



Client Success Story

Advancing Research Audit and Grants Compliance



Client

A private R1 institution seeking a fresh perspective on internal audit and a service provider with specialized knowledge of emerging risks in higher education. Deloitte has served as the institution's internal audit provider since 2008.

to maintaining a strong annual audit process, the institution needed support identifying risk areas across campus, enhancing awareness of risk management responsibilities among university leaders, and improving compliance, controls, and operational effectiveness related to research activities and grants management.

across their functional areas. These efforts informed the development of the annual internal audit workplan and helped the institution maintain a more strategic and informed approach to internal audit planning.



Issue

The institution wanted to strengthen its internal audit function by bringing in deeper subject matter knowledge on emerging risks affecting higher education, particularly within research and sponsored programs. In addition



Approach

Executing a Comprehensive Risk Assessment Process

Deloitte performed annual comprehensive risk assessments across the campus and worked closely with leaders to build understanding of the risk assessment process and how to identify, monitor, and manage risks within and

Building Risk Management and Controls Awareness

To strengthen the broader control environment, Deloitte provided risk management and controls training opportunities throughout the year for university professionals. These sessions not only increased awareness of risk and compliance responsibilities, but also allowed the internal audit function to regularly engage with the wider campus community and build stronger relationships across the institution.

Assessing Emerging Research and Grants Risks

Deloitte also delivered specialized audits focused on emerging risk areas, including a Grants Management Audit and a review of Office of Sponsored Projects Accounting processes and procedures. As part of this work, Deloitte conducted a current state assessment of sponsored projects accounting and developed a recommended roadmap aligned to leading practices. The review covered policies and procedures, training and monitoring activities, people, process, and technology across the end-to-end grants management lifecycle, as well as overall compliance risk. Deloitte also performed grant compliance reviews focused on cost eligibility, effort reporting requirements, and opportunities to strengthen internal controls such as segregation of duties, approvals, reviews, and closeout processes.



Impact

Through this work, the institution was able to mitigate risk and improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance of its research activities. Deloitte identified opportunities to enhance internal controls, strengthen processes, and improve compliance activities tied to sponsored research. The institution also benefited from access to specialists in grants management, along with benchmarking and leading-practice insights from across the higher education sector.

For more information,
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