



State University System
Education and General
2015-2016 Legislative Operating Budget Issue
Form I

University(s):	Systemwide
Work Plan Issue Title:	Clearinghouse for Applied Research Programs Support
Priority Number	
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$175,200
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	\$ 47,444
Total Funds Requested:	\$222,644
Please check the issue type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Issue	√
2014-2015 Non-Recurring Issue	
New Issue for 2015-2016	

I. Description

Overview

The Clearinghouse for Applied Research (Clearinghouse) was established in 1998 to provide a single resource for connecting businesses, government, and the community with expertise and resources available within the State University System of Florida. To support this activity, a small amount of funding was provided to the Center for Information Management and Educational Resources housed within the Florida State University Institute for Science and Public Affairs. The Clearinghouse role was soon expanded to provide a secure online reporting system for the annual Institutes and Centers reports required first by state law and currently by Board Regulation 10.015. In addition, the Clearinghouse worked with Board and university staff to create a secure Graduate Candidates Recruiting System used by the universities to help retain intellectual talent in Florida. The Clearinghouse has since expanded its role even further in support of system issues, often at the request of the Board of Governors Office, but there has been no corresponding increase in funding.

In support of the Board of Governors Office and the State University System, the Clearinghouse operates the resources and business systems outlined below, most of which exist under the Florida ExpertNet brand at www.expertnet.org.

1. Florida ExpertNet (est. 1998)

This online portal lists expertise and resources available in Florida’s universities, including faculty and their research projects, centers and institutes, speakers,

technologies available for licensing, a directory of instructional programs (TalentNet) and a business matchmaking portal (Innovation Exchange).

2. Florida TalentNet (est. 2012)

An inventory of post-secondary training and education programs in the state for all delivery sectors was developed for the Florida Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC.). This is now a component of ExpertNet.

3. Innovation Exchange (est. 2014)

The Exchange provides a customized interface to match businesses with university expertise and resources based on research needs. This is now a component of ExpertNet.

4. SUS Institutes & Centers Online Reporting System (est. 2000)

This secure online system allows universities to annually report to the BOG the activities of all their official research centers and institutes to fulfill the required reporting and monitoring function.

5. Graduate Candidates Recruitment System (est. 1998)

This secure statewide system was developed to identify undergraduate students who are potential candidates for Florida's university graduate programs. This database is used by all state universities and helps to keep intellectual talent in Florida.

6. Volunteer Recruitment System (est. 2010; Inactive)

An online tool was developed to quickly recruit faculty volunteers in response to a disaster. This system was developed for Volunteer Florida after the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. The tool is currently not in use, but can be reactivated in response to another disaster.

Funding Request for Programs and Services

The Board of Governors Office is initiating a funding request to enhance and maintain the Clearinghouse for Applied Research as a system-wide shared resource and service. The funds requested will be used in the following manner.

ExpertNet

- **System Enhancements** – For ExpertNet to remain at the vanguard of expertise systems, it should be upgraded yearly with new features and technologies. Some examples are search engine optimization; repurposing content by pushing data to universities, state agencies, and economic development organizations; integrating the latest social media and collaboration tools; front-end user experience; and improving data management tools for external users; and special reports.
- **Data Management** – Data are collected and processed from many different sources within each of the 12 institutions. This makes data management for ExpertNet

complex and challenging. Data integrity is critical to a successful system. The data collection load continues to increase as new systems are incorporated into ExpertNet. Due to the ongoing collection of additional data and their interconnectedness, the complexity of processing and managing the data has increased. Additional staff is required for data management to broaden the pool of data and ensure data integrity (up-to-date, correct, and complete with meta-tags). Furthermore, Taxonomy and thesauri require updating regularly to ensure that new terms are available.

- Marketing – An ExpertNet marketing campaign is required to maximize its investment and value. An effective marketing strategy is not a one-time event or single campaign but an ongoing commitment. The repetitive and consistent message helps communicate the benefits of a product.

The funds will be used to first develop a strategic marketing plan to include all media formats (print, digital, Web, etc.) and appropriate social media outlets. Subsequently they will be used to implement the marketing plan.

Graduate Candidate Recruitment System

- System Rebuild and Enhancements – This system was created in 2001 and is in need of a complete rebuild with enhancements to improve data access and uploading.
- Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services – These services include customer Help Desk support, additional programming, and Web and database hosting with backups and system updates.

Centers and Institutes Online Reporting System

- System Rebuild and Enhancements – The C&I reporting system was created in 2001 and is in need of a complete rebuild and enhancements to improve functionality.
- Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services – These services include customer Help Desk support, additional programming, and Web and database hosting with backups and system updates.

TalentNet: An Inventory of Instructional Programs

- Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services – These services include customer Help Desk support, additional programming, and Web and database hosting with backups and system updates.

Funding Breakdown by Program and Service

Programs & Services	Current Recurring	New Recurring	New Non-Recurring
ExpertNet			
• System Enhancement		\$51,590.	
• Data Management	\$32,000	\$49,793.	
• System Development and Maintenance	\$77,500		
• Data Collection	\$110,000		
• Marketing and Outreach	\$6,711	\$37,748.	
Graduate Candidate Recruitment System			
• System Rebuild and Enhancement			\$23,722.
• Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services		\$12,023.	
Centers and Institutes Online Reporting System			
• System Rebuild and Enhancement			\$23,722.
• Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services		\$12,023.	
TalentNet: An Inventory of Instructional Programs			
• Hosting, Maintenance, and Support Services		\$12,023.	
Volunteer Recruitment System (currently inactive)			
• Support Services		0.	
• Hosting and Maintenance			
TOTAL	\$226,211	\$175,200.	\$47,444.

II. Return on Investment –

Expertise portals are quickly becoming a major economic development strategy of state university systems and their communities. Florida has been a leader in this area, and Florida ExpertNet was the first statewide system of its kind. Several other states (e.g., Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, and North Carolina) have developed or are developing similar statewide systems. Recently, a representative of a planning committee for an expertise system in Ohio contacted the Clearinghouse. Ohio’s planning committee identified Florida ExpertNet as the best model to emulate.

The most recent addition to ExpertNet is the Innovation Exchange, which helps match businesses with experts and other resources. Development for the Exchange was funded in part by the Economic Development Agency (EDA), U.S. Dept. of Commerce. ExpertNet was honored for this project by the National Association of Development Organizations with a 2013 Innovation Award. This annual awards program acknowledges creative approaches to regional community and economic development throughout the nation.

As the Board of Governors and the State University System fulfills its role as a partner in local and state economic development efforts, there is value in having an expertise portal

such as Florida ExpertNet from which information can be easily retrieved and customized. In addition, the underlying databases provide information that supports statewide strategic planning and program coordination efforts.

III. Facilities - Not Applicable