NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

How The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation Simplified Their Complex Grants and Scholarship Management Process

ⓘ Synopsis

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation has a complex array of processes to manage thousands of grants and scholarships each year. Yet, even with two grants management systems running, they found they still needed to do most of their own configuration. Then, one vendor changed focus and decided to no longer support foundations, meaning the limited amount of help they were getting was about to disappear.

The Foundation heard about SmartSimple's impressive range of online capabilities and the reliability of the platform from colleagues in the community foundation space. The Foundation discovered that they could indeed have their entire suite of programs stored and managed safely from the cloud. Being completely online meant they could handle the complexities of their grants and scholarships much more easily than before, with individual portals for every applicant, reviewer, and team member. The Foundation eliminated paper, put every stage of their programs online and saved money since they only had to pay for what they actually used. The configuration work they had to handle in the past was now supported by SmartSimple, and help was only a click, call or email away.

📊 Key Stats

Client Name: New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

SmartSimple Client Since: 2017

Type of Giving: Scholarships, application grants, donor-advised funds

Dollars Granted: More than $40 million annually

Old System: Grants Edge, Good Done Great

Key Pain Points: Previous online grants management systems were not sufficient for saving time in the application review process

New System Must-Haves: High level of security, regular vendor updates, solid support offering, able to house their entire process in one location, manage multiple application types and programs, able to process scholarships, multiple user access, seamless transfer of data from current system to their new platform

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>
> Hilary Miskoe
> Student Aid and Program Technology Manager
> New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

About the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is New Hampshire's statewide community foundation, founded in 1962 by and for the people of the state. The Foundation manages a growing collection of 1,900 funds created by generous individuals, families, and businesses, and awards more than $40 million in grants and scholarships every year. The Foundation works with generous and visionary citizens to maximize the power of their giving, supports great work happening in our communities and leads and collaborates on high-impact initiatives to make New Hampshire better for all. Their areas of support include arts and culture, civic engagement, education, the economy, health and well-being, and the environment.

Trying to manage with limited system capabilities

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was using a combination of two different grants management systems to administer a rather large number of application grants and scholarships. "This was our first time putting our grant applications online," says Hilary Miskoe, Student Aid, and Program Technology Manager. "The system was inexpensive, and even though our vendor told us we wouldn't need to do any of the customization work, we did, in fact, wind up doing a lot of it ourselves."

"We also learned that our supplier would no longer be focusing on foundation and nonprofit clients. They had decided to change their business model, so the limited support we had would not be there for us any longer," continues Hilary.

The challenge of finding a competent partner

The Foundation had a long and detailed list of features and functionality they wanted in a new system." We certainly didn't want to lose any of the functionality we had with our previous grants management system, but it wasn't the easiest program to use. We were looking for a solution that would offer a great deal more flexibility, a high level of security, integration capabilities, and the ability for everyone — staff, applicants, and reviewers — to be able to use the platform for their part of the grants process."

The Foundation was seeking a platform that would keep them up to date on the latest technology and offered a superior customer support model. "Some of the options we saw would require us to implement a multitude of individual modules to handle each stage of each program, which was not going to work for us. We also wanted multiple users to be able to log into the system at the same time. We'd had to share login for the entire organization with one of our previous systems, and it was not a great solution."

Hilary and her team started doing the research needed to find a new system that would be able to manage their very complex processes. "We must have looked into 10 different vendors, and were able to eliminate over half of them pretty quickly because they couldn't handle the level of sophistication involved in our processes. One vendor even told us right up front they'd be unable to meet our needs."

The Foundation was looking to have the entire system configured but still have the ability to easily reset passwords, modify application forms, intuitive navigation, and have mobile access. "Because community foundations have a very unique granting process due to the number of other organizations we support, we asked a lot of questions of potential vendors and also of other nonprofit colleagues. We wanted to know what other organizations were using and how they were managing."

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powered by aws

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is hosted on Amazon Web Services

Making the move to complete process automation

"We'd heard about SmartSimple, and had received good feedback on the platform. We saw they could provide everything we were looking for." The Foundation presented SmartSimple with a challenging timeline for launching their new solution. "We were working with a very ambitious agenda because we needed to get the new system up and running before our old system expired. SmartSimple completed all the required configuration we needed and kept on track with the demanding schedule we created. Their implementation team presented us with a complete work back schedule, detailing all the milestones set to meet our required launch date. **SmartSimple met every single deadline, so we knew we could rely on their work being done when we needed it.** We never heard 'oh, we'll get to that next week/next month', every aspect was delivered when and as promised."

Up and running

"The biggest advantage of a configurable system over a basic out-of-the-box product is that there are no limits to what you can do. With SmartSimple, we received proper training. We also had — and still have — access to the SmartSimple video channel and the SmartSimple Wiki. If we need to talk to someone, we simply call the technical support team for assistance."

"How important is it that we finally had a completely configurable system? Very! Not only do we have a multitude of programs to manage, we have all the pieces of the application, review and awarding process to complete for every grant and scholarship instantly organized and stored securely in one place."

Another great feature the Foundation likes is their backup system. "It's great to have an entirely separate environment from our live system where I can try out new features and functions, so if I break anything it's not critical to our live environment."

"Being able to administer every aspect of our broad range of programs online has meant there's absolutely no need for paper anymore. We're also really excited about the donor portal. It's such a great feature; any community organization looking for funding can simply log into SmartSimple and see all potential granting opportunities available to them," concludes Hilary. "Keeping everything in one system and being able to centralize our entire program has made the wide range of funding opportunities we offer our communities so much easier to manage."

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About SmartSimple

SmartSimple is a global leader in cloud-based automation software, offering a unique process solutions used by over 300 clients in more than 192 countries. Some of the largest companies in the Fortune 100, as well as global foundations and government agencies, choose SmartSimple to enrich their impact story and create greater efficiencies in their granting processes.

SmartSimple's Community Foundation Solutions

Community foundations of all sizes choose SmartSimple to track, manage and report across all their programs, giving true insight into the impact of their granting, scholarship, and donor funding efforts. SmartSimple partners closely with clients to provide innovative technology to aid their impact story and vital work in their communities. No matter how varied or complex community foundations' challenges are, our intuitive platform is adapted and configured to meet current and evolving needs. For more information or to request a demo, visit www.smartsimple.com.

SmartSimple interacts with over 200,000 unique users a month from over 300 organizations in more than 192 countries.

Our commitment to making processes work better and freeing our clients to do more good goes beyond the technologies we create **– it's at the very heart of our business.**

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Discover more.

Contact us to request a demo that's tailored to your granting needs.

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