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response

**CASE STUDY:
STREAMLINING GRANT
MANAGEMENT FOR RHODE
ISLAND STATE AGENCIES**



STREAMLINING GRANT MANAGEMENT FOR RHODE ISLAND STATE AGENCIES

CHALLENGE

The State of Rhode Island, like many state governments, was grappling with an inconsistent and inefficient system for managing Federal awards and grant programs to subrecipients across its 30 agencies. Prior to 2021, grant management activities—both programmatic and financial—were tracked in offline Excel workbooks, creating a fragmented and arduous process. This lack of uniformity caused duplicate efforts and increased administrative burden for subrecipients. Moreover, there was no systematic method for state leadership to oversee all Federal funding flowing into the state, as data had to be manually populated into Excel spreadsheets annually by each state agency.

SOLUTION

In response to these challenges, the State of Rhode Island Department of Administration partnered with Witt O'Brien's in 2021 to implement the eCivis Grant Management System (GMS) statewide. Witt O'Brien's, leveraging its past experiences with eCivis and knowledge of state government operations, guided Rhode Island through the implementation process. This involved the creation of standard forms and training materials, migration of historic data into the system, establishing an integration connection between the GMS and the state's Financial Management System (FMS), and revamping change management processes for their 30 state agencies.

The comprehensive eCivis GMS offers various capabilities including research and pursuance of Federal awards; pre- and post-award management of Federal and subrecipient grants; a document repository for all award documentation; standardized application intake and review processes for subrecipient grant programs; and a standardized closeout process for Federal awards.



RESULT

By December 2022, the implementation period for eCivis was successfully completed—leading to a significant shift in how Rhode Island state agencies manage grants. As more agencies adopt the eCivis system, the State of Rhode Island anticipates several benefits:

1. A centralized software system housing all Federal award documentation, providing easy access for state employees.
2. Standardized reporting of Federal grant awards and funds passed through to subrecipients, improving transparency and efficiency.
3. Streamlined application forms and central organization profiles for applicants and subrecipients, reducing administrative burden.
4. Seamless integration between GMS and FMS allowing for:
 - Transfer of award information to FMS
 - Transmission of transaction data to GMS
 - A unified platform for subrecipients to request payment and have those requests automatically sent to FMS
 - Transfer of subrecipient payment information from FMS to GMS

This integrated and automated system allows state agencies to spend more time managing and executing their Federal awards. Additionally, it provides a single, comprehensive system for auditors, further improving transparency and efficiency.

By helping the State of Rhode Island upgrade its grant management processes, Witt O'Brien's demonstrated the power of a well-implemented digital solution to enhance public administration.

