



InspireD

Quality Management Manual (abstract)

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1. Introduction

The present document is an abstract of the Quality Management Manual (QMM) which has been realised in the frame of the EC-funded initiative entitled "Inspired" (IST-2002-507894). It provides management and quality control procedures to facilitate co-operation within the EC-funded project called "INSPIRED". InspireD is an EC-funded project under the 6th framework programme for research & technology. It gathers 18 partners from various European countries who gather to provide a common work on the next generation of smart cards.

In order to follow ISO 9001 principles, a clearly written policy statement on the objectives for, and commitment to, product and service quality must be available. The INSPIRED Quality Management Manual (QMM) constitutes that policy statement for the INSPIRED project. It is also complement to all other important documents like the EC contract and its annexes, the Consortium Agreement and the various EC guidelines.

A private project website will be used extensively for facilitating INSPIRED cooperation and coordination and many of the documents and tools described hereafter are implemented on it.

The Sixth Framework Programme is implementing some major changes, as compared to the previous framework programmes, which will improve the flexibility while having consequences on the project management. The guidelines contained in the QMM should contribute to tackle these issues to the best benefit of all.

2. Main section

2.1 The QMM provides guidelines on:

2.1.1 Project Organisation

There are several entities governing the different aspects of the project. These entities include the General Assembly (GA), the Executive Board (EB), the Subproject Management Teams (SP1-MT and SP2-MT) and the Innovation Management Team (IMT). The Project Director, the Technology Manager¹, the SP leaders and the WP leaders have special roles and responsibilities within this bodies and specific operations and actions are expected from them, as seen in the table on section 4.

2.1.2 Project Procedures

These procedures, based on effective personal commitment and common sense, should help minimising overhead and avoid "reinventing the wheel". They make up the main section of the present guidelines.

2.1.3 Communication

Three different kinds of communication are distinguished: internal, external and towards the EC. For internal communication INSPIRED will extensively use electronic means to facilitate communications and exchange of information between the partners. For this purpose a private

collaborative website is used (<http://www.eurtd.org/project-inspired>) as well as e-mailing lists. These e-mailing lists should be used using a set of simple specified rules to avoid proliferation of messages and increase the relevance of these exchanges. Teleconferencing should be used for short meetings limited to a small number of participants to increase their efficiency.

External communications or publications should be done by ensuring there is no conflict of interest with the other project partners. A request for publication should be made to the Executive Board. A specific folder for posting such requests has been arranged on the private website.

Concerning communication with the EC, since the project coordinator is the official interface, all formal exchanges of information should be handled through him.

2.1.4 Meetings:

The Project Calendar includes several types of meeting, each with its own scope. Good practices for all type of meetings are given in these guidelines as well as the definitions of the responsibilities for the meetings

2.1.5 Document management:

During the lifetime of the INSPIRED project, many documents will be produced. Some simple rules should be followed to facilitate document management Responsibilities or ownership of documents are specified as well as other general rules of formats, in section and instructions on the level of confidentiality of the documents

2.1.6 Production of deliverables:

Some deliverables are contractually bound to submission to the EC. The consortium has also defined "internal" deliverables listed in the descriptions of the different work-packages. Before launching the production of the deliverable, a deliverable owner should define the document structure and the contributions expected from each partner in a preliminary document named Deliverable Development Plan or DDP. A deliverable structure is also proposed in the QMM, as well as quality check procedures, including the peer review requirement

2.1.7 Reporting and progress monitoring:

The EC will monitor progress of the project through progress reports, deliverables and project reviews. Internal reporting will be used to track project progress and identify rapidly problems and risks, in order to enforce pro-active management. The internal reporting will be implemented through status reports every 6 weeks and activity and resource consumption reports every 3 months. The information provided will be used to detect eventual problems by comparing them to a set of indicators, used to monitor progress defined in the planning stage or at the beginning of the project. INSPIRED will use technical and scientific, resource and performance and state-of-the-art indicators. The responsibility of the monitoring of each of the indicators is indicated in these guidelines. Because of the higher autonomy of FP6 projects and the relatively long (annual) EC reporting and project review periods, the project will carry out internal assessments every 6 months similar to the EC project reviews.

2.1.8 Annual reviews

Together with eventual audits, they will condition the EC payments to the coordinator. The EC might be assisted in reviewing the project progress by external experts who are subject to a confidentiality agreement. Approbation of deliverables and reports will be made according to the results of the review.

2.1.9 Risk management

Due to the higher autonomy of FP6 projects the risks incurred by the consortium partners are higher than in projects of the previous Framework Programmes. At the beginning of the project, a thorough risk analysis should be carried out, covering the entire project. Identified risks will be reported in the 6 weekly internal reports. Each Work-package Leader is responsible for identifying any risks related to his own work-package as early as possible. The Project Office will consolidate the information provided in a status register in order. The risks will be classified and a colour displayed as a function of the exposure which is calculated as a function of the probability and the impact. The Inspired SP leaders will regularly monitor the status register and initiate appropriate contingency actions after consultation of concerned partners and the Executive Board if required. The Executive Board will review the content of the status register and the status of actions decided at each regular Executive Board meeting

2.1.10 Financial management

Rules are laid down in Annex 2 (Part B) to the EC contract and are further detailed in the EC document "Guide to Financial Issues relating to Indirect Actions of the Sixth Framework Programmes". Financial statements have to be produced yearly, and submitted through the Coordinator to the EC. Audit certificates can be requested by the EC from each contractor for each Financial Statement. Payment handling involves the coordinator receiving EC contribution on behalf of the consortium. Money transfer to each partner according to the procedure and schedule defined in the Consortium Agreement is under the responsibility of the Coordinator. The Project Office will monitor the payment process and takes care of the project accounting. In particular, the Project Office follows-up total expenses per contractor and activity per period compared to what was planned in the budget, based on the 3-monthly internal reporting. A common cash pool dedicated to common expenses will also be created and monitored, based on the share of budget per partner. There may be some cases where decisions cannot be made or actions cannot be undertaken according to the defined rules. This may be the case, for instance, when any unforeseeable event prevents application of agreed rules and immediate action is required.

2.1.11 Deviation plan

FP6 offers some flexibility which allows dealing with certain deviations from plan through the updates of the 18-month implementation plan, the possibility of re-allocating the budget and the provisions for the evolution of the consortium. Several actions could be envisaged and taken by the General Assembly to palliate the problems arising from the difficulties encountered in the progress of the project.

- At the end of each 12-month reporting period, a new 18-month implementation plan has to be provided. The same procedure as for the deliverable production will be applied. The production of the new Implementation Plan is under the responsibility of the Project Director and will be coordinated by the Project Office.
- Contractual management (includes contract amendments, change of key personnel and amendments to the consortium agreement. A request for a contract amendment has to be decided by the General Assembly and then requested by the coordinator who acts as interface with the EC. In case of personnel replacement the EC must be informed by writing. An amendment to the Consortium Agreement needs also to be decided by the General Assembly
- The external collaboration is also one aspect linked to the deviation plan, to the possibility to update the project orientations... External collaboration will be carried out through a user panel, through FP6 programme activities and through collaboration with other related projects and programmes. A group of potential users invited to cooperate with the consortium will get privileged access to information mainly through a shared space of the private website and dedicated User Panel meetings. They will give in return their views based on expertise in application and end-user requirements. Also, proposals for

cooperation with other initiatives will be made by the partners to the Executive Board for decision.

2.2 Additional information

The Quality Management Manual describes management and quality control procedures meant to facilitate cooperation of the project partners and to ensure that the output produced by INSPIRED is in-line with the expectations of its stakeholders: the partners, the EC, potential users of this technology. The definition and implementation of efficient decision making, coordination and monitoring practices are key for a successful large European RTD collaboration project.

Also, INSPIRED being a long-term project the people involved in management tasks may change during the project lifetime. Clear procedures will assist newcomers joining the project and help them to become quickly operational.

Management of an Integrated Project (IP) must take into account the requirements that are inherent to inter-organisational collaboration:

- In the INSPIRED project, partners with complementary background and skills are collaborating to achieve a common objective, share experience and know-how and develop new knowledge.
- The collaboration of the project partners is based on consensus and joint decision-making, involving different levels of decision-makers in different domains (strategic, technical, financial, and administrative). The project organisational structure and decision-making rules need to be clearly defined.
- Work must be organised and planned in a result-driven way. Whilst the internal work organisation is the matter of each partner (as long as commitments are met), the interactions between partners working at distance must be efficiently planned for and followed-up based on the flow of results. Common planning must hence be a reference for everybody and must always be up-to-date.
- The effectiveness of meetings between the partners is absolutely critical to the progress of work. An inconclusive meeting can cause serious delays, risks and costs.

This document has been prepared following principles of the ISO 9000 standard. In its most basic form this standard requires that you:

- Say what you do: have documented procedures for the work affecting product or service quality.
- Do what you say: carry out the work in accordance with the written procedures.
- Have the records to prove it: show documented proof of compliance to auditors, providing objective evidence.

By describing what is actually done, writing it down and then seeing how it can be improved, many of the requirements of ISO 9000 can be met. In addition, there are a few additional activities which the standard requires:

- A defined organisational structure with clear responsibilities;
- Internal Quality Audits;
- Management Review through regular meetings.

In order to follow ISO 9001 principles, a clearly written policy statement on the objectives for, and commitment to, product and service quality must be available. The INSPIRED Quality Management Manual constitutes that policy statement for the INSPIRED project.

2.3 Who is concerned?

The guideline of this document have been written to help the persons in charge of the various management tasks in the project:

- Technical / scientific coordination (WP leaders, SP leaders, Executive Board members);
- Partner representation (General Assembly members);
- Administration (persons responsible for contractual or/and financial issues).

3. Conclusions

The present document should be considered as a complement to all other important documents that the persons with management responsibilities should have read and have access to while the project is running: the EC contract and its annexes, the Consortium Agreement and the various EC guidelines. A list of such key documents will be maintained by the Project Office on the project private website.

A glossary with the terms used within these guidelines and a table referencing the tools and documents described are included in the QMM.

4. Glossary

CPF	Contract Preparation Form
DDP	Deliverable Development Plan
DoW	Description of Work (the “Technical Annex” to the EC contract)
EB	Executive Board
FP6	Framework Programme 6
GA	General Assembly
IMT	Innovation Management Team
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
PEKH	Pre Existing Know-How
SPMT	Sub-Project Management Team
UP	User Panel
WP	Workpackage