



Case Study : Australian Red Cross

# How Australian Red Cross strengthened efficiency, collaboration, and compliance

## The challenge

Australian Red Cross lacked a centralized system to manage their hundreds of contracts and grants. They needed to make it easier for staff to collaborate and share information, and ensure strong compliance.

## The solution

ARC implemented NGO Online to bring together program, project, and grant management in one integrated system, configured to their specific needs.

## The outcome

ARC staff enjoy increased efficiency and stronger collaboration in managing projects, contracts and grants. They can easily share documents, control file versions, and work together within the shared system. Using NGO Online also helps ARC demonstrate robust compliance with donor requirements.

**NGO online**  
by precio fishbone 



# How Australian Red Cross strengthened efficiency, collaboration, and compliance

## The challenge: Efficiently managing files and contracts between far-flung offices

Australian Red Cross (ARC) supports numerous vulnerable communities at home and abroad. To do so effectively, all ARC staff need to be able to quickly find, store, and share vital information. But with around 2,000 staff spread across a huge continent and further afield, this often proved difficult without a shared file management and collaboration system.

ARC also didn't have a centralized way to manage their hundreds of projects, contracts, and grants. They realized they needed to strengthen and streamline their approach to ensuring compliance with their donors' requirements.

The fact that staff were so geographically dispersed meant that any roll-out and training for a new system would have to be mostly remote. Catherine Tinel, ARC's project manager for implementing the new system, explains: "We work a lot with people we've never met and will never meet, and so in any change management and engagement that's a very strong consideration we need to have."

## The solution: A flexible, user-friendly system integrating program, project, and grant management

ARC wanted a centralized platform to manage their projects, contracts, and grants as efficiently as possible. It had to integrate with their existing Microsoft systems. And they needed it to offer enough flexibility to accommodate different departments' structures.

NGO Online was top of their list as it met all these needs. ARC implemented NGO Online for their international program department in 2016. They started implementation for their larger, more complex domestic program in 2018.

Introducing new ways of working can be challenging in any organization. It requires careful planning and advocacy to help ensure staff are cooperative and positive about the changes. Catherine found this was made easier because onboarding staff into the new system was straightforward.

"It's not a huge learning curve for staff because as a tool NGO Online is user-friendly, with plain English and a clear navigation structure. And because the technol-

ogy itself isn't difficult, we're not consumed by technical issues or inefficiencies in the system. Instead, we can focus on the heart, which is the people. So that's something I like, compared to other projects I've managed where the technology was heavy and cumbersome and annoying. That's not the case for NGO Online, and in my role that's a big plus."

## The outcome: Better collaboration, compliance, and continuity

Now, ARC staff can easily find and share all the information they need to carry out their day-to-day work. They can collaborate better, even half-way across the globe.

"Having an online platform like NGO Online – as opposed to having zillions of versions of documents in local laptops and Google Docs and USB sticks and so on – that's made a big difference in terms of efficiency and working together."

ARC's international program now runs everything through NGO Online. "It's the core of their operations." The new system has also boosted ARC's ability to prove compliance with donor requirements for managing

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Catherine Tinel, Project Information Management System (PIMS) project manager

contracts and grants. This has been noted in several external audits. A 2018 federal government audit found NGO Online had been instrumental in the strong performance of ARC's international program.

"The audit report really highlighted NGO Online, with a big, big green tick, as a key element of risk reduction, better collaboration and so on. And that means more confidence from our donors and auditors, greater donor satisfaction and trust in our processes."

### **Continuing vital work in extraordinary times**

ARC's domestic program of work is larger and more complex, so their adoption of NGO Online has unfolded more slowly. But here, too, it is steadily becoming more critical to ARC's operations. This applies to both routine projects and emergency responses such as bushfire recovery work in early 2020.

"People increasingly understand the benefits of using NGO Online. It enables people to work in a smart way to achieve their goals and improve the way they work."

When the COVID-19 outbreak started, NGO Online proved crucial to business continuity plans in Western Australia ARC. "They knew that if some things had to switch off, if somebody tested positive for COVID-19 and suddenly couldn't work, NGO Online was trusted to be the platform where people could find all the info they needed to carry on critical project work."

"Precio are always reliable, professional and responsive. And I really think they're proud of their work, I think they

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care for their client's successes, and that's nice. They were really on board throughout the process, and have the pride which goes with a great sense of customer service."

**To find out more about NGO Online's unique, comprehensive software solution for NGOs, get in touch:**

**[ngoonline.net](https://ngoonline.net)**



## ABOUT

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NGO Online is a cloud-based program, project and grant management IT solution specifically designed for international humanitarian and development NGOs.

NGO Online is developed by Precio Fishbone, a product and consulting company focused on SharePoint and Microsoft 365 based solutions. We have customers in Europe, Asia and North America supported by approximately 250 employees in Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom, Canada and Vietnam.

Together with our partners, we have assisted some 1000 customers with their digital solutions.

Precio Fishbone is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm First North Premier.

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