

SRI International Alumni Association

2020 Hall of Fame Award

Presented to

Paul Finnigan

**for exceptional contributions to the enduring success of SRI International.
Presented on this fifteenth day of October, two thousand and twenty.**

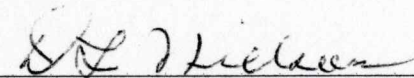
In 1966, when SRI had about 2,000 employees, the institute was in a precarious financial position because it lacked consistent project accounting procedures. Increasing project overruns were red flags to the federal government, SRI's largest client, and were leading to significant losses. A project control system was needed to identify revenue sources, track related expenditures, and monitor the cash flow of individual projects. Paul Finnigan was hired to lead a program to develop such a system.

As a first step, Paul's team quickly conducted a financial audit and was shocked to find that the outstanding invoices represented an estimated total of roughly half SRI's annual revenues!

The team spent several months analyzing SRI's operations and drafting specifications for the Project Status Report, the now familiar and ubiquitous PSR at the core of all SRI projects. Paul was charged with executing the measures that were essential to establish financial control. Some measures seemed draconian to the staff but were necessary. For example, all staff member credit cards were rescinded to reel in uncontrolled and untracked spending; future purchases required the controller's personal signature. A travel company also was engaged to ensure that all travel costs were reimbursable according to contract specifications.

Development and implementation of the PSR brought full accountability to SRI projects and led to financial stability. Paul's appointment as controller resulted in a financial model that accurately forecasted weekly cash flow, and a year later SRI was profitable and had achieved positive cash flow.

The entire management team admired the efforts to set SRI on a sound financial footing. Paul was appointed to serve on committees that set the direction of the institute, and he was also invited to join the Management Systems Division where the team promoted SRI's Management Information System concepts to SRI clients worldwide.



Don Nielson, Chair
Alumni Association Steering Committee