



The AI Gap in Nonprofits: *What the Data Says and What We Want to Hear from You*

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The AI revolution is real. But for many small nonprofits, it can feel like watching a parade from the sidewalk. The tools are multiplying, the think-pieces are piling up, and everyone seems to be doing something with artificial intelligence. Meanwhile, your team is still running on spreadsheets, stretched budgets, and goodwill. But don't worry, you are far from alone.

Where Things Stand

The headline numbers can be misleading. According to oft-cited research, 92% of nonprofits now report using AI in some form. But that number hides a much more important one: only 7% describe their use as strategic, meaning they are seeing real ROI and measurable mission impact. The rest are experimenting, dabbling, or simply asking ChatGPT to clean up an email now and then.

The divide sharpens when you look at organizational size. Nonprofits with annual budgets over \$1 million are adopting AI at nearly twice the rate of smaller organizations — 66% versus 34%. For organizations with budgets under \$500,000, financial constraints, lack of technical expertise, and uncertainty about where to begin remain the dominant obstacles.

Where Nonprofits Are Using AI

When nonprofits do engage with AI, communications and content creation lead the way. Donor research is another area of growing comfort. Eighty-two percent of fundraisers say they are comfortable using AI for donor research, even as 63% remain hesitant to let AI touch actual donor communications for fear it will feel impersonal. And the results in fundraising are starting to show. Thirty percent of nonprofits report that AI has boosted fundraising revenue over the past 12 months.

Emerging applications include grant research, volunteer coordination, program evaluation, and impact reporting, but adoption in these areas is still thin.

AI Without a Strategy

Here is the pattern that keeps showing up in the research: organizations are picking up tools before they have a plan. While 85.6% of nonprofits are exploring AI, only 24% have a formal AI strategy. Nearly half have no AI policy whatsoever.

The capacity gap is just as striking. Seventy percent of nonprofits believe AI can reduce their workload, but 60% say they lack the in-house expertise to evaluate tools, and only 4% have any budget specifically allocated for AI training. Meanwhile, 40% of nonprofits report that no one in their organization has any AI education at all.

The risk is not being too slow to adopt. It's using AI to do more of the wrong things, faster.

We Want to Hear from You

The data above tells us where the sector stands in aggregate. What it cannot tell us is what is actually happening in your organization. We built a short survey to find out. It takes three minutes, is anonymous, and the results will directly shape the content and resources we share around this topic. We will publish what we learn so that all of you can have access to this valuable information.

→ **Take the Survey: AI in Nonprofits:** <https://tally.so/r/RG09xj>

The good news buried in all of this data is that you are not behind. Most of the sector is still finding its footing. The organizations that will come out ahead are not necessarily the ones who started earliest; they are the ones who take the time to ask the right questions, build a clear plan, and bring their teams along. That's exactly what we are trying to help with. Your voice is the first step.