

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACTION ITEM: UA Commitment to Kualii Research Administration Project

ISSUE: The Board is requested to review and approve UA's Kualii Research Administration Project, for a total of \$732,472 over a two-year period.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2005, ABOR approved The University of Arizona's commitment of \$590,000 to the Kualii Financial System Project, which is proceeding on schedule toward a completion in 2007. Success in the collaboration around the Kualii Financial System has created opportunity for a similar collaboration around a Kualii Research Administration System (to handle grants and contracts, integrating compliance and other management functions with budgeting, accounting, and reporting). UA needs to replace its old and unsupported system, and wishes to join this partnership rather than to implement a vendor-supported product.

Core partners in the development effort are a subset of the original Kualii members. All core partners are required to commit staff FTE and a small amount of cash used to support organizational needs such as meeting support.

The Vice President for Research and the Chief Information Officer request permission to commit staff time and cash amounting to approximately \$732,472 over two years to the Kualii Research Administration Project, a software development collaboration led by Indiana University.

DISCUSSION:

Kualii Research Administration will be distributed when complete under an Educational Community License, which means that all universities will be able to implement it free of licensing costs. The premise behind this partnership is that the total lifecycle cost of major university information systems can be reduced by (1) eliminating licensing fees; (2) sharing continuing development costs among many partners; and (3) separating economic interest in the software product from economic interest in maintenance and support services.

Arizona's current grant and contract system (SPINS) is over twenty years old, home-built with a vendor partner in 1986, and unsupported by any current vendor. It is considered the most vulnerable of UA's major administrative systems. As a core partner in Kualii Research Administration, UA will have direct influence on the features of the product, increasing the likelihood that the product *as released* will meet the institution's needs. Collaborating closely with other institutions with comparable research enterprises will allow our staff to participate in

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an ongoing exchange of ideas about effective research administration. Moreover, because UA technical personnel will be teamed with other Kuali developers, we will have intimate knowledge of the product's design and best use configuration. Finally, by joining the partnership, UA gains immediate access to components as they develop and immediate knowledge of the functions performed by these components.

The Kuali software will bear copyright under the names of all the core institutional partners but will be distributed on a fee-free basis. Colleges and universities will be free to engage implementation partners of their choice (or none at all) to assist in implementation, making support and maintenance a discretionary and competitively priced service rather than a product vendor's monopoly. Intellectual property issues will be reviewed by University and ABOR legal teams, and will be similar to terms resolved satisfactorily for Kuali Financial System.

UA seeks approval to join with other universities in a speculative joint venture that holds great promise for benefit to all research universities.

APPROVAL:

This project was approved on August 28, 2006, by action of UA's Information Technology Policy Group and submitted to the ABOR Central Office on September 5, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board approve UA's Kuali Research Administration Project.

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University IT Project Justification SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Contact Name and Phone</i>
University of Arizona	Sally Jackson 520-626-7418
<i>College or Unit</i>	Date Submitted
Vice President for Research	August 28, 2006

Project

UA Core Membership in Kuali Research Administration

Project Overview

The University of Arizona has been a core member of the Kuali Financial System Project since Spring 2005 and now seeks to become a core member of the Kuali Research Administration (KRA) Project. UA intends to collaborate with 3 other universities (Indiana University, Michigan State University, and Cornell University) to develop KRA, and later to implement it as a replacement for SPINS, the system currently in use at UA for support of grant and contract administration.

SPINS is more than 20 years old. It was custom built by UA, with a commercial development partner, but with no ongoing arrangements for maintenance and support. Very advanced for its time, SPINS has now reached the end of its useful life. Because it runs on an unsupported hardware platform, it is considered the most vulnerable of UA's major administrative systems. *Establishing an intention to replace SPINS and a clear direction for that replacement is essential both to prevent business interruption and to encourage individual colleges and departments to wait for a centralized solution.*

KRA will combine financial accounting and reporting with many other functions now required for responsible conduct of funded research, including all forms of statute and policy compliance. The software will include modules for Proposal Development, Budget, Administration, Subcontract Management, and a growing array of compliance issues, including Export Control. KRA will use leading edge technologies and be fully compliant with the tri-University architecture standards.

Costs of participating will be borne by the Vice President for Research, using state and locally allocated funds.

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Deliverables

The deliverable from this project will be a new software system, ready for implementation under an Educational Community License (fee-free).

Service and Economic Benefits

Grant and contract administration is a business function that is distinctive of higher education, and for The University of Arizona, externally funded research is a major source of revenue. A good system for development of proposals will contribute to the University's success in gaining research awards within an increasingly competitive arena. A good system for management of awards will protect both institutional integrity and future eligibility for awards. The annual cost of this project is less than .5% (one half of one percent) of annual grant and contract revenue.

Project Roles and Responsibilities

Leslie P. Tolbert, Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, and Economic Development, will serve as UA's voting member on the KRA Board, the primary governing body. Sally Jackson, Vice President for Learning and Information Technologies, will serve as UA's "extended board" member. In addition to technical staff hired for the duration of the project, the following UA personnel will serve on the project's Functional Council:

- Caroline Garcia, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Research
- Sherry L. Esham – Director, Sponsored Projects Services, The University of Arizona
- Paul Sandoval – Assistant Director, Sponsored Projects Services, The University of Arizona
- Lori Ann M. Schultz - Assistant Director, Sponsored Projects Services, The University of Arizona

Project Management Timeline

The project is expected to take two years, commencing with a decision on grant funding from the Mellon Foundation. As with the Kuali Financial System Project, development of a project plan and timeline will be the responsibility of a full-time project manager, not yet named.

Opportunities for Collaboration

This is a National-scale collaboration among four major research universities jointly seeking subvention from a charitable foundation. ASU and NAU are not involved at present, and participation is limited for logistical reasons during the development phase, just as with the Kuali Financial System collaboration. When KRA is released for use by other institutions, either or both of ASU and NAU could implement the fee-free system and take advantage of UA's implementation experience (as ASU is now taking advantage of NAU's experience in implementing Peoplesoft Student and HR systems). Copies of this Project Justification have been sent to both ASU and NAU with an invitation to comment, and with a definite commitment from UA to share knowledge and information gained through participation.

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Summary of Proposed Costs
(All Funds)

Five Year Total (\$000)						
	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	Total
Personnel	351	351	NA	NA	NA	702
Other operating	30	0	NA	NA	NA	30
Total Cost	381	351	NA	NA	NA	732

Funding Source

This project will be funded from the operating budget of the Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development, using institutional locally allocated funds.

Approval History

This project was approved by UA's Information Technology Policy Group on August 28, 2006, and submitted to the ABOR office on September 5, 2006, for Council of Presidents review.

Recommendation

It is recommended that ABOR approve this proposed expenditure.