CASE STUDY: Cambridge & Oxford – Research Costing
CASE STUDY: How Cambridge & Oxford partnered UNIT4 to produce a new Research Costing solution

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Working with the sector for the benefit of the sector

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WHAT WILL BE COVERED

• Challenges Research in HE today

• Partnership between the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge and UNIT4

• Design of Agresso Research Costing and Pricing (ARCP)

• Development of ARCP

• Benefits realised

• Integrating ARCP into the full suite of Agresso products

• International projects
CHALLENGES FOR TODAY’S INSTITUTION (RESEARCH)

• Competing for limited research funds on an international basis

  Increased drive by funders to maximise ‘outputs’ from research funds through efficient and transparent admin.

  Attracting the best staff and researchers on the international stage

• Open accessible information (Southampton)
CHALLENGES FOR TODAY’S INSTITUTION

• Rapidly adapting with ease to changes in policy and regulations (Agility)
  ROI from new projects expected within a year rather than many years
  Strategic platforms needed to build for the Future

• Re-use existing investments where possible
Gartner review of the design recommended partnering with an experienced software organisation

Requirements from Oxford and Cambridge:

• Ability to develop the sophisticated design
• Essential that on-going support would be provided
• Be able to cope with change and new development requirements
• Understanding the sector
Why UNIT4 was selected

- Established software company
- Post-implementation agility
- Excellent sector expertise
- A range of products used by hundreds of Institutions within the Higher Education sector in the United Kingdom
- A 55% lower running cost than any of its competitors

In January 2011, UNIT4 became a partner on the project
Why the need to design a new system?

- Funding requirements have become very complicated
- Existing systems were not flexible enough
- Greater need for bigger and more collaborative projects
- Need to simplify the administrative burden around research costing
- Greater competition for research funding meant that a streamlined end-to-end solution became essential
A joint design phase compiled the requirements from both Universities.
The system is designed around funding rules.
All Universities need the same costing elements:
- Staff
- Non-Staff (Consumables; Travel; Equipment)
- Overhead costs
The key to the design was to be able to adjust the costs in line with the funding requirements.
This design principle means that research organisations can configure the system to suit their own internal needs and that of the funders.
The development team used the “Agile methodology for software development”

This partnership approach allowed for:

1. Working closely with Oxford and Cambridge throughout each stage of development
2. Greater creativity in the interactive development cycles
3. Working versions of components throughout the development phases that could be tested and refined
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BENEFITS REALISED

New functionality:

On a single costing project

- Multiple departments
- Multiple funders
- Varying costing types (Outline; Application; Re-cost; Award etc...)
- Multiple versions of each costing type
BENEFITS REALISED

Copying abilities

• New versions of the same costing types
• Copying to other costing types
• Copying to new projects

This saves so much time as you do not need to constantly “Reinvent the wheel”
• Audit trails can be setup within the system

• Reporting is very powerful and easy to understand

• There are constant development cycles that deliver new functionality

Recent examples include:

• Quick costing

• Simple costing

• Multiple posts for one resource

• Default additional payments for staff
A Suite of Agresso Products – For the Whole Organization

Agresso Research Costing and Pricing is part of a suite of products designed around what the funder needs – so can be used by many Research Institutions for costing research.

This forms part of our software solution that can be tailored to meet the business needs of the client.

Research Award Management – developed in partnership with University of Glasgow.
Agresso Graduate Progression – developed in partnership with the Universities of Nottingham & Oxford.
Research Lifecycle - overview

In-built Analytics
Integrated Workflow
In-built Document Management
Social Collaboration
Mobile
Dynamic Organisational modelling
Why mention the other solutions?

Research administration is not only about Costing and Pricing

• The solution needed for an institution will have many components that include HR; Finance; Payroll; Projects etc...

• Agresso utilises its functionality to configure the solution around the client’s business requirements

• This also includes the ability to integrate with external systems to allow for a flexible approach to current and future needs
UNIT4 CAMPUS SOLUTION

Institution Portal
Information Management
Relationship Management

Financial Management
Student Management
Human Capital Management
Curriculum Management
Estates Management
Research Management
Student Engagement
Business Engagement
Environmental Performance
Partner Applications

API Framework
Workflow and Integration
Document Management
System Hosting and Support

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UNIT4 is a global company with many projects in many sectors

A current project I have been involved in is in Australia

Monash University and S1 Consulting

“S1 Consulting, an established firm with in-depth sector knowledge, is undertaking an implementation of an Integrated Research Administration Solution at Monash University

The solution includes a partnership with UNIT4 and Elsevier to provide a Managed Cloud Solution that empowers the Academics and Administrative staff in their research grants management and publication”
INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

• From Business process workshops to implementation of the LIVE environment

• Bringing together all the information needed

Researchers will have one portal

One true source of information

• To enable better research grants management across the University
We need to simplify the entire process of research administration to allow for quicker and more accurate turnaround throughout the research grants lifecycle.

This will allow our academics to spend more time on scientific research – and less time on the bureaucracy that is imbedded in the research funding environment.

The Agresso platform is designed to adjust to the changing needs of the research communities on a global scale.
EMBRACING CHANGE

Thank you!
Dr Ian Tebbet (Monash University's CIO) Interview with CIO.com.au about the Monash University implementation

Educause article about the development of Agresso Research Costing and Pricing from the Cambridge and Oxford perspective

www.UNIT4.com