SAFE. SMART. FUNDED.

ETHICAL AI FOR COMMUNITY GRANTS

Despina Karatzias

Institute of Excellence

City of Casey | Wednesday 21 October 2026

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YOUR PRESENTER

IGNITING EXCELLENCE SINCE 2014



DESPINA KARATZIAS

Founder, Institute of Excellence

- Certified Trainer and Qualified Business Coach
- Master's in Digital and Social Media Marketing
- Host of The Tourism Hub Podcast
- Author of Adventures of a Balloon Girl
- Outstanding Contribution | 2022 Victorian Tourism Awards
- 20+ years in tourism, digital strategy and entrepreneurial education

YOUR GIFT TODAY

Complete the Business and AI Capability Audit and receive a personalised report with your three priorities, straight to your inbox. Scan now. It takes four minutes.

audit.instituteofexcellence.com

Scan for your audit

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TODAY'S SESSION

WHAT WE WILL COVER

01

PRIVACY AND AI

Protect your community before you type a single prompt.

02

THE FIVE LEVELS OF AI

Find your level, then move up one.

03

THREE STEPS TO A STRONG SUBMISSION

Decode. Draft. Verify.

SAFE **SMART**

FUNDED

Ethical AI for community grants.

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OPENING QUESTION

RATE YOURSELF RIGHT NOW

How confident are you that you could use AI on your next grant application safely, ethically and in your own voice?



Write your number down. We are coming back to it at the end.

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THE FRAMEWORK

OPA!

More than an enthusiastic expression. It is the lens for how organisations grow.

Every challenge contains an opportunity. This is how we look at AI and your next grant today.

OPA is Despina's Greek Heritage. It is the spirit of possibility.

O

OPPORTUNITY

What is possible right now, for your organisation?

P

PURPOSE

Why does it matter, to you, your members, your community?

A

ACTION

What is the one thing you need to do to activate it?

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01

PRIVACY AND AI

Protect your community before you type a single prompt.

SAFE

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THE EVIDENCE

9 in 10

Australians would like organisations to do more to protect their personal information.

Your members are trusting you with theirs.

Source: Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), Australian Community Attitudes to Privacy Survey 2023 (1,916 respondents).

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PRIVACY FIRST

CHANGE YOUR SETTINGS FIRST.

CHATGPT	*Settings → Data Controls. Turn off "Improve the model for everyone".*
GEMINI	*Settings → Gemini Apps Activity. Turn activity off.*
COPILOT	*Open an InPrivate browser window first, then go to copilot.microsoft.com.*
CLAUDE	*Settings → Privacy. Turn off "Help improve Claude".*

60 seconds. Do it before your first prompt.

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SAFE UPLOAD CHECK

THE NOTICEBOARD TEST

Four questions before you upload anything.

1	Is it already public, like your council's grant guidelines?
2	Would I pin it on a community noticeboard?
3	Does it contain zero names, contact details, photos or health details?
4	Does it contain zero bank or financial details?

A no to any question? Don't upload. When in doubt, leave it out.

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02

THE FIVE LEVELS

You don’t need to climb all five. Just move up one.

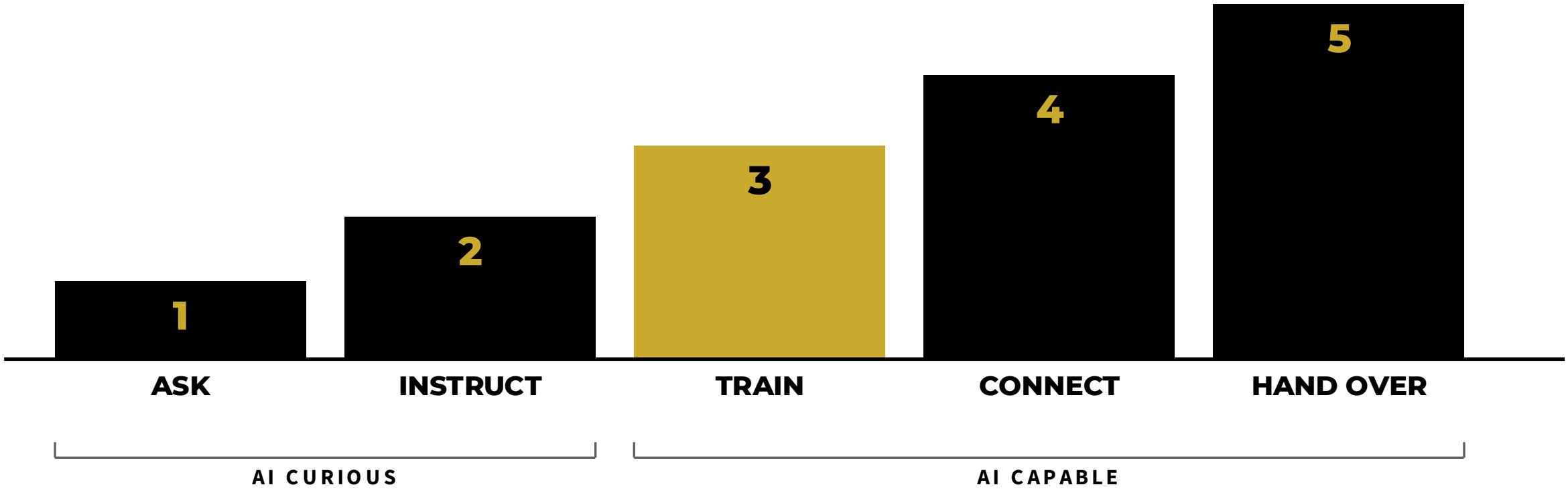


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WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

THE FIVE LEVELS OF AI CAPABILITY



Hands up. Which level are you at today?

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OPA — LIVE PEER CHECK-IN

TURN TO THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU.

O

OPPORTUNITY

What is one grant task AI could take off your committee's plate?

P

PURPOSE

Why does it matter, to you, your members and your community?

A

ACTION

What is the one action you need to take to activate it?

60 seconds. One opportunity. One purpose. One action.

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03

THREE STEPS TO A STRONG SUBMISSION

Decode. Draft. Verify.

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STEP 1 OF 3 · DECODE

KNOW THE RULES BEFORE YOU WRITE

YOUR AI ASSISTANT

"Summarise the funding priorities, eligibility requirements and assessment criteria, with their weightings, from these grant guidelines in plain English for a volunteer committee."

Upload the public guidelines PDF only, or paste the link from the council's website.

Spend the most time where the most marks sit.

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STEP 2 OF 3 · DRAFT

YOUR NOTES IN, A FIRST DRAFT OUT

YOUR AI ASSISTANT

"Turn these dot points into a clear paragraph for a council community grant addressing [community need]. Use active voice and emphasise community benefit: [paste your notes]"

Write three to five dot points first: what you will do, who it helps and why it matters.

AI drafts. You refine.

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STEP 3 OF 3 · VERIFY

ADD THE TRUTH ONLY YOU HOLD

YOUR AI ASSISTANT

"Check this draft against the eligibility and assessment criteria in these guidelines. What is missing, vague or unsupported?"

Then replace every placeholder with your real numbers, your real partners and your community's story.

AI will confidently invent numbers. You verify every one.

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LIVE EXERCISE

MY NEXT GRANT — MAP IT NOW.

SAFE
What will we never upload?

LEVEL
What is our next level?

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DECODE
Which grant? Where are the marks?

TRUTH
What can only we provide?

Work in pairs. 2 minutes. Fill all four. What you complete now is your next grant brief.

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AI ACCELERATOR

TAKE YOUR GRANT FURTHER TONIGHT.

SAFE	*List the types of documents a [type of group] like ours holds. Sort them into "safe to upload to AI" and "never upload".*
LEVEL	*We use AI at Level [1–5]. Suggest one grant-writing task that would move our [type of group] up one level.*
DECODE	*Analyse the assessment criteria in these guidelines for a project that [brief description]. Which should we prioritise, and what evidence would help?*
TRUTH	*Ask me five questions about our community and project that will help me add real evidence to this grant draft.*

Photograph this slide. Four prompts. Tonight, not next week.

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YOUR PRIORITY

THE ONE PRIORITY PRINCIPLE

One priority. Not two. Not a list. One.

1. Go to your 4-Quadrant Map. Circle the quadrant you will start with.
2. One priority. One baseline. Thirty days. That is what moves the needle.
3. One thing done well for 30 days produces evidence. A list produces guilt.

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YOUR COMMITMENT

TURN TO THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU

1

NAME THE SECTION

Safe, Smart or Funded. Which one are you starting with?

2

NAME THE ACTION

Exactly what will you do this week?

3

GIVE THEM A START DATE

When does this begin? Day and date. Not "soon".

60 seconds. What you say out loud right now, that is your contract.

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BEFORE YOU GO

WHAT WE COVERED TODAY

01	**PRIVACY AND AI**	*Safe AI starts before the first prompt, in your settings and in what you choose not to upload.*
02	**THE FIVE LEVELS**	*You don't need to climb all five. Just move up one.*
03	**THREE STEPS**	*AI can draft the words. Only you can supply the truth that gets funded.*

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PSA FROM DESPINAI



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CLOSING QUESTION

RATE YOURSELF AGAIN — RIGHT NOW

How confident are you that you could use AI on your next grant application safely, ethically and in your own voice?



You gave yourself a number at the start. Give yourself a number now. What changed?

Continue what shifted. Imagine where you will be 30 days, 90 days and 12 months from now.

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YOUR GIFT

PUT ONE IDEA TO WORK THIS WEEK

Today's slides and an Action Sheet for your next grant.

YOUR RESOURCES

Scan the QR code

Enter your details to download your resources.

instituteofexcellence.com/resources/casey1026

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The AI tools will keep changing.

Your values and your community's trust are what you can't replace.

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Thank you.

Your values and your community's trust are what you can't replace.

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