
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Grants management software helps grantmakers save time, make their processes more effective and transparent, and can even transform the way they do business. The options in grant management systems are growing every year, and there are currently more solid systems than ever before.

This expansion of the market is great for grants managers, but the array of choices can make it complicated to decide what system makes sense for any given organization. This report explores the systems available to help private foundations accept and review applications and track grants throughout their life cycles, with detailed comparisons of 22 systems.

There's a huge variety of grants management systems, ranging from basic options at only a few thousand dollars a year to robust solutions for large foundations starting at \$100,000 or more.

Community foundations differ from private foundations in several important areas, and are therefore not included in this report—we also have a report on grants management software for community foundations that we'll release soon after this one.

What Systems Are Available?

There's a huge variety of grants management systems, ranging from options for small foundations at only

a few thousand dollars a year, specialty options for niches like arts grantmaking or medical research foundations, and robust, completely configurable solutions for large foundations starting at \$100,000 or more.

Low cost for simple needs

More functionality isn't necessarily better. If you have only a small grants program, a straightforward system with a lower price tag could provide exactly the support you need. Consider **Bromelkamp's Akoya.net, Closerware GrantMaker, Foundant Grant Lifecycle Manager, MicroEdge GIFTS Online, Oceanpeak's Common Grant Application, WizeHive Grant Manager** or **ZoomGrants**.

Flexible relationship management

If you are hoping to track not just the basic details of a grant, but complex custom tracking information about applications and relationships, consider the growing number of systems geared to support this need with customizable options and strong support for relationship management, such as **Bromelkamp Akoya.net, Bromelkamp First Pearl, Good Done Great Grant Management System, MicroEdge GIFTS, MicroEdge GIFTS Online, NPower Foundation Grant Manager, SmartSimple GMS for Private Foundations** or **Solph Fluxx**.

Complex online data collection needs

If your core priority in a grants management system is to collect complex application and grantee progress report data online, a number of systems provide both strong online support and useful general grants management functionality. Consider **CyberGrants, Good Done Great Grant Management System, JK Group, PhilanTech PhilanTrack** or **NPower Foundation Grant Manager**.

Complex application review needs

Some systems provide very little functionality to support complex review processes, while others provide complex scoring mechanisms, online forms to allow

outside reviewers, and even specialized functionality geared toward reviewing arts projects or medical research applications. If review functionality is a core priority, consider **WESTAF GrantsOnline™**, **Dulles Technology Partners WebGrants**, **GrantStream GrantRight™** or **Altum proposalCENTRAL**.

Strong all-around functionality for the large foundation

If you need all of the above—and are willing to pay for it—large “enterprise” systems provide strong functionality and customization for a larger price tag. Consider **Altum Easygrants**, **Grantium G3**, **FusionLabs GrantedGE** or **MicroEdge GIFTS**.

What's Changed?

We released the first edition of our Consumers Guide to Grants Management Systems in 2008, and since then the field of systems has evolved substantially. The number of vendors offering tools has greatly expanded, providing many more options for smaller foundations at affordable costs. Online hosted systems are also becoming the norm. While a few traditional installed systems remain available, all the vendors in this report offer an online hosted option. These hosted systems can be compelling to grantmakers—they allow program staff to login to the system from anywhere with internet access, and tend to provide better support for online applications and online grantee communications.

On the higher end, systems are adding compelling features. Far more systems offer customization per user—for instance, to show a “dashboard” of the tasks a user is likely to want to take on, or to provide different interfaces for different types of roles. As an example, a grants manager might see an interface that allows sophisticated data management, while a program officer might see one that's pared down and easier-to-use. More advanced functionality, like

branching in online forms and robust budgeting facility, have become far more common. The grants management system marketplace is becoming more vibrant, with healthy competition creating better systems for both small and large grantmakers.

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Comparing the Systems

How do all these packages compare? It's impossible to say in a few quick paragraphs, but this report provides both a high-level look at the systems and a closer look at the details behind them. Quick paragraph blurbs describe the core strengths and weaknesses of each system, and a comparison chart (starting on page 30) shows how they stack up across a set of 17 different criteria. Finally, the reviews of the systems provide a detailed, six-page summary of each system that shows how it addresses more than 125 different criteria.

The grants management software marketplace has never had a better set of options to support effective and efficient grantmaking, and this report helps grantmakers understand how all these options compare.

COMPARISON CHART

When there are two ratings, the first represents the system with the most basic configuration, while the second shows what's possible with the addition of modules or customizations at additional cost. The prices shown give the approximate range of costs for small and large grantmakers, and for minimal and then all functionality. For the majority of these vendors, prices can vary for each individual implementation.

	Aitum Easygrants	Aitum proposal-CENTRAL	Bromelkamp Akoya.net	Bromelkamp First Pearl
Small grantmaker, basic functionality*				
First year cost	not recommended for this size	not recommended for this size	\$7.1K	\$17K
Ongoing yearly cost	not recommended for this size	not recommended for this size	\$6.2K	\$1.8K
Larger grantmaker, all functionality*				
First year cost	\$150K - \$250K	\$40K - \$60K	\$33K	\$43K
Ongoing yearly cost	\$30K - \$50K	\$30K - \$50K	\$15K	\$7.2K
Internal Tracking	○	◎	○	●
Online Applications	●	○	• to ○	• to ●
Applications Review	●	●	• to ●	• to ●
501(c)(3) and OFAC Status	• to ○	•	○	○
Letters & Board Dockets	●	○	●	●
Emails	○	○	○	●
Relationship Management	○	○	●	○ to ●
Grant Requirements & Evaluation	●	●	◎ to ●	◎ to ●
Payments	○	◎	○	○
Budgeting	○ to ●	•	○	◎
System Querying & Reporting	○ to ●	◎ to ○	●	○
Roles & Permissions	○	◎	●	○
Data Access	●	●	●	●
Overall Customization	●	●	○ to ●	●
Ease of Use	●	◎	○	◎
Support & Training	○	●	●	●
Stability in the Market	○	●	◎	●

• None ○ Fair ○ Good ● Excellent

* Small: Five named users, five concurrent users, 50 external reviewers, \$10,000,000 asset base, 10 grants per year. Basic functionality to review applications, track and pay grants.

Large: Twenty named users, 10 concurrent users, 50 external reviewers, \$1,000,000,000 asset base, 100 grants per year. With all functionality covered in this report.

When there are two ratings, the first represents the system with the most basic configuration, while the second shows what's possible with the addition of modules or customizations at additional cost. The prices shown give the approximate range of costs for small and large grantmakers, and for minimal and then all functionality. For the majority of these vendors, prices can vary for each individual implementation.

	Closerware Grant Maker	Dulles Technology Partners WebGrants	Foundant Grant Lifecycle Manager**	FusionLabs GrantedGE	Good Done Great Grants Management System	Grantium G3***
Small grantmaker, basic functionality*						
First year cost	\$3.5K	\$10K	\$4.5K**	\$10K + cost of Raisers Edge	\$12K	About \$100K***
Ongoing yearly cost	\$3K	\$6K	\$3K**	\$2.4K + cost of Raisers Edge	\$3K	About \$25K***
Larger grantmaker, all functionality*						
First year cost	\$12K	\$150K	\$4.5K**	\$85K + cost of Raisers Edge	\$31K	\$100K+***
Ongoing yearly cost	\$12K	\$18K	\$3K**	\$20K + cost of Raisers Edge	\$9.1K	\$25K+***
Internal Tracking	●	○	○	○	●	○ to ●
Online Applications	○	○	○	○	●	●
Applications Review	○	●	○	●	○ to ●	○ to ●
501(c)(3) and OFAC Status	•	• to ●	●	○ to ●	○	• to ●
Letters & Board Dockets	○ to ●	○	○	●	●	○
Emails	○	●	○	○ to ●	○ to ●	○
Relationship Management	• to ○	○	•	○ to ●	○ to ●	○
Grant Requirements & Evaluation	○	○	●	○	●	●
Payments	•	○	○	○	○ to ●	○
Budgeting	•	○	○	○	●	○ to ●
System Querying & Reporting	○	○	○	●	●	○
Roles & Permissions	○	○	○	○	○ to ●	●
Data Access	○	●	○	●	●	●
Overall Customization	●	●	●	○	●	●
Ease of Use	○	○	○	○	●	●
Support & Training	○	○	●	●	●	●
Stability in the Market	○	○	●	●	●	○

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** Foundant footnote: Prices listed are for one year, but the vendor requires the purchase of two-year licenses.

*** Grantium footnote: Based on 2009 prices. Grantium refused to disclose 2011 pricing data for this report.

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	GrantStream GrantRight™	JK Group	MicroEdge GIFTS	Microedge GIFTS Online	Npower Foundation Grant Manager	Oceanpeak, Inc Common Grant Application
Small grantmaker, basic functionality*						
First year cost	\$48K	\$20K	\$19K+	\$7.1K	\$30K	\$1.3K
Ongoing yearly cost	\$18K	\$10K	\$6K+	\$7.1K	\$9.4K	\$1.3K
Larger grantmaker, all functionality*						
First year cost	\$75K	\$30K	\$75K+	\$19K	\$34K	\$7K
Ongoing yearly cost	\$25K	\$30K	\$15K+	\$19K	\$13K	\$7K
Internal Tracking	●	○	○ to ●	○	●	○
Online Applications	○	●	• to ○	○	●	○
Applications Review	○ to ●	○	• to ○	○	○	○
501(c)(3) and OFAC Status	○	○	●	○	○	○
Letters & Board Dockets	●	●	●	●	○ to ●	○
Emails	○	○	○ to ●	○	●	○
Relationship Management	○ to ○	○	●	○	●	•
Grant Requirements & Evaluation	○ to ○	○	○ to ●	○ to ●	○	○
Payments	○ to ○	○	●	○	○	○
Budgeting	○	○	• to ○	• to ○	●	○
System Querying & Reporting	○	•	○	○	●	○
Roles & Permissions	○ to ○	•	○ to ●	●	●	○
Data Access	○	●	●	○	●	○
Overall Customization	○ to ●	●	○ to ●	●	●	•
Ease of Use	○	○	○	●	●	●
Support & Training	○	●	○	●	●	●
Stability in the Market	●	●	●	○	○	○

• None ○ Fair ○ Good ● Excellent

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	PhilanTech PhilanTrack	Smart Simple GMS for Private Foundations	Solpath Fluxx**	WESTAF Grants- Online™	WizeHive Grant Manager	ZoomGrants
Small grantmaker, basic functionality*						
First year cost	\$8K	\$17K - \$25K	\$15K**	\$7.5K	\$2.9K	\$1.9K
Ongoing yearly cost	\$4K	\$7K - \$15K	\$10K**	\$4.5K	\$2.4K	\$1.5K
Larger grantmaker, all functionality*						
First year cost	\$36K	\$25K - \$100K	\$75K**	\$21K	\$8K	\$7K
Ongoing yearly cost	\$11K	\$12K - \$20K	\$24K**	\$35K	\$6K	\$7K
Internal Tracking	○	●	○	○	●	◎
Online Applications	○	○	○	○	◎ to ○	◎
Applications Review	○	●	○	●	●	○
501(c)(3) and OFAC Status	○	●	○	•	○	•
Letters & Board Dockets	●	●	○	○	◎	◎
Emails	◎	●	○ to ●	●	○	◎
Relationship Management	◎	●	●	○	•	◎
Grant Requirements & Evaluation	○	●	○	●	●	○
Payments	◎	●	○	• to ○	○	◎
Budgeting	◎	○	○	○	○	◎
System Querying & Reporting	○	●	◎ to ●	○	○	◎
Roles & Permissions	◎	●	●	○	○	◎
Data Access	●	●	●	◎	◎	◎
Overall Customization	○	●	●	○	●	○
Ease of Use	○	○	○	○	○	●
Support & Training	○	○	●	●	○	●
Stability in the Market	○	○	◎	○	●	○

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** Fluxx footnote: As an open source system, Fluxx can be downloaded without charge. These prices assume Solpath help in implementing and supporting the system.