

The University of Arizona

Driving Research
Opportunities for
a Large, Diverse
University



At the University of Arizona, Research Development Services and individual researchers alike rely on Pivot to ensure no opportunity is missed.



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Daniel Moseke, University of Arizona



About University of Arizona

Established in 1885, the University of Arizona, the state's land-grant university with two medical schools, produces graduates who are real-world ready through its 100% Engagement initiative. Recognized as a global leader, the UA is also a leader in research, bringing more than \$622 million in research investment each year, and ranking 22nd among all public universities. The UA is advancing the frontiers of interdisciplinary scholarship and entrepreneurial partnerships and is a member of the Association of American Universities, the 62 leading public and private research universities. The University maintains more than 250 industry partnerships for research and development, and is particularly strong in space and planetary sciences, defense, biosciences, environmental sustainability, information sciences, advanced materials and manufacturing, agriculture, engineering, and the visual arts.

Supporting a Huge Diversity of Interests

The University of Arizona is one of a growing number of universities that have established a Research Development Services (RDS) unit to assist with securing research grants. As program manager Daniel Moseke describes it, “RDS supports 20 colleges, including the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and more than 3,000 researchers across everything from the arts and humanities to chemistry to physics to optical sciences. That is a huge listing of research interests.

“Part of my main charge is finding relevant funding opportunities to advertise to campus in whatever way I can,” he continues. “When I was first hired, we did a survey to learn how people were finding funding opportunities. Many of them were saving emails that talked about research funding so that they could search them later. We thought, well, that sounds terribly inefficient. So one of my first tasks was to reinvent our weekly newsletter, which is our principal method of advertising.”



"Researchers can be secure that they're not missing an opportunity. They find federal, state, private organizations, nonprofits, all in one place."

Sangita Pawar, University of Arizona

Making the Job Possible

Moseke had worked in a variety of departments across the university, but research development was new to him. Fortunately, the solution he needed was already in place. Pivot from Ex Libris was used by Moseke's colleagues within RDS, as well as by individual researchers to find their own funding. "My director encouraged me to use Pivot," he states. He found that Pivot instantly provided a breadth of knowledge about available funding he could never find on his own. In fact, "Once I started diving into what Pivot makes available, I realized it was instrumental in making the scope of my job even possible.

"With so many different research interests, I need a way to target things for people. There's NSF funding for \$2 million here, and \$2 million there. Meanwhile in the arts and humanities people are looking for a \$5,000 book award or funding to conduct research at a specific library. So I make heavy use of the ability to curate lists and searches. I use those to find what we call out as featured opportunities, and also to catalog and save opportunities."

To make the latter available to users, Moseke embeds links to the curated Pivot searches directly in the newsletter. "It's all right there, cataloged, and they can see and track everything that's been promoted or advertised over the course of the semester or the year. No more saving emails."

Improving Success with Limited Submissions

"Another major area of responsibility is identifying limited submissions and managing that process for the university," declares Moseke. "Pivot tags the limited opportunities, and that's been indispensable. It allows the university to better discover limited submissions in sufficient time to advertise and target appropriate faculty to put in stronger and more strategic proposals. RDS is responsible for that. Because of the background and expertise of our associates, they're familiar with the appropriate faculty, so they can reach out and encourage them to apply.

"Pivot integrates with InfoReady Review, which is the software that we use to run the internal competitions that select the PI or team to apply. That helps me immensely because I don't need to cut and paste between two different software packages, and it very much streamlines our internal competition process. In 2017 we tracked about 95 limited submissions. In 2018, we tracked more than 170."

One-Stop Shop for Finding Funding

While RDS takes the lead in advertising funding opportunities, individuals within the university also use Pivot to conduct their own searches. Sangita Pawar is the Assistant Vice President for Research for the Division of Agriculture, Life Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, and Cooperative Extension, and a longtime Pivot user. "RDS does an excellent job, but researchers know the nuances of their research, and can search more specifically and accurately on their own," she explains. "Pivot is a one-stop-shop for funding opportunities. When I train my faculty on how to use Pivot, it blows their mind. They no longer have to go to ten different websites to find funding. They create searches, save them, and depend on Pivot to send them alerts. Researchers can be secure that they're not missing an opportunity. They find federal, state, private organizations, nonprofits, everything in one place."



Flexible, Friendly, and Global in Scope

Beth Stahmer, Director of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Institute, describes her unit's role: "We are here solely to support faculty and students in identifying funding opportunities, and then developing grant or fellowship applications. We saw the value of being able to 'teach people to fish', using Pivot, to identify funding opportunities that are highly relevant based on their own research, interests and expertise. Whenever we have a training session, we see our Pivot usage increase. That tells us people are very happy with the results.

"I personally have been searching databases for years and have used many different systems. For our college's purposes, I prefer Pivot. Our college has 20 academic units and 15 centers and institutes. There are really unique research questions being looked at. I love the ability to use Boolean operators to get very specific about what I'm looking for. But on the flipside of that, because of the breadth of research in social and behavioral sciences, I love that people can get very broad and find opportunities that fit.

"I've found Pivot to be highly user-friendly and flexible, and very, very easy to navigate. A faculty member told me he had identified opportunities in Pivot in about 15 minutes, when it would have taken him hours or days to come up with the same list of potential funders on his own. I spent just 20 minutes in Pivot with a graduate student, and we found a great opportunity through National Geographic for work specifically in Africa. Another feature I really like is the ability to note if you are a citizen of a different country. We have many international students and that's an important tool, especially if they're struggling to find opportunities that they're eligible for."

Concludes Stahmer, "In the academic setting, we're very focused on the big funders and people tend not to think beyond them. They're amazed when they see that there are opportunities beyond the government sources, like private foundations, other academic institutions, fellowships and scholarships. With Pivot, people have uncovered opportunities that they would not have known about otherwise."

Supporting the Strategic Plan

"The university has just completed a new strategic plan," states Moseke, "and a goal is to increase research expenditures by close to \$200 million over the next few years. That's a grand challenge and a huge undertaking. Having a tool like Pivot is critical to reaching our goals."



About Ex Libris

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