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Trust, Respect, Ethics, Growth



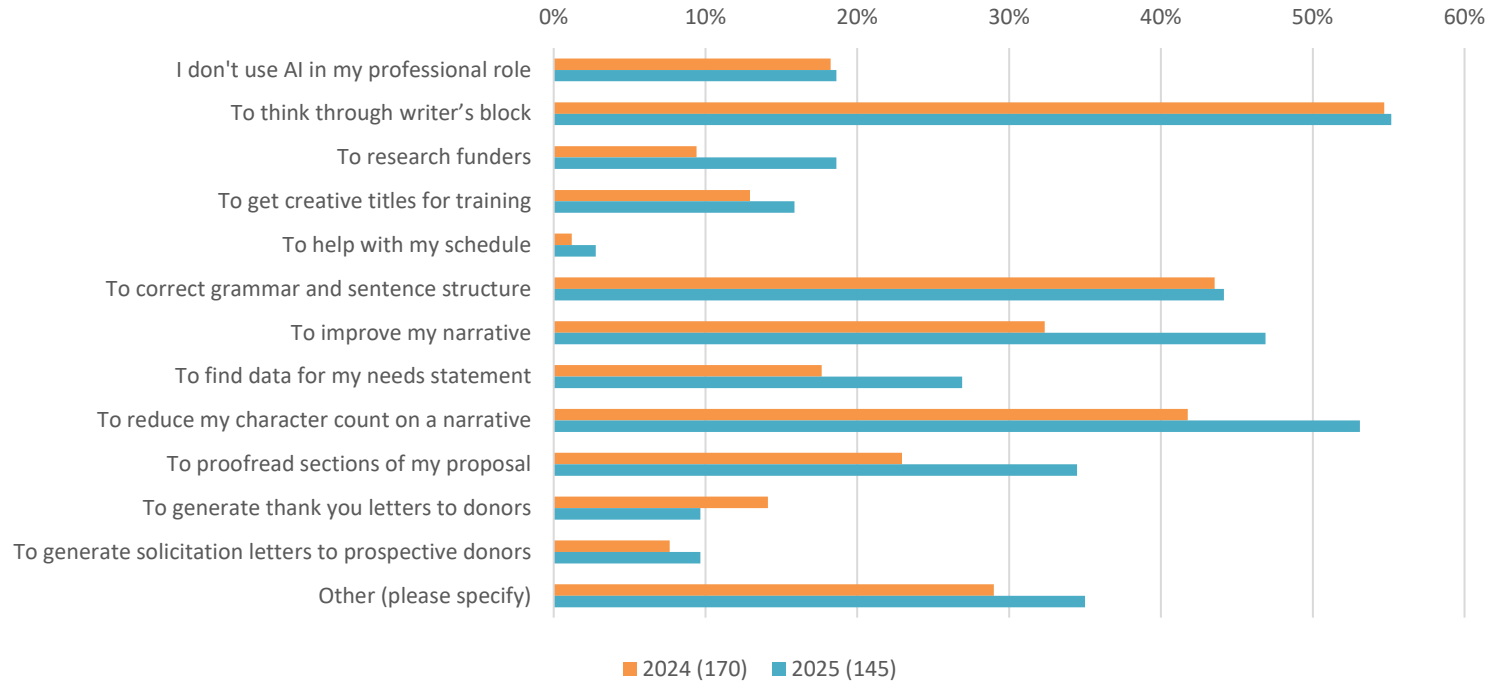
GRANT WRITING IN THE AI ERA: LESSONS FROM 2024 -2025

2024: 175 Respondents
2025: 145 Respondents

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May 3, 2025

In what ways have you used AI that has helped in your current grant professional role?



Other Uses of AI

Answers from 2025

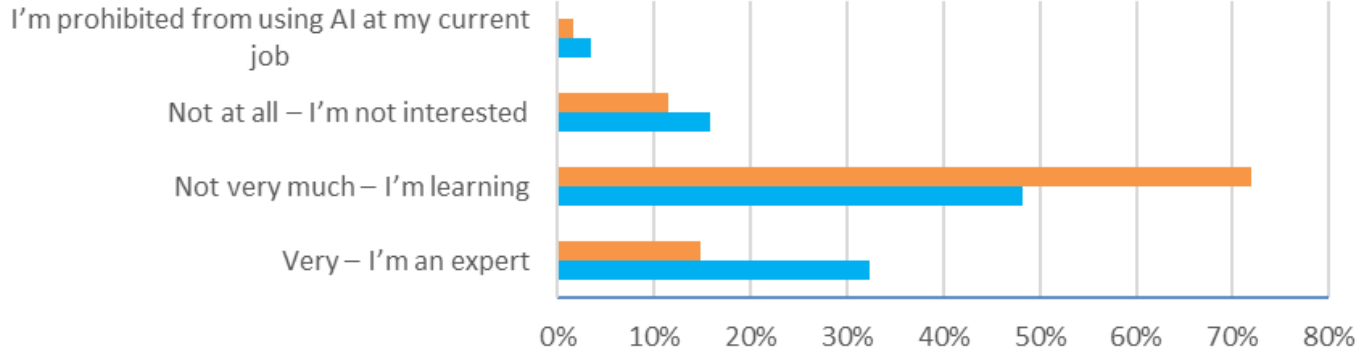
- To generate draft letters of support/commitment for proposals (most popular answer)
- For images
- Develop Logic Models
- Outline narrative sections, Generate program names/acronyms, summarize RFA/RFP and dense information
- To help with writer's block - generate initial drafts
- To summarize NOFO key points
- Very minimal use
- To digest/interpret lots of information at once
- To make graphics out of data
- To summarize NOFOs
- Search for citable sources, generate examples for clients of content I need
- Develop draft contracts, formatted resumes and many other proposal attachments
- To compare a narrative to the corresponding project budget. To score a narrative against a funder's rubric
- Search for evidence-based practices
- Structuring or outlining proposals

Other Uses of AI (continued)

Answers from 2025

- Formatting help
- Writing social media posts to promote projects and programs that are grant funded
- Having AI create the frame for a full proposal (including notes about what goes in each section) based on RFP has saved so much time on federal proposals! To provide feedback on a draft proposal using the grant guidelines (NOT ChatGPT, but internal AI) - also use AI to provide internal proposal reviewer suggestions (at a R1 university)
- Generating pivot tables from spreadsheets, making annual revenue projections
- I don't use AI in my personal life, either
- To synthesize large amounts of information
- Compile list of elected officials
- Quickly create letters for permission, cover, etc.
- Brainstorm framing that might resonate for a funder, to rate drafted responses, to draft emails to funders or ghost write executive comms
- To help edit other's writing
- To generate a "score" on sections of my application based on the provided rubric

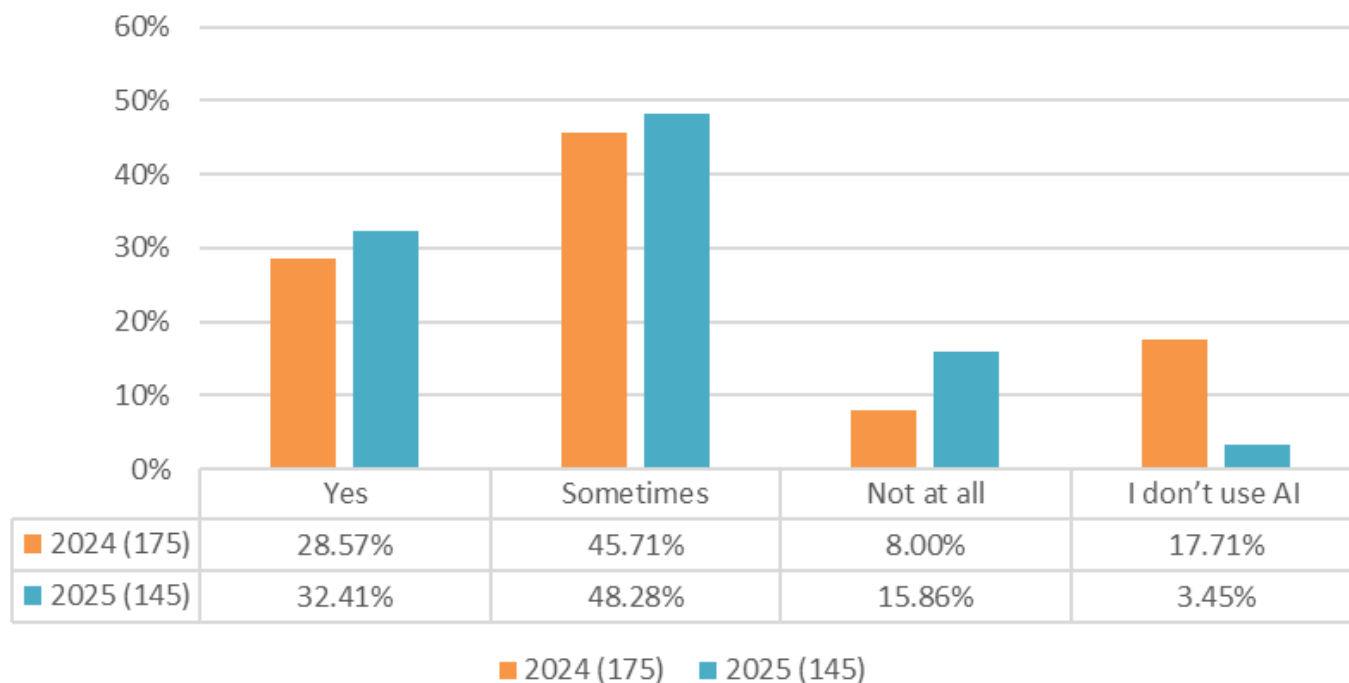
How comfortable are you with using AI/LLMs in your work?



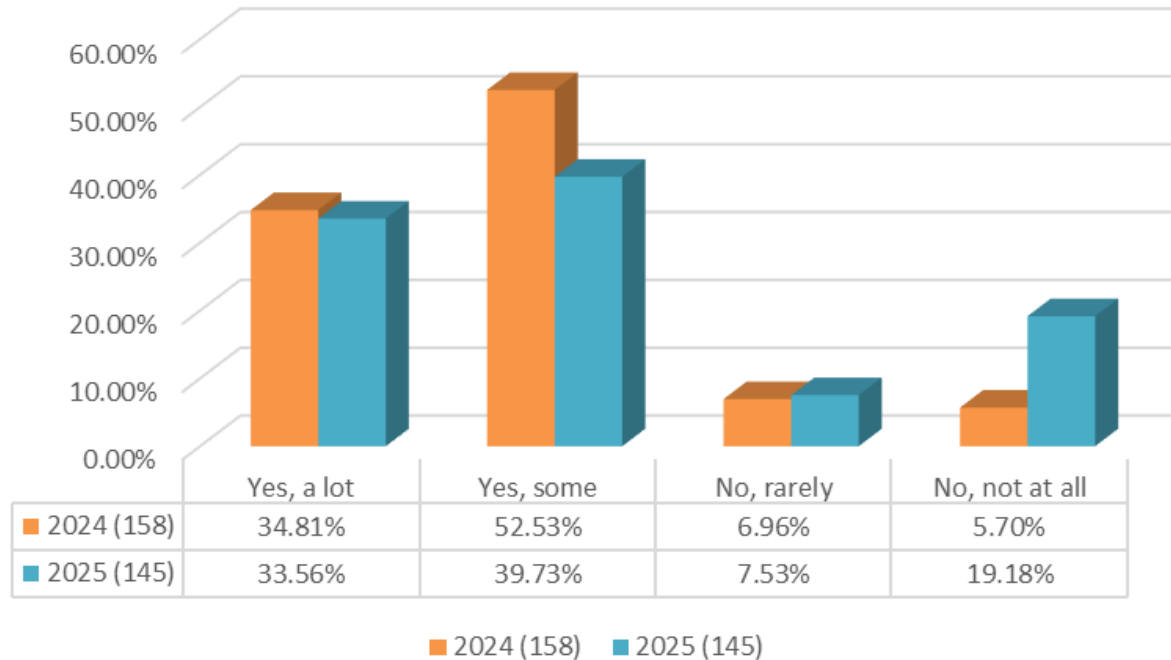
	Very – I'm an expert	Not very much – I'm learning	Not at all – I'm not interested	I'm prohibited from using AI at my current job
2024 (175)	14.86%	72.00%	11.43%	1.71%
2025 (145)	32.41%	48.28%	15.86%	3.45%

2024 (175) 2025 (145)

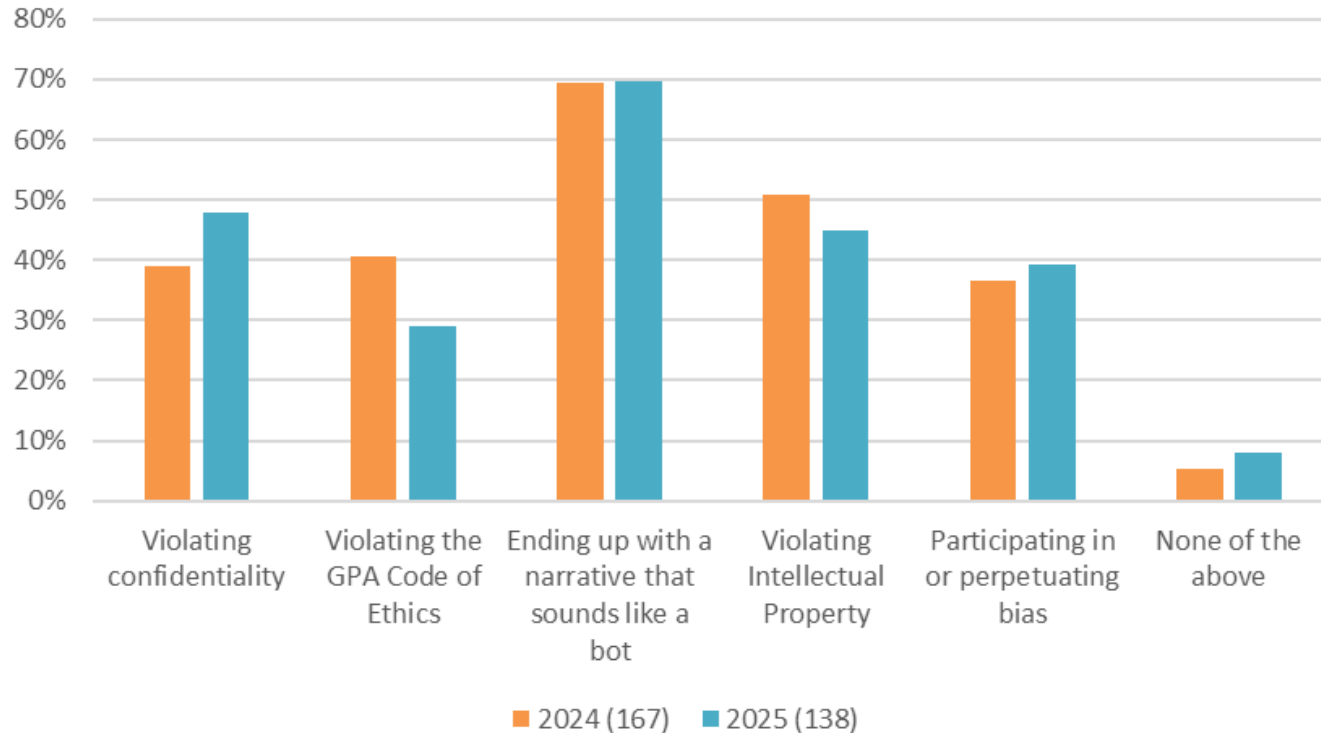
When using AI, do you find it effective in saving time on a grant professional tasks?



When using AI tools, do you find you spend a lot of time editing what it produces?



What are your biggest concerns about using AI?



Other Concerns (please specify)

Answers from 2025

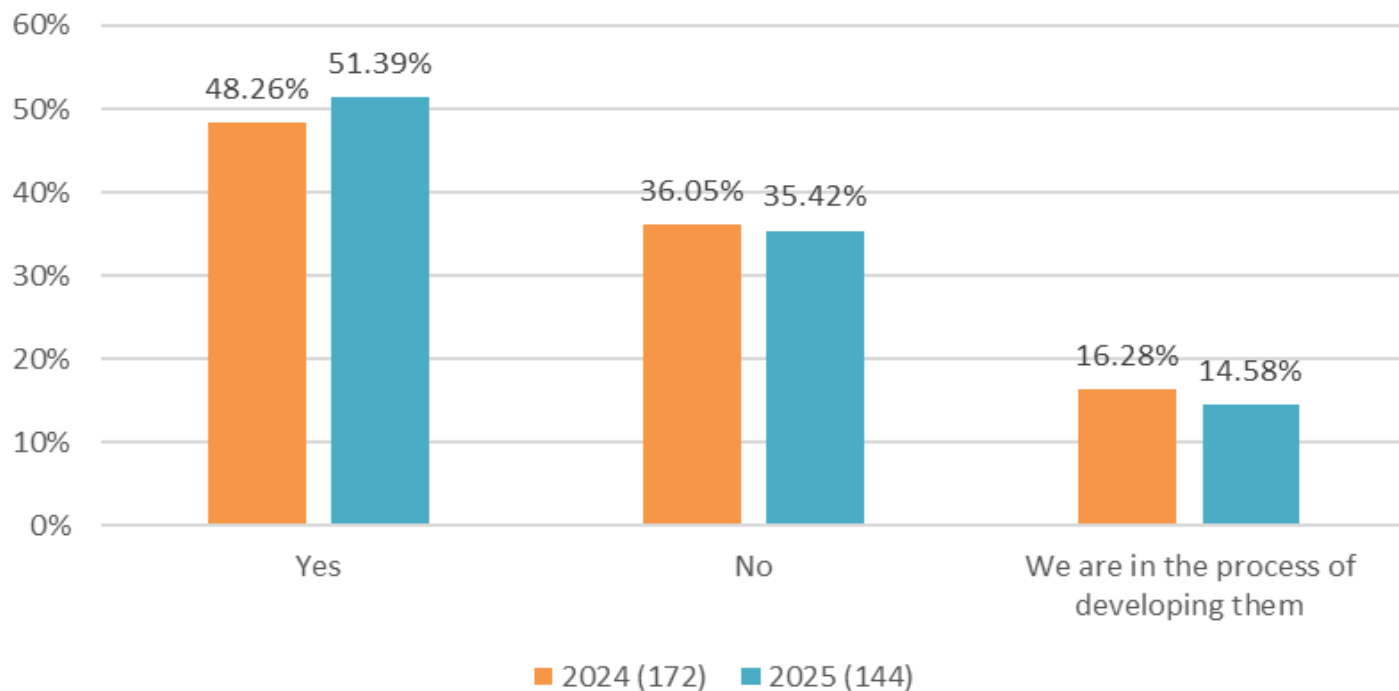
- Negative environmental impacts of operating generative AI and large language models (most popular answer)
- Factual inaccuracies (many answers)
- Surrendering the creative process to a robot in a way that feels existentially dehumanizing. But once you get over the fundamental philosophical dread, it is definitely a helper
- The potential for AI to replace humans in certain professions
- Taking credit for work that is not mine
- I use AI on small pieces of text so I can review it thoroughly and rewrite to eliminate bias, check references, and intellectual property violations
- Wasting time rewriting results
- Being tempted to just use what comes up because the deadline looms
- It's incorrect and we can spot AI generated narrative right away
- All of the things listed are general concerns of using AI, but I have worked to understand the tools and implications in order to avoid those concerns in my work
- I don't want to train the system to replace me
- Losing the tone and essence of humanity, potential for security breaches
- I employ AI selectively and rarely, and have not used the AI results verbatim
- Sharing private organizational data

Other Concerns (please specify)

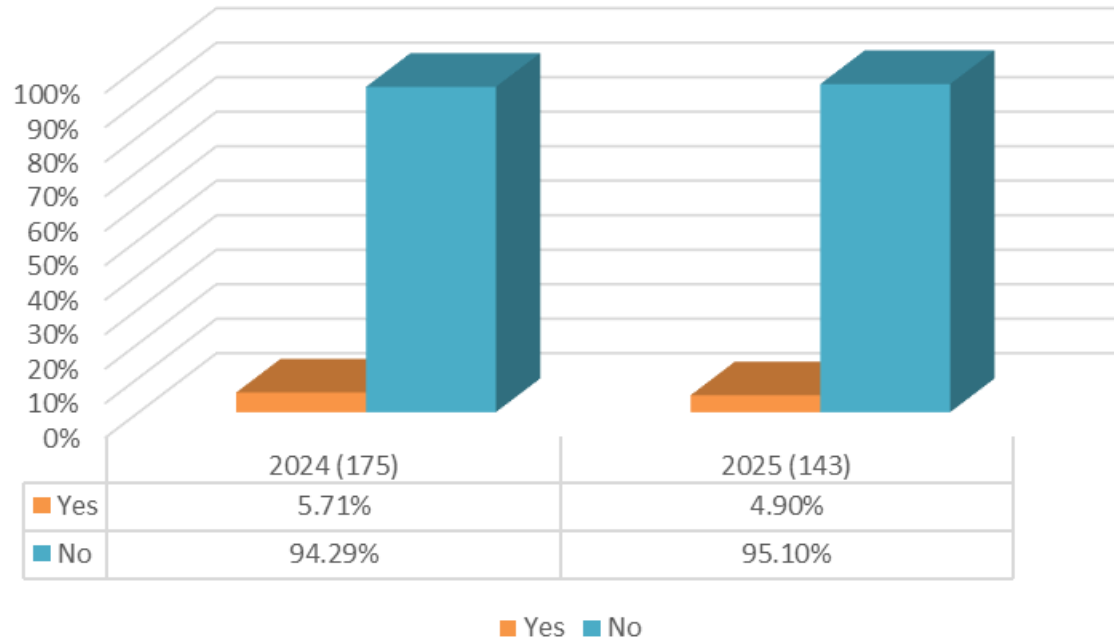
Answers from 2025

- Making sure I am confident that all my facts are correct and context
- The way that many LLMs have been "trained" using content without permission or compensation to authors
- Exposing my employer to security risk
- Ensuring thorough review so the voice is still my own and there is no inaccuracies
- Inaccurate statements being generated and too many adjectives being used
- No concerns; I prefer to do my own work.
- I am concerned about all of the above, but I do think AI is here to stay. As I indicated, I don't use AI. I have experimented with four different AI platforms and understand how they operate and can help grant writers. However, I am on the edge of retirement and don't feel the need to implement a new tool or system.
- Loss of independent and educated thinking
- As a former biomedical researcher, I feel that its use constitutes plagiarism
- Overusing it that might make me "lazy" or hamper me becoming a better writer
- Environmental impacts, giving money to billionaires, supporting projects that I think don't help anybody to pursue.
- I limit my use of AI to areas where I don't think there is an issue with these concerns
- Feeding into AI machines with content

Does your organization have policies regarding the use of data privacy, use, and/or sharing?



Have you seen any grant applications that prohibit the use of AI in a proposal?



Which funder prohibited the use of AI?

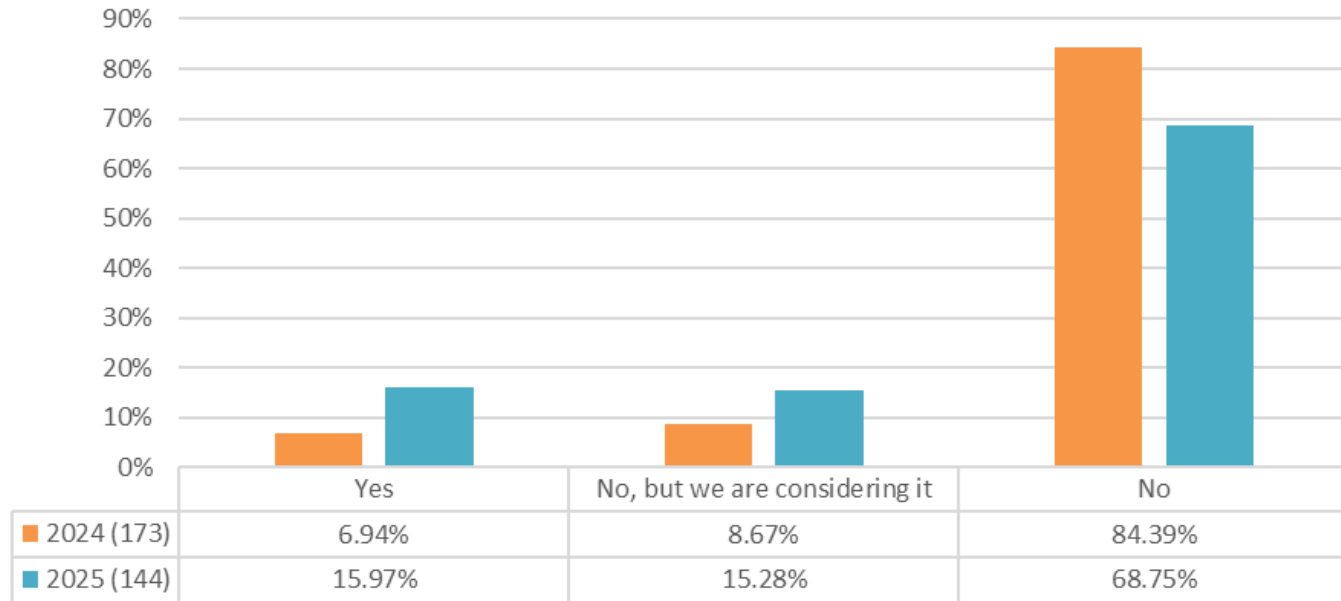
2025

- ✓ A state education agency
- ✓ One, but I do not recall which one.
- ✓ Have not seen specifically but professional publications suggest it is not approved.
- ✓ Have anecdotally heard this is the case with Federal grants but haven't seen it stated outright.

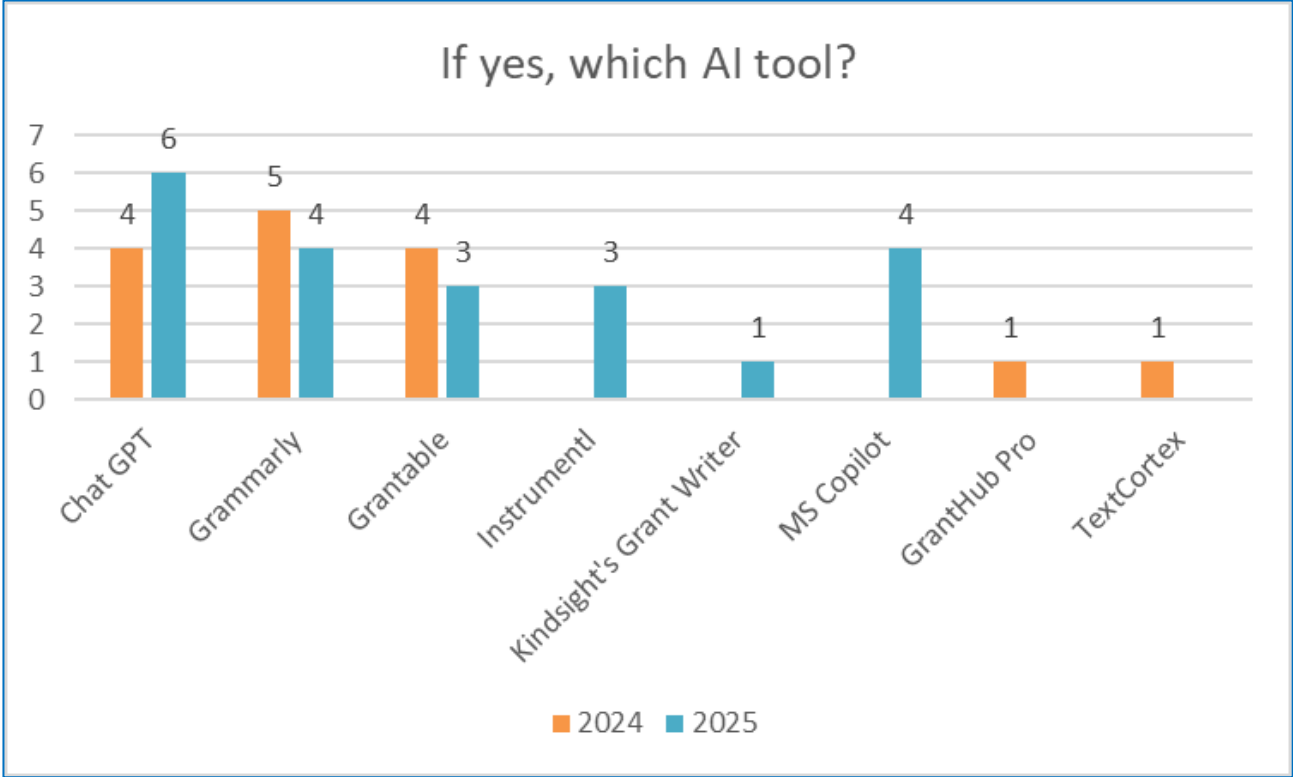
2024

- ✓ Kentucky Dept of Ed
- ✓ Library of Congress
- ✓ State Ed Agency
- ✓ NIH Must Disclose Use
- ✓ Federal Grant (not specified)
- ✓ Smaller Organizations
- ✓ Cannot Recall Name (4)
- ✓ How Would They Know? (learning challenge disadvantage)

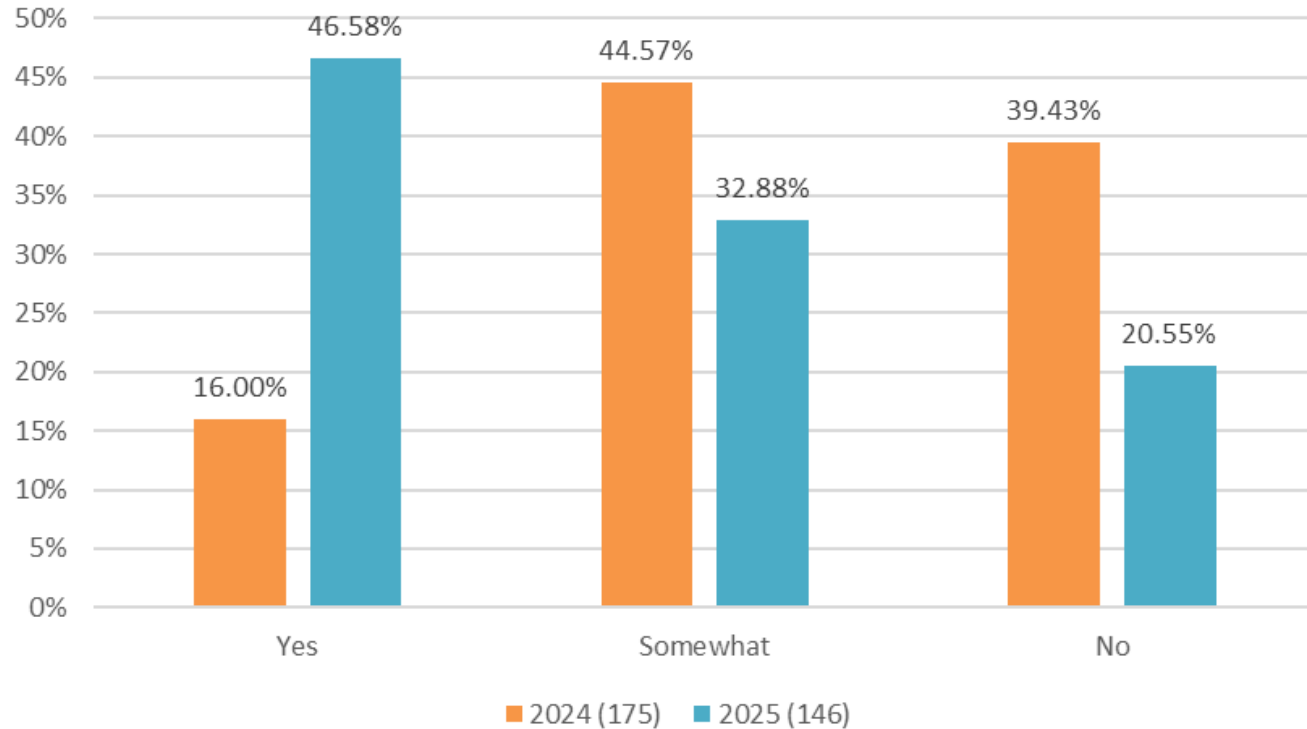
**Has your organization engaged in paid agreements
for the use of AI tools, specifically for the
grant profession or fundraising efforts?**



Which AI tool do you use?



Do you understand about open-source models of AI and closed AI models?



Is there anything else you would like to share about AI in the grant profession?

Answers 2025: [Adapting](#) (19)

- ✓ I like having something on paper to edit it gets me rolling faster. The end product is mine not AI by the time I am done editing
- ✓ I am thankful for it
- ✓ I think it is a wonderful tool. People shouldn't be afraid of it. It isn't hard to create text that sounds like a bot.
- ✓ Learning how to prompt your ai and customizing agents (feed info about your org, writing style, etc) helps cut down the back and forth, and gets you closer to a final product sooner. Also knowing which AI bot to use for specific task, ie perplexity for research
- ✓ I find AI to be a helpful tool in relation to turning bullet points into sentences and decreasing word count. I ensure to review the narratives and adjust as needed. I do not trust AI to generate facts, figures or data for me. I will ask for possible website about a topic, but I will ensure to do my own research and not rely on AI to do any research for me. I use ChatGPT, Claude, and Wordtune.
- ✓ Embrace it!
- ✓ NSF has asked for a statement of AI use to be added to proposals for some RFPs.
- ✓ It has the potential to change things for consultants, especially those who report hours used.
- ✓ No. I think it's a tool that will continue to grow and influence our world, including our profession.
- ✓ I really appreciated the iLearn Live conference in 2025 about AI for the grants profession. I appreciate the proactive approach and evolving clarity around uses and ethics as AI use becomes more prevalent.
- ✓ It is a tremendous time saver, but I still have to put in the initial work to get a grant proposal in the shape I want it to be. Then I let AI do the polish.

Is there anything else you would like to share about AI in the grant profession?

Answers 2025: **Concerns (29)**

- ✓ I work on scientific, environmental, health, and construction grants. If using AI, proceed with caution. The information provided on open AI is often at least partially incorrect. Additionally, I do not disclose any company or proprietary information while using AI.
- ✓ The environmental impact is so outsized that its usage is in violation of other values, including environmental justice for low-income communities, compensation for individuals who created the IP used in training (often low-income creatives), and supporting the white supremacist's tech oligarchs
- ✓ I worry that higher ups think this means I should be able to churn out proposals at a much faster rate.
- ✓ I have concerns about the future of writing professions.
- ✓ I may be a holdout, but am quite disheartened by the wide adoption of AI in the grant profession and feel pressured to participate in order to be competitive even though I do not want to use AI at all
- ✓ I agree with using caution in how/when to use AI but to choose not to use it when its use continues to escalate would be like continuing to use a typewriter and paper to develop proposals. I also think we need to adopt specific ethics around the use of AI, such as citing it as a source when appropriate.
- ✓ Still not a time saver- yet.
- ✓ I have found AI generated narrative tends to use lots of words that don't say all that much. It looks and sounds impressive at first glance, but, when you really digest what AI suggested, there isn't a lot of true substance there. I am guessing this means whoever used the AI did not spend enough time with it to fine tune the prompts, which begs the question of whether the time it takes to fine tune it is less than the time it would have taken just to write the narrative yourself. I suspect fine tuning would take less time, but I'm not entirely sure.

Is there anything else you would like to share about AI in the grant profession?

Answers 2025: [Resources](#) (2)

- ✓ It would be fantastic if GPA could create a closed source platform for GPC users to subscribe to
- ✓ I mainly use ChatGPT but I'm curious about other tools and platforms.
- ✓ I'm glad I'm 57 and not 37 😊

NEW QUESTION 2025: Are there any aspects of AI in your grant professional role that have changed for you since April 2024? Please share as much as possible.

Answers 2025: 55 Answers

Good prompts get good results. Editing is everything. Don't trust any claims AI makes. Verify

I was dabbling in AI (Grantable and ChatGPT) in April 2024 until earlier this year but have stopped using it after discovering the significant negative environmental impacts of AI. Until those are addressed more fully, I have serious ethical reservations about using AI, especially just to "save time" in the interest of "being more productive." I think that perpetuates a society that is ever more focused on being more and more productive. Why can't we go back to workplace expectations of boomers? Why do we always have to be producing more and being more productive? (sorry for the rant)

AI has improved as a grant writing tool.

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NEW QUESTION 2025: Are there any aspects of AI in your grant professional role that have changed for you since April 2024? Please share as much as possible.

Answers 2025: 55 Answers

I have noticed a lot of AI responses in Google searches. Much more so than a year ago.

Over the course of the last year, I have slowly adopted the use of Grammarly and Canva as tools for some pre-award tasks. I will write out my outline, ask an AI platform to do the same, and compare. I will use either platform's AI capabilities to help me produce catchy titles or headers and may utilize it to cut down on some of the more generic sections of a proposal if exceeding page limits. Of course, I make sure to review the produced material to ensure the main points have not been overlooked and change a lot of the phrasing to flow with the rest of the narrative, but I still find it helpful on some occasions when my internal reviewers are limited in availability.

I am using it more frequently and hearing about other uses from others.

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NEW QUESTION 2025: Are there any aspects of AI in your grant professional role that have changed for you since April 2024? Please share as much as possible.

Answers 2025: 55 Answers

I have posted the following statement on my website and in contractual agreements: "Due to concerns about the unauthorized sharing of client privileged information across AI platforms, this grant business utilizes only the Grammarly-Free App to correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation and improve the readability of grant proposal drafts and training materials."

My institution strongly encourages using AI, which has increased my exploration and use of the tools.

Not really. The quality of its writing is just not there yet. It ends up taking more time to edit than it would to just write without it.

Conclusion Based on Data 2024 -2025

1. Grant Pros are more aware of open-sourced and closed models.
2. Grant Pros are much more aware of, and concerned about, the environmental effect of using AI.
3. Grant Pros are realizing that prompts make a big difference when using AI.
4. Grant Pros are utilizing more AI overall, even if just “learning”.
5. Companies are *slowly* adopting policies.
6. Grant Pros who use AI feel it has improved.
7. There are a growing number of AI tools for the profession.
8. There seems to be more acceptance that AI is here to stay.
9. Grant Pros still have many concerns about the use of AI.
10. Grant Pros feel strongly about their views of AI use.

This data is being shared to educate Grant Professionals and those in the Artificial Intelligence field.

Survey answers appear as they were submitted through a Survey Monkey survey in 2024 and 2025.
They are not the opinion of the author.

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Artificial Intelligence Survey 2024 + 2025 Comparison

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