Research Administration Transformation
How ASU Architects for Growth

Webinar Q&A

Presenters

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If you have additional questions, please submit them to Gary Whitney at **gwhitney@huronconsultinggroup.com**.

We will do our best to ensure all questions are answered as fully and promptly as possible.

1. **Q: What access/services does the IT office have at ASU?**
   A: The Research Technology Office has responsibility for all enterprise research systems, other application development to support the knowledge enterprise, website development, deskside support and other services to support research efforts in conjunction with the academic units.

2. **Q: How did ASU's core academic values inform process redesign? For example, interdisciplinarity is priority....but multi-PI grants can be tricky....at least to report on for dept/school metrics.**
   A: ASU has developed a research recognition methodology that allows investigators to split credit for projects between them based on level of contribution to the project. This percentage split is separate from the percentages that drive indirect cost return to the units so the two can be different if needed.

3. **Q: Can you explain again what constitutes your Specialized Services?**
   A: Specialized services are those above and beyond the offices one would find at most research institutions (sponsored projects office, compliance, animal care, etc.), which are required to operate a largely federally-funded research enterprise. In our case, we have a Project Management Office, a Quality and Continuous Improvement organization as well as services offered from our Research Technology Office (website development, data management, etc.) that are above and beyond what is required. We believe these services provide our researchers with a competitive advantage in their efforts to secure external funding.

4. **Q: Is the Huron/Click product being used for post-award accounting?**
   A: The Huron (Click) awards application is currently being deployed at ASU and it will be used as the system-of-record for award data as well as to facilitate workflow for award change management. We plan to continue to use our accounting system for for tracking the spending of actual award dollars.

5. **Q: Regarding the System, what are the modules already in place and what are to be developed? Are these all Huron products or a mixture from different vendors?**
   A: All of the modules ASU has in place and those that are in development are Huron (Click) applications. Currently, ASU has PreAward Grants, IRB, COI, and Agreements in place. Award Management and IACUC are in development.

6. **Q: In the research enterprise, what do you consider currently to be the biggest technological challenge and what is the biggest organizational challenge (i.e.. office of research organization) for yourself/your department?**
   A: The largest technological challenge is developing a system that is flexible and adaptable to ensure that we can administer awards from a wide variety of sponsors without standardizing on the most burdensome requirements given our large federal portfolio. Our biggest organizational challenge is maintaining our high level of performance. It is actually easier to improve metrics than it is to maintain them.

7. **Q: Which financial system are you migrating to?**
A: We are currently evaluating several different solutions and have not made a final decision.

8. **Q: Why did you call your department Knowledge Enterprise Development instead of Research?**
A: We consider the University to be a knowledge enterprise and our office is responsible for many more activities than research, though it is a significant and important part of our portfolio. Our office is also responsible for advancing our entrepreneurship activities, strategic partnerships, innovation campuses, economic development in the region, strategic corporate engagement and many other activities and our name is meant to represent that much larger scope.

9. **Q: Why is ASU willing to push the envelope on so many things?**
A: Our charter and mission is based on the premise that higher education must evolve and change in significant ways to support the knowledge economy in the United States and globally. We are committed to access, excellence and impact in ways that have not previously been achieved. Given that mission, we know that we will have to try and potentially fail with many ideas and innovations before we find success so there is a very high tolerance for risk taking as it will be required to achieve our goal.

10. **Q: How do you measure the satisfaction of your researchers?**
A: We send a survey to our researchers every time they submit a proposal, similar to a 'how was your stay?' survey one might receive after a hotel visit. Also, all of our staff include a link in their email signature that says "How am I doing? Email my supervisor here." And we periodically survey them about their post-award support. It is also relatively easy to correlate their satisfaction based on turn-around time on key metrics like contract negotiation speed and award setup time.

11. **Q: How do you train the research community on the new systems you are delivering?**
A: While we do provide some classroom-style training sessions, most of our training is delivered in smaller "just in time" training sessions. We also have a very robust system of help text, chat and other real-time solutions in the application itself so that it is easy to deliver precise assistance and information to users while they are logged in.

12. **Q: How are you able to roll out solutions so quickly?**
A: We have a very strong team that have developed a method of assessing what is absolutely required, what can be phased in and what is gold-plating so that our systems can be implemented quickly and refined after users have experience. We also have a quick decision making process and it is streamlined as all of the affected users are a part of our organization either through reporting structure or strong organizational linkages.

13. **Q: What kind of governance model do you use for vetting priorities and tradeoffs?**
A: We have a change management board that has representation from all of the key teams within Operations in the central office as well as the lead research advancement staff from each of the key research units that meets to review and approve process changes and priorities. This group has been in place for many years so we were able to leverage this existing mechanism when we began system implementation.