

The following is in response to the various electronic systems used by Washington State University for obtaining funds electronically. I strongly support the US Council of Chief Financial Officer's decision to namely the PMS limit systems for grant payments to two existing systems ASAP.

The major systems used at Washington State University are:

1. PMS
2. ASAP
3. Department of Education
4. EDI for the Office of Naval Research (ONR)
5. Request for funds vary for many other federal agencies from FAX to PHONE and ACH.

Our experience with the systems listed above (exclude # 5) has been favorable. The Department of Education has probably taken the most time to master as well as EDI. A reduction in systems would reduce the amount of effort required to train and document how each system functions.

The ONR system initially was rather cumbersome but has evolved over time into an acceptable method for drawing funds. One disadvantage is that the university needs to pay a monthly fee to utilize the EDI system.

One of the complexities envisioned in trying to limit systems is that agencies each have their own way for managing draws against awards. Naturally, the most time consuming are those that require draws to be made at the award level, instead of a pooled draw. Although standardized systems are the goal, agencies will still seek to address their unique needs. If these can be incorporated without undue burdent to grantees, this would would be acceptable.

The PMS system is the system most favored. However, we have encountered problems when drawing funds on an award basis for the Department of Agriculture. This is a technical issue and no an overall system complexity.

We commend the action that is being taken, since the movement of funds electronically is critical not only for the government but also for the universities in this era of tight budgets. We look forward to continued progress in this area.

Sincerely,

Finance Officer - Sponsored Programs  
Washington State University

