Automated conflict of interest process saves UCCS time and $80-90K

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This July, UCCS researchers filling out their required Conflict of Interest (COI) disclosures will save 125 clicks and much time. In revamping this process, a collaboration between University Information Services (UIS) and UCCS Human Resources will save the university an estimated $80,000 to $90,000.

UCCS HR needed to modernize its COI practices and improve its tracking and accountability functions by July 2024. They knew the software application InfoEd offered a solution — which came with a lengthy iterative process and a $70,000 implementation fee.

Rather than going to the vendor, they turned to University Information Services (UIS) and its Electronic Research Application (eRA) team's expertise to create a customized COI solution.

Understanding UCCS HR's specific needs was the first step in the process. Kaley Espindola, UCCS employee relations and experience director, collaborated with Kelly Kim, UIS eRA application manager for compliance, and Valerie Carricato, UIS senior business system analyst.

What is COI?
Conflict of Interest (COI) is a research compliance process to ensure research integrity at all University of Colorado campuses. Key personnel involved in research activities must disclose any significant financial or proprietary interests.

The new module

A new CIO module was launched in January 2024. The collaboration avoided a vendor fee of around $70,000 and over time, will save the HR office an estimated $21,000 annually in labor.

The original COI disclosure form took over 140 clicks to complete. Now, it only requires 15, dramatically reducing the time needed to fill out the form. Research and HR personnel reaped new efficiencies from the module.

"One of the biggest efficiencies and innovations for our campus is that the form retains the

information," Espindola said. When users return next year to complete the annual disclosure, they can update information without needing to start from the beginning.

The new COI module includes a self-disclosure form for reporting financial interests and compliance checks while also streamlining central office reporting.

"I'm so proud of the team implementing this new module in six months without needing to pull in the vendor, which would have escalated the costs," said Jennifer Silverthorne, UIS associate director of eRA. "It was a great example of the skill set within UIS and the power of collaboration."

The project's Innovation & Efficiency Finalist video

Congratulations to the team on being named on of the 2024 CU Innovation & Efficiency Finalists.

Video of Implement Conflict of Interest Management Solution for UCCS HR

eRA [1], InfoEd [2], [3], uccs [4]

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