



How the SickKids Foundation elevated their grant funding impact with a new grants management system

Synopsis

The SickKids Foundation's National Grants Team had big organizational challenges in their grants management system. Their small number of dedicated program staff were inundated with a burdensome, outdated grant application process, and the data they pulled from templates yielded incomplete data that limited impact reporting. SmartSimple assisted them in updating their entire application process in one centralized location. Their new grants management system enabled them to work more efficiently and provided them with in-depth and powerful tracking and reporting capabilities that gave more insight into their grant researcher work and community impact.

Key Stats

Client Name: SickKids Foundation

SmartSimple Client Since: 2016

Type of Giving: Grants

Dollars Granted: \$1.8 million per grant cycle

Old System: Outdated Paper Based System

Key Pain Points: Overpaying for a product that didn't facilitate impact reporting and wasn't addressing their needs as an organization.

New System Must-Haves: Wanted an online and cost-effective grants management system that could accommodate their workflow process.



“

I love that SmartSimple is an innovative company. The senior management is very in tune with the clients, and it doesn't feel like all sales, all the time. ”

Pam Gilliland, Granting and Hospital Relations Manager, SickKids Foundation

About the SickKids Foundation

As a leader in the not-for-profit sector, SickKids Foundation raises funds on behalf of The Hospital for Sick Children - one of the world's foremost paediatric health-care institutions. SickKids Foundation is the largest charitable funder of child health research, learning and care in Canada. Established in 1972, the SickKids Foundation was built upon the leadership of SickKids in helping children across Canada and has funded more than \$80 million in grants across the country for children's health through their National Grants Program. Their awards focus on supporting well-trained researchers across the country who are working to address the most pressing childhood diseases and conditions. They also work to bring together families, researchers, clinicians, and community organizations for medical presentations and family-oriented discussions. While their grant funding is only a small part of the vast lineage of the incredible work that SickKids has provided, it has made a significant impact on children's health and the medical industry.

Too much time in data entry

The SickKids Grants Team was utilizing a grants management system that was time-consuming, and wasn't yielding great outcomes for all the invested effort. **"We were literally getting proposals in by PDFs and we had to enlist volunteers to do hours of data entry."** says Pam Gilliland, Granting and Hospital Relations Manager of the SickKids Foundation. Their cumbersome process was getting stuck at the administrative level, and it was difficult to quantify program impact.

To make matters worse, they were overpaying for their current system, **"The maintenance fees were relentless, so we couldn't afford the online module,"** and the modules themselves made for a complicated workflow. Their application process also didn't provide in-depth impact reporting since their templates only offered bare-bone information making for incomplete data.



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powered by **aws**

The SickKids Foundation is hosted on Amazon Web Services

The search for a solution

Needing a significant change in their application process, the Foundation Grants Team looked for an online platform that was cost-effective and didn't require a degree in technology to set up. They needed an online platform that could streamline and simplify their expansive grant application process. **"We get up to 100 applications every cycle from applicants all across Canada."** Pam and her team needed a solution that gave them the powerful functionality that ensured robust reporting, **"We wanted to be able to manage and dig deeper into the applications that we were receiving,"** as Pam states. They appreciated the transparency in pricing from SmartSimple's sales team and decided on working with SmartSimple because the software met their workflow needs and expectations.

A grants management system that put all the pieces together

After working with SmartSimple's implementation team in person, the changes in process were met with positivity. **"I was amazed that we could start monitoring the grant requests that people were creating,"** Pam says, **"the applications and their deadline dates we could see two months out and see what grant activities were taking place,"** she continued. With SmartSimple's powerful grant management tools, Pam and her team were able to get a broader perspective of their work instead of playing catch up with paperwork, **"I could get a head start in preparing and assigning reviewers to applications. We no longer have any data entry, and with an updated system, there were fewer mistakes in processing data into the system."**

With SmartSimple, old processes were shed, and new ones welcomed with open arms. **"Having a head start on the peer review analysis has been amazing"** Pam says. **"Deadline day used to be the day people would send their PDFs, and that's when we'd open the documents. Now we see beforehand what kind of applications we're getting and what expertise we need. We used to sit down with a paper checklist which took forever. Now we don't have to do that anymore. When applicants fill out the application, they have to fulfill our requirements and we can easily see the type of expertise we will require from our peer reviewers."**

High focus on high impact

The transition to SmartSimple was an extensive process to ensure user comfort and confidence. **"There's only two of us on the Grant's Team that use the database and neither of us are tech-savvy. We spend a lot of time with SmartSimple's support team, and they're very responsive."** Says Pam. **"The support has been great, and they're helping us all the time to make it better. It's been very manageable, even without going through our own IT department."** Now with all of the time they've saved with their new system, the SickKids Foundation can focus on continued support for their community. **"We're really starting to focus on impact and showcasing our awardees,"** says Pam. **"With the freed up time, I've managed to highlight and focus on our grantees, and we've created profiles, bios and web pages following their careers. I'm able to pull this information from the system and we can highlight the impact our grants are making."**

Pam is happy about the capabilities the SmartSimple system has already delivered and is looking forward to the future. **"We're going to be able to pull impact data and statistics much easier now, and see what our researchers are accomplishing."**

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About SmartSimple

SmartSimple is a global leader in cloud-based automation software, offering unique process solutions used by over 300 clients in nearly 200 countries. Some of the largest companies in the Fortune 100, as well as global foundations and government agencies, choose SmartSimple to enrich their impact story and create greater efficiencies in their granting processes.

About Discover

SmartSimple Discover is a robust, end-to-end grants management solution that makes it easy for foundations to track, manage and report across multiple grants programs, giving true insight into the impact of your funding efforts. In a single online solution, Discover gives you complete control and visibility over the entire granting process. From the initial call for proposals to reporting on final outcomes, Discover helps foundations stay on top of everything from correspondence with applicants, to monitoring budgets and reporting, eliminating hours of paper shuffling and administration. No two foundations are alike. That's why the technology behind Discover comes with the flexibility to fit your unique needs and deliver innovative solutions that transform how you manage your granting programs.

Our commitment to making processes work better and freeing our clients to do more good goes beyond the technologies we create – **it's at the very heart of our business.**

Michael Reid
Co-Founder, Chief Operating Officer
SmartSimple



Discover more.

Contact us to request a demo that's tailored to your granting needs.



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SmartSimple interacts with over 115,000 unique users a month from over 300 organizations in nearly 200 countries.

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