

Project Initiation Document Guidance

Project/Programme Details

Project/Programme Name			
SRO (Sponsor)			
Project/Programme Manager			
Group/Directorate			
Start Date		Completion Date	

Document Details

Version	Status (Draft or Approved)	Date	Author/Editor	Details of changes

Background to the proposed work - Describe the potential change, idea, and problem. Where it fits into the wider business/political context. Why it should be done now and the implications of not doing it

Describe the potential change, idea or problem. Describe the circumstances, decisions, previous work that has lead to this PID being produced. This should make it clear:

- what is the overall purpose of this project?
- what previous actions/decisions lead to the current position?
- why it needs to be done?
- why it should be done now?
- what the end result of this project should be?
- what are the implications are of not doing it?

Objectives

Objectives should provide a clear definition of what the project must achieve in order to be complete and successful. This section might start "Completion of this project will result in....."

Objectives should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. Avoid words like improve, optimise, clarify, help etc. These are vague words that mean you cannot measure your result. Project objectives should contribute towards and be consistent with higher level programme and/or business plan objectives

How does the purpose of the project break down into specific objectives?

Objectives

What specific, measurable results are expected at the end of the project?

The objectives should be phrased such that they can be used to measure completeness and success at the end of the project.

Scope

The Scope should make it clear what are the boundaries of the work, what areas of work will be included and what is outside the scope. Where work could or should be divided into phases, a definition of scope for each phase should be given.

The scope may be defined in terms of such things as:

- the boundary between this project and other projects and programmes – this helps prevent gaps or overlaps in all the work that is necessary to achieve higher-level corporate or programme objectives
- the work that the project must do, and what it is specifically excluded from doing (you might refer to the list of deliverables if you feel it is complete at this stage)
- the geographic spread of impact (changes affecting England and Wales but not Scotland and Northern Ireland)
- the coverage in terms of the organisation(s) and types of role/staff/people/organisations that will be affected by changes arising from the project (all staff in Grades X-Y, stakeholders of type S, market segments M-N)

The scope should be sufficiently detailed to form a measurable baseline for subsequent change control so that the damaging effects of 'Scope creep' can be minimised.

Be specific about what is excluded from this project to avoid any misunderstandings later on.

Business Case (Benefits and Costs)

The desired benefits identified in the Project Brief should now be defined in as precise and measurable a manner as possible. If you have produced a Business Case with detailed analysis of benefits you may cross-refer to it rather than duplicating the fine detail here. In any case it should be clear what are the desired benefits to be gained from undertaking this project, whether they are tangible/intangible, quantifiable/unquantifiable, who will be the beneficiaries and the value and estimated timing for realisation of each benefit.

The information provided here (either directly or via a link to a separate Business Case document) must be sufficient for the Project Board to decide whether or not it is justified for the project to proceed and whether it is affordable.

The benefits identified in the Project Brief should be quantified and their timing of realisation estimated. They should be balanced against the costs and timings estimated during preparation of the Project Plan (see below).

Business Case (Benefits and Costs)

For smaller projects, the Project Board might find the following to be sufficient:

- Refer to the business objective(s) that the project contributes towards
- Describe the options considered for meeting the project objectives and why the recommended option was selected
- List the tangible benefits to be derived, expressed in quantified terms and timed. Make it clear which benefits (if any) will be realised during the project, and which will be achieved after the project.
- Identify any intangible benefits anticipated as a result of the project.
- Identify any key risks or critical success factors affecting achievement of the benefits (NB there may be some overlap with the section of Risks in the PID)
- Identify any known costs and person effort and timing (derived from the planning process)
- Add any other information you consider will add further weight to this justification

For large projects a business case summary may be inserted here with a document reference or link to the full Business Case (see separate template) which should be a free-standing document in its own right.

Assumptions

As defined in the Project Brief and updated in the light of knowledge gained during Project Initiation.

This should be an explanation of factors that you are assuming to be in place or to occur that will contribute to the successful outcome of the potential project. Assumptions made when producing the project plan will be of particular importance (eg assumptions about the availability of resources and about delivery of external products/dependencies/decisions outside the control of the project).

Taken from the Project Brief, validated and updated as necessary during preparation of the PID.

Constraints

As defined in the Project Brief and updated in the light of knowledge gained during Project Initiation.

Constraints are things that the SRO and Project Manager are powerless to change. They are existing conditions that you must take into consideration during the project and may include such things as deadlines, standards, regulatory requirements, a major dependency on another project and resource constraints.

These are things that you must take into consideration during the project but cannot change? These may include deadlines, regulatory requirements, procurement rules, technology standards or limitations imposed by some other project or programme.

Constraints

Risks

Usually an extract from the Risk Log summarising the risks that merit SRO/Project Board attention, particularly those that threaten the project objectives and achievement of benefits.

You may also give an indication here of how you intend to manage the risks, otherwise provide a reference to the Risk Log where that detail should be held.

A summary of the most significant threats and opportunities facing the project and how it is intended to manage them. The detail should of risks and management actions should be in the project's Risk Log (see separate template). A document reference or link to the Risk Log should be provided here.

Other areas of business affected

Other areas of the organisation and/or its customers/partners that could be affected by the outcome of the project. Identify ownership of each area and define the nature of their involvement.

Taken from the Project Brief, perhaps updated during preparation of the PID.

Deliverables

The list of products and deliverables defined in the Project Brief must be updated in the light of detailed planning carried out during Project Initiation

Deliverables are the main component parts or outputs of the potential project that have to be produced in order to achieve the project objectives. Deliverables should be tangible and might include things such as reports, consultation documents, submissions, ICT systems, trained staff, documents, contracts, accommodation and marketing material. You may find it useful to use the techniques Product Breakdown Structure and Product Flow Diagram to help you identify the main deliverables and the products that form the building blocks needed to produce them. For each major deliverable a Product Description may be required, this will be of particular benefit where stakeholders do not understand, or disagree, about the composition and/or quality requirements of deliverables.

This requires a clear description of the things that the project are aiming to produce and deliver. It should be clear what the unit of measurement is and what levels of achievement are acceptable

The post project review should assess how many have been achieved and to what level these

Have been successful

Project Quality Plan

The list of products and deliverables defined in the Project Brief must be updated in the light of detailed planning carried out during Project Initiation

Deliverables are the main component parts or outputs of the potential project that have to be produced in order to achieve the project objectives. Deliverables should be tangible and might include things such as reports, consultation documents, submissions, ICT systems, trained staff, documents, contracts, accommodation and marketing material. You may find it useful to use the techniques Product Breakdown Structure and Product Flow Diagram to help you identify the main deliverables and the products that form the building blocks needed to produce them. For each major deliverable a Product Description may be required, this will be of particular benefit where stakeholders do not understand, or disagree, about the composition and/or quality requirements of deliverables.

This defines the quality expectations the project must achieve and how they will be met. It describes the qualities that must be possessed by the project's outputs in order that the desired outcomes are achieved. It also describes the quality aspects that apply to the processes to be used in the project to create the desired outputs and outcomes.

This section should not be used to say precisely who is doing what activities on what day to manage quality: that information should be defined in the Project Plan (and/or more detailed Stage/Team Plans if they exist).

For a small project it may be possible to define the project's approach to quality management here, otherwise a separate Project Quality Plan should be produced (see separate template) and a document reference or link provided here.

Major dependencies

As defined in the Project Brief and updated in the light of knowledge gained during Project Initiation

Dependencies are events or work that are either dependent on the outcome of this project or that the project will depend on. Identify ownership and indicate how you intend to manage them during the project. Where there is uncertainty about the likelihood of delivery of an external dependency it should be treated as a risk and the proposed management approach described in the risk log and included in the project plan.

A description of any known future dependencies with other projects, programmes or initiatives which may be internal or external to the parent organisation. This may be defined in terms of such things as products/deliverables, resources, decisions, legislation, environmental conditions, economic conditions etc.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders

As defined in the Project Brief and updated in the light of knowledge gained during Project Initiation

Stakeholders are the people that you consider will have a major interest in the work, may want some involvement, may be impacted by the outcome. For larger or more complex projects you may wish to construct a Stakeholder Map and/or a Power/Impact matrix to help you decide how to manage stakeholder relationships. List the stakeholders and describe the nature of their interest in the potential project and how you intend to manage relationships with them during the project. You should refer to any Communication Plan you have produced and should include it as an annex to the PID.

A list of known stakeholder organisations and, where appropriate, individuals having a significant interest in or influence over the project. For each stakeholder it should be made clear what is the nature of their interest in the project (eg they will be affected by the outcome, must make changes, will provide resources, will take decisions, must be kept informed.)

Project Organisation

Resources – give an detailed assessment of the resources you need to complete this programme or project. This will be derived from your project plan and should cover the quantities and types of resources you will need, when you will need them and where to get them from. This should include staff, skills and also any non-human resources (eg accommodation or equipment) you require.

You may provide a summary here and cross-refer to the detail in you project plan.

A description of the roles, responsibilities and relationships within the project management team. An organogram with brief description of the requirements of each role often is sufficient. If more detailed job descriptions are to be included in the PID then they are best held in an Annex.

The basic minimum to be described would be:

Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)/ Executive /Project Sponsor: (This role may be undertaken by a steering group as well as a sponsor) is the person who has ultimate responsibility for the project: They should perform the following key functions:

- Approving the PID and plans
- Ensuring that the project is subject to review at appropriate stages
- Making certain that any action points from reviews are met
- Keeping track of the business case and ensuring it remains viable
- Ensuring that benefits are realized during and after the project
- Final decision-maker on changes
- Ensuring adequate funding is available
- Approving costs at key milestones
- Committing resources as agreed in the plans

Project Organisation

- Deciding what type of project assurance is required (including types and timing of gateway reviews and/or health checks).
- Taking ultimate responsibility for the project

Project Board: If the project is large and/or cross cutting, it may have more than one individual who needs to be part of the decision-making authority. If this is the case, you may wish to set up a Project Board probably chaired by the SRO. This group will have the same overall set of responsibilities as the SRO but will include stakeholders from those providing the solution to the business need (eg the PRINCE2 Senior Supplier role) and those who will operate in a different fashion as a result of the project (eg the PRINCE2 Senior User role). Even with a Project Board in place the SRO is ultimately accountable to the business for the success of the project.

Project Manager - is responsible for the day-to-day management of the project, reporting to the SRO:

- Agreeing with the SRO what the project is hoping to achieve, the project elements (deliverables), scope and necessary resources
- Following corporate project management guidelines and producing the agreed documentation for review by the SRO/Project Board and senior management
- Planning and delivering all elements of the project to budget and agreed timescales
- Organizing and directing the project team
- Ensuring the external suppliers (if used) deliver the agreed solutions
- Monitoring, controlling and reporting progress/costs to all interested parties
- Ensuring business expectations are managed so no surprises on completion
- Building in quality checks so that the final solution is fit for purpose
- Controlling any risks, issues and changes that may arise during the project
- Resolving problems and conflicts that arise
- Assisting the sponsor in ensuring the business case continues to be viable
- Ensuring that the project is closed and lessons learned are captured

Team Manager (optional): In many instances, the project may involve specific input from other areas within the organization. If Information Technology is required, they may wish to set up their own team to provide the IT solution for the project. They then need to nominate a Team Manager/Team Leader to head up this team and he/she needs to report to the Project Manager for all project related matters. The same would apply to external suppliers working under contract to provide some of the project outputs.

Project Plan

Project Plan

Costs – Provide detailed estimates for the cost of completing this project based on your project plan. The timing and amount of major expenditure should be described.

If you have produced a business case then you may cross-refer to the sections where the costs are analysed in detail. The costs will be revalidated as you progress through your project but should be detailed and robust enough at this stage to enable the SRO/Project Board to decide whether or not it is sensible and affordable to continue with the project.

A schedule of activities and resource requirements for the entire project. The level of detail will depend on the size and complexity of the project but needs to be enough for the Project Board to understand the commitment they are making if they approve the PID.

A summary of the plan (schedule key dates, activities, milestones, resource requirements, control points) should be provided. The detail should be in the Project Plan itself a link to which (or a document reference) should be provided here.

The plan presented with the PID is unlikely to be the final project plan (unless it is a very short, well defined project). It is expected that the project plan will be updated at key milestones as the project progresses, particularly at key decision points such as when awarding major contracts.

For large project it is expected that more detailed stage plans will be produced to define in detail section of the project plan. As these will normally produced as the project progresses they cannot be included in the PID.

Project control and reporting

Background – describe the potential change, idea, and problem. Where it fits into the wider business/political context. Why it should be done now and the implications of not doing it

Schedule of Project Board meetings explaining purpose of each meeting and decision required from the Project Board. These should also be shown as activities in the Project Plan.

Highlight Report recipients, frequency, content and method of communication.

Checkpoint Report source, recipients, frequency content and method of communication.

Other project management communications planned for this project.

Project tolerances and exception reporting process

Change control process (covering handling requests for changes and faults detected in signed-off products/deliverables).

Where appropriate, an indication of the likely timing of any project health checks or Gateway Reviews should be given.

Communication Plan

Communication Plan

Objectives should provide a clear definition of what the project must achieve in order to be complete and successful. This section might start "Completion of this project will result in....."

Objectives should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. Avoid words like improve, optimise, clarify, help etc. These are vague words that mean you cannot measure your result. Project objectives should contribute towards and be consistent with higher level programme and/or business plan objectives

An explanation of how the project will engage with and maintain communication with internal and external stakeholders.

For each type of communication the plan will identify the purpose, message, timing, source, recipient(s), content, response required and method of communication.

Document management

The Scope should make it clear what are the boundaries of the work, what areas of work will be included and what is outside the scope. Where work could or should be divided into phases, a definition of scope for each phase should be given.

A description of the method and responsibilities for organising, storing, retrieving, securing, issuing and version controlling changes to documents created in the project. An indication of which specialist and project management documents will be controlled formally.

For projects that will create products other than documents (eg ICT, accommodation, equipment) a formal configuration management scheme may be required.

Any other issues specific to this project

Deliverables are the main component parts or outputs of the potential project that have to be produced in order to achieve the project objectives. Deliverables should be tangible and might include things such as reports, consultation documents, submissions, ICT systems, trained staff, documents, contracts, accommodation and marketing material. A simple list may suffice, or you might or you may find it useful to use the techniques Product Breakdown Structure and Product Flow Diagram to help you identify the main deliverables and the products that form the building blocks needed to produce them

Add new sections to the PID as required. For example you may wish to describe the Procurement Strategy proposed for your project.