

Customized tool improves Grants FFR process ^[1]



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University of Colorado faculty attracted \$1.45 billion in grants and gifts supporting research last year. Federal agencies award most of CU's sponsored research funding, and those awards require financial reporting during and at the closeout of an award. Grant accountants and sponsored projects administrators on every CU campus devote time to the Federal Financial Reporting (FFR) process. A new custom-built tool from University Information Services simplifies the process while highlighting any potential expenditure issues.

"Prior to having the [Grants FFR tool](#) ^[3], we used an internal spreadsheet that takes between 15-60 minutes to complete, even longer on complex projects," said Koffi Gnatsidji, assistant director of Post-Award Financial Services at CU Denver and Anschutz Medical Campus. "Now it's instant and more accurate."

To fully understand their needs, UIS met with grant administrators and learned they needed a tool that not only provided a summary of financials but also provided system validation checks and detailed level transaction information. For Samantha Fildish, a grants business system analyst at UIS and the initiative lead, that was the best part of the project.

"Working with campuses and our dev team to design and build the tool was exciting — and because we were developing the full tool in-house, we could be specific and creative in how we wanted it to work and display," said Fildish.

Rather than needing to pull data from a variety of queries and different financial reports, grant administrators are now able to easily verify and pull all the information quickly. Perhaps best of all, they can run batches of reports.

Morgan Hubbard, lead post-award administrator and closeout specialist at CU Denver/AMC's Office of Grants and Contracts, worked closely with the UIS team and is especially thrilled that "the tool allows us to run multiple FFRs at one time." Hubbard also said that the tool would eliminate the typos and human errors that can result in revisions.

"Especially during heavy reporting months, this tool will be a lifesaver!" said Hubbard.

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