

## **IT INVESTMENT CAPITAL FUND PROJECT CLOSE OUT REPORT**

**To:** Information Technology Strategy and Investment Committee  
John Vittner, Office of Policy & Management

**FROM:** John Forbes, Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, Office of Policy & Management

**AGENCY/PROJECT NAME:** OPM / Grant Management System

**PROJECT MANAGER:**

**Project Start Date:** July 1, 2012    **Project End Date:** June 30, 2015

**Total IT Capital Funds Allocated:** \$ 421,244

**Total IT Capital Fund Expenditures:** \$ 420,848

### **Brief Project Description/Summary:**

The Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) in the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) sought to automate their grants management process. The division opted to purchase a commercial-off-the-shelf solution as a standard platform in order to achieve greater efficiency and functionality. The chosen vendor is CSDC, Inc., headquartered in Ottawa, Canada and the application software product is known as "Grantium". The goal is to use the Grantium platform for most, if not all CJPPD grants. The initial funding opportunity that was constructed was the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding opportunity and has been used as the baseline to clone in creating additional funding opportunities.

The Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) installation of Grantium is complete and the project is fully operational. As of this date, the CJPPD Grantium installation contains approximately 97 grant awards across 7 major funding opportunities, with a total value of \$5.1 million dollars. Current expectations forecast for these figures to double in the next 12-18 months

### **List Project Goals and Deliverables Completed:**

*(Please provide a brief summary goals and deliverables of the project that were implemented. Please reference your IT Capital Investment Brief for the initial goals of the project)*

### **Project Goals**

The implementation of an OPM/CJPPD lifecycle grants management system (LC-GMS) is intended to provide the following key business transformation outcomes:

- Automate common grant management functions to (a) achieve a general reduction in the paper-based administrative bureaucracy that envelopes the current process and (b) achieve a reduction in staff response time and labor requirements per grant administration task:
  1. Implement automated process tracking/monitoring functions including contact, correspondence inventory, financial tracking, and status tracking
  2. Automate correspondence and program deliverables tracking with sub-grantees
  3. Implement automated routing and retention of electronic documents where practicable

4. Provide comprehensive financial and program reporting (including standard and ad-hoc report capabilities)
  5. Implement system-generated communications/document generation
- Improve grant program/grant project transferability between staff by implementing standardization and automation of grant management processes
  - Implement a single approach and tool for program and financial management reporting across all grant programs
  - Provide a single, consistent, and efficient access point for managing criminal justice/juvenile justice grant projects for constituents
  - Simplify the interaction with the grantee:
    1. Less paper-intensive process from the customer-side
    2. Reduced turnaround time
    3. On-line document review-paperless process internally

#### **Deliverables Completed:**

Licenses Provided  
 Annual Maintenance and Support Agreement  
 Commencement  
 Project Kickoff Complete  
 Program Preparedness Assessment Complete  
 Introduction to Grantium Training Completed  
 Delivery of Infrastructure Requirements Complete  
 Integration Requirements Analysis Complete  
 Hosted Sandbox Installation Complete  
 Technical Training For Privately Hosted Application Complete  
 Basic Configuration Training Complete  
 Intermediate Configuration Training Complete  
 Program One (JAG) Configuration Complete  
 Advanced Configuration Training Complete  
 Business Intelligence Training Complete  
 BI Report Designer Training Complete  
 CSDC System Testing complete  
 User Acceptance Testing Complete  
 Production Deployment Complete

#### **Project Replication Opportunities:**

*(Are there opportunities to repeat or leverage the project solution by other state agencies? Please provide a brief explanation)*

Grantium is a very powerful, very flexible, “user configurable” enterprise capable grants management system. However, grant management activities tend to be highly variable depending upon (1) the use of state or federal funds and (2) the organizational entity managing/providing the funds, whether it be an OPM Division or a

federal agency of cognizance and (3) the external grantee (or sub-recipient) constituents. The more organizational functional entities attempting to use an enterprise system like Grantium, the greater the need for collaborative governance among those users. The likelihood of finding sustainable common ground to implement a wide variety of constituent organizational entities and their external grantee (or sub-recipient) constituents diminishes with each new grant program implemented.

This is certainly true just within the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD).

OPM's consideration of this system for other **agency** grant programs will immediately test this premise.

Using a single installation of Grantium to serve the diverse interests of the Executive branch (enterprise) seems highly unlikely – if not outright impossible.

### **Key Lessons Learned:**

*(Provide any lessons learned experienced during this project that may be helpful to other agencies starting a similar project)*

**Timetable:** CJPPD embarked on this project to use – and not lose – \$600,000 in federal grants funds which were scheduled to expire within a 12 time period. Finding/selecting and vendor and preparing the contract took 6 months; the application development activities had only 6 months of time to complete the project; even the selected Vendor said they had never completed a project like this in less than 9 months - and that was optimistic. The result was a highly compressed timetable to accomplish the project – which was ultimately successful. Because of the highly compressed timetable, CJPPD staff were left with significant (in fact, overwhelming) learning curve to be absorbed – without the help of the vendor under contract.

**GSA Price Schedule:** The selected Vendor (and the Grantium product) was listed on the Federal government's GSA price schedule. The fact that the vendor was listed on the GSA price schedule was instrumental in getting sole source approval sign-off from the Executive Branch purchasing authorities.

**User Acceptance Testing:** User Acceptance Testing (UAT) is a very necessary and critical part of any IT project implementation. We did not properly estimate the necessary amount of time for a thorough and methodical UAT of all elements of the Grantium installation prior to the end of the Vendor contract. This is especially critical with a “workflow” application that has multiple dependencies at every step in the workflow.

**Mentoring and Knowledge Transfer:** One-on-One (or small group) on-site mentoring and knowledge transfer sessions with the Vendors application developer(s) was extremely useful and extremely productive. (Our vendor was headquartered in Ottawa, Canada. At one point, we paid for a one-week on-site mentoring and knowledge transfer session – which was very fruitful.) Long distance business process analysis and application development can be somewhat inefficient – in terms of engaging in the constant iteration to solve a small problem that's not quite completely understood by the vendor, etc...

**Documentation:** A serious review and analysis of the necessary documentation of the products functions and capabilities should be undertaken to understand exactly how comprehensive (or not) that product documentation is and how much it is related to the actual “How To” instructions you will need to implement your project - in their software environment.

**Business Process Analysis:** Building any new IT system requires intensive and highly granular business process analysis; vendor application developers will build exactly what you tell them, even if it's not exactly what you meant. Finely detailed and highly vetted business process analysis components will make the application development process much more efficient.

**User Configurable:** The Grantium GMS application bills itself as a “User Configurable” COTS application. The “user” designation is really an IT analyst or a programmer – not a typical grant manager. Configuration of the Grantium application is highly granular and exceedingly detailed.

**Training Issues:** Training issues have to be considered across the spectrum of all constituent users of the system (1) developers, (2) grant managers and (3) grantees or subrecipients. Consideration should be given to having to develop training materials, e.g. documentation, in a variety of formats, which supplements or re-interprets the vendor’s documentation for various audiences.

**Usability Issues:** The issue of “usability” should be explored with the vendor to ascertain how flexible the system is to address potential user “usability” issues; e.g. the ability to parse the screen into identifiable pieces of work or priority response through lines and borders, the ability to change the color of text to indicate required fields, the ability to apply color to buttons to give visual queues to the user, etc.