The 2014 Enterprise Application Market in Higher Education
Grants Management
With more than $45 billion in federal grants and contracts appropriations supporting research and education at U.S. college and universities, institutions that want to compete for such funding must have organized and compliant grants management processes. Institutions use grants management systems to navigate the grant process from proposal development to financial reporting and project close. Depending on institutional culture, infrastructure, and policy, institutions may choose to use two systems, one for the preaward and another for the postaward processes. Both system areas fall in the middle of the pack in terms of core enterprise IT application rate of change and in the lower half in terms of customization and outsourcing (figure 1).

*Rate of change is an indicator of how rapidly a system area is changing. It is a composite score based on year of current implementation and on plans to implement new systems or replace existing ones. Systems with the highest rate of change typically have been implemented recently or are expected to be implemented or replaced soon.

**Figure 1. Characteristics of core information systems**
Because not all institutions apply for and process grants, grants management systems are among the least commonly deployed system areas (preaward grants management systems are in place at 66% of institutions; postaward systems are in place at 69% of institutions). When an institution does have these systems, a unit on campus outside central IT is more likely to be responsible for preaward systems, whereas central IT is more likely to be responsible for postaward systems (figures 2 and 3).

**Figure 2. System provision and plans for change for preaward grants management systems**

**Figure 3. System provision and plans for change for postaward grants management systems**
Market Share

With just over half of the market (53%) using a solution from one of the top 5 vendors—Ellucian, 21%; Oracle PeopleSoft, 10%; Kuali, 10%; InfoEd, 6%; and Evisions (Cayuse), 6%—the preaward grants management system market is fairly heterogeneous and includes a substantial proportion of homegrown solutions (figure 4). The marketspace for postaward systems is similarly split, with two-thirds (63%) of the market using a solution from one of the top 5 vendors—Ellucian, 30%; Oracle PeopleSoft, 18%; Kuali, 6%; Blackbaud, 6%; and InfoEd, 3% (figure 5).

![Figure 4. 2014 preaward grants management system market](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Market Share</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ellucian Banner</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oracle PeopleSoft Grants or Financials</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoEd Grants and Contracts Suite</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuali Coeus</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evisions (Cayuse) Research Suite</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackbaud Financial/Raiser’s Edge</td>
<td>6%</td>
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Open source  ||  Vendor  ||  Other/homegrown

Figure 4. 2014 preaward grants management system market
Figure 5. 2014 postaward grants management system market
Market Shift: 2011–14

From 2011 to 2014, both system areas exhibited subtle shifts. The largest changes were increases in use of Evisions (Cayuse) Research Suite for preaward grants management, Ellucian Colleague for postaward grants management, and Blackbaud Financial/Raiser’s Edge for postaward grants management (all went from 2% in 2011 to 6% in 2014). Use of homegrown solutions appears to be stable for preaward systems (32% in 2011 and 33% in 2014), while institutions may be moving away from homegrown systems for postaward grants management (29% in 2011 and 26% in 2014); see figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6. 2011–14 preaward grants management system market (top 5 solutions and homegrown)
Figure 7. 2011–14 postaward grants management system market (top 5 solutions and homegrown)
Management Strategy

For both preaward and postaward systems, institutions tend to opt for an in-house implementation (figures 8 and 9). One preaward system, however—Evisions (Cayuse) Research Suite—is more likely to have a SaaS implementation (53%).

Figure 8. Management strategies in use for top 5 preaward grants management solutions
Figure 9. Management strategies in use for top 5 postaward grants management solutions
Case Study: Refining Grants Management at Georgia Southern University

Research funding provides an important revenue stream for many higher education institutions. But grants administration is complex, especially in today’s dynamic environment of diminished research funding opportunities, interinstitutional collaboration, and stricter regulatory compliance. Effective grants management requires ongoing resource calibration to address these environmental complexities while supporting expanding institutional research activities.

Over the past several years, Georgia Southern University struck this balance as it refined its grants management to support former President Brooks A. Keel’s vision of research mission expansion. For example, one grants management–related technology refinement involved a new preaward system investment. Initially, Georgia Southern used an inexpensive combination of Bamboo Solutions Grants Management, a Microsoft SharePoint–based system, and Excel spreadsheets for preaward grants management, but the institution outgrew capabilities of this approach. In 2014, the university switched to rSmart’s cloud-based Kuali Coeus service solution (now owned by Kuali), not only for its enhanced capabilities but also for its relatively low entry costs, its limited use of Information Technology Services (ITS) personnel, and its integration with Georgia Southern’s extensive cloud-based infrastructure (approximately 70% of ITS-managed systems are cloud-based). “Kuali Coeus hit the sweet spot for us because it represented the balance between functionality, price, and implementation,” stated Steven Burrell, vice president for information technology and chief information officer. To ensure Kuali Coeus continues to meet institutional needs, the university partners with Kuali as a Pillar Partner to determine and articulate suggested system enhancements in a single voice and capitalize on new system capabilities developed by other Kuali members.

The transition to new preaward systems required a phased implementation to minimize historical data migration and several customizations. The phased implementation began with outstanding grants remaining in the existing system, while Kuali Coeus processed new grants. New submissions between the beginning of the fiscal year and implementation were rekeyed into Kuali Coeus—also a good training opportunity. Existing awards are entered into the Kuali Coeus system when new money is received on the award. Other awards will be maintained in the original system until closed. In terms of customization, over time ITS has developed some system workarounds to meet university special requirements, especially related to reporting and invoicing.

The university maintains a dual approach to grants management: The vice president of research and economic development’s Office of Research
Services and Sponsored Programs manages the preaward phase with a Kuali Coeus electronic research administration system, supported by Georgia Southern’s ITS organization and hosted by Kuali. The Controller’s Division of Research Accounting area administers postaward expenses with PeopleSoft Financials, supported by the University System of Georgia’s ITS organization, with local support from Georgia Southern’s ITS. In addition to technology adjustments, Georgia Southern’s grants management changes required organizational refinements to address its environment of twos: two separate grant administration divisions and two grants management–related systems that are supported by two different ITS organizations. Another wrinkle: PeopleSoft Financial system policies that are enforced by the board of regents for the University System of Georgia further segment grant administration. For example, system policy precludes a direct Kuali Coeus/PeopleSoft Financial system data feed, requiring double data entry for all grants from one system to the other.

But Georgia Southern overcame these barriers by physically locating personnel from the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs and from Research Accounting near each other, which in essence creates a single, virtual grant-processing organization. “It was one of the best moves we ever made,” stated Eleanor Haynes, interim director, Research Services and Sponsored Programs. “Both departments work together through the grant administration, even though the internal workings are split between two different university divisions.” Combined staff meetings improve communication and planning; coordinated policy development ensures that preaward policies match, mirror, and feed into postaward administration. Both areas coordinate postaward monitoring, too. It creates a seamless looking front end that is actually supported by two, separate organizational back-ends. The result is a more user-friendly experience for faculty and staff, as well as more efficient operations.
Conclusion

Managing the grants process from proposal to compliance and reporting requires coordination of systems, people, and process. To support this process, institutions typically rely on in-house implementations of either homegrown or vendor systems. Institutions like Georgia Southern University, with separate preaward and postaward systems, have additional complexity from transferring data between systems and disparate staffing models. The institution, however, has proven that coordination can be accomplished through staff co-location and customization. Similarly, institutions can achieve consistent, compliant processing of grants by assessing their organizational processes and implementing changes that overcome organizational challenges and system limitations.

Acknowledgments

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Note

1. FY 2014 IPEDS (https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/); Grants and Contracts (Revenues) defined as “Revenues from governmental agencies and nongovernmental parties that are for specific research projects, other types of programs, or for general institutional operations (if not government appropriations). Examples are research projects, training programs, student financial assistance, and similar activities for which amounts are received or expenses are reimbursable under the terms of a grant or contract, including amounts to cover both direct and indirect expenses. Includes Pell Grants and reimbursement for costs of administering federal financial aid programs. Grants and contracts should be classified to identify the governmental level—federal, state, or local—funding the grant or contract to the institution; grants and contracts from other sources are classified as nongovernmental grants and contracts. GASB institutions are required to classify in financial reports such grants and contracts as either operating or nonoperating.”

About the Enterprise Application Market Series

The Enterprise Application Market report series from the EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research focuses on data from the EDUCAUSE Core Data Service (CDS) to better understand how higher education institutions approach various information systems. Market share and system rate of change are among the metrics highlighted in this series. Information provided for this series was derived from Module 8 of CDS, which asked several questions regarding information systems and applications. For reports in the 2014 series, responses from 560 institutions were analyzed. Only U.S. institutions are represented in this series.