



## E-procurement technology helps Board of Regents implement an effective strategic sourcing initiative

SciQuest spend management solutions increase time and cost efficiencies for Tennessee Board of Regents

### | Situation |

With 46 institutions and a combined annual enrollment of over 200,000, the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) system is among the nation's largest systems of public higher education. TBR comprises six state universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technology centers. The system is a \$2.2 billion per year enterprise.

The TBR's Purchasing and Contracts Department is responsible for managing system-wide procurement and contracts within the laws of the State of Tennessee, federal purchasing and contracting regulations, and the policies and guidelines of the Tennessee Board of Regents, ensuring that they receive the best value possible. It's an ambitious undertaking given the enormity of the system. Add to that a decentralized environment and things get much more complicated.

### | Challenge |

Many of the institutions within the TBR network were managing their own supplier relationships, which not only led to considerable inefficiencies, but it also meant that on a larger scale, the system was not taking full advantage of its aggregate purchasing power.

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According to Angela Gregory Flynn, TBR Director of Purchasing and Contracts, one of the biggest challenges the TBR was facing was a lack of strategic sourcing. "It was difficult to begin any kind of effective strategic sourcing initiative since we did not have a system in place that allowed us to view our spend collectively. We were particularly interested in spend analytics, and being able to see the whole picture."

TBR evaluated a number of e-procurement systems before ultimately deciding to utilize the competitively awarded SciQuest contract available through E&I. The agreement represented significant savings with a trusted and knowledgeable e-procurement provider.

### PROJECT PROFILE

**Institution:** Tennessee Board of Regents

**Location:** Nashville, TN

**Founded:** 1972

**Combined Enrollment:** 200,000+

**Project Background:** The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) was looking for an effective e-procurement system to help manage its system-wide procurement activity – including six state universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technology centers. In its quest to become more strategic, the TBR was particularly interested in receiving spend analytics data. E&I's SciQuest contract provided the perfect e-procurement solution to help standardize the TBR's supplier management processes and create system-wide operational efficiencies.

### | Key Benefits |

- The SciQuest solution has allowed the TBR to focus on strengthening its strategic sourcing activities by negotiating better rates for all institutions.
- The TBR is now able to make more informed decisions based upon the spend analytics data provided by SciQuest.
- End-users have benefitted from significant cost-saving efficiencies available through the new automated system, freeing up more time for them to focus on more strategic initiatives.



*“I would certainly recommend E&I’s SciQuest contract to other member institutions who are considering an effective e-procurement solution.”*

- Angela Gregory Flynn, TBR Director of Purchasing and Contracts

## | Challenge | *cont’d*

“One of the things we found most appealing was SciQuest’s experience with higher education institutions. They have a genuine understanding of the nuances of the business process associated with higher education,” Flynn said. “This distinction was important to us.”

## | Solution |

SciQuest’s spend management solutions have enabled TBR to centralize and automate previously manual and labor-intensive tasks such as registering suppliers and uploading this information to the network’s existing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

By helping standardize supplier management processes across schools, SciQuest will create operational efficiency improvements that free up existing resources and save money. Suppliers will also have the ability to keep their information up-to-date, enabling TBR staff to focus on more strategic initiatives.

TBR is implementing the SciQuest system in three phases to ensure a smooth process for each of its institutions, as well as central office. Full implementation typically takes between 16-20 weeks, and SciQuest is readily available to provide hands-on training and support.

“Understandably, we’ve received some pushback with regard to the new technology, as well as concern about having to learn a new system and adjusting to the change,” Flynn said. “We’ve worked with SciQuest on addressing these issues, and they’ve been flexible, when possible, in accommodating our schedule and our comfort level.”

The SciQuest solution has allowed the TBR to focus on

strengthening its strategic sourcing activities by negotiating better rates for all of its institutions. According to Flynn, the true value is in spend analytics and the ability to make more informed decisions based upon this information. She added that users have also benefited from the cost-saving efficiencies available through the new automated system.

“I would certainly recommend E&I’s SciQuest contract to other member institutions who are considering an effective e-procurement solution. We are looking forward to more positive results as we complete implementation across the entire system.”



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