



SRA INTERNATIONAL
ANNUAL MEETING
CHICAGO 2024
OCTOBER 26-30



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Building Capacity for Research at a University in a LMIC

Melaine D'Cruze, Adnan Altaf &
Salima Panjwani

THE CONTEXT

A BACKGROUND OF THE INSTITUTION



Established in 1983, the Aga Khan University (AKU) positions itself as a university of and for the developing world.



Guided by its core principles of Quality, Access, Relevance, and Impact, it functions as one single global University with integrated campuses and 11 teaching sites distributed across three continents and six countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and the UK.



The University supports core disciplines in Nursing, Medicine, Teacher Education, Muslim Cultures and Civilizations, and Media and Communications at undergraduate and graduate levels.

A BACKGROUND OF THE INSTITUTION



The university is relatively small with a student body of 3300+, a faculty size of 800+ and around 1300+ staff supporting teaching and learning.



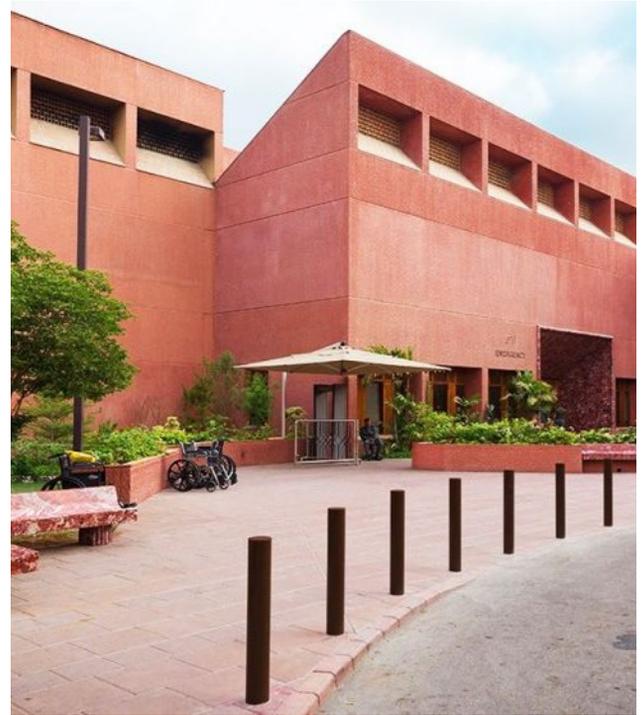
As stated in its mission, AKU aims “to offer programs of international quality; prioritizing teaching and research that underpin intellectual innovation and change; and developing leaders through its educational programs”.

OVERVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH PROFILE

AKU has had a good track record for knowledge creation. However, global research priorities are constantly evolving, and so is AKU's research portfolio.

What will maintain our university's global footprint for decades and centuries to come, is the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

Whether the said knowledge is medical, educational, environmental, or focuses on media and culture, our goal is to foster a research environment that brings together a diverse group of people in their quest for knowledge.



OVERVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH PROFILE

AKU has a 5-year Global Research Strategy in place which focuses on the themes in the diagram.

As we mark the 40th year for AKU, we will continue to expand our research portfolio beyond the borders in which we operate, inspiring budding scientists, researchers, and educators, and creating an identity of knowledge production.



THE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Research Office

Actively Involved in Project



Dr Salim Virani
Vice Provost,
Research



Melaine D'Cruze
Director, Research
Office



Salima Sherali
Research Office



Adnan Altat
Manager,
Research Office



Inara Saleem Ahmed,
Associate, Research
Office



Nabeel Ahmed,
Associate, Research
Office

Project Team

Actively Involved in Project



Irfan Haji,
Project Director



Saher Karim,
Analyst



Muhammad Hayat Khan,
Assistant Manager

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PURE AWARD MANAGEMENT MODULE AT AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

WHAT IS THE PURE AWARD MANAGEMENT MODULE?



Pure Award Management Module (AMM) is a research information management system used by universities and research institutions to streamline various aspects of research administration and management.



This module typically provides functionalities for tracking, managing, and reporting on research grants and awards, including compliance monitoring, and reporting capabilities to Principal investigators, Researchers, and Grant Administrators.



It helps institutions efficiently handle the entire lifecycle of research awards, from proposal submission and approval to post-award management and reporting.



Pure AMM is a valuable tool for research universities like AKU, looking to improve the efficiency and transparency of their research administration and approval processes.

MORE ABOUT PURE AMM



Pure AMM is designed to be a simple and turnkey solution for Research Grants Management.

It is an off-the-shelf solution to manage the complete grants life cycle and would fulfil most of the requirements, identified by the Research Office (Pakistan, United Kingdom, and East Africa) related to grants management and reporting needs.

It captures a wide range of research-related outcomes, publications, and datasets, and can add additional/custom reporting variables.

MORE ABOUT PURE AMM



Pure AMM has a very vibrant user community and innovations/new functionalities and rolled out quicker than the previous system.

Pure AMM works on a proven interconnected data model featuring automated data sourcing, advanced data sharing options having data quality controls.

Workflows can be custom-defined to track the entire funding lifecycle, review opportunities, monitor and submit applications and meet compliance needs.

THE PURE AMM GRANT LIFECYCLE



KEY FEATURES AND FUNCTIONALITIES



Centralized monitoring of all the grants from initiation to close out.



Reporting of all entered content as per requirements.



Automated workflow for approval processes.



Customization of the workflow as per the institution's requirement.

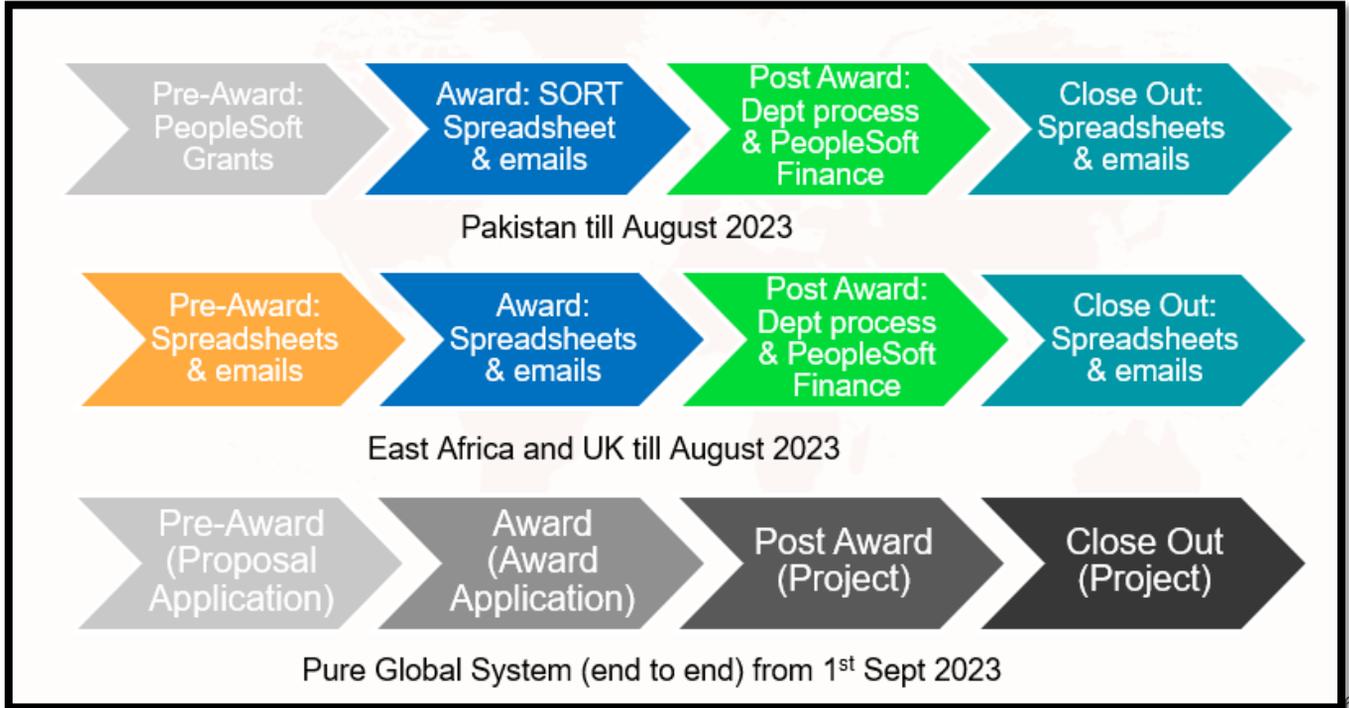


Actions are being recorded at every level which shows the transparency of the system.



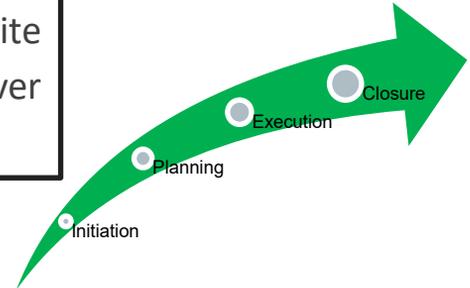
Documentation repository and records are in one place.

BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION



OUR PROJECT STRATEGY

All phases were subdivided into tasks and milestones which needed to be done on specific dates. Despite several changes in the plan, we were able to deliver the project within the timeframe allocated.



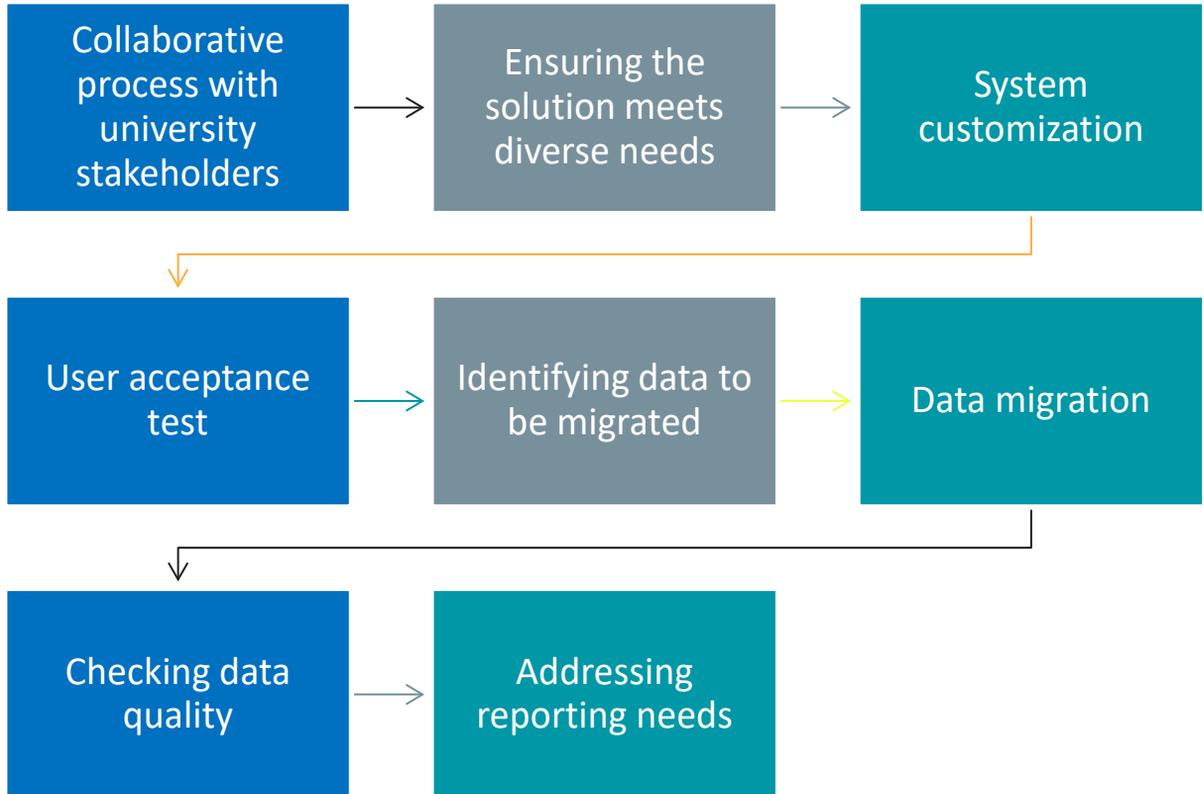
PROJECT REPORTING



Quarterly reports were presented to the University Research Council (URC) chaired by the Vice Provost, Research.

Monthly project reports were shared with the Project Management Office (PMO-ICT).

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



TRAININGS AND SUPER USER CONFERENCE



Recognizing the role of users in successful implementation



Designing effective training programs – More than 40 training sessions were conducted globally



Super User Conference and user feedback sessions



Change management session

SOME GLIMPSES FROM THE SUPER USER CONFERENCE



SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

Data is no longer managed in silos or captured in disparate formats.



Data only needs to be entered once to be easily retrieved for use across the institution.



Accessible to all stakeholders, allowing real-time access to grant status, milestones, and reporting, thereby fostering transparency, and building trust among collaborators.



The module provides better tracking mechanisms for awards, allowing organizations to monitor the status of awards and compliance. This enhances accountability and transparency.



It can assist in generating accurate and timely reports required for audits, funding agencies, or internal purposes.

CHALLENGES & MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Challenges	Mitigation Strategies
<p>User Adoption: Resistance or reluctance from some users to adapt to a new system can hinder successful implementation.</p>	<p>Change Management: Implement effective change management strategies to ensure smooth user adoption and minimize resistance.</p>
<p>Integration: Difficulty in integrating the award management module with existing systems or other modules can be a challenge at the onset.</p>	<p>API and Allocated Resource: Use application programming interface (API) and standardized data formats to facilitate integration with other systems seamlessly. A programming resource is also required from the institutional end for the integration.</p>
<p>Customization: Different organizations have a unique award management processes; thus, the system needs to be customizable to meet specific requirements.</p>	<p>Flexible Configuration: Provide administrator rights to institutions project team to keep monitoring the configuration of the system to meet the organization's unique needs. An IT administrator can help in making this easy for the institution at the initial implementation stage.</p>
<p>Training and Support: Insufficient training and support for users can lead to errors, delays, and frustration.</p>	<p>Comprehensive Training Programs: Develop comprehensive training programs for users and provide ongoing support to address any issues.</p>

THANK YOU