

What is GMAS 2.0?

The Grants Management Application Suite (GMAS) is the engine behind the administration of University's sponsored funding portfolio, totaling over \$800M in annual expenditures. GMAS 2.0 is a project to upgrade the core technology backbone with modern, extensible architecture and address long-standing user requests for usability enhancements and functionality.

During the Planning Phase for the GMAS 2.0 Project, user interviews and focus groups were conducted to understand the top areas of concern with the system. The GMAS 2.0 project consists of two tracks:

1. Convert track to migrate existing GMAS pages to the new technology look and feel and
2. Business priorities track to deliver against the top 3-5 user priorities. Those priorities include:
 - Streamline navigation
 - Design a document repository that improves document management including uploading, downloading, and locating documents
 - Streamline the reconciliation and closeout process
 - Develop general ledger budget entry functionality
 - Add additional request types

Why are we undertaking GMAS 2.0? Why is Harvard implementing GMAS system enhancements?

The GMAS system went live in 2004 and the GMAS 2.0 project allows to a much-needed upgrade on the technical side in order to facilitate quicker changes that are responsive to user needs. The project will also, seek to improve the user experience by adhering to common web application standards and providing a new look and feel to enhance navigation and experience.

How is GMAS 2.0 governed?

The [GMAS 2.0 governance structure](#) is led by the Research Administration Systems Executive Committee, Business Steering Committee, Project Leadership Team and Project Delivery Teams. Each team is responsible for various portions of oversight to ensure that the planning and implementation is a success.

- [Executive Steering Committee](#) – The GMAS 2.0 project leverages the Research Administration Systems Executive Committee as its executive steering committee. The Executive Committee is responsible for providing overall direction, policy review, approval and enforcement, and removal of any barriers to project success. This committee also provides support and momentum for the project, and serves to resolve any conflicts that cannot be resolved within or between the other groups.
- [Business Steering Committee](#) – The GMAS 2.0 Business Steering Committee is comprised of Senior Managers in Central Administration and the tubs responsible for providing guidance with respect to business and information technology needs and priorities, approval of project methodology and order of execution, and removal of any barriers to project success.
- *Project Leadership Team* – Overall leadership of the project including responsibility for generating project strategy. Accountable for monitoring overall project health including financial management, timeline, resource plans/ capacity, issues, risks, cross team collaboration and change management.
- *Project Delivery Teams* – Responsible for delivery of clearly defined, consensus-driven scope for each track within project parameters. The team is also responsible for defining scope for each track, creating a project schedule and tracking/ managing risks and reporting status.

What are the benefits associated with the project?

This project will provide many benefits to system users. Some of these benefits include:

- Updated page template for an improved user experience
- Less dense pages – use of spacing, type and color to create pages that are easier to view
- Hierarchy that makes it easy to understand what information is important

What are some of the new features of the GMAS 2.0 system?

Using both the user research and consulting with industry website design best practices, many user friendly features for the GMAS 2.0 system have been developed. Some of these system features include:

- **Contextual Help/ Tool Tips** – Additional information by hovering over fields or question mark icons
- **Breadcrumbs** – Tracks user location in the system
- **Project Snapshot** – Key project information (account number, description, principal investigator, dates and status) at the top of page that will remain intact as you scroll through the page
- **Collapsed Actions** – Actions collapse when there is more than one action to take
- **Available Actions** – Actions user can take are in blue font and those not allowed provide reasoning
- **Date Calendar** – Pick dates from a date calendar
- **Page View** – wider pages that fit the page and responds to smart devices
- **Relocated Actions** – To-do's, documents, and portfolio included in drop down under the user's name
- **Related Links and Information** – Page related links that open separate pages, information panels with longer help content.
- **Condensed GMAS Header** – GMAS header providing links to projects, people and organization

What is the timeline for the release of the project?

The Research Administration Systems Team will have multiple releases of enhancements to the GMAS system. There are four scheduled GMAS releases a year aligning to the seasons (summer, fall, winter and spring releases).

The first release for the GMAS 2.0 functionality will be delivered with Release 1_39 planned for July 27, 2015 converting 24 pages to the new page format. The pages in scope for this release include accounts, sub agreements, notice, financial award information and action memo lists. Some pages will also be retired with the summer release since that functionality will be enabled on other pages (i.e. removal of edit sub-agreement invoice). With only 24 of the more than 350 GMAS pages, users will toggle back and forth between the old and new page formats as they are using the system.

Future GMAS 2.0 releases will deliver components of both tracks – converted pages and strategic priorities. The team has been working on redesigning the Segment homepage to help decrease the number of clicks to access data. This functionality is planned for Release 1_40 to be delivered in the fall. An exact date for this release has not been identified.

What are the impacts to the system users?

As pages are converted to the new format and layout, users will experience the system differently than they do today. Users will notice a mix of pages in the old and new format since all pages cannot be converted at the same time. Therefore converted pages are targeted for the various releases. For the first release, the team started with the account pages – though not all pages that are accessible from the account page will be updated at the same time.

How will employees be trained on the new/ updated processes and technology?

The training for the implementation of the GMAS 2.0 enhancements will vary by release depending on the impact to users. The Change Management Team will ensure that all existing documentation (i.e., job aids, quick reference guides, and work instructions) are updated following each release. The team will also create new documentation as necessary to help users understand the difference between the current and future page layouts and business processes. Since there is a large user base, training will be delivered as computer based training, where needed.

How will the project communicate with stakeholders?

The Change Management Team has developed an extensive plan for sharing information with stakeholders to prepare them for the release of the system enhancements. As releases near, the project team plans to conduct demonstrations, site visits, office visits, and lunch and learns. The [GMAS website](#) will serve as a central repository for information including announcements, schedule of events, and updated documentation. Users should also refer to [eNews](#) and department blogs for additional project and release information.

Will users be involved in testing the new system functionality?

Yes, the project will plan to do two cycles of usability testing prior to each release where select users from across the schools and central organizations will be asked to navigate the system and provide feedback. The users will include members from the business steering committee and selected other individuals from the wider user community. Users will have the ability to interact with the system and data and provide feedback prior to the changes being released to all users. Interested in getting involved in usability testing – reach out to your [Business Steering Committee representative](#)!

How can I find out more information about the project/ system enhancements?

Please be sure to visit our [GMAS website](#) for the answers to many of your questions and to find out more about GMAS 2.0. If you have specific questions, please send them to Simone Alpen, Project Director, at simone_alpen@harvard.edu.