IS 301 Class Project Report Ethan Lear November 13, 2025

GrantBase

Description:

GrantBase is an AI-powered platform designed to take the stress out of finding scholarships. Instead of spending hours searching the internet and juggling spreadsheets, students can rely on GrantBase to do the work for them. By looking at a student's academic record, major or career path, and schools of interest, the app's AI automatically provides each student with an extensive list of scholarships they actually qualify for, saving time and opening doors to more opportunities. A built-in chatbot will guide students through each application, send deadline reminders, and share strategies to improve their chances of success and increase the number of scholarships they could potentially qualify for. Integrated blockchain technology ensures every scholarship is legitimate and backend AI-powered data analytics highlight which opportunities are most competitive and which align best with a student's profile. Over time, the platform gets smarter, learning from past results to provide an even more personalized experience for each student, as well as specific demographics of students, like specific schools and degree pathways. Right now, college students are leaving an estimated \$100 million in unclaimed scholarships and grants on the table each year, all while taking on more student debt. GrantBase flips the script on tuition, streamlines the scholarship application process, and makes it easier than ever for students to make the most of every scholarship opportunity they qualify for.

AI Incorporation:

- AI is the foundation of GrantBase's functionality and value proposition, using it to transform how students find and apply for scholarships.
 - o AI-Powered Scholarship Matching: GrantBase's algorithm analyzes each student's academic record, declared major, extracurricular activities, demographic data, and schools of interest to automatically generate a curated list of scholarships they are genuinely eligible for. The matching engine uses natural language processing to interpret complex eligibility criteria and compare them to each user's unique profile, ensuring precision and relevance. Chatbot Assistance: A built-in AI chatbot serves as a personal scholarship assistant, helping students navigate the platform, explaining application requirements, providing deadline reminders, and giving tips for improving essays or recommendation letters. This conversational interface mimics a real scholarship

- advisor to enhance students' experience and reduce the stress of scholarship application management.
- Predictive Analysis/Insights: Backend AI data analytics continuously evaluate which scholarships yield the highest success rates for specific student profiles. This allows GrantBase to prioritize and recommend the most promising opportunities, learning from past application results and improving over time through machine learning. O AI-Driven Personalization and Learning: As students continually engage with the platform, the smarter it becomes. AI tracks metrics for engagement and accordingly adjusts recommendations as it learns student preferences for scholarship size, location, or potential fields of study. Over time, GrantBase delivers increasingly personalized results that reflects each user's goals and performance. Customer Base
- GrantBase is designed to serve college-bound high school students, current undergraduate students, and graduate students who are actively searching for scholarships and grants to help fund their education. These users are motivated and academically driven persons who want to make informed financial decisions about their path through higher education, but feel overwhelmed by the time and complication of finding, applying for, and earning legitimate and competitive scholarships.

• Demographics:

- o Age: 16-26 years old
- Education Level: High school juniors and seniors, undergraduate students, and graduate students.
- o Location: Primarily the U.S. with potential future expansion to English-speaking international markets.
- o Income Level: Middle-to-lower income households in need of scholarships, grants, and financial aid to afford the rising costs of college.

• Psychographics:

- o Goal-oriented, technology-comfortable, and valuing efficiency and transparency.
- Independent thinkers who want to maximize educational funding opportunities without wasting time on irrelevant or unapplicable listings.
 Many firstgeneration college students who need simplification of a complex and outdated application process.

• Behavioral Characteristics:

- o Frequent independent research for scholarships online. O Value trustworthy digital solutions to modern problems
- Likely to engage with GrantBase's chatbot for personalized results, engage with automated app reminders, and return to the app consistently to check for new opportunities.
- Secondary audiences may include parents, academic advisors, and high school counselors.

Customer Acquisition Strategy

- GrantBase's customer acquisition strategy will be composed of a heavy focus on digital marketing through digital and social media in tandem with on-campus advertising and university partnerships. The company's outreach will focus on where our primary customer demographic spends most of their time, online and in academic settings.
- Social Media Marketing:
 - Build a strong presence across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube with short-form videos and demographic-targeted ads explaining how the AI platform simplifies the scholarship search and application process.
 - Posts will feature student testimonials and success stories along with "scholarship spotlights" to drive engagement.
 - Paid ads will be optimized using AI-driven analytics to target users based on age, interests, and education level to ensure efficient ad spend and increase conversion rates.
- Campus Advertising and Partnerships:
 - Partner with high schools, community colleges, and universities to build a
 physical presence with target demographics. Promotional booths, QR-code flyers,
 and advertising material on public bulletin boards across campuses.
 - o Partnerships with universities to provide direct access to internal university scholarships and connections with financial aid offices to drive engagement.

Competitive Advantage

- GrantBase's competitive advantage is established by its seamless integration of artificial intelligence, blockchain verification, and personalized scholarship guidance in both the search and application processes. Unlike competitors like Scholarships360, Bold.com, or Fastweb, GrantBase far exceeds the capabilities of current scholarship search sites. Instead of relying on manual searching and generic listings, GrantBase uses smart verification and automation to ensure every opportunity is personalized, relevant to the specific user, and legitimate.
- Personalization:
 - Curated search results. AI algorithm effectively interprets complex eligibility requirements and filters them using each user's academic record, intended field of study, demographic factors, and institutional preferences.
 - O This produces a uniquely accurate and dynamic list of opportunities tailored to the user, saving hours of research time.
- Blockchain verification ensures that every scholarship comes from an authentic and traceable source, building trust and distinguishing GrantBase as the most reliable scholarship discovery tool available.
- Integrated Chatbot and Application Assistance:
 - The built-in AI chatbot acts like a 24/7 scholarship advisor. It provides reminders, clarifies eligibility questions, and offers tailored essay and application tips, features that competitors typically reserve for premium plans or third-party tools.

Day-To-Day Operations

GrantBase will primarily operate as a digitally automated platform, with AI systems
handling most daily functions and a small human team supporting premium users who
opt for one-on-one guidance. The company's hybrid operational structure allows it to
remain efficient, scalable, and customer-focused while maintaining the personal touch
necessary for users who need expert feedback.

• AI Automation:

o The backbone of GrantBase's daily workflow is its AI system. Artificial intelligence will automatically maintain and update the scholarship database by scanning verified sources, educational institutions, and sponsor websites. It continuously cross-references new opportunities, removes expired or fraudulent listings, and refines matching accuracy based on evolving user data. ○ The AI-powered chatbot operates 24/7 to assist users in finding scholarships, answering questions, and providing tailored advice. It also delivers application reminders, essay guidance, and personalized notifications. Predictive analytics monitors user engagement trends to help refine platform recommendations in real time.

• Human-Driven Operations:

O A small team of trained professionals and former scholarship application reviewers will oversee premium services. This team will review scholarship essays, provide in-depth feedback, and offer personalized strategy sessions for students who subscribe to a higher-tier plan. This team will ensure high-quality, personalized mentorship and an additional layer of trust and guidance that complements the automated services. O Additionally, human-based teams will oversee the AI algorithm and performance, conduct quality assurance and verification checks, manage partner relationships with schools, and direct GrantBase's marketing initiatives.

Scalability

- GrantBase's AI-powered foundation and cloud-based infrastructure enables efficient
 future scalability. As our machine learning algorithms evolve, expansion will require
 minimal additional staffing or manual oversight, making growth more sustainable and
 cost-effective.
- Short Term Growth:
 - Establish partnerships with universities, community colleges, and public school districts across the nation.
 - Expand into premium subscription tiers and partnerships with corporate scholarship sponsors to establish new revenue streams. Essay analysis tools and predictive success rates for applications can be introduced as AI technology and internal data improves.
- International Expansion:

 Once domestic operations are established, GrantBase will expand into Englishspeaking foreign markets like Canada, the UK, and Australia.
 These regions share similar higher education structures to the U.S. and have a strong demand for scholarship and grant opportunities, enabling an easy transition.

• Long Term Growth:

- o As natural language processing technology becomes more advanced, GrantBase will scale further into non-English-speaking countries.
- This global expansion will be driven by the AI's ability to accurately interpret and translate scholarship criteria, eligibility requirements, and application materials across multiple languages while maintaining accuracy and cultural relevance.

Revenue and Business Model

• Business Model: GrantBase will operate as a portal and service provider within the higher education funding system. It will serve as a centralized hub connecting students with legitimate scholarship and grant opportunities, while also providing intelligent guidance and tools to help them succeed in securing those funds. As a portal, GrantBase functions as a search engine and application assistant using AI to filter and recommend scholarships that align with a student's goals and background. As a service provider, we will offer premium features like one-on-one application support, essay review, and personalized feedback from real scholarship professionals.

• Revenue Model:

- Freemium Access The core AI-powered scholarship matching service will remain free to attract a wide user base. This open access encourages widespread adoption and builds trust with students early in their scholarship search journey.
- O Premium Subscription Tiers The "Premium Success Plan" will offer enhanced features such as human-reviewed essays, personalized scholarship strategy sessions, and deeper analytics. This plan will include a "scholarship success guarantee." If users do not secure at least one scholarship within a set period, their subscription fee will be refunded. This performance-based structure reinforces transparency and credibility.

Short-Term and Long-Term Information Systems

• Short-Term:

o Transaction Processing System (TPS): Used to record and process routine transactions such as user registrations, subscription payments, and advertising purchases. This ensures financial accuracy and allows the system to track premium plan enrollments and refund guarantees automatically. ○ Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System: Used to organize user data, manage communications, and store interaction histories. Helps to tailor marketing efforts, track user satisfaction, and improve engagement with all customers. ○ Knowledge Management System (KMS): Organize and store the continually growing body of scholarship information, AI-generated application tips, and

verified resources to ensure that users consistently receive high-quality, accurate, and up-to-date scholarship recommendations.

• Long-Term:

- Enterprise Resource Management (ERP): Long-term integration of financial management, marketing, and customer service systems into a single unified platform, streamlining operations and ensuring consistent data flow across organizational departments.
- o Business Intelligence (BI) System: Analyze user engagement metrics, demographic trends, and conversion data to guide marketing decisions, improve the algorithm's matching ability, and inform expansion strategies.
- Extranet: A secure extranet will enable institutions and verified scholarship providers to directly upload new opportunities and verify existing listings, establishing and maintaining data integrity and authenticity across multiple markets.

Social and Ethical Implications

• GrantBase promotes educational equality by making scholarships more accessible through AI-powered matching and blockchain verification, but this accessibility also introduces new challenges. As more students gain awareness and apply to the same opportunities, competition for popular scholarships will naturally increase, potentially making them harder to win. While this heightened competitiveness could motivate scholarship providers to expand funding or create new awards, it also raises questions about fairness and equity among applicants. Additionally, GrantBase must prioritize strict data privacy and security practices to protect users' personal and academic information. Overall, the platform's technology offers clear social benefits by improving transparency and opportunity, but it must continually balance accessibility with ethical responsibility to ensure it truly benefits students.

APPENDIX: CHATGPT CONVERSATION

I am completing the class project report right now. Based on everything we've done working on this GrantBase project and website, you will help me answer a series of questions to complete the report. Consistency is extremely important. Reference all previous conversations and provided material to ensure this report accruatley reflects the project idea in its entirety. ChatGPT said:

Perfect — I've reviewed both your **IS 301 Class Project instructions** and your **GrantBase Overview document**, along with everything we've built together (website content, blogs, product images, etc.).

Here's what I'll do next to help you complete your Class Project Report:

We'll go question by question from the report prompt in the IS301 document, maintaining **consistency** across everything we've already created — including your site pages, brand voice, AI focus, competitors, and target audience.

To confirm, these are the report sections we'll complete:

- 1. Description of the startup business
- 2. How the business incorporates Artificial Intelligence
- 3. Target market (demographics, psychographics, behaviors)
- 4. Customer acquisition strategy
- 5. Competitive advantage
- 6. Operational plan (human vs AI-driven tasks)
- 7. Scalability and growth opportunities
- 8. Business and revenue model(s)
- 9. Information systems (short-term and long-term)
- 10. Social and ethical implications

Once you confirm, I'll begin drafting each section so the final text is ready for your **ClassProjectReport.pdf**submission — written in professional, student-level tone and aligned with your GrantBase concept and IS301 rubric.

Can you confirm you'd like me to begin with **Section 1: Business Description**, or would you like to include any specific details or updates to the GrantBase idea before I start?

You said:

I've completed the business description. Let's move on to section 2.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — since you've already completed the **Business Description**, we'll move on to **Section 2: How the Business Incorporates Artificial Intelligence**.

Here's a strong, consistent draft tailored to your GrantBase project and IS301 grading rubric:

How GrantBase Incorporates Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is the foundation of GrantBase's functionality and value proposition. The platform uses AI in several integrated ways to transform how students find and apply for scholarships.

1. AI-Powered Scholarship Matching:

GrantBase's core algorithm analyzes each student's academic record, declared major, extracurricular activities, demographic data, and schools of interest to automatically generate a curated list of scholarships they are genuinely eligible for. The matching engine uses natural language processing (NLP) to interpret complex eligibility criteria and compare them to each user's unique profile, ensuring precision and relevance.

2. Smart Chatbot Assistance:

A built-in AI chatbot serves as a personal scholarship assistant. It helps students navigate the platform, explains application requirements, provides deadline reminders, and gives tips for improving essays or recommendation letters. This conversational interface mimics a real scholarship advisor—accessible 24/7—to enhance the user experience and reduce stress.

3. Predictive Analytics and Insights:

On the backend, AI data analytics continuously evaluate which scholarships yield the highest success rates for specific student profiles. This allows GrantBase to prioritize and recommend the most promising opportunities, learning from historical results and improving over time through machine learning.

4. AI-Driven Personalization and Learning:

The more students use the platform, the smarter it becomes. AI tracks engagement metrics and adjusts recommendations accordingly, learning a student's preferences for scholarship size, location, or field of study. Over time, GrantBase delivers increasingly personalized results that reflect each user's goals and performance.

5. Blockchain Verification Integration:

Although blockchain is not an AI system itself, GrantBase integrates it alongside AI to verify the legitimacy of scholarship listings. This ensures that users only see verified and authentic opportunities, preventing scams and fake listings that are common in the scholarship search space.

Through these AI-driven features, GrantBase automates a process that was once time-consuming, confusing, and inefficient. By replacing hours of manual searching with intelligent automation and personalization, the platform redefines how students connect with financial aid opportunities—empowering them to apply strategically and maximize their chances of success.

Would you like me to make this section slightly **shorter (around 1–2 paragraphs)** to fit your report's formatting expectations, or keep this **expanded version** for maximum detail and rubric coverage?

You said:

Next section (who the business is serving)

ChatGPT said:

Excellent — here's **Section 3: Target Market – Who GrantBase is Serving**, written to align with the tone and structure of your IS301 report and consistent with all GrantBase content so far:

Target Market: Who GrantBase Is Serving

GrantBase primarily serves **college-bound high school students**, **current undergraduate students**, **and graduate students** who are actively seeking scholarships and grants to reduce the financial burden of higher education. These users are often motivated, academically driven individuals who want to make informed financial decisions about their education but are overwhelmed by the time and complexity involved in finding legitimate opportunities.

Demographics:

- **Age:** 16–26 years old
- Education Level: High school juniors/seniors, undergraduate, and graduate students
- Location: Primarily the United States, with potential expansion to English-speaking international markets
- **Income Level:** Middle- and lower-income households that rely on scholarships, grants, and financial aid

Psychographics:

GrantBase users are goal-oriented, tech-comfortable, and value efficiency and transparency. They tend to be independent thinkers who want to maximize their educational funding opportunities without spending hours sorting through irrelevant or outdated listings. Many are first-generation college students who appreciate accessible tools that simplify a confusing process.

Behavioral Characteristics:

These students frequently research scholarship opportunities online, use social media for academic resources, and value trustworthy digital solutions. They are likely to engage with GrantBase's personalized AI chatbot, respond positively to automated reminders, and return regularly to check for new scholarship matches.

In addition to individual students, **secondary audiences** include parents, academic advisors, and high school counselors who may recommend GrantBase as a reliable scholarship discovery tool.

By understanding the unique motivations and challenges of these audiences, GrantBase tailors its AI-driven experience to deliver meaningful value—helping students save time, increase their application success rates, and reduce student debt.

Would you like the next section to cover **customer acquisition strategy** (digital marketing and outreach), or would you like me to shorten this section first for your final report formatting?

You said:

Yes, next section. GrantBase will use a social-media driven digital approach in partnership with on-campus advertising.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — here's **Section 4: Customer Acquisition Strategy**, customized to reflect GrantBase's digital-first, campus-based growth plan and consistent with the rest of your project narrative:

Customer Acquisition Strategy

GrantBase will attract users through a **social-media-driven digital marketing approach** complemented by **on-campus advertising and partnerships**. Because the target audience consists primarily of students, the company's outreach strategy focuses on meeting them where they already spend their time—online and in academic settings.

1. Social Media Marketing:

GrantBase will build a strong presence across Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn, using short-form videos and targeted ads that explain how the AI platform simplifies the scholarship search process. Posts will feature testimonials, success stories, and "scholarship spotlights" to drive engagement and trust. Paid ads will be optimized through AI-driven analytics to target users based on age, interests, and education level, ensuring efficient ad spend and high conversion rates.

2. Campus Partnerships and Advertising:

To reach students directly, GrantBase will collaborate with universities, community colleges, and high schools. Promotional booths, QR-code flyers, and digital campus bulletin boards will invite students to create free profiles and try the scholarship matching tool. Partnerships with student organizations and financial aid offices will help position GrantBase as a trusted academic resource.

3. SEO and Content Marketing:

The company's website blog will feature weekly posts about scholarship tips, financial literacy, and college success strategies. Search-engine optimization (SEO) will increase visibility in Google results for terms like "best scholarships for business majors" or "AI scholarship matching tools."

4. Email and AI-Personalized Outreach:

Once users register, AI-powered email campaigns will provide personalized scholarship updates, deadline reminders, and motivational content to keep them engaged.

Together, these strategies create a sustainable and scalable customer acquisition pipeline—leveraging AI insights, social virality, and real-world campus engagement to drive steady growth and long-term brand recognition among students nationwide.

Would you like me to move on to **Section 5: Competitive Advantage** next?

You said:

Yes.

ChatGPT said:

Excellent — here's **Section 5: Competitive Advantage**, written to align with your GrantBase brand identity, website content, and market positioning.

Competitive Advantage

GrantBase's competitive advantage lies in its **integration of artificial intelligence**, **blockchain verification**, **and personalized scholarship guidance**, creating a platform that goes far beyond simple scholarship databases. Unlike competitors such as *Scholarships.com*, *Fastweb*, or *Bold.org*, which rely heavily on manual searches and generic listings, GrantBase uses smart automation and verified data to ensure every opportunity shown is both **relevant and legitimate**.

1. AI-Driven Personalization:

GrantBase doesn't just list scholarships—it *curates* them. Its AI engine interprets complex eligibility requirements and filters them through each student's academic record, intended major, demographic factors, and institutional preferences. This produces a uniquely accurate and dynamic list of opportunities tailored to the individual user, saving hours of research time.

2. Blockchain Verification for Trust:

One of the most persistent issues in the scholarship search industry is legitimacy. Many students fall victim to fraudulent listings or outdated links. GrantBase solves this through blockchain verification, ensuring that every scholarship comes from an authentic and traceable source. This transparency builds trust and distinguishes GrantBase as the most reliable scholarship discovery tool available.

3. Integrated Chatbot and Application Assistance:

GrantBase includes a built-in AI chatbot that acts like a 24/7 scholarship advisor. It provides reminders, clarifies eligibility questions, and offers tailored essay and application tips—features that competitors typically reserve for premium plans or third-party tools.

4. Continuous Learning System:

Each user interaction trains GrantBase's algorithms to become smarter over time. The more students use it, the better its recommendations and predictions become, resulting in a self-improving platform that continually outpaces competitors who rely on static databases.

5. Accessibility and User Experience:

With a clean, modern interface and mobile-friendly design, GrantBase makes scholarship discovery intuitive and stress-free. It bridges the gap between complex AI systems and everyday users, making advanced technology approachable for students from all backgrounds.

By combining personalization, verification, and ease of use, GrantBase builds a **sustainable competitive advantage**rooted in innovation, trust, and long-term student success—positioning itself as the future of scholarship discovery.

Would you like me to move on to Section 6: Operational Plan (day-to-day business operations and which parts are AI-driven vs human-driven) next?

You said:

Yes. Maintaining the scholarship database and application assistance will all be AI driven. A premium, one-on-one application assistance with real scholarship application reviewing professionals will be driven by a small human team.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — that fits seamlessly with the GrantBase structure we've built. Here's **Section 6: Operational Plan**, integrating your notes while keeping consistent tone and detail for your IS301 report:

Operational Plan

GrantBase will operate primarily as a **digitally automated platform**, with AI systems handling the majority of daily functions and a small human team supporting premium users who opt for one-on-one guidance. The company's hybrid operational structure allows it to remain efficient, scalable, and customer-focused while maintaining the personal touch needed for users who desire expert feedback.

AI-Driven Operations:

The backbone of GrantBase's daily workflow is its AI system. Artificial intelligence will automatically maintain and update the scholarship database by scanning verified sources, educational institutions, and sponsor websites. It continuously cross-references new opportunities, removes expired or fraudulent listings, and refines matching accuracy based on evolving user data.

The AI-powered chatbot operates 24/7 to assist users in finding scholarships, answering

questions, and providing tailored advice. It also delivers application reminders, essay guidance, and personalized notifications. Predictive analytics monitor user engagement trends to help refine platform recommendations in real time.

Human-Driven Operations:

While AI handles most of the technical and customer-facing workload, a small team of trained professionals will oversee **premium services**. This team will review scholarship essays, provide in-depth feedback, and offer personalized strategy sessions for students who subscribe to a higher-tier plan. These human advisors ensure high-quality mentorship and a layer of trust that complements the automated experience.

Additionally, the human operations team will oversee AI performance, conduct quality assurance checks, manage partner relationships with schools and sponsors, and supervise marketing initiatives.

This balanced structure allows GrantBase to operate efficiently with minimal overhead while maintaining the professionalism, authenticity, and personal connection that students and parents value.

Would you like me to continue with Section 7: Scalability and Growth Opportunities next?

You said:

Yes. GrantBase has the opportunity to expand to new markets outside the US. First to english speaking foreign countries, then beyond as AI NLP becomes more powerful and GrantBase can ensure the quality and accuracy of its services in foreign countries.

ChatGPT said:

Excellent — here's **Section 7: Scalability and Growth Opportunities**, reflecting your global expansion plan and maintaining consistency with the tone of the previous sections:

Scalability and Growth Opportunities

GrantBase is designed to scale efficiently thanks to its AI-powered foundation and cloud-based infrastructure. As the platform's machine learning algorithms continue to evolve, expansion will require minimal additional staffing or manual oversight—making growth both sustainable and cost-effective.

Short-Term Growth:

Initially, GrantBase will focus on building its user base across the United States by partnering with universities, high schools, and educational organizations. Expansion into premium subscription tiers and partnerships with corporate scholarship sponsors will provide new revenue streams. As AI technology improves, new features such as essay analysis tools and predictive success scoring can be introduced to enhance the platform's value.

International Expansion:

Once established domestically, GrantBase will expand into **English-speaking foreign markets** such as Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. These regions share similar higher education structures and a strong demand for scholarship and grant opportunities, allowing for an easy transition.

Long-Term Growth:

As natural language processing (NLP) technology becomes more powerful, GrantBase will scale further into **non-English-speaking countries**. This global expansion will be driven by the AI's ability to accurately interpret and translate scholarship criteria, eligibility requirements, and application materials across multiple languages while maintaining accuracy and cultural relevance.

Future Opportunities:

GrantBase could also partner with universities and private organizations worldwide to host exclusive scholarships on the platform, integrate internship and grant listings, or develop a B2B version of its software for academic institutions seeking to match students with funding opportunities internally.

With its AI-driven scalability, low operational costs, and adaptable platform, GrantBase is positioned to grow from a national tool into a global leader in scholarship discovery and educational funding technology.

Would you like me to move on to Section 8: Business and Revenue Model(s) next?

You said:

Yes. GrantBase will operate on an advertising model in addition to incorporating a freemium/subscription based model that will operate on the basis of guaranteeing scholaship success or their money back.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — here's **Section 8: Business and Revenue Model(s)**, integrating your freemium, subscription, and advertising-based structure with professional detail and consistency:

Business and Revenue Model

GrantBase will operate on a **hybrid business and revenue model** that combines advertising, freemium access, and a results-based subscription tier. This approach allows the company to generate revenue from multiple sources while keeping the core service free and accessible to all students.

1. Freemium Model:

The base version of GrantBase will be free to use and provide AI-powered scholarship matching, access to verified listings, and the built-in chatbot assistant. This free tier is designed to build trust and attract a large user base, making it easy for students to experience the value of the platform before committing to a paid plan.

2. Premium Subscription Plan:

For users who want personalized guidance and higher scholarship success rates, GrantBase will offer a paid "**Premium Success Plan.**" This subscription tier will include human-reviewed essay feedback, in-depth application strategy sessions, and access to advanced analytics showing scholarship competitiveness.

The Premium tier will operate under a "success guarantee" model—if users do not secure any scholarships within a certain timeframe (for example, six months of active use), they will receive their subscription fee back. This guarantee reinforces confidence in the platform's effectiveness and builds brand credibility.

3. Advertising Revenue:

To supplement income and support free access, GrantBase will partner with educational institutions, test prep companies, and student financial service providers who can advertise responsibly within the platform. Ads will be minimal, non-intrusive, and **AI-personalized** based on user intent—for example, promoting FAFSA workshops or college-prep courses relevant to a student's profile.

4. Future Revenue Opportunities:

As the platform scales, GrantBase may license its AI-matching technology to universities or government education agencies seeking to improve their own scholarship management systems. Additionally, affiliate partnerships with lenders or student budgeting tools could create recurring passive income streams.

This multi-faceted model ensures that GrantBase remains accessible, profitable, and sustainable—balancing mission-driven educational impact with scalable financial performance.

Would you like me to continue with Section 9: Information Systems (short-term and long-term) next?

You said:

Section 8 needs to discuss the business model and the revenue model. Grantbase's business model is a portal and service provider, and the revenue model is the same as we've already discussed.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect clarification — that distinction between the **business model** (what the company *is* and *does*) and the **revenue model** (how it *makes money*) is exactly what your IS301 report rubric expects.

Here's the refined and fully aligned version of **Section 8: Business and Revenue Model(s)** for your report:

Business and Revenue Model

Business Model:

GrantBase operates as a **portal and service provider** within the higher education funding ecosystem. The platform serves as a centralized hub that connects students with legitimate scholarship and grant opportunities, while also providing intelligent guidance and tools to help them succeed in securing those funds.

As a **portal**, GrantBase functions as both a search engine and an application assistant, using AI to filter, verify, and recommend scholarships that align with a student's background and goals. As a **service provider**, the company offers additional premium features such as one-on-one application support, essay review, and personalized feedback through human scholarship professionals.

This dual-role business model allows GrantBase to continuously add value for both free and premium users while positioning itself as an essential utility for students, parents, and academic advisors.

Revenue Model:

GrantBase will generate revenue through a **hybrid approach** that includes:

1. Freemium Access:

The core AI-powered scholarship matching service will remain free to attract a wide user base. This open access encourages widespread adoption and builds trust with students early in their scholarship search journey.

2. Premium Subscription Tier:

The "Premium Success Plan" will offer enhanced features such as human-reviewed essays, personalized scholarship strategy sessions, and deeper analytics. This plan will include a "scholarship success guarantee" — if users do not secure at least one scholarship within a set period, their subscription fee will be refunded. This performance-based structure reinforces transparency and credibility.

3. Advertising Partnerships:

Educational organizations, test prep services, and financial institutions will have the opportunity to advertise within the GrantBase platform. All ads will be AI-personalized and non-intrusive, ensuring relevance to each user's educational interests.

4. Institutional Licensing (Future Revenue Stream):

As GrantBase scales, its proprietary AI-matching engine can be licensed to universities

and educational institutions, allowing them to integrate GrantBase technology directly into their financial aid systems.

This combination of **portal-based service delivery** and **diversified revenue generation** ensures that GrantBase remains both impactful and financially sustainable—providing long-term value to students while maintaining strong growth potential.

Would you like me to move on to **Section 9: Information Systems (short-term and long-term)** next?

You said:

Yes.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — here's **Section 9: Information Systems**, written to match your project's technical depth and the IS301 rubric. It's divided clearly between **short-term** and **long-term** systems, each with explanations of why they're relevant to GrantBase.

Information Systems

GrantBase relies on a robust combination of information systems to manage operations, deliver AI-powered functionality, and support future growth. These systems ensure efficiency, data accuracy, and security while enabling the company to scale nationally and internationally over time.

Short-Term Information Systems

1. Transaction Processing System (TPS):

Used to record and process routine transactions such as user registrations, subscription payments, and advertising purchases. This ensures financial accuracy and allows the system to track premium plan enrollments and refund guarantees automatically.

2. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System:

A CRM will organize user data, manage communications, and store interaction histories. This helps GrantBase tailor marketing efforts, track user satisfaction, and improve engagement with both free and premium customers.

3. Knowledge Management System (KMS):

A KMS will organize and store the growing body of scholarship information, AI-generated tips, and verified resources. This ensures that users consistently receive high-quality, accurate, and up-to-date scholarship recommendations.

4. Collaboration Tools:

Tools such as Slack or Microsoft Teams will allow the small human operations team to

coordinate efficiently, especially when reviewing essays or managing campus partnerships.

5. Website Analytics System:

Google Analytics (connected through the Analytify plugin) provides valuable data on user behavior, page visits, and conversion rates—helping optimize marketing and user experience strategies in real time.

Long-Term Information Systems

1. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Systems:

AI and ML models will continue to evolve, refining scholarship matching, predicting success probabilities, and learning from new data to improve personalization and accuracy.

2. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System:

As GrantBase scales, an ERP will integrate financial management, marketing, and customer service systems into one unified platform—streamlining operations and ensuring consistent data flow across departments.

3. Business Intelligence (BI) System:

BI tools will analyze user engagement metrics, demographic trends, and conversion data. Insights from these reports will guide marketing decisions, improve the matching algorithm, and inform expansion strategies.

4. Supply Chain Management (SCM) System (Modified for Partnerships):

While GrantBase doesn't manage physical inventory, a lightweight SCM-style system will track partnerships and advertising contracts with universities, organizations, and sponsors—ensuring accountability and smooth collaboration.

5. Extranet:

A secure extranet will allow academic institutions and verified scholarship providers to directly upload new opportunities and verify existing listings, maintaining data integrity and authenticity across multiple markets.

These systems collectively ensure that GrantBase operates as a reliable, data-driven, and scalable platform. In the short term, they support daily operations and customer engagement; in the long term, they provide the infrastructure for global expansion, continuous innovation, and sustained competitive advantage.

Would you like me to move on to the final section (10): Social and Ethical Implications next?

You said:

Yes. Describe the social and ethical implications of this business and the technology it utilizes. (i.e. will it violate people's privacy, will it cause security concerns, what societal changes

might occur as a result of this business/tech, will it make people's lives better or offer them convenience, will it negatively impact people's lives, does it raise concerns about legality, morality, equality, etc. I want to focus on how this business may increase the competitiveness of popular scholarships, making it more difficult to obtain as we increase accessibility and the number of applicants.

ChatGPT said:

Perfect — that's an insightful and balanced ethical angle, and it fits extremely well with GrantBase's purpose.

Here's **Section 10: Social and Ethical Implications**, crafted to reflect both the positive impacts and the nuanced challenges of accessibility and competition in scholarship funding:

Social and Ethical Implications

GrantBase was created to make education more accessible by helping students discover and secure scholarships more efficiently. The platform's use of artificial intelligence and blockchain technology carries both positive societal impacts and ethical considerations that must be addressed responsibly.

Positive Social Impact:

GrantBase democratizes access to scholarship opportunities by removing barriers such as time, awareness, and digital literacy. Traditionally, many students—especially first-generation or low-income students—struggle to find scholarships that align with their qualifications. By automating this process, GrantBase helps level the playing field, giving more students an equal opportunity to secure funding and reduce student debt. The platform also improves transparency through blockchain verification, reducing fraud and misinformation in the scholarship industry.

Ethical Concerns and Unintended Consequences:

However, as GrantBase increases accessibility and participation, it may also **intensify competition** for popular scholarships. With more qualified applicants submitting strong, AI-optimized applications, the acceptance rate for many well-known scholarships could decline. This could make it more challenging for any single student to win high-demand awards, even though more students are aware of them. While this trend encourages scholarship providers to create new opportunities and potentially expand funding, it also raises ethical questions about fairness and accessibility in a more competitive environment.

Privacy and Security:

Because the platform collects personal, academic, and demographic data, GrantBase must adhere to strict privacy and data protection standards, including encryption, user consent policies, and compliance with regulations like FERPA and GDPR. All AI systems are trained to handle data responsibly, ensuring that personalization never compromises privacy.

Societal Changes:

Over time, GrantBase may influence how scholarships are distributed, pushing organizations to

adopt more transparent and data-driven selection processes. This shift could promote fairness and reduce bias in financial aid, though it may also challenge traditional systems that rely heavily on manual review or subjective selection criteria.

In summary, GrantBase's technology empowers students and promotes equality in education, but it also introduces new ethical dynamics related to competition and data stewardship. The company's long-term success will depend on maintaining transparency, protecting user data, and continuously refining its systems to ensure that accessibility does not unintentionally disadvantage the very students it aims to support.

Would you like me to now format the **entire completed report draft (Sections 2–10)** into a single cohesive document for export (so you can easily copy it into your final PDF submission)?

You said:

Shorten section 10. One paragraph ChatGPT said:

Absolutely — here's a concise, one-paragraph version of **Section 10: Social and Ethical Implications**, preserving your focus on competitiveness and accessibility:

Social and Ethical Implications

GrantBase promotes educational equality by making scholarships more accessible through AI-powered matching and blockchain verification, but this accessibility also introduces new challenges. As more students gain awareness and apply to the same opportunities, competition for popular scholarships will naturally increase, potentially making them harder to win. While this heightened competitiveness could motivate scholarship providers to expand funding or create new awards, it also raises questions about fairness and equity among applicants. Additionally, GrantBase must prioritize strict data privacy and security practices to protect users' personal and academic information. Overall, the platform's technology offers clear social benefits by improving transparency and opportunity, but it must continually balance accessibility with ethical responsibility to ensure it truly benefits students.

Would you like me to compile **Sections 2–10** into one clean, properly formatted report next?

You said:

Uploaded a file

Verify that the following document meets all requirements of the class report assignment as outlined in the class project instructions document. Are there any changes I should make?

ChatGPT said:

I've reviewed your "LearEthan_ClassProjectReport.pdf" against the full IS301 Class Project Report requirements in the assignment instructions. Overall, your document is very strong and nearly perfect—you've clearly integrated the GrantBase concept, AI usage, business structure, and ethics with depth and consistency.

Here's a breakdown of how your report measures up against each rubric item and a few fine-tuning suggestions to make it fully compliant and polished for maximum credit:

Requirement	Status	Comments			
Thorough Business Description (5 pts)	Complete	Clear, detailed, matches your earlier GrantBase overview exactly.			
Explanation of AI Incorporation (8 pts)	Complete	All four AI functions (matching, chatbot, analytics personalization) are included and well-explained.			
Target Market & Customer Segments (6 pts)	Complete	Fully defined demographics, psychographics, and behaviors. Includes secondary audiences (parents/advisors). Excellent.			
Customer Acquisition Strategy (7 pts)	Complete	Thoroughly covers digital and campus marketing Suggest adding a brief mention of SEO or content marketing to echo the class project expectations, but not required.			
Competitive Advantage (10 pts)	Complete	Distinguishes GrantBase from major competitors. AI and blockchain integration described clearly			
Operational Plan (6 pts)	Complete	Strong hybrid model (AI + human team). Fully meets prompt for "human vs AI-driven" explanation.			
Scalability & Growth (6 pts)	Complete	Domestic, English-speaking, and non-English expansion all covered. Aligns with rubric and your class discussions.			
Business & Revenue Model (10 pts)	Complete	Correctly separates "Business Model" (portal/service provider) from "Revenue Mod (freemium + premium + success guarantee).			
Information Systems (12 pts)	Minor adjustment recommended	Short-term and long-term systems are detailed, but the assignment specifies: include Collaboration Tools and Website Analytics/Google Analytics/			

Requirement	Status	Comments		
		System in short-term list. Add one brief bullet noting these systems.		
Social & Ethical Implications (10 pts)	Complete	Well-balanced and insightful—your focus on competitiveness adds depth and originality. One of the strongest sections.		
Formatting, Grammar, Section Headers (10 pts)	⚠ Minor format note	Great organization and clarity. Consider making each main section header bold (e.g., "Customer Acquisition Strategy") to make the document easier to grade quickly. Optional: remove bullet points from single-paragraph sections for consistency.		

Recommended Minor Edits Before Submission

- 1. Add one sentence under "Short-Term Information Systems" such as:
 - Collaboration Tools (e.g., Slack, Teams): Facilitate internal communication among staff handling premium services and partnerships.*
 - Website Analytics (Google Analytics via Analytify): Track user activity and engagement to improve marketing and user experience.*
- 2. Formatting polish:
 - o Make sure all section titles (e.g., "Competitive Advantage," "Scalability," etc.) are **bolded and aligned consistently** for readability.
 - o Remove a few isolated blank lines at the end of the document (after the last paragraph).
- 3. **Optional (for completeness):** Add a single sentence near the start of the "Description" noting that "GrantBase is an AI-powered startup concept developed for the IS 301 Class Project to demonstrate real-world business applications of emerging technology." This makes it unmistakably clear that it's a student project, which professors often appreciate.

Final Evaluation

If you implement the small tweaks above, your report will **meet 100% of the IS301 Class Project Report rubric requirements** and demonstrate strong mastery of business and information systems concepts.

Would you like me to reformat and finalize a **revised version** of your report (Word or PDF) with those exact fixes applied so you can submit it directly?