



Project Managers Feedback

How are projects managed in IT?

PMO Team

January 2023

Outlook

- **The Whiteboard**

- **Summary of input for each section**

- Milestones
- Deliverables
- Schedule
- Communications
- Stakeholders
- Risks
- Costs

} Let's try to discuss these ones today!

} These ones can be material for future CoP meetings if we don't have time today

The Whiteboard

<https://it-project-office.web.cern.ch/templates/>
it-project-office.web.cern.ch

IT Project Managers Workshop
The workshop aims at collecting feedback from IT project managers so we can work together to provide project portfolio information needed for decision making.
In the longer term, the PMO would also like to track other aspects like the project steering committee, list of stakeholders, communications plan, project personnel, risks, costs...
During the workshop, we would like to gather feedback from you on how you currently manage all these areas within your project(s).

Project Manager/Project	Stakeholders	Schedule	Milestones	Deliverables	Risks	Costs	Communications	Comments
<i>This is an example</i> Maria (PMO)	Stakeholders are identified and defined in JIRA. Team project stakeholders management. It's an area for improvement in the future.	We are using a standard tool for project management. We also use JIRA tasks with start and end date, also projects, with start-date.	Milestones are defined in JIRA and in our yearly Strategic.	There are milestones.	The plan to start internal risk management is not yet started yet.	We don't do any cost management for the time being.	We haven't defined a communication plan yet, but we would like to define one in the future.	Add more info with comments. You may want to edit.
<i>Write your input in this column</i> Tim Bell (BC/DR)	Not clear on stakeholders where the IT department is the sponsor. Should the IT be the stakeholder?	I tried to using an excel chart to create a timeline, with a common chart for stakeholders to see the addition to the schedule which was difficult to see things in excel.	I ended up tracking milestones in the excel sheet. In addition to the schedule which was difficult to see things in excel.	I tried to use milestones but it was too complex.	High level risks listed on the excel sheet.			
Hannah Short (WLCG IAM)	Very clear, we have a working group in WLCG and contacts with each experiment.							
Michal Kolodziejcki / Google Workspace	Clear and concise with the use of JIRA. The use of JIRA is very helpful for the project.	Simply used the Project Plan with clear dates. Tried to use different charts available on Confluence but it was hard to design it in an easy to use way.	Defined in the Project Plan.	Defined in the Project Plan.	Defined in the Project Plan.	Defined in the Project Plan.	Defined in the Project Plan.	
Adrian Mönich / Indico-JaCoW	Known: JACOW group and Indico. Not clear on the other stakeholders.	Deadlines set for changes that are considered a major point. Other tasks done as they come.	No explicit milestones, unless you count individual tasks.	There are deliverables, mostly development of a particular feature.	Stakeholders management is not yet started.		JACOW team will report on the work on the website.	It has been a while since we had a meeting. I would like to see if we can have a meeting in the future.
Jan Ivens/AFS migration	Formal representatives from department/keeper limits in 2017, but not up-to-date since 2021.	Various, including JIRA task-based, manual high-level diagrams. No single up-to-date schedule.	Milestones: identified, displayed on diagrams, dropped after much IT-internal slippage.	Only external deliverables - listed to milestones.	Identified early on (project was risk-driven) but not updated later.	Some IT-internal cost tracking, but most effort was dispersed outside OIT and untracked (with few exceptions).	OK with stakeholders (meeting/emails), so with general community (TUM, "start/stop" messages) communicated through CEREN at various speeds.	The AFS migration project is done with a lot of milestones and risks. However, no explicit communication plan. It is a complex project, depends on future compute models. It is a long-term solution for Risk.
Antonio Nappi/Modernisation of regular jobs architecture (Kubernetes) used by FAP and EDMS	FAP-BC, EDMS team and ourselves.	Mostly using JIRA tasks and epics. I split the tasks based on user communities and different requirements.	Defined again via JIRA and Epics.	As milestones.		VA resource for 2 years.	Regular meetings with stakeholders and a dedicated JIRA dashboard for tracking progress and common tasks.	
David Collados/DBOD Backup & Recovery Automation and High Availability for PostgreSQL								
Thomas Baron/Exchange Online Migration	Stakeholders are all CEREN departments. There are many projects that are related to Exchange Online. It is a complex project.	Long-term: tactical quarterly plan and OTG for public announcement. Short-term: JIRA tasks and epics.	Milestones are clearly identified (migration of a given department) and linked with the long-term project plan.	In this case, deliverables are linked to milestones, there is no formal deliverable acceptance process defined.	The main role of the project was to identify the critical tasks and to improve and formalize the process of implementation.	No real material cost.	A communication plan was written with the IT departments. Communication is done by regular emails, while stakeholders, and while stakeholders, and while stakeholders with the (GRC) and level support teams.	
Borja Aparicio Cotarelo/Implementation of								

- Instructions to fill in the board
- Pick up an empty row
 - Edit the project manager and project name
 - Edit the post-its to add your input for the different sections in the project plan. Try to be concise and write only a few lines with the main ideas.
- Stakeholder Management**
How do you manage stakeholders in your project? Are they identified? How do you interact with them?
- Schedule**
Do you have a clear timeline for your project? How do you estimate task duration? Do you use a tool?
- Milestones**
Are the main milestones of your project identified? How do you track progress?
- Deliverables**
Are the main deliverables of your project identified? Do you have a deliverable acceptance process defined?
- Risks**
Are the main risks of your project identified? Do you know how to perform a risk assessment? Do you manage risks?

Unreadable and difficult to navigate

The board is a bit intimidating because it's large and impossible to visualize

The board looks lightweight enough, so I'll add something

I had not considered the project for the Whiteboard as it is currently on hold

I wasn't thinking of adding anything as my project is very simple and I think I can learn more from others

- Whiteboard hasn't been a good choice for collaboration → Point taken!
- Everyone should feel entitled to provide feedback in any case!

Which projects have provided feedback

8 out of 26



Technical Delivery

Indico-JACoW
Adrian Mönnich

Exchange
Online
Migration
Thomas Baron

AFS Migration
Jan Iven

Implementation
of CEPH
Storage
Borja Aparicio

Development of
Hadoop and Big
Data
Manuel Marin

Modernisation
of regular jobs
architecture
Antonio Nappi

2 DBoD
projects
David Collados

4 out of 14



Business Engagement

Google
Workspace
Michal Kolodziejcki

BC/DR
Tim Bell

Unifying experiment-specific
monitoring
Domenico Jordano

Exascale Token
Support for FTS
Luca Mascetti

2 out of 30



Innovation

OpenWebSearch
Andreas Wagner

Onboard
Paolo Tedesco

13 out of 46



Summary

- Very valuable insights so far to start discussing
- More knowledge is available in the department that we should take into account

To discuss

Shall we collect more feedback via i.e. a project manager's survey or computing blog article?

The project plan has been kept to the minimum (main milestones and deliverables), shall we keep a section to describe best practices? Shall PMO summarise this?

Milestones

Project Manager

Tim Bell	I ended up tracking milestones in the excel sheet in addition to the schedule which was difficult to keep things in sync
Michal Kolodziejski	Defined in the Project Plan
Adrian Monnich	No explicit milestones, unless you count individual tasks
Jan Iven	Milestones: identified, displayed on diagrams, dropped after much IT-internal slippage
Antonio Nappi	Defined via JIRA and Epics
Thomas Baron	Milestones are clearly identified (migration of a given department) and linked with the long-term public project plan
Borja Aparicio	Mapped as JIRA issues. Time management via Sprints
Andreas Wagner	Milestones are clearly defined in the Project Proposal and Consortium Agreement
Paolo Tedesco	Gitlab epics
Manuel Martin	The priorities and milestones are well defined and we use JIRA epics as a tool to track them
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascoiu	Codimd and JIRA epic
Domenico Giordano	Main milestones are identified. JIRA is used
David Collados	Milestones are defined at the beginning of the project. Progress is tracked weekly with meetings and JIRA sprints
Maria Alandes	Milestones are defined in JIRA and in our yearly timeline

Summary

- Milestones identified in most cases
- JIRA seems to be widely used

To discuss

Do you think the list of milestones help you and your stakeholders convey on status updates and keep track of schedule?

Do you think using a tool like JIRA helps you identify milestones?

How could the PMO help those project managers who struggle to identify milestones?

Deliverables

Project Manager	
Tim Bell	Ended up duplicating the milestones data into the deliverables. These can probably be merged.
Michal Kolodziejski	Defined in the Project Plan
Adrian Monnich	Tasks on GitHub project board; usually development of a particular feature
Jan Iven	Only external deliverables - linked to milestones.
Antonio Nappi	Defined via JIRA and Epics
Thomas Baron	In this case, deliverables are linked to milestone, there is no formal deliverable acceptance process defined
Borja Aparicio	High level deliverables defined in the project charter as objectives
Andreas Wagner	Deliverables are clearly defined in the Project Proposal and Consortium Agreement
Paolo Tedesco	Gitlab epics
Manuel Martin	JIRA epics
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascoiu	Gitlab/github, JIRA and software product/packages
Domenico Giordano	Main deliverables are identified. JIRA is used
David Collados	Main deliverables are clear but we don't have a well defined process for deliverable acceptance. Functionality and performance testing will be done together with our users.
Maria Alandes	Deliverables are defined in JIRA and in our yearly timeline

Summary

- Deliverables also identified in most cases
- JIRA also widely used
- Milestones vs Deliverables?

To discuss

Do we need a deliverable acceptance process? Is this up to the project manager with their stakeholders? How can the PMO help?

Schedule

Project Manager

Tim Bell	I ended up using an excel sheet for the schedule. JIRA is an interesting possibility for the short term tracking but I don't think it is as good for a high level of view (e.g, over 2 years) for a project. Tracking the tasks in multiple places is hard work too
Michal Kolodziejcki	Simply used the Project Plan with clear dates. Tried to use different charts available on CodiMD but it was hard to design it in an easy to read way.
Adrian Monnich	Deadlines set for changes that are needed at a certain point; other tasks done ad-hoc
Jan Iven	Various, including JIRA;text-based, manual high-level diagrams. No single up-to-date schedule
Antonio Nappi	Mostly using JIRA tasks and epics. I splitted the tasks based on user communities and different requirements
Thomas Baron	Long-term: textual quarterly plan and OTG for public announcement short term: JIRA tasks and epics
Borja Aparicio	JIRA issues, organized in an epic within the project that gathers all the issues part of the Storage platform used for databases
Andreas Wagner	Timeline of project clearly defined in the Project Proposal and Consortium agreement
Paolo Tedesco	Gitlab issues, epics and timelines
Manuel Martin	We use an agile approach that follow the priorities defined in the project plan. However, we are also flexible to adapt depending on users and stakeholders requirements. We use mainly JIRA.
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascoiu	We have a shared timeline within WLCG and JIRA to keep track of tasks
Domenico Giordano	JIRA epics and issues are used to define tasks and track progress
David Collados	A timeline is defined at the beginning of the project in an Excel document and is reviewed quarterly. For the different tasks we use JIRA with Sprints and tickets/tasks are organized in Epics.
Maria Alandes	We are using a timeline built in PowerPoint. We also use JIRA tasks with start and end dates, also progress, with Gantt chart.

Summary

- Schedule could refer to a master plan but also a more fine-grained coordination schedule
- Different tools used
- Effort to keep it up to date

To discuss

How important is it to have a master plan (it shouldn't change much as it's a high-level view)? Do we want to provide a particular tool/template for that?

How important is it to keep a coordination schedule (i.e. Gantt Chart)? Do PMs use this? Does it depend on project complexity?

It seems it's difficult to keep project schedules up to date, is it still something we want to adopt as a best practice? What can PMO do to make this simpler?

Communications

Project Manager

Michal Kolodziejcki	Defined in the Project Plan however it was quite a complex thing to do without any knowledge of how information should be spread across CERN
Adrian Monnich	JACoW Slack team, all very informal (which is fine on both sides)
Jan Iven	OK with stakeholders (meetings/emails), so-so with general community (ITUM). "start/stop" messages percolated through CERN at various speeds
Antonio Nappi	Regular meetings with stakeholders and a dedicated jira dashboard for tracking progress and common tasks
Thomas Baron	A communication plan was written with the IT communications team. Communication is done by bulletin articles, email notifications, and direct contacts with the DAOs and local support teams.
Borja Aparicio	Review meeting every Friday focus on objectives description, progress review and supervision. Higher level communication with other stakeholders happens on-demand
Andreas Wagner	Communication on project level handled by WP7 (Dissemination, Exploitation & Communication) WP5 Federated Data Infrastructure communication via bi-weekly progress meetings and ad-hoc workshops with other WPs/
Paolo Tedesco	No comm. plan behind meetings w. stakeholders
Manuel Martin	We have dedicated monthly meetings with the main stakeholders to evaluate status, intervention, risks, growth, evolution, and make sure that everything is being executed as planned
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascioiu	Dedicated meeting with stakeholders: WLCG DOMA general meetings and WLCG DOMA BDT meetings
Domenico Giordano	Weekly meeting with the monitoring experts. Occasional reports during the software & computing weeks
David Collados	Internally with regular meetings. Our external stakeholders through Mattermost, SNOW, and face to face meetings.
Maria Alandes	We haven't defined a communications plan yet, but we would like to define one this year

Summary

- Ad-hoc communication strategies (more or less formal) depending on project impact
- EU projects can provide useful experience
- OK with IT stakeholders, not so clear with end users
- Most data is about communications related to external stakeholders

To discuss

Shall we engage with IT communications team to define communication best practices for IT projects?

Which internal communications channels are used? Section meeting/Group meeting reports? Any other technical board/meetings in IT? Outside IT? ITUM?

How can we minimize the effort in communication making sure we reach out to all internal and external stakeholders with minimum effort?

Stakeholders

Project Manager

Tim Bell	Not clear on stakeholders where the IT department is the sponsor. Should the IT-SC be the stakeholder?
Michal Kolodziejski	Quite clear however while filling in the Project Plan it was unclear to me how extensive this list should be. For example, should the IT Dept Head be included as one of the stakeholders?
Adrian Monnich	Known: JACoW people and Indico team (in case of changes to the Indico core)
Jan Iven	Formal representatives from department+experiments in 2017, but not up-to-date since 2021
Antonio Nappi	FAP-BC, EDMS team and ourselves
Thomas Baron	Stakeholders are all CERN departments. They are approached either directly through their local support teams (FHR, ATS) and dep secretariats, or through the IT engagement team (for EP)
Borja Aparicio	CERN computing account owners subscribed to the DBOD service - IT-DA-DS as holders of the project - IT-DA-DB as providers of DBOD service - IT-ST as providers of CEPHFS via Openstack - IT-CS as providers of Openstack and the interface with CEPHF via Manila
Andreas Wagner	Project Partners are clearly identified
Paolo Tedesco	Meetings every 3 months, frequency to be increased as soon as we have a MVP to gather feedback
Manuel Martin	Some the stake holders are very well identified like BE-CSS (NXCALS), We run dedicated infrastructures for them and we have monthly meetings and dedicated communication channels. Others are more like communities where we have identified representative for instance for ATLAS Experiment, IT-DA-MMS (Monitoring), IT-GOV (Security)
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascioiu	WLCG Community (Experiments, T0/T1/T2/T3 Sites), OSG (Open Science Grid), EGI (European Grid Infrastructure) Communities
Domenico Giordano	IT groups: IT-GOV-ENG, IT-DA-MMS, LHC Experiments, WLCG Monitoring Task Force
David Collados	Our stakeholders are the DBOD team and a few DBOD users. By now interaction is done via regular meetings.
Maria Alandes	Stakeholders are identified but we don't have proper stakeholders management. It's an area for improvement in the future

Summary

- Most PMs seem to be able to identify their stakeholders, but “granularity” not clear
- No data about stakeholder management though

To discuss

Do we think stakeholder management is important? Shall we organize a specific session about this?

How do you come up with the list of stakeholders?

How do you decide what you need from each stakeholder?

What are the key messages for each stakeholder and how do you pass them?

Risks

Project Manager	
Tim Bell	High level risks tracked in the excel sheets.
Michal Kolodziejcki	Defined in the Project Plan
Adrian Monnich	Stakeholders misunderstanding functionality, new requirements coming up later
Jan Iven	Identified early on (project was risk-driven) but not updated later
Thomas Baron	The main risks of the project were identified and exposed during the CRMB review, mitigations were proposed and for most of them implemented
Borja Aparicio	Possibility of poorly balanced benefit and investment. Depending on strategy, TCO and scalability
Andreas Wagner	Risks identified in project (hiring of qualified staff and issues procuring hardware)
Paolo Tedesco	Risks identified in occasion of IRB review (Project delay, Competition)
Manuel Martin	No specifics risks were identified during the project plan. However, this is a follow up project for the services so risks were inherited from previous development. We have identified a few of them and make aware of those together with the possible mitigations to the stakeholders
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascioiu	Directly impact WLCG data challenge 2024, communities needs to agree on a common solution, interoperability issues between grid infrastructure
Domenico Giordano	High level risk identified. Having clear, common tools & procedures to perform a more detailed risk assessment would be appreciated
David Collados	No particular experience with risk assessments but for us a risk is not having the manpower to maintain the implemented service functionality when the project will end.
Maria Alandes	We plan to start doing risk management as of next year but haven't started yet

Summary

- Basic risk analysis done on a few projects
- EU projects do risk analysis
- No data about risk management though

To discuss

Do we think risk management is important? Shall we organize a specific session/training about this?

How do PMs identify risks?

What happens with identified risks?

Costs

Project Manager	
Michal Kolodziejcki	Defined in the Project Plan
Jan Iven	Some IT-internal cost tracking; but most effort was dispersed outside of IT and untracked (with few exceptions)
Thomas Baron	No real material cost
Borja Aparicio	Besides the HR cost, no additional resources are needed for the completion of the project
Andreas Wagner	All costs covered by the Horizons Europe project (2 fellows for 3 years, and hardware resources)
Maria Alandes	We don't do any cost management for the time being
Paolo Tedesco	No cost management. Project funded with special DG funds.
Manuel Martin	For instance for NXCALS we receive the material funds from BE and we adequate to those. For general purpose we are collecting contact metric to predict the growth and therefore the future requirement and cost associated
Domenico Giordano	Material cost: pc and training for the single fellow involved in this activity
Luca Mascetti & Mihai Patrascoiu	No material costs are foreseen for the execution of this project. Equipment for development, testing and deployment are considered minimal and included in the overall FTS service operational costs.

Summary

- Very little cost management due to low number of projects with material costs

To discuss

Do we think cost management is important? Shall we organize a specific session/training about this?

It's probably worth aligning with future DPO and overall cost management strategy (i.e. what's needed from projects?)



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