ARGIS® Software: A Robust Single-Source, Web-Based Research Management System

Academic Research And Grants Information System

Scaleable software, ARGIS significantly reduces administrative overhead associated with managing university research, funding and commercialization projects.

UCF researchers have developed customizable and scalable web-based software for research administration that meets the needs of diverse stakeholders in a single system. The Academic Research & Grants Information System (ARGIS) provides researchers and administrators access to information about research activities institution-wide to simplify the application, administration and accounting process for project funding and technology transfer. ARGIS provides automated workflows, paperless review processes and on-demand reports, reducing the overhead costs of research administration. It also provides a secure and robust audit trail that is available in real-time.

Technical Details

Fully integrated grants management software system, scalable, customizable and flexible, ARGIS consists of the following features:

- **Role-based security access control** ensures the integrity and security of research data. An organization can create roles and define permissions using customized business rules that restrict the scope of a user’s access based on his or her “need to know.” A record-locking feature prevents editing by anyone other than the person who checks out a record, and ARGIS keeps an audit trail of data and proposal modifications.

- **Research (proposals and awards) module** and workflows enable an organization to track the submission, review, approval, and post-award management of research proposals, awards, grants, and contract deliverables. All stakeholders, such as principal investigators/researchers (PIs), research administrators, college deans, department chairs, grant managers, and outside sponsors can easily upload and store documents as well as track the progress of research proposals.

The online workflow starts when a researcher submits a proposal using standardized online forms and associated documents. ARGIS connects to an external authentication system (such as iThenticate) that scans and authenticates research proposals to ensure against plagiarism. The workflow continues through an electronic review process and the post-award administration of funds. An automated notification and alert system keeps reviewers on track. Reviewers can also create on-demand reports to view a project’s progress, including the state of deliverables, documents, balances, expenditures, revenues and payroll. Stakeholders can upload and store a large variety of documents and use the ARGIS search engine to look up research by subject, department, individual, sponsor, funding level, contract vehicle and other characteristics.

- **Agreements module** stores all contractual arrangements (non-research) between an organization and external groups. Contracts such as a Confidential Disclosure Agreement (CDA), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Teaming Agreement, and Visiting Scientist...
Agreement can be linked to other resource types tracked in the system (for example, proposals, awards and licenses). ARGIS tracks all agreements based on the lead researcher/PI and enables stakeholders to view agreements.

- **Tasks module** enables research administrators to log activity and create reminders for proposals, awards, agreements and other items. Using business rules, ARGIS can create tasks automatically, reducing the need for manual entry. Proposal managers, contract and grant managers, compliance coordinators, and accountants can create and track various tasks related to a project.

- **Hazardous Materials module** provides a web-based method for a PI to request internal approvals for the use of hazardous materials. The module includes an electronic review and approval process of the hazardous materials submissions along with the sponsored and non-sponsored research associated with the request. With each hazardous materials submission, ARGIS uses customized business rules to dynamically determine which individuals to include in a review. Reports are available for PIs /lead researchers to review their hazardous materials protocols.

- **Technology Transfer module** enables an organization to track and manage the statuses of invention disclosures and associated national and international patents, copyright or trademark filings for new technologies and intellectual property. The module also supports the management of licensing and commercialization activities, such as creating invoices, tracking revenue, and reimbursing expenses for all technologies that make up the “portfolio” of a license. Stakeholders can view and track data for patents, licenses, assignments and royalties.

- **Conflict of Interest and Commitment module** provides a streamlined system for submitting, updating and maintaining organizational approvals for potential conflicts of interest. The module helps to ensure that employees or individuals in positions of trust who design, conduct, and report an organization’s research have no conflicts between their primary obligations and their outside activities, interests and commitments. The online disclosure form is customizable, so that it can conform to federal guidelines, state statutes, educational board policies and an organization’s own COI requirements. The form can provide links to available training and features pop-up help text. The module operates in ARGIS or as a standalone system.

- **Reports and searching capabilities** enable real-time reporting of proposals, awards, revenue, expenditures, agreements, and more, using 30+ pre-built reports with parameter options for proposals, awards, sponsors and funders, investigators, deliverables, general information and institutional-to-unit data tracking.

- **Integration with third-party software systems** enables stakeholders to access, monitor and manage related administrative functions such as human resources data, and financial systems including PeopleSoft, Banner and others. Financial reports on expenditures such as payroll, as well as revenue data, are available for each project through systems integration.

**Benefits**

- Secure, web-based software system that is accessible anytime, anywhere
- Scalable, customizable, easy to implement and seamlessly integrates with external systems
- Enables immediate and accurate performance measurement and gap identification
- Supports all stakeholders in a single system to track and manage research-related activities.

**Applications**

- Public and private university research organizations
- For-profit and not-for-profit businesses and federal laboratories

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