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This section contains policy, procedures and guidance used by IRCC staff. It is posted on the department's website as a courtesy to stakeholders.

Introduction of the Grants and Contributions System

Summary

The Grants and Contributions System (GCS) is a new Information Technology application that enhances CIC's grants and contributions (Gs&Cs) officers' ability to complete their work and manage information. GCS is scheduled to be released in multiple stages over the next several years with Release 1.0 launched in January 2015.

Issue

GCS is designed to improve the management of contribution agreements (CAs) and information pertaining to them.

Background

GCS is designed to replace the Word and PDF versions of the documents used to create and to manage CAs for Gs&Cs recipients. GCS also permits officers to store correspondence such as emails in files associated with each CA. Officers will use GCS to

- create and manage recipient organization information such as contacts, branches, and legal history;
- send requests to the Grants and Contributions Financial Management (GCFM) division to conduct the Financial Viability Analysis (FVA) for a recipient;
- complete the Funding Risk Assessment Model (FRAM);
- create, revise, and amend CAs and automatically generate agreement schedules based on the information in GCS;
- create notes to file and add attachments;
- plan and conduct financial and activity monitors, initial consultations, and compliance audits; and
- draft and approve recommendations for funding.

Q4 of the 2014-15 fiscal year will be a transition period allowing officers time to verify and enter all information pertaining to active CAs in GCS. Officers will first enter the information from the original CA and subsequently will add any amendments or revisions to ensure that the history of the file is properly captured in the system.

Business process adjustments

GCS allows supervisors to review and approve the FRAM and agreement reviews (including financial and activity monitors, initial consultations, and compliance audits) directly in system. Officers now complete the FRAM and monitoring reports in GCS and attest to their accuracy before sending them to their supervisor for approval, meaning that handwritten signatures are

no longer required on these documents. Monitoring reports capture the findings of the monitor, recipient promising practices, and follow-up action items. Moreover, GCS replaces the National Monitoring Plan (NMP) by storing information about required, planned, scheduled, and completed monitors.

In addition, officers can begin the process of obtaining Expenditure Initiation (a.k.a. approval to negotiate) and Transaction Authority (a.k.a. final approval) of new CAs and amendments directly in GCS. Officers will enter all of the pertinent information, including the funding recommendation, for the CA or amendment in the system, attest to its accuracy, and then send the CA to a colleague for independent verification. At that point, officers will be able to send the CA or amendment to each departmental official (supervisor, manager, director, and director general) who is required to review the request for Expenditure Initiation or Transaction Authority. GCS will serve as an electronic route slip by capturing the name of each person who reviewed the CA and the date when they reviewed it. It should be noted that original signatures will still need to be obtained from the recipient and the delegated authority at CIC on the CA itself in order for the CA or amendment to be approved, and managers will still need to sign the commitment request form (certification under section 32 of the FAA) in order for funds to be committed in SAP. However, GCS will still record when those approvals took place.

Specialized training will be provided to departmental managers on conducting approvals in GCS. Following that training, GCS should be used to approve the FRAM, monitors and other reviews, new CAs, and amendments.

It should be noted that, at present, GCS does not eliminate the need to maintain paper files. Any documents that contain an original signature, as well as documents related to Gs&Cs business processes that are not yet part of GCS (e.g., payment claims, close-out reports) are still to be kept on the physical file. However, in future releases, GCS will replace these paper files.

GCS automatically generates the CA articles and schedules based on the information that is entered into the system, replacing Word documents and PDF files, with the exception of Schedule 2 (Description of Eligible Costs). As an interim measure, officers will continue to use the PDF version of the Schedule 2 posted on Connexion until GCS is able to produce this document. The information in the *Financial Summary* tab on the *Agreement* screen in GCS will still need to be entered and maintained.

The articles and schedules produced by GCS will still need to be printed so that original signatures can be obtained for the CA. These documents will continue to be maintained in the physical file.

Release 2.0 of GCS is scheduled for June 2015, in time for the next national Call for Proposals process. It will include a Partner Portal allowing applicants to submit their proposals to GCS and officers to conduct assessments within the system.

The Grants and Contributions Information Management System (GCIMS) continues as the system of record for multiculturalism grants. Multiculturalism grants will be incorporated into GCS in 2015.

The Contribution Agreement Management System (CAMS) is no longer in use.

It should be noted that once GCIMS and CAMS are officially decommissioned, data from those systems will be saved and archived.

It should also be noted that the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) income support payments will not be managed in GCS at this time. However, the Department will be incorporating RAP income support functionality in GCS in a future release.

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