

Organizational Excellence Initiative Summary

Initiative Title: Research UVA / Research Administration Process Improvement

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Problem Statement

The current process for submitting grant proposals is a manual paper-based system that is cumbersome and in many cases requires people physically walking/driving paper from place to place to secure approval signatures. The data collected from this process is limited and often not detailed enough to provide useful reports.

Presently, all the official proposal and award files are paper copies and stored in file cabinets in a central location. Due to limited access, duplicates and triplicates of these files are located throughout the University in schools and departments taking up space and resources. Countless hours are spent not only copying but filing and refiling and searching for pulled files. Such resources would be better served on the administration of grant proposals and awards.

Project Overview:

Project Description

The Research UVA web-based system will provide an electronic workflow and track the University research administration process from beginning to end. The system will collect more detailed data than is currently available and enable more meaningful and thorough analysis and reporting. This system will also be a “one stop” portal to other key administrative systems that give the researcher and administrator access to information pertinent to individual proposal and awards, such as Recon@ for budget and expenditure information, Institutional Review Boards for information regarding the use of animals and human subjects, the Conflict of Interest system if necessary, and others such as Effort@ for effort reporting. Access to all of these systems will be consolidated into a single login.

Research UVA will be the one source for approving proposals and accessing research files. An individual faculty member will have access to his/her own files; Chairs will have access to their department’s files; Deans will have access to their school files; and Central offices will have full access to all files.

The redesigned process will eliminate a paper intensive process, remove redundancies such as copying and filing, and give researchers immediate access to their files and financial and related information from any computing device. Detailed process mapping of key research administration areas will identify additional opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the

various processes, including pre-proposal preparation, pre-award activities, and award project management.

Scope

The scope for this initiative includes the University of Virginia academic research administration and the five research schools. This scope covers approximately 95% of the research dollars received from the following schools: School of Medicine, School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, College of Arts & Sciences, Curry School of Education and the School of Nursing

Faculty will be providing valuable feedback into the process through interviews and focus groups.

Project Goals / Objectives

1. To eliminate manual, paper-based processes by imaging files of proposals and awards through a custom developed interface and imaging system based on ease of use for faculty and staff.
2. To streamline the process, provide transparency and real-time status about the proposal submittal and award management process, and improve efficiency and effectiveness in pre- and post-award activities.
 - Streamline the process from research “Idea to Award Close-out” which will be informed by detailed process mapping
 - Provide a “Faculty Dashboard” of information for investigators and their support staff for information “at their finger tips”
 - Develop improved system integration and tools to automate transactions in research administration activities
 - Increase accuracy, timeliness and more detailed data to support efficient reporting, analysis and monitoring of performance success

Team members include school research administration representatives from the 5 major research schools as well as representatives of VPR, Provost Office, Office of Sponsored Programs and Organizational Excellence. Research faculty are providing valuable feedback into the process and the systems being developed through individual interviews and school-based focus groups. Over 100 faculty and 150 administrators will be asked to participate throughout the initiative.

Timeline: October 2013 – Future

ResearchUVA will be developed and implemented using Agile methodology. Releases will be scheduled periodically and the functionality will drive the process improvement, workforce development, and service delivery for deployment at the same time.

- ✓ **Phase 1: ResearchUVA – Faculty portal & imaging of active proposals and grants**
Summer '14-Spring '15
 - ✓ Finalize requirements (team)
 - ✓ Develop Research UVA system (ITS)
 - ✓ Engage and obtain feedback from Faculty and Research Administration
 - ✓ Conduct testing of Research UVA (team & key users)

- ✓ Provide user training and implementation plan (key users)
- ✓ Monitor and track performance metrics (OE, team, owners) Ongoing
- ✓ **Completed and Implemented Phase 1** May 2015

Phase 2: Streamline Research Administration, Workflow and Integration March 2016

- ✓ Complete the end-to-end process mapping of IRB, and Pre and Post Award (OE Team)
- ✓ Institutional Review Board: IRB-Health Sciences and IRB-Animal Care
- ✓ Pre-Award: Grants and Contracts negotiation, Account Create, Front Desk
- ✓ Post-Award: Invoicing, Reporting, Accounts/Receivable, Collections, Unapplied Cash
 - ✓ **Current State Process mapping completed in Winter 2015**
- ✓ **Processing Queue & PreAward - Simplify/redesign the research admin process**
 - ✓ Implement workflow to automate RA activities
 - ✓ Integrate Oracle and RA tracking systems
 - ✓ Engage and obtain feedback from Faculty and Research Administration
 - ✓ Monitor and track performance metrics

Future Phase: ResearchUVa – Electronic Proposal and Budget Tool Winter 2016

- Develop automated preparation and tracking of proposals on line
- Develop automated budget tool to improve ease of entering and tracking budget, personnel and expenditures

Phase 3: Add additional functionality as identified from users TBD

Dates are estimates.