

Time Savings at Yale University

*How Yale University maximizes limited submissions
and saves .5 FTE admin time using InfoReady Review*

An InfoReady Review Case Study



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For twenty years before Gina Della Porta, DHSc, MHS, arrived at Yale University, managing the Limited Submissions process manually required one staff member's full-time efforts. That was also prior to Yale appointing its first ever Vice Provost for Research, who began his tenure by benchmarking systems and processes used at other research institutions and thus learned about the widespread usage and benefits of InfoReady Review.

A fortuitous arrival... times two

Fortunately for Yale's Office of Sponsored Projects – where Gina is the Program Manager of Funding Opportunities – InfoReady Review arrived at the same time she did. The result today is that even with an increasingly robust and comprehensive limited submissions program, she can perform the same functions as her predecessor in about half the time. Gina attributes a significant portion of that time savings, and resultant productivity increase, to Review's automated, cloud-based platform and its rapid acceptance by researchers, reviewers, and administrators. In her words, "people were pretty happy from early in the Review process." But she's also quick to point out that Yale's unique and proprietary processes for scoring and reviewing, plus having standing committees of reviewers, played a role in making the Limited Submissions process more efficient.

So what does Gina do with that administrative timesaving? Having come from Duke University in a research development position where she supported federal grant proposals, Gina reports:

"I saved so much time through Review that I've been able to take on other initiatives. For example, pretty quickly the VP was able to assign me to some research development activity here at Yale."

Gina's additional responsibilities are clearly a win for the University and its budget. Faculty members now have a better structure for improving research proposals. And, Gina is better able to utilize her extensive skill set and deep experience. For example, she administers an internal pilot funding opportunity. Gina expects that as InfoReady's benefits become more widely known at Yale, additional competitions may migrate from manual or other automated processes to Review.

Benefits anticipated... and unanticipated

Beyond her own administrative time savings, Gina reports that she and her colleagues correctly anticipated some additional benefits of implementing InfoReady Review. For instance, “We’re very lucky at Yale that we have a committed group of reviewers, and because we could post opportunities in InfoReady and distribute them in an organized way, we’re actually able to streamline how many committee meetings they have to attend,” and that’s in addition to Review helping reduce reviewers’ strain and workload.

Further, Gina is using Review’s Bulletin Board functionality to promote external opportunities that Yale won’t be running a competition for. She is also able to capture and aggregate the most relevant funding opportunities in a weekly newsletter. These things greatly streamline processes for research faculty. Although final numbers aren’t yet available, Gina’s Office has anecdotally experienced an increase in competitions, especially at the federal level.

One surprise, though, was that while Sponsored Projects expected to see a large spike in application volume, that didn’t occur. “Instead,” Gina said, “we saw more tailored and screened opportunities. That is, previously some people applied to opportunities perhaps not perfectly aligned with their research. Now, through InfoReady and the resources we provide, our investigators can better screen and target opportunities and hopefully be more successful.”

Sponsored Projects’ success with Review has been duplicated at Yale’s Cancer Center, which focuses exclusively on cancer-related research opportunities. Nonetheless, the two enterprises collaborate and coordinate opportunities with InfoReady Review templates to maximize research success in opportunities spanning their individual foci.

Frontline recommendations and best practices

Now that InfoReady Review has been in use in Yale’s Office of Sponsored Projects for over a year, Gina offers the following thoughts to the research administration community:

- *“Don’t make unrealistic expectations from other institutions’ experiences”* – in other words, she believes the best processes for limited submissions, and the most effective use of InfoReady Review, should be customized to one’s particular college or university systems and practices.
- *“Communication with reviewers is key – not just creating training materials but being responsive to their questions.”*

- *“Don’t be afraid to customize the templates – for example, I sometimes use bold type and highlight information to capture people’s attention and I find that extremely helpful.”*
- *“When I realized that investigators may be confused by special interest notices or “dear colleague” opportunity letters, or not even understand these are typically NIH and NSF funding opportunities, I posted all relevant information and resources in the InfoReady system to clarify their relevancy and eliminate some of the confusion.”*

Conclusions

While Yale has its own unique systems and processes, its already notable success with InfoReady Review is a common one across the spectrum of research-focused colleges and universities – a primary reason for its use at more than 150 institutions globally. Common, too, is Gina’s personal experience with the platform and the InfoReady staff: “Everyone at InfoReady has been very responsive and very helpful.”

InfoReady’s extraordinary responsiveness – a key differentiator among competitive platforms – is especially critical because the transition from manual to an automated process tool can create uncertainty and anxiety among users. By focusing as much on “high touch” as “high tech,” our dedicated support team engenders confidence in the product and trust in the Company. To hear such testimonials for yourself, we’ll be pleased to put you in touch with current users.

To learn more about Review, schedule a demo, or get in touch with current Review users, contact Amanda or Max at the contact info below.

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