FLUXX | GSMA™

GSMA'S INNOVATION FUND AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLUXX FOR GRANTS MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The GSMA Association is a global organization representing mobile operators. Its mission is to bring together mobile operators worldwide to design new standards, policies, and technologies that drive mobile connectivity. Within GSMA, the Mobile for Development Foundation operates at the intersection of the development community and mobile operators, focusing on improving lives in developing regions through mobile technology.

THE INNOVATION FUND

The Innovation Fund, part of the Mobile for Development Foundation, is dedicated to providing grants to startups in developing regions. Its mission is to empower these startups to develop technologies that address pressing issues, such as climate change and digital utility access. The fund aims to facilitate initial grants that can attract further investment, ensuring that end users benefit from innovative solutions. The Innovation Fund team coordinates multiple funding rounds that can each receive more than 400 applications that need to rapidly move through a robust assessment and due diligence process to create global cohorts of grantees addressing pressing humanitarian challenges.

CHALLENGE

Prior to implementing Fluxx, GSMA's Innovation Fund faced significant challenges in managing its grants process:

1. **Fragmented Systems:** The team managed grant applications and communication across various platforms, including email, Microsoft Teams, and SharePoint, leading to inefficiencies and confusion.

2. **Communication Silos:** There were disconnects among team members, including operations, grant managers, compliance teams, and external fund managers, resulting in a lack of cohesion and streamlined communication.

3. **Inability to Scale:** With plans for increased funding rounds and team expansion, the existing systems could not support the anticipated growth or the complexity of managing overlapping funding initiatives.

THE FLUXX APPROACH TO ONBOARDING

In order to reach GSMA's programmatic milestones, the traditional end to end onboarding process was adapted by Fluxx's premier implementing partner Social Edge Consulting and delivered in a carefully coordinated and collaborative phased roll-out alongside the Innovation Fund team. The onboarding team gathered requirements for the first round of applicant registration and intake that needed to go live and rapidly deployed it while gathering requirements for the subsequent processes in the grants lifecycle. This allowed GSMA to launch Fluxx, begin collecting and reviewing applications while completing their buildout of contracting and post-award functions in the platform which were each released as that phase of the process was reached. Combined with robust collaboration and training, this iterative and dynamic approach enabled a smooth transition and strong user adoption as the Fluxx platform scaled to meet the needs of the program to ensure grant funds were awarded and distributed in a timely manner.

THE FLUXX SOLUTION

After assessing their needs, GSMA chose Fluxx as their grants management system because they loved Fluxx's compliance & due diligence capabilities and knew Fluxx would provide a centralized platform to manage the entire grant process, addressing the challenges of visibility, communication, and compliance.

KEY FEATURES OF FLUXX

> **Centralized Management:** Fluxx allowed all stages of the grant process to be managed in one place, from application through to reporting, which increased visibility and coordination among team members. GSMA's Operations Manager, Matt Jones, noted "Fluxx connected teams as well with different profile roles and user roles, where all elements of our various teams were able to come in, access what they need, and gather the information because everything is stored in one place."

> **Improved Grantee Experience:** By creating a formalized portal for grantees, Fluxx provided a dedicated space for grantees to access all requirements and deadlines, making the process feel more tangible and structured. "We've got more than 200 applicants and 40 grantees moving through the process, and this is the cleanest user experience we have worked with," said Matt.

> **Standardized Processes:** Fluxx enabled the Innovation Fund to implement consistent processes across teams, reducing variability and increasing accountability. A 3-part application with separate eligibility, compliance and due diligence forms and workflows was configured to streamline the intake process, which led to an internal workflow with 3 distinct review rounds all tracked in one place.

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➤ **Built-in Compliance Checks:** Fluxx incorporated compliance functions that minimized reliance on human oversight, reducing the risk of errors in reporting and oversight.

➤ **Dynamic Milestone Tracking:** Fluxx ensured the Innovation Fund could capture and report upon milestone targets as part of the pre-award application process. Milestones are dynamically embedded into post-award grantee reports to deliver visibility into progress and success metrics without manual configuration or the need for grantee intervention. The data around milestones and their progress is structured within the system, rather than in living in spreadsheet attachments, and is therefore easy to aggregate and report on across the portfolio.

RESULTS

Since implementing Fluxx, the GSMA Innovation Fund has realized significant benefits:

1.Increased Visibility: Operations Manager Matt Jones noted that Fluxx has dramatically improved visibility into the progress of grants. This allows for proactive management of deadlines and milestones. "We came to Fluxx because it had the functions to manage our compliance and due diligence functionalities and also had the ability to manage our whole end to end processes all in one place," said Matt.

2.Formalized Grantee Engagement: The improved grantee experience has fostered better relationships, with grantees having clear access to requirements and timelines. "Prior to Fluxx, the grantee used to go onto an application portal, and when it came to reporting, we just let the team know the reports they have to submit," said Matt. "What Fluxx did for us is create a formal platform that applicants can go on and see all their requirements. It creates a space where the grant feels more real for them, which I think has been a great tool from the grantee experience side of things and actually wasn't something that we anticipated when we first started exploring Fluxx."

3.Standardized Operations: Processes are now consistent across the team, allowing for better communication and less confusion regarding responsibilities. "Because things were siloed, processes that we had agreed to were sometimes done in different ways," said Matt. "Now we've got a process implemented and built on Fluxx, and we all follow it."

4.Reduced Human Error: By incorporating compliance functionalities within Flux, the fund has minimized reliance on manual processes, leading to more accurate reporting and oversight. "Fluxx has given us the ability to build in checks and balances through functionality rather than leaving it to human competency," noted Matt. "We've struggled with our manual processes, so working with Fluxx is leading to more accurate reporting and oversight."

FUTURE PLANS

Looking ahead, GSMA is excited about further integrating and optimizing their use of Fluxx. Future initiatives include:

- ➤ **Enhanced Configuration and Extensibility:** Exploring Fluxx's capabilities to build dynamic models and improve the due diligence process. "We are at the start of our Fluxx journey. I think the initial build lasted about six months and at the moment, we've got a platform that meets our needs perfectly, but we want to think about the future and continue to build on the platform," said Matt.

- ➤ **BI & Data Visualization:** Leveraging Fluxx's advanced data business intelligence and visualization tools to present insights to senior management more efficiently.

- ➤ **Team Onboarding:** Utilizing Fluxx to support the onboarding of new team members, ensuring they can quickly adapt to the platform.

- ➤ **Process Improvement:** Continuously evaluating existing processes to identify areas where Fluxx can facilitate greater efficiency and effectiveness. "We're going to look at what Fluxx is offering at the moment, look at our processes, and then look at what Fluxx can add to those processes and how to streamline and improve them. We're always evolving and appreciate that we now have a grants management system that will grow with us," noted Matt

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Fluxx has positioned GSMA's Innovation Fund to achieve its mission of empowering startups in developing regions. By streamlining operations, improving communication, and enhancing compliance, GSMA is now better equipped to effectively manage its grants and ultimately make a significant impact in the organizations it serves.
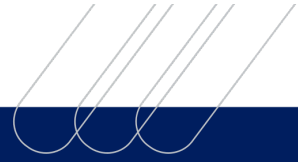
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ABOUT FLUXX

Fluxx is the cloud platform that powers impact in philanthropy. Fluxx connects givers and doers, creating capacity, increasing visibility, and improving collaboration for organizations throughout the philanthropy ecosystem. Hundreds of the world's largest foundations and tens of thousands of nonprofits rely on Fluxx to streamline their funding processes, get data-driven insights, and drive more impact.

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