



openED

Designing for participatory learning in open educational environments

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OpenED



Lifelong Learning Programme



Education and Culture DG



Education
and
Training

Project Management Strategy

Workpackage 1: Deliverable 1.1

Version: 1.2

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Version	Date	Author	Comments
1	01-2010	SPI openED Team	Release of version 1.0 of the openED Project Management Strategy
1.1	08-2010	SPI openED Team	Replacement of IBM by ELIG
1.2	02-2011	SPI openED Team	Sections update concerning the project progress: Critical Milestones; and Workplan and Workpackages.



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1. Introduction

The following Project Management Strategy was conceived for the openED project (Designing for Participatory Learning in Open Educational Environments), funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme (Key Activity n.º 3 - Information and Communication Technology) (505667-LLP-1-2009-1-PT-KA3-KA3MP). The objective of the Project Management Strategy is to breakdown the work to be done, the dependencies between tasks, and the resources required to carry out this work.

This includes a detailed plan of progress and financial reporting (with responsibilities clearly identified) and a clearly articulated strategy for communication, to ensure that the partners communicate effectively and efficiently throughout the lifecycle of the project.

The overall aim of the project management and evaluation mechanism proposed is:

- To ensure effective collaboration between the members of the partnership and external stakeholders;
- To promote communication and organisation among the partners involved;
- To complete the project within the required time frame;
- To solve any problems that may come up during the project's completion;
- To organise and carry out a structured, efficient and effective completion of the tasks;
- To ensure that the project results are of the best quality possible, and with the innovation characteristics proposed;
- To meet the project's objectives set within the Lifelong Learning Programme objectives.

This project management strategy should be read in conjunction with the initial project proposal and the partnership agreement to understand each partners' individual responsibilities and the overall and specific objectives of the project.

2. Partnership

The openED consortium involves 6 partners, geographically distributed within the European Union territory and with a vast experience in European and international projects, comprising key players from academia, private sector and related associations:

- Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação – SPI (Project coordinator);
- The Open University – The OU;
- ELIG - European Learning Industry Group (through linkSpace Management Services Gesellschaft mbH);
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – AUTH;
- Hellenic Management Association – HMA;
- University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland – HES-SO.

Given the broad contact network of each project partner and their liaison with different stakeholders, the consortium possesses all necessary skills required to carry out this project successfully.

3. General Aspects

As outlined at the project proposal the project management team, the workpackage leaders and other involved staff are individually and jointly responsible for:

- Effective management of the project warranting a good and active communication between all the partners and stakeholders in order to meet the project objectives;
- Establish and maintain adequate mechanisms to coordinate tasks, partners and stakeholders;
- Collaboration with and consideration of stakeholders' feedback;
- Project and workpackage coordination from a technical, pedagogical and administrative-financial point of view;
- Coordination during all the phases of negotiation, preparation, analysis, research, development of reports, etc. to guarantee that all partners will have a clear idea of the tasks needed to be done during the relevant period of time and the effects that they need to produce;
- Controlling and monitoring project's activities and performance.

The main working language will be English. It is expected that the project partners will interact with the different involved groups (for example in the openED pilots to communicate with the involved stakeholders) in the most appropriate language (most likely English and the respective native language), while all project relevant information will be communicated to the project members in English.

It will be the individual responsibility of the project partners to translate the Project Brochure and the Catalogue of benefits to their native language. When considered appropriate by the Partnership other materials can be translated as: Newsletter/Press releases; project presentation; and other dissemination materials. The project coordinator will provide all translated documents as downloadable files on the project website.

With regard to the project outputs, the entire team will have an equal level of input with the coordinating organisation leading the process.

4. Coordination and Management

The concepts that will be applied in co-ordinating and managing the project are as follows:

1. **Communication** - One of the keys to success in any project is communication between the partners involved. All the partners must be “in the same boat”, meaning that everyone must know what they are supposed to complete and in what time period. Communication is necessary to assure that problems are handled quickly and in the best way possible, and to ensure that the Tasks are being completed properly. In other words communication is necessary to promote the second concept, *effectiveness*;
2. **Effectiveness** - To produce quality results within a specific time period we must be effective. Tasks and their respective sub-tasks must be delegated in a structured and clear manner. Apart from trying to conceive a framework that applies the principles of open participatory learning, project’s main goal is to ensure the quality and completion of all described tasks, so problems must be handled as quickly and in the best way possible. This leads us to the third concept, availability;
3. **Availability** - Availability means that each member of the consortium must do their part in contributing suggestions and solutions for problems that may affect the project’s quality and completion, especially the task leader for each workpackage. For example, the progress reports will include a section where each partner will describe any problems they have faced or think they will confront in the future. Along with this the partner will be asked to describe how they solved the problem and to give any suggestions for solving any anticipated problems. This will provide the partners with a basis of suggestions and problem-solving strategies that could be of use to another partner who is experiencing or anticipating the same problem. Also, as project coordinator, SPI will always be available for any questions or comments that a partner may have and in keeping with the concepts of *communication* and *effectiveness*.

5. Critical Milestones

The openED project is based in a continuous improvement philosophy, where it will evolve by the tests made at the pilot stages (3 pilots in the project time frame).

The first months of the project will be very important for settling the initial framework that will be used in the first pilot and then updated with the feedback received and the analysis made by each partner. Thus, some documents produced in the beginning of the project will be draft version that will need to be updated as the project will take place (e.g. RSD of Organizational Framework, Learning resource framework and Technical support framework). All deliverables and outputs are closely aligned to the critical milestones presented in Table 1.

Critical Milestones	Date
WP2 (openED organizational framework) as 1st draft in place for 1st pilot round	March 2010
WP3 (openED learning resource framework) as 1st draft in place for 1st pilot round	June 2010
WP4 (openED technical (support) framework) as 1st draft in place for 1st pilot round	June 2010
WP6 (openED course pilots)	July 2010 – April 2012
Review of 1st pilot round, evaluation & modification as identified	March 2011
Review of 2nd pilot round, evaluation & modification as identified	September 2011
Review of 3rd pilot round, evaluation & modification as identified	May 2012

Table 1: Critical Milestones of openED project and expected date.

The deliverables and expected completion date were revised by SPI after the project approval by the European Commission and are identified in Table 2.

Deliverables	Completion date
Project Management Strategy	January 2010
Dissemination and Exploitation Plan	February 2010
RSD of Organizational Framework – first draft	March 2010
Project Brochure	April 2010
Catalogue of Benefits	April 2010
Learning resource framework – first draft	June 2010
Technical framework	June 2010
Technical support framework – first draft	June 2010
Learner support framework	June 2010
Introduction training for support provider	June 2010
Quality assurance strategy/ Assessment framework	June 2010

Deliverables	Completion date
Interim Report	March 2011
Coordination activity with associated networks	March 2012
openED pilots	April 2012
Experimental introduction of revenue models	April 2012
RSD of Organizational Framework – final version	May 2012
Learning resource framework – final version	May 2012
Technical support framework – final version	May 2012
Pilot assessment	June 2012
Assessment Report	June 2012
openED sustainability framework	June 2012
Project meetings	July 2012
Project presentation at conferences	July 2012
Final Report	July 2012

Table 2: Deliverables of openED project and completion date.

The partnership should also be aware some important activities and their dates (see Table 3).

Important activities	Completion date	Place
Kick off meeting	December 2009	Belgium (BE)
Second meeting (1 st pilot planning & sustainability framework)	May 2010	Metamorfoosis (GR)
First pilot executed	February 2011	Online
First Pilot Assessment and tasks done until that moment	February 2011	Online / Fribourg (SW)
Third meeting (1st pilot review & 2nd pilot planning & sustainability framework)	February 2011	Fribourg (SW)
Update Dissemination and Exploitation Plan	February 2011	Online
Update RSD of Organizational Framework	March 2011	Online
Update Learning resource framework	Mach 2011	Online
Update Technical support framework	March 2011	Online
Second Pilot executed	September 2011	Online
Second Pilot Assessment and tasks done until that moment	September 2011	Online / Milton Keynes (UK)
Fourth meeting (2nd pilot review & 3rd pilot planning & sustainability framework)	September 2011	Milton Keynes (UK)
Draft openED sustainability framework	September 2011	Online
Update Dissemination and Exploitation Plan	September 2011	Online
Update RSD of Organizational Framework	October 2011	Online
Update Learning resource framework	October 2011	Online
Update Technical support framework	October 2011	Online
Third Pilot executed	January 2012	Online
Third Pilot Assessment and tasks done until that moment	February 2012	Athens (GR)
Fifth meeting (3rd pilot review, project evaluation & sustainability framework)	February 2012	Athens (GR)
Update openED sustainability framework	March 2012	Online

Update Dissemination and Exploitation Plan	April 2012	Online
Update RSD of Organizational Framework	May 2012	Online
Update Learning resource framework	May 2012	Online
Update Technical support framework	May 2012	Online

Table 3: Important activities of openED project and completion date.

6. Workplan and Workpackages

The workplan and workpackages have been well defined at the initial project proposal, including deadlines, responsibilities, human resource input and deliverables and will be displayed in a transparent manner at the project's website to be publicly accessible.

The project coordinator for the project, and the respective workpackage leader of the different workpackages, is following up with the project partners on a day to day base to assure that all objectives and actions remain clear and to assure a smooth running of the project.

In the next tables the project workpackages, the leaders and the time period of each workpackage are presented.

Workpackage	WP1 – Project Management		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 31/07/2012	Lead partner	SPI
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the project • Assure a good communication • Oversee the project outcomes • Resolve problems in case of occurrence 		

Workpackage	WP2 – openED organizational framework		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 31/03/2012	Lead partner	SPI
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Requirement Specification Document (RSD) for the organizational structure 		

Workpackage	WP3 – openED learning resource framework		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 31/03/2012	Lead partner	The OU
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a framework of instructional and learning materials 		

Workpackage	WP4 – openED technical (support) framework		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 30/04/2012	Lead partner	AUTH
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a technical framework that supports a seamless interplay of the different involved virtual environments 		

Workpackage	WP5 – openED learner support framework		
Time period	01/04/2010 – 30/04/2012	Lead partner	ELIG
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a comprehensive support framework for the different type of learners such as students, practitioners and free learners outside of formal education 		

Workpackage	WP6 – openED course pilots		
Time period	01/07/2010 – 30/04/2012	Lead partner	The OU
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run three consecutive pilots within the openED environment implementing and testing a hybrid approach 		

Workpackage	WP7 – Quality Assurance		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 31/07/2012	Lead partner	AUTH
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of project developments • Project performance assessment 		

Workpackage	WP8 – Dissemination		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 31/07/2012	Lead partner	SPI
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the project 		

Workpackage	WP9 – openED sustainability framework		
Time period	01/11/2009 – 30/06/2012	Lead partner	SPI
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop revenue and funding models that would allow the openED framework to operate self-sustainable beyond the project's funded duration 		

Workpackage	WP10 – Exploitation		
Time period	01/02/2010 – 31/07/2012	Lead partner	SPI
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the development strategy of the sustainable framework 		

7. Conflict Management and Disputes

It is highly unlikely any conflicts will arise; nevertheless in the event that one does the coordinating organisation will mediate the conflict to a resolution.

If this is unsuccessful, then the project partnership as a whole will have the final decision on conflicts related to the project content, results and final output.

The coordinating organisation will conduct all interaction with the programme officials and will make all programme related decisions.

The coordination and follow-up of the project is the sole responsibility of the coordinating organisation. To ensure the project meets its objectives, produces quality outputs and conducts effective dissemination activities, the project team has identified critical milestones (see section 5) at specific completion dates within the project and has appointed a partner (AUTH) to develop and implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance Strategy based on its long experiences in this field.

8. Project Monitoring and Evaluation

As stated in the previous point this project has appointed a partner (AUTH) to develop and implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance Strategy. Taking into account the importance of having the best results within the time available and having an entity (AUTH) that can access what has been done/achieved by the partnership and what can be improved in their results and their practices this project has defined a separate workpackage (WP7) that will address this issues.

In this workpackage it will be developed the document “Quality assurance strategy/Assessment framework” available in June 2010 that will include a basic description of how the quality assessment for openED is designed, which criteria are assessed and how the overall performance of the project is monitored. It is expected the implementation of this strategy will contribute to monitor the project’s performance and allow for evidence based recommendations and evaluation, with the results obtained being provided to the partnership by the end of each pilot round to be reviewed, reflected on and to draw conclusions from it for the need of e.g. adjustments.

9. Project Valorisation

The openED comprises three separate workpackages (WP8, WP9 and WP10) under the coordination of the project coordinator (SPI) relating to Project Valorisation.

WP8 (Dissemination) and WP10 (Exploitation) aim to ensure that the project results are appropriately recognised, demonstrated and implemented on a wide scale, throughout the project length and after the funding period.

In order to achieve this aim, a Dissemination and Exploitation Plan will be elaborated and presented to the partnership in February 2010.

Regarding WP9 (openED sustainability framework), the aim is to develop revenue and funding models that would allow the openED framework to operate self-sustainable beyond the project's funded duration. This framework is expected to be present to the partners in September 2011 (draft version) with a final version expected to be concluded by June 2012 (1 month before the project end).

10. Financial Reporting and Administrative Aspects

The project coordinator initially instructed the project partners about the financial reporting and administrative aspects, providing them with the available materials as offered by the EC.

Further the coordinator will approach the project partners prior to the interim (15/03/2011) and final report (10/07/2012) and request all relevant documents and discuss about suitability of forecasted spending and reallocations.