

Case Study: University of Vienna

A researcher-centric approach to
research reporting and evaluation



Research Intelligence

Pure

Your brilliance, organized for action

Make confident program decisions, streamline funding analysis and forge new partnerships with complete, correct, current and connected information around research activities.



Executive summary

The University of Vienna is a renowned public university and one of the oldest and largest universities in Europe. With a 651-year history, it has garnered an international reputation for having a highly diverse student community and a wide variety of degree programmes.

According to the 2016 QS World University Rankings, the University of Vienna scored an impressive 94.4 in its appeal to international students and an outstanding 96.9 for its international faculty. Having a total of 6,800 researchers and 94,000 students across 65 locations across campus, it is Austria's largest research and education institution – and it continues to push the boundaries of groundbreaking and innovative research in its ERASMUS-Partnership with 350 of the best universities worldwide.

Background

In Austria, it has been mandatory since 2006 for universities to produce an annual Intellectual Capital Report, and many universities developed their own in-house Current Research Information System (CRIS) to primarily meet mandate requirements.

By 2011, the University of Vienna concluded that maintaining and upgrading its in-house CRIS would be cost-prohibitive and began looking for industry-leading alternatives that were researcher-centric. In 2012, it settled on Pure by Research Intelligence, and deployed it under the name “u:cris”. Since then, the university has seen significant improvements in researcher engagement with the campus CRIS system, the management of research resources, as well as in research processes and administration.

Challenge

The University of Vienna's in-house CRIS solution is called Research Activities Documentation (RAD), which ran from the time of the mandate in 2006 to 2012. Through the years, demands of the system had evolved and its user experience needed to be more sophisticated for greater efficiency.

These factors, coupled with the fact that ongoing maintenance and further development were becoming prohibitively expensive, led to the university's decision of looking outward for a more suitable solution, with the needs of the users placed in top priority. At the same time, the university kept in mind that the statutory requirements had to be met, and that research-related data had to be transparent with data quality maintained.

Solution

During the evaluation of suitable CRIS solutions available externally, Pure stood out from its competitors as a dedicated system built for the academia, evolved from years of engagement with myriad institutions of higher learning globally.

The Elsevier team also had vast experience in system implementation, and could assist in deploying the solution for a broad scope of activities. The Pure system proved to be aligned with the researcher perspective – which was a key reason why the selection team felt that it was the best system to fulfill the university's full range of objectives.

At the core, Pure manages research and researcher-related data with a user-friendly interface. This prompted participation from researchers to continuously populate and utilize research data. Its well-established framework also encompasses components for administration and processing, further future-proofing the university from ever-changing demands with flexibility and scalability.

In order to fulfill the Austrian government's annual Intellectual Capital Report mandate, the University of Vienna needed a CRIS solution.

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“To maintain its leadership as Austria’s most extensive academic institution, the University of Vienna looked to overhaul its Current Research Information System (CRIS) with a solution that would be well-accepted and easily utilized by its researchers, the library and the administration. To meet reporting requirements mandated by the Austrian government since 2006, it was imperative for the university that the chosen research information management solution provided capabilities that could adapt to the institution’s evolving needs and requirements.”

– MICHAEL GREIL
Head of Research Information System,
University of Vienna

The successful synchronization of master data from the campus management system and the migration of legacy data gave rise to a centralized database for all of the university's research-related information, resulting in trusted, comprehensive and accessible data in real time. Also, being committed to maintaining high standards of data protection and security as its top priority, the university is able to host Pure and store all its data in its internal servers and nowhere else.

To advance the use of Pure, the university is studying the Award Management module as it will allow for a structured grant application process and provide an overview of awarded grants and related projects. With this in mind, user group meetings are being planned in various locations across Europe – to share best practices and discuss insights about adoption at an international level.

Mr. Greil and his team are now able to:

- Authenticate the validity and reliability of research information
- Improve visibility of the institution's researcher profiles and data on the open web
- Log research data with greater ease, as data only needs to be entered once, even across multiple projects

Conclusion

Pure has given the University of Vienna both a more panoramic and granular view of its internal environment, and equipped it with improved data collection to drive strategic business decisions.

By enabling decentralized data registration, Pure also gives researchers full control over their data and profiles, as it helps them submit their data with greater ease.

“During the tender process, it was a very clear decision to choose Pure. Pure had the highest score based on our criteria, and it was very important for us to work with a vendor that had experience with higher education institutions.”

“Pure is a solution that extends beyond the organization and accumulation of data. It has played a vital role in identifying the value in our institution's research output and increasing our institutional visibility.”

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“Developing an in-house solution is not cheaper than having a system like Pure, which is designed to support and manage many different aspects of research. You can’t develop this in-house with normal IT services – this is an expert system.”

— MICHAEL GREIL
Head of Research Information System, University of Vienna



Pure can be configured to provide easy-to-use online researcher profiles, making it easier to highlight your researchers' unique strengths. Pure's public portals can be branded to match a university's identity.

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The world's leading research information management system that enables evidence-based decisions, simplifies research administration and optimizes impact, reporting, and compliance.

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Elsevier offices

ASIA AND AUSTRALIA

Tel: + 65 6349 0222

JAPAN

Tel: + 81 3 5561 5034

KOREA AND TAIWAN

Tel: +82 2 6714 3000

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Tel: +31 20 485 3767

NORTH AMERICA, CENTRAL AMERICA AND CANADA

Tel: +1 888 615 4500

SOUTH AMERICA

Tel: +55 21 3970 9300



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