using available AI platforms (Gemini, ChatGPT) to support my work. In part, I lacked trust but I also found that when I would use these tools, they would generate content that was well-tailored to funder interests, but at the cost of embellishing program details to a very dishonest degree. In the end, I spent more time reigning in the tool than I would have writing and editing the old fashion way.

Late last year, we met Llyas Salahud-din and learned about GrantAppli. We trusted him based on his experience working in the nonprofit sector, because he comes from our community, and because he was offering this tool at a price point we could actually consider. Since I work on a contract basis, a tool that could help improve grant writing efficiencies also made sense for our budget.

While initially skeptical, I quickly saw that many of my qualms were addressed with this software - the big one being that it does not hallucinate. I realized I could use this tool while still feeling in control of the responses. It only draws from content I've already written, so its responses correctly capture the way I speak about our programs. While there's a slight learning curve for the software, which Llyas deftly supported us through, I quickly saw how helpful this tool would be.

A recent example highlights the benefits: I came across a \$3,000 application due the next day. I had a busy afternoon ahead. I previously would have passed it up, but this time decided to go for it using GrantAppli. Instead of finding and opening up half a dozen files of old grants to copy and paste from and rework the language to align with this solicitation, I easily selected all those files with one click in GrantAppli, added the link to the solicitation, and asked it to answer the grant questions. I did my usual nitpicking, and within an hour, I submitted the application. While it felt like a rush job, the content that I submitted was high quality. Without GrantAppli, I would have either submitted a far weaker application or spent twice the time on it.

The current grant landscape has been brutal for grassroots nonprofits like Excellence Project. We are lucky we can still fund my position. An affordable, accessible tool that helps under-resourced nonprofits spend less time on grant applications is a major benefit and can help level the playing field. I'm grateful to have access to this time-saving, money-saving tool to support our mission.

Sincerely,

Lily Crane
Grants Manager