

The Harrington Discovery Institute



About The Harrington Discovery Institute

The Harrington Discovery Institute (HDI) provides financial and non-financial support through programs like The Harrington Scholar-Innovator Grant, Foundation Scholar, and the Harrington Prize to physician-scientists, specifically to advance translational research, addressing unmet clinical needs.

The Challenge

Every part of the grant application process at HDI was done manually. “We went through a lot of printing and creating binders, and everything was sent and received through our email system,” says Mel Sanders, Financial Analyst at HDI. “Applicants were asked to complete grant requests using fillable PDFs, but there was no way to apply online. We really wanted to go as paperless as possible and use more electronic resources for things like reporting, because our current paper-based system just wasn’t getting the job done. We were filling out spreadsheets and pulling information from a variety of resources when we were creating reports, so it wasn’t unusual to have errors in our data.”



Melodie Sanders, MBA, Financial Analyst
The Harrington Discovery Institute

Selecting SmartSimple

“We decided we needed a proper grants management system,” continues Mel. “We figured that, since it took the collective effort of three or four members of our team hours to process paper applications that a good system would pay for itself.”

One of HDI’s Program Analysts recommended checking out the Consumer’s Guide to Grants Management Systems produced by Idealware, and that’s how they found SmartSimple. “Coming from an entirely manual process, we had no idea how much a software system could do,” adds Mel. “The demonstration provided by Todd Lapin was impressive. I was really struck with the amount of research he did in advance, so the features he showcased were features that would be of interest to us.”

HDI decided SmartSimple was the best system for them, based not just on the demonstration, but also on the positive feedback they heard from current SmartSimple clients. “It looked to be a very intuitive system for those of us not very technically inclined and it would be pretty easy to learn the basics. Plus, we were looking for an established company and the competitors didn’t seem to have the breadth of experience SmartSimple did,” Mel says.

Working with SmartSimple

“The team really took their time in creating our Statement of Work to make sure we truly understood the implementation process,” Mel continues. “We appreciated the time Teresa Clarke, the Director of Research Solutions, took in explaining workflows and how ultimately our system would work for us.”

Mel and her group found the SmartSimple team to be responsive partners, always available to address concerns. Her implementation team kept the project moving to ensure all milestones were reached. The HDI team also discovered that SmartSimple could do so much more than they had anticipated.

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“Once we learned what the system was capable of, we realized how much more it could do for us, not just for online applications, but in managing post-award activities. Having a system so configurable and easy to modify is very helpful,” Mel adds.

Mel also shares her experiences during training and the transition to the SmartSimple Support Team. “Everyone on the Support Team is wonderful. They never make us feel like we are being rushed off the phone and they make sure we fully understand everything they do. We’re not IT people, but they make using the system so easy!”

“We find SmartSimple easy to use and it offers so many more opportunities to automate our activities than we had initially thought,” concludes Mel. “The system is actually changing how we operate and is making a positive impact on our entire operation. Before we were limited in how much we could do because of manual processes. Now, the sky is the limit!”

About SmartSimple

SmartSimple isn't just software. It's a cloud-based solution that streamlines the administration of your entire grants management process. Completely personalizable, endlessly configurable, and at a price that reflects only what you actually use, SmartSimple puts the control of your system in your hands.

To learn more, visit www.smartsimple.com and request a demo, email us at sales@smartsimple.com, or call us, toll-free, at 1-866-239-0991.