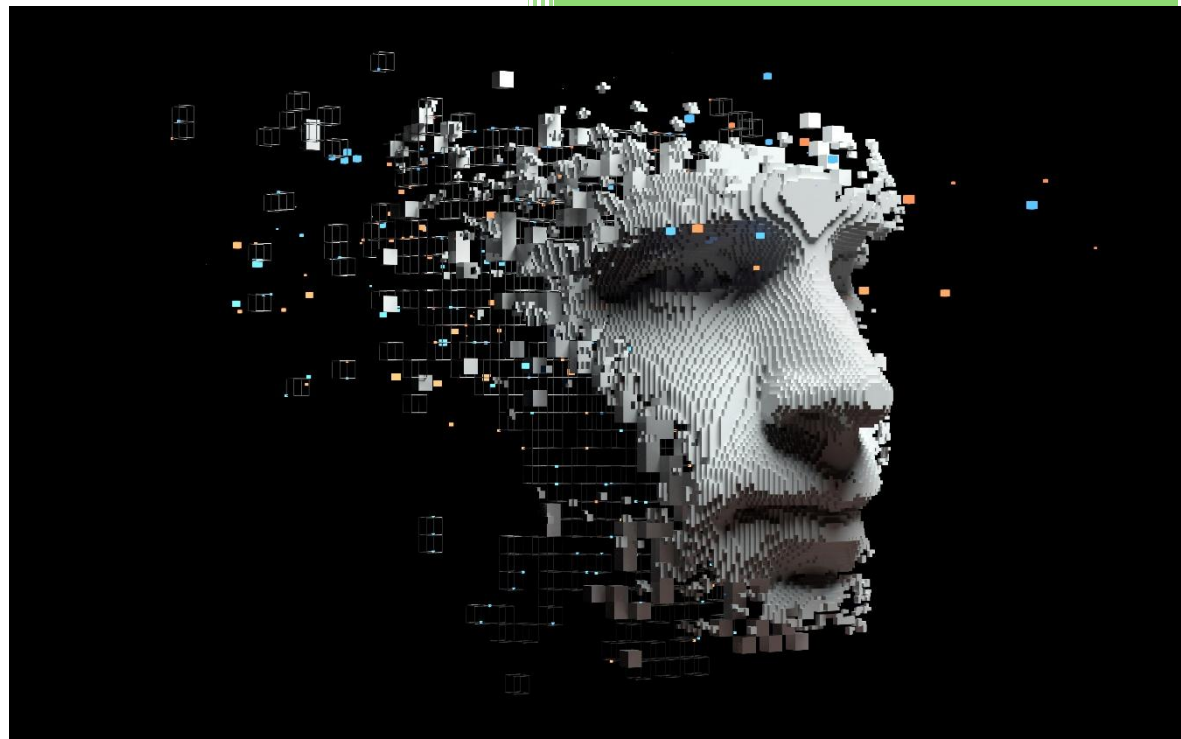


2025

# Digital Transformation in Grant Development

*Integrating Generative AI to Enhance Workflow Practices and Increase Department Productivity.*



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Budget and Strategic-Planning:*

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# Overview

This proposal outlines a plan to implement Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) designed to streamline workflows and increase worker productivity. Integrating GenAI requires sincere consideration of ethical concerns and accountability (Callari & Puppione, 2025, p. 267), and the department must include policies to address these potential roadblocks. The core objective of this proposal is to leverage GenAI technology to increase efficiency while meeting project deadlines. This proposal will also outline the projected benefits and results of integrating GenAI, along with a proposed budget for the project.

# Background

Generative AI is an advanced technology (Micro Systems, n.d.) that can create structured content such as reports, summaries, and compliance documentation. Taylor Karl (2024) describes how GenAI separates itself from traditional AI programs: “While regular AI focuses on specific tasks like data analysis and process automation, GenAI empowers organizations to create new content, streamline processes, and drive innovation” (p. 5). Unlike traditional AI, which primarily analyzes data, generative AI produces drafts, tailored outputs, and automated workflows that align with organizational and funder requirements. The United States Government Accountability Office, or GAO, has analyzed at least twelve federal agencies that have publicly reported the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence to support their operations (Office, 2025). Gen AI can assist employees with repetitive tasks, allowing them to focus on more meaningful and purposeful work (Callari & Puppione, 2025, p. 274).

# Problem Statement

*The department is experiencing a surge in demand during the current grant period, resulting in a higher percentage of missed deadlines. By adopting Generative AI tools that streamline administrative processes and improve oversight of awarded funds, the Grants Management Team will enhance efficiency, compliance, and reporting accuracy.*

# Resources Needed

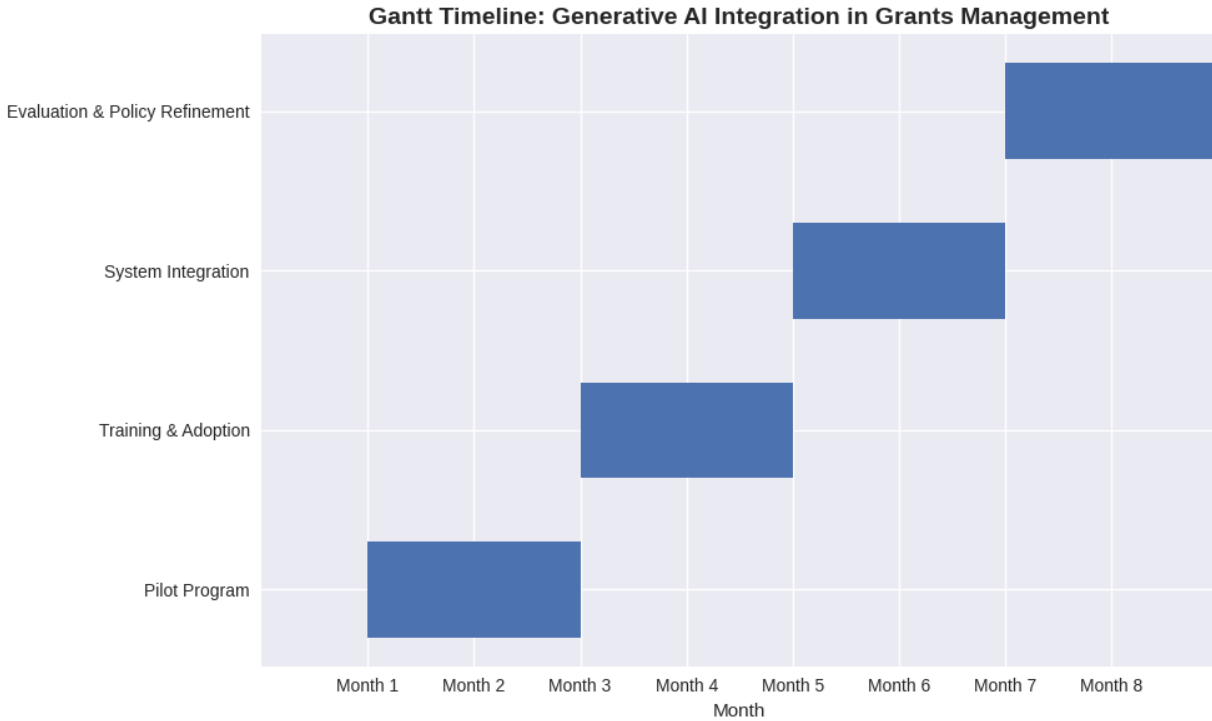
Integrating Generative AI into the Grants Management Team will require a combination of technical, human resources (HR), and organizational resources. With these resources, the Grants Management Team can streamline reporting, improve compliance, and strengthen oversight of awarded funds.

| Resource Type | Description   | Examples/Needs   | Estimated Investment                    |
|---------------|---|--|---|
| Technical     | Tools and infrastructure to run AI securely and effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>AI platforms (Copilot, Chat GPT, etc.)</li></ul> | Software licenses, IT integration costs |

|                |   |   |  |
|----------------|---|---|--|
|                |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration with existing grant management systems</li> <li>• Secure cloud storage, encryption, and access controls</li> </ul> |  |
| Human (HR)     | Staff skills and roles to adopt and manage AI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training workshops on AI use and compliance</li> <li>• Specialists for support</li> </ul>                                      | Training budget, staff time allocation   |
| Organizational | Policies, governance, and change management   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear AI use policies (drafting vs. compliance checks)</li> <li>• Ethical guidelines</li> </ul>                                | Policy development, leadership oversight |
| Financial      | Budget allocation for adoption and scaling    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licenses and subscriptions</li> <li>• Infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>• Pilot program funding</li> </ul>                      | Departmental or organizational budget    |

# Timeline

The following is a projected timeline for the planned implementation of gen AI into the Grants Management Team. This timeline is based on an 8-month phased program launch. By the end of the initial launch, the Grants Management Team will have a tested, trained, and fully integrated generative AI system with clear policies in place.



*This Gantt Chart was created using Microsoft Copilot, a generative AI program.*

### 1. Pilot Program

- a. Duration: Months 1-2
  - i. Test AI on limited tasks
  - ii. Collect Staff Feedback
  - iii. Identify strengths and gaps

### 2. Training and Adoption

- a. Duration: Months 3-4
  - i. Conduct staff workshops on AI use and compliance
  - ii. Establish best practices
  - iii. Assign AI project leads

### 3. System Integration

- a. Duration: Months 5-6
  - i. Connect AI tools with grant management systems
  - ii. Ensure secure data workflows
  - iii. Develop templates for reporting

### 4. Evaluation and Policy Refinement

- a. Assess efficiency gains and compliance accuracy
- b. Refine policies for responsible AI use
- c. Reports outcomes to leadership

# Benefits/Results

- **Efficiency in Administration**
  - Employees on the grant management team spend significant time on email correspondence. “GenAI can create optimized content for social media, emails, and reports” (Feuerriegel et al., 2023, p. 121).
  - Integrating a Generative AI tool like Microsoft CoPilot would help employees draft email responses, reducing unnecessary time spent on email communication.
- **Improved Accuracy and Compliance**
  - GenAI detects patterns and condenses large volumes of data. This expedites the location of key information in proposal submissions.
  - One problem that arises with GenAI use is that there are known risks associated with AI outputs. AI may produce “hallucinations” or false information (Jiang, 2025). Employees should conduct their own fact-checks to avoid the spread of misinformation. (Jiang, 2025).
- **Improved Customer Service**
  - Serving the city is at the heart of this department. Improved customer service response time encourages public involvement.
  - Chatbots are a useful tool for assisting employees with automated processes, such as frequently asked questions (FAQs).
  - “AI can manage basic customer service inquiries through chatbots” (Callari & Puppione, 2025, p. 268).
- **Enhanced Data Insights**
  - Summarizes grant performance metrics and financial data quickly.
  - Delivers dashboards and narrative summaries to leadership and funders.
- **Collaboration and Transparency**
  - Produces clear, accessible summaries for cross-departmental communication.
  - Enables knowledge sharing by automatically generating drafts for team collaboration.

# Considerations

- **Responsible Use:** AI should support, not replace, human expertise in compliance and financial oversight.
- **Oversight:** Staff must review AI-generated outputs to ensure accuracy and alignment with organizational standards.
- **Investment:** Requires training, secure infrastructure, and clear policies to ensure ethical, compliant use.

# Budget

The following table shows the requested budget of \$18,000 for the proposed GenAI integration:

| Expenses             | Estimated Costs              | Low/High Estimates                                       | Rough Percentages                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Employee Training    | \$250 - \$750 per person     | \$5000/\$15,000<br><i>(Based on a team of 20 people)</i> | 80%  |
| Program Startup Cost | \$20 - \$200 initial payment | \$20/\$200<br><i>(Dependent upon Service)</i>            | 5%   |
| Monthly Maintenance  | \$20 - \$200 monthly         | \$240/\$2,400<br><i>(Total Cost for 1 year)</i>          | 15%  |
|                      |                              | <b>Total:</b>  | <b>+/- \$18,000 to cover listed/implied expenses</b> |

*Source: Data collected from research on AI programs' costs.*

- **Employee Training:**
  - Employees must learn new skills to work with AI effectively (Callari & Puppione, 2025, p. 267). Employees must practice “Crafting effective prompts and iterating queries for better output” (Callari & Puppione, 2025, p. 273).
  - Investment in AI literacy through employee upskilling and retraining programs (Karl, 2024, p. 5).
  - Costs will vary depending on the level of training to meet program requirements.
- **Program Startup Costs:**
  - According to Marcus Taylor (2025), “Businesses can score quick wins by implementing AI productivity assistants like Microsoft Copilot, Google Workspace, ChatGPT, etc. These programs are cheap and easy to use and will produce rapid productivity increases, demonstrating immediate ROI” (p. 8).
  - Choosing a prebuilt GenAI program like Microsoft Copilot will reduce costs compared to a custom solution.
- **Monthly Maintenance Fees:**
  - Maintenance fees depend on the GenAI model used. For example, Microsoft Copilot monthly costs vary depending on the subscription and/or department requirements.

# Conclusion

By deploying generative AI, the City of Norfolk Department of Budget and Planning’s Grants Management Team will enhance efficiency, improve compliance reporting, and reinforce oversight of awarded funds. Staff will spend less time on routine administrative tasks and more

on strategic monitoring, funder relations, and organizational impact, positioning the department as a leader in grants management.

There are challenges the department will face if it decides to move forward with this proposal, with privacy and accuracy at the forefront. Despite these challenges, if implemented, the department can expect a decrease in time spent on email correspondence and document review, an increase in accuracy, and improved customer experience by Generative AI. The budget requested will cover all necessary expenses. All funding invested in this project will result in long-term economic growth for the department.

**If interested in moving forward with this project, please promptly respond to this proposal submission at [kjone127@odu.edu](mailto:kjone127@odu.edu) and, if desired, schedule a meeting to discuss further.**

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