



Setting the AI API key

Bid Sentinel — quick setup guide

The optional **AI enhancement** uses a low-cost Claude model (Haiku 4.5) for richer summaries, a reasoned Fit %, and more accurate certifications and technical requirements. The key is **not** entered in the web app — it is a secret, so it lives in an environment variable the backend reads at startup.

1. Get an API key

- 1 Sign in to the Anthropic Console at <https://console.anthropic.com>
- 2 Go to **API keys** → **Create key**.
- 3 Copy the key — it starts with `sk-ant-` (you won't be able to see it again).

2. Add the key to the .env file

The `.env` file sits in the project root, next to `docker-compose.yml`. If you don't have one yet, create it from the template:

```
cp .env.example .env
```

Open `.env` and set the key (no quotes, no spaces around the `=` sign):

```
ANTHROPIC_API_KEY=sk-ant-your-key-here
AI_MODEL=claude-haiku-4-5
```

`AI_MODEL` is optional — it already defaults to Haiku 4.5.

3. Restart the containers

Environment variables are only read when a container starts, so recreate them (no database wipe is needed — your data is preserved):

```
docker compose up -d --build
```

4. Confirm the backend can see the key

```
curl http://localhost:8080/api/config/ai
```

Response contains	Meaning
"available": true	Key detected — you can switch AI on.
"available": false	Key not picked up — see Troubleshooting.

You can also check inside the container:

```
docker compose exec backend printenv ANTHROPIC_API_KEY
```

5. Turn AI on in the app

- 1Open the dashboard and go to **Settings** → **AI enhancement** (admins only).
- 2The toggle is now enabled — switch it **On**.
- 3Click **Recompute fit & certs** to apply AI to existing opportunities. New opportunities are analysed automatically from then on.

Troubleshooting

Symptom	Fix
Toggle greyed out / available:false	Ensure .env is in the same folder as docker-compose.yml; the line reads exactly ANTHROPIC_API_KEY=
AI on but a row has no summary	That row fell back to the deterministic engine (e.g. transient API error). Click Recompute to retry.
Want to turn AI off	Toggle it Off in Settings, or remove ANTHROPIC_API_KEY from .env and restart. The app then

Notes

- 1**Cost:** roughly half a cent per opportunity with Haiku 4.5 (one model call each). A full recompute over a few hundred rows is a few dollars at most.
- 2**Security:** keep .env out of version control (already in .gitignore). Never paste the key into the web UI or commit it.
- 3**Privacy:** with AI off, nothing leaves your server. With it on, each opportunity's text is sent to the Anthropic API for analysis.