

Developing a Project Plan: What to Include?

An executive summary/project vision – comprising a brief description of the project and clearly demonstrating the aims and objectives (e.g. SMART targets) of the project.

A description of the target audience and the desired learning outcomes. Think about the USP (Unique Selling Point) of your project to the target audience.

Details about the content and context of the project – is it a new project, or does it build on previous experience? Will it utilise an existing platform?

Key roles and responsibilities – details of individuals involved in the design and delivery of the project and the tasks assigned to them. Who is ultimately responsible for the project and final decisions e.g. the principal funding applicant. This is extremely important for any project, but even more so when a project is a collaboration between different organisations. (You should also establish who is *accountable* within each partner organisation).

Keys tasks and deliverables required to achieve the objectives of the project (key tasks broken down into sub-tasks if required).

Resources necessary to achieve the aims of the project, (real, virtual, people, organisations etc.)

Project timeline and key milestones – all tasks put into a sensible order with sufficient timescales. Start and end dates should be clearly identified. Gantt charts are a useful planning tool for this: <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/tools/gantt-charts>.

Budget and Costing – a budget showing a breakdown of all the project costs linked to key tasks and deliverables e.g. salaries, consultancy fees, communication with stakeholders, materials & consumables, venue/access charges, events, equipment, travel & subs, consumables, evaluation etc. This should also include any funding that has been secured 'in kind' e.g. room hire that has been waived. This will demonstrate the true cost of the project.

Contingency plans – allow time and budget for 'contingencies' and detail how any project issues and changes to the scope of the project will be managed. Risks to the project should be continuously assessed and mitigated for as far as possible.

Communication strategy/mechanisms – how will communications with all stakeholders be managed? Including methods of and frequency of communication. This should also include plans for marketing and promotion, dissemination and sharing any learning.

Monitoring and evaluation strategy – what are the intended impact(s) and outcomes, and how will you measure success?

Record keeping/document management system –The person(s) responsible for record keeping and managing all the project documents (i.e. funding proposal, detailed project plan, interim reports, stakeholder communications, processes for change, health and safety documents etc) needs to be agreed at the start of the project. (This is often the Project Manager).

Legacy – what is the intended legacy of the project e.g. working towards a sustainable activity?