

# Getting AI to understand you: the power of context

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Transparency Label: AI-assisted

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Lab type	Acclimatisation
Participants	AB, GF, Dennis Silverwood
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Session type	Facilitator-led with guided hands-on elements
Primary Learning Outcome	Understand and apply the idea of “context” when using ChatGPT
Duration	2 hours

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## Purpose of lab

To explore how general-purpose AI tools can support our everyday work.

In the Anapoly team, we use three general-purpose AI tools:

ChatGPT	for reasoning, drafting, and structured thinking
NotebookLM	for digging into our own files with AI support
Perplexity	for search, quick fact-checking, and exploring alternative viewpoints

Today we are going to use ChatGPT, and we will focus on how to give it context: the information it needs to help us most effectively.

A key thing about general-purpose AI is that we can use it straight away, with no need for coding or integration. By contrast, special-purpose AI involves custom-made models trained on company data; this is powerful but requires a dedicated technical team and significant resources.

## Preparations before arrival

### Chatbot account

While there are many large language models (LLMs) available - each with its own strengths - we think it makes sense to concentrate our learning on just one to begin with. We in Anapoly have chosen ChatGPT. That's not because it's the only option, or even necessarily the best in all situations, but because using a single tool deeply helps us understand how this kind of AI behaves. Once we grasp how to shape its inputs, judge its outputs, and give it context, those same skills transfer easily to other LLMs. Spreading attention across several tools too early can dilute the learning and make it harder to form useful habits.

That said, if you already have an account with a tool like Claude or Gemini, by all means continue to use it during the session. The point isn't to convert everyone to one tool, but to develop habits of use that make sense across the board.

If you do not already have an account with either ChatGPT, Google Gemini, or Claude, then please set up an account with ChatGPT: <https://openai.com/chatgpt/pricing/>. The free account will be satisfactory for this initial session.

With a free ChatGPT account, you'll be working with an older version of the AI that's less capable in several ways. It may respond more slowly, struggle with complex tasks, and sometimes miss the point of what you're asking. The paid version (ChatGPT Plus) uses a more advanced model that's noticeably better at understanding context, following instructions, and producing clearer, more helpful responses. You'll also get access to features like file uploads, charts, voice, and image recognition. You will need these capabilities in later lab sessions.

## Devices

Please bring either a laptop (preferred) or a tablet (eg iPad) to the session. We will ask you to connect to your chatbot's account through your web browser. Please test this before arrival. Note. There is a downloadable ChatGPT app for use with these devices, but to keep things simple at this stage, we propose to defer its use until a later lab session.

## Topic for exploration

To give you a focus for hands-on work during the session, please identify one or more of the following: a subject or topic that you would like to learn more about, a task that you would like AI to assist you with, or a problem that AI might help to resolve.

## On arrival at the lab session

One-minute introductions by each person: background, what kind of work we do now, what brought us to this session. 5

Connect devices to the Anapoly Wi-Fi and open individual sessions with the chatbot. 5

## PART 1: What is Context?

Item	Mode	Notes
What is an LLM?	Facilitator-led discussion	An LLM is like an operating system
What is "context" ?	Facilitator-led discussion	Context is like a computer's user interface
Chat without context	Hands-on	Participants try a simple prompt with minimal background.
Build context through conversation	Guided hands-on	Ask follow-up questions. Observe how the system "remembers".
Add context into a chat	Guided hands-on	Demonstrate how role, background, and purpose improve results. Provide example prompts.
Prompt to ask for clarification	Guided hands-on	"What more do you need to know before answering?" or "What assumptions are you making?"

## PART 2 – Enriching the Context

Item	Mode	Notes
Upload a file into chat	Guided hands-on	Use a short, relevant document (e.g. sample CV, task brief). Discuss how it shapes the output.
Work within a project	Facilitator demo	Show how uploading project files gives persistent context. Link to Anapoly lab method.
Web link	Facilitator demo	Show how an AI can use information from the internet as reference material.

## PART 3 – Embedding Context Permanently (Preview Only)

Item	Mode	Notes
Custom instructions	Facilitator demo	Show where to find them. Explain “You” vs. “Assistant” settings.
Custom instructions in a project	Facilitator demo	Highlight that each project can have its own settings. Link to “context bundles”.
Custom GPTs	Facilitator preview	Show a simple example. Emphasise this is for later exploration.

## Wrap-Up

Comment on the organisation and conduct of the lab.

Reflect on the value of the lab approach.

Discuss possible next sessions.