ANNEX D: TGMS Business Capability Model

1 Introduction

The Tri-Agencies grants management process spans from program design to end of grant reporting. The below describes this process, including some of the current user pain points, to help contextualize the intended solution.

Arrange

The design of a funding opportunity is characterized by decisions defining the research objectives, budget, applicant eligibility, terms and conditions, etc. In some cases, collaborative agreements are made between the Agencies and partnering organizations to develop and implement funding opportunities together. The Canadian research landscape continues to evolve as do the elements of the funding opportunities and their program requirements. The Agencies collaborate with partners, including development, agreements, budgets, and collecting associated data to enable accurate reporting.

Agency administrators launch and modify funding opportunity set up. Funding opportunities are advertised on the Agencies external facing sites, promoted through campaigns, and evaluated through questionnaires. The Agencies currently launch approximately 300 funding opportunities per year, that employ a variety of application forms/components, strategic directions, peer review models, scoring scales, etc.

Once the funding opportunities are posted, researchers and research administration staff (at their institutions) search for and identify relevant funding opportunities to which they are eligible, and which align with the objectives and impacts of their research. Once identified, the applicants (who may be academic or non-academically based), often with support from the research administration staff at their institution, develop their research proposals, and prepare their applications to submit to the Agency (s) through their portal.

Agency administrators manage and allocate the program and competition level budgets according to the determined funding structure and program design. In preparation for the influx of funding applications, internal Agency administrators begin to identify appropriate peer reviewers to conduct peer review on all funding applications received by analyzing the historical application and peer review data. Additionally, Agency administrators and analysts perform analyses on data to inform decision making at the program and competition level.

Apply

The applicant(s), often with the support from their respective institution's research administration staff, prepare their application, which generally consists of CV information for the participants, a research proposal, budget information, sponsor letters, and any other relevant attachments (depending on the funding opportunity, this could include video attachments in some cases). Depending on the type of funding opportunity, the applicant might prepare their application in collaboration with some combination of applicant level funding partners, other domestic and international researchers, and trainees. During this process, agency administrators field questions related to system use and funding opportunity specifications.

In many cases, our users interact with the agencies in multiple roles, such as applicant and peer reviewer, so they complete multiple role-related tasks (such as application and peer review related tasks in the example above). Each user (both internal and external) has a profile which contains personal and professional information that is used to complete their tasks, and information relating to their roles and access.

Following the submission of an application, institution research administrators access the application portal to review the application for eligibility and completeness and submit the application to the Agency.

Assess

Once applications have been approved and submitted by the institutions, agency administrators receive the applications through the portal and verify them for eligibility and completeness. Agency administrators assign peer reviewers (or staff reviewers in some cases) to funding applications within the portal so that the peer reviewers can then gain access and complete their reviews (i.e., scores, written comments, binning, etc. this can vary between funding opportunities). Peer reviewers submit their reviews through the secure portal. Agency administrators conduct quality assurance checks on reviews submitted to ensure appropriateness and breadth of review in preparation for in-meeting discussions. Staff coordinate meeting, travel, and logistics for the discussions. Peer reviewers provide consensus scores and post-discussion ratings during peer review meetings that are used to identify which funding applications will be recommended to receive funding. During off-site peer review meetings, peer reviewers provide their ratings to Agency staff in a secure way to enable them to be tracked, compiled, and reported on as part of the competition results. These meetings can be held virtually in some cases. The concept and methods of peer review processes are evidence-based and not subject to change.

Award

Agency administrators produce decision documents, and communicate results securely to applicants. The institution research administration receives any relevant data on these decisions for their reporting purposes. Funds are released and paid to the institutions, where research grant administration manage the funds received and provide funds to the researcher through institutional financial systems. In some cases, funds are transferred directly to the recipient.

If unsuccessful, applicants often re-use content from their previous submissions to re-apply to funding opportunities using the application portal.

Administration

Once the funding awards are issued, agency administrators monitor the release of funds to the institutions/applicants, monitor the continuing eligibility of applicants (working with the institutional research administrators), and process amendments to the grants/awards should request arise from funding recipients. This may include, changes in personnel on the grant, relocating the grant, should the recipient move to another eligible institution, requests for leaves of absence, etc. Funding recipients are required to update and report on the use of their funds to institution and Agency administrators. Agency administrators also regularly review the allocations of funds, and re-profile funding where necessary.

The agencies also monitor the controls and processes that institutional research administrations use to ensure compliance with the rules in place governing the use of funds. In some cases, this can lead to additional monitoring and investigation of an individual or institution. The agencies also have a secretariat that monitors investigations into allegations of misconduct against researchers. These investigations can often result in sanctions against researchers (such as application or peer review suspensions) which are communicated to Agency staff to ensure they are adhered to.

Acquit, Evaluation & Monitoring
The Tri-agencies need to conduct consistent evaluations on the research processes, to ensure ethics in federally funded research, and that funding opportunities are achieving their objectives. They also need to monitor progress of their grants and awards, and their impacts.

Analytics
The agencies receive regular requests for analyses of data and respond to questions from both parliament and the general public. Data is used to perform quantitative and qualitative analysis and interpret/report on results reliably and timely to be shared with a multitude of internal and external stakeholders. Data integrity is of extreme importance.

Stakeholder Management
The Agencies are in regular communication with their stakeholders, and track this correspondence to ensure consistency, continuity and avoid duplication of efforts. They also have the need to share Protected B information with some of these stakeholders in some cases in a secure manner.

Continuous Learning
The agencies support their applicants and peer reviewers with the provision of learning materials to help them better understand how to best apply to our funding opportunities or to support them with the assessment of proposals. Completion of learning materials is self-managed and is often a required task for applicants, and peer reviewers, in support of excellence in research and peer review.

Program Budget Management
To fully consume funds, Agency administrators may need to distribute unused funds from the budget into additional research awards or new budgets. The transfer of funds between budgets supports the strategic management and oversight of our budgets to best support research excellence in Canada.

The core GMS software solution should have functionality to address the grants and awards management lifecycle from the perspective of both those funding and administering grants and awards programs, the grantors, and from the perspective of the research communities seeking and using funding.

Figure D-1: TGMS Initiative Business Capability Model illustrates the scope of the grants and awards management lifecycle and identifies the high-level processes associated with each stage.

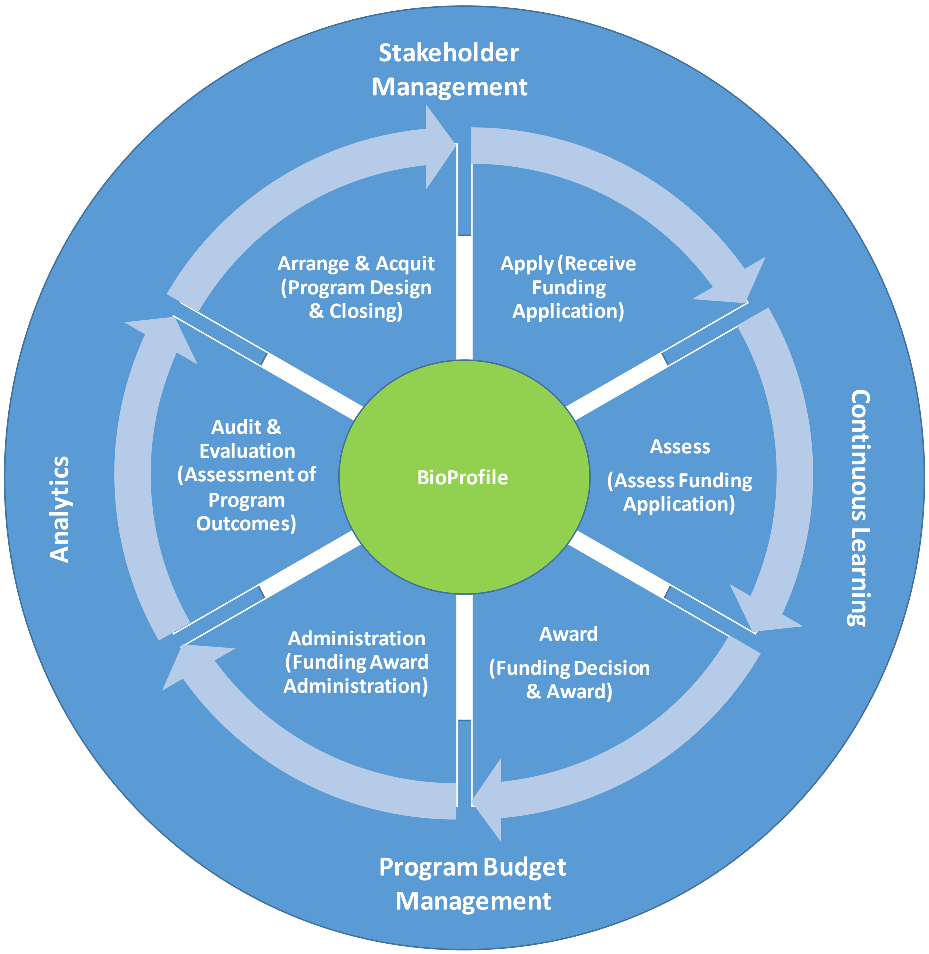

Figure D-1: TGMS Initiative Business Capability Model

These business capabilities are further sub-divided as illustrated in Figure D-2: TGMS Initiative Business Capability Model Detail.

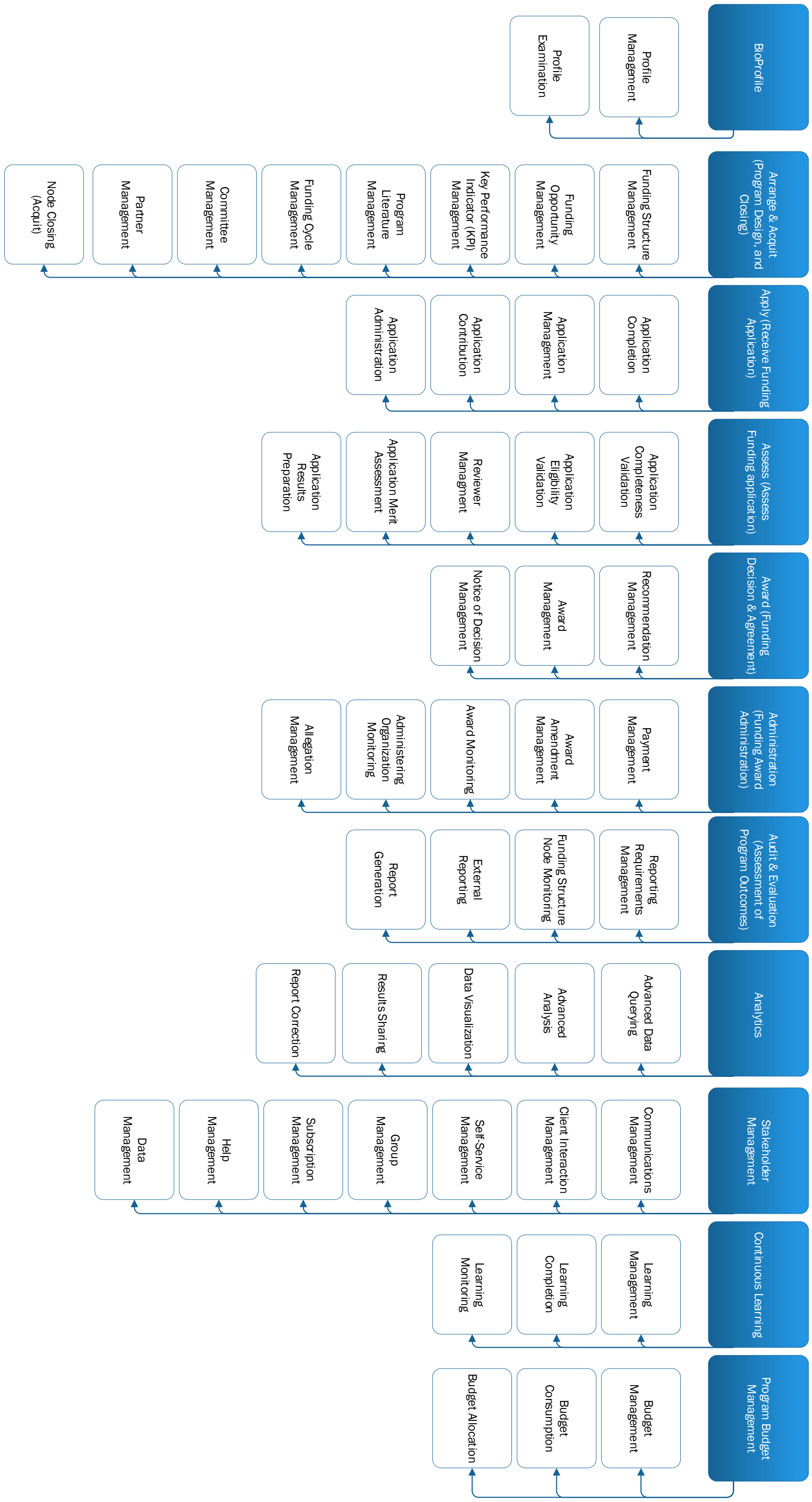

Figure D-2: TGMS Initiative Business Capability Model Detail