

THE IT PROJECT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Information Technology Services

UPDATED: FEBRUARY 7, 2024, VERSION 5.0

Contacts and Document Control

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Document Control

Item	Detail
Document Title	The IT Project Management Framework
Document Location	Information Technology Services Website Working with ITS – Portfolio and Project Management https://its.gmu.edu
Document Owner	George Mason University Information Technology Services (ITS)
Document Manager	ITS Portfolio and Project Management Office, Enterprise Strategic Governance
Document Description	The IT Project Management Framework provides the process and templates used for managing and tracking IT Projects at George Mason University.
Authority	University Policy 1310 – Information Technology Project Management (revised June 2021) University Policy 1113 – University Project Management (updated May 2021)
First Issued Date	May 2010
This Issue Date	February 7, 2024
Approved By	Portfolio and Project Management Office, Enterprise Strategic Governance
Version	5.0

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Introduction

The Information Technology (IT) Project Management Framework is a methodology that references industry standards to identify, classify, document, and manage IT projects. The goals of this Framework are:

1. To inform IT Project Managers and stakeholders of the IT Project Management Framework Lifecycle in use at Mason and how to apply it to manage their projects in a standardized, repeatable manner.
2. To provide a set of IT Project Management templates and tools that can be used by project teams to plan and execute projects.
3. To provide management controls through data collection and approvals to satisfy regulatory and audit requirements.

Project managers should employ this Framework as an integral part of the workflow for all project team members and activities. To ensure continuous improvement and reliability of the Framework, it is crucial that project managers (and team members) enter and update project information regularly. The Framework provides tools and guidance.

While the IT PM Framework provides templates and tools, successful project management is primarily about the data and information collected and used throughout the project's lifecycle. There are multiple ways to capture and document required project management information. The provided templates ensure that relevant information is captured and reported in a timely manner.

The Framework is designed to ensure:

- **Clarity** – Requirements, Scope, Definition of Done, Roles & Responsibilities
- **Alignment** – Continuity Between Phases, Realized Business Value
- **Traceability** – Acceptance, Current Autonomy Level, Government Reporting Requirements
- **Effective Resource Utilization** – Level of Effort, Tracking, Planned vs. Actual

The IT Project Management Framework (Framework) is intended to be used for ALL IT Projects at George Mason University and is supported and maintained by Enterprise Strategic Governance (ESG) Portfolio and Project Management Office (PPMO). Full details of the Framework, templates, and additional information are available on the ITS Website, <https://its.gmu.edu> under "Working with ITS".

Definition of an ITS PPMO Project

The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines a **project** as “a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.” In other words, a project is a sequence of tasks bounded by time, resources, and required results; has a defined outcome and deliverables; has a deadline; and has a budget limiting the number of people, supplies, and capital.

At George Mason University, the Portfolio and Project Management Office (PPMO) recognizes this same definition for Information Technology Services (**ITS PPMO projects**). While this Framework can be applied to manage beyond the scope of ITS PPMO projects, it is designed with ITS in mind. Within this document, the term “project” refers to an ITS PPMO Project.

While this definition is straightforward, complexities and questions exist, particularly within the context of a local environment. Some of the following attributes may assist in the definition of an ITS PPMO Project. The Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®), states that managing a project includes the following:

- Identifying the business issues and risks to be addressed by the project
- Establishing clear and achievable objectives
- Adapting to different concerns and expectations of stakeholders
- Clarifying/Identifying requirements
- Balancing competing demands for quality, scope, resources, time, and cost

The following key project characteristics are essential for achieving project objectives efficiently and effectively:

- Shared resources often only available on a part-time basis
- Cross-functional teamwork may be required
- Uncertainty and potential change during execution
- Changes to the way the business operates
- Specific deadlines, time and resource constraints

To further assist in the project definition, included below are diverse examples of endeavors falling under ITS PPMO’s oversight.

- New technology purchases and implementation regardless of cost (e.g., new business application)
- Development and establishment of new IT service offerings (e.g., ITSM/ITAM, CRM, Cisco telephony)
- Development and establishment of new capabilities with existing on-site applications or technology
- Generally, feasibility studies and proof-of-concepts
- Any RFP/RFI that brings on services related to expanding the technology footprint, expanding functionality, or bringing on new technology
- Outsourcing of business functions to a vendor that includes IT systems
- IT Reserve Fund Spending

Within the Appendix, please find efforts that are not considered PPMO Projects and do not meet the criteria.

This Framework provides a means of answering questions within George Mason University's environment by using local definitions when most appropriate. At the same time, when necessary to do so, it aligns and complies with the policies, procedures, and requirements of external agencies.

Project Roles and Responsibilities

The first component of the IT Project Management Framework establishes the roles and responsibilities of persons participating in project development processes. Project roles and responsibilities are introduced below.

Project Sponsor

The Project Sponsor is the individual within George Mason University who makes the business case for the project. This individual (or the sponsor along with a Project Steering Committee) has the authority to define project goals, secure resources, and resolve conflicts. The sponsor oversees the project and provides guidance, direction, oversight, and political support to the project manager and the project team. He or she approves the project proposal and project charter and provides the formal sign-off for acceptance of a project's final deliverable(s). For ITS projects, sponsors must be at the director level or higher.

Project Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee is advisory in nature and provides recommendations to the project sponsor and university leadership regarding project initiation or continuance, management, baselines (e.g., performance, cost, and schedule), periodic reviews, and any additional follow-up actions required to ensure the success of the project. Depending on the nature of the project, the committee may also be involved in charter and objective approval and deliverable acceptance. Steering committees; typically part of large, enterprise-wide projects that impact many groups around Mason; can be a crucial part of project governance. Though not all projects will need a steering committee, they are highly encouraged based on each project's complexity, cost, scope, and impact.

ITS Project Owner

A Mason IT Project, regardless of whether it is initiated within or external to ITS, is assigned an ITS Project Owner if it requires any assistance or interaction from ITS. The ITS Project Owner coordinates the project on behalf of ITS by securing necessary resources, monitoring the project's progress relative to other ITS projects, and serving as an escalation path for the project sponsor when needed. As with the Project Sponsor, the ITS Project Owner must be at the director level or higher. For projects originating within ITS, the same person may act as both the Project Sponsor and the ITS Project Owner.

Project Manager

The Project Manager, assigned by the project sponsor and/or the ITS Project Owner, is responsible for managing and completing the project on behalf of the sponsor and George Mason University. Approval of the project charter grants authority to the project manager to staff the project team, procure resources, and utilize the systems necessary to complete the project objectives. Certain projects require that project managers be either Virginia Information

Technologies Agency (VITA) qualified¹ or Project Management Institute (PMI) Project Management Professional (PMP) certified². Based on the type of project, there may be two types of project manager roles assigned:

- **Project Manager** – This is the project manager from the ITS organization, typically the Portfolio and Project Management Office (PPMO). The PM coordinates all project lifecycle activity requirements and coordinates the efforts of ITS staff.
- **Sponsor Project Manager** – The Sponsor PM is someone from the organization requesting the project who is responsible for coordinating tasks, resources and responsibilities of the functional office originating the project. The Sponsor PM works directly with the Project Manager to deliver the project.

Business Analyst

The ESG IT Business Analyst (ITBA) Team's primary focus is to provide support, management, and coordination for entire ITS Intake Request process, from ticket submittal, through charter creation and project approval. This role includes coordinating the analysis, evaluation, and decision-making process for requests related to the implementation of new technology or significant architectural modifications. The ITBA Team works in collaboration with the requesting functional office to facilitate this process. Further details on the Submission and the ITS Intake Request Process are detailed in Project Management Framework Lifecycle: Intake.

Overall, the Business Analyst acts as a liaison between the requesting functional office and the PPMO, ensuring that requests for new technology or significant architectural modifications are thoroughly analyzed, evaluated, and aligned with the organization's priorities. ITBAs bring their expertise in business analysis to facilitate a consistent and transparent process, promoting equity among stakeholders and enabling informed decision-making.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are persons and organizations (e.g., customers, sponsors, performing organizations, and the public) actively involved in the project, or whose interests may be affected positively or negatively by execution or completion of the project. Typical stakeholders for most projects at George Mason University include academic departments, administrative units, the greater university community, and the Commonwealth of Virginia, as well as the customer who provided the impetus for the project. Stakeholders will vary by project. The project sponsor and manager must identify stakeholders at the forefront of the project.

Users

In the context of a project, users comprise a special group of stakeholders who will be the end-users of the system or service developed by the project. During the project, they may be involved in design and testing activities. Working on projects that affect the entire university community can pose challenges to scheduling, communication, and receipt of input. Given the nature of the academic calendar and certain groups' limited availability, project managers

¹ <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/it-governance/project-management/>

² <https://www.pmi.org/certifications/types/project-management-pmp>

should consider how to appropriately engage various user groups throughout the project's lifecycle.

Project Team

The Project Team is composed of individuals that report, typically indirectly (i.e., dotted line report), either part-time or full-time to the project manager for the duration of the project and are responsible for performing project tasks. Within a project team there are specific roles including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Project Team Leaders** – Project teams may be divided into various functional or logistical sub-teams. Project Team Leaders are staff members responsible for leading sub-teams and coordinating activities with the project manager. For larger projects, the project manager may have a Project Leadership Team or Project Coordination Team. This team consists of project team leaders and the project manager for the purpose of coordinating activities.
- **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** – Subject Matter Experts are individuals retained on a project due to their high level of knowledge, experience or specialized training. An SME can be either internal or external to the organization and serves on a project team as the expert on a system, application, or in a specific functional area. Examples include Data Analyst, Information Technology Security Office (ITSO) representative, IT Compliance, Resource Owner, Technical Expert, etc.
- **Operations Staff** – Representative(s) of an operations staff serve as members of a project team to help ensure that the deliverable(s) of the project can be transitioned into ongoing operations.
- **Customer Representative** – Customer representatives serve as members of a project team to provide clarification on project requirements.
- **Vendors** – Project leaders, with the approval of the sponsor, may bring in vendors to provide specialized skill sets to a project team.

Portfolio and Project Management Office

The Portfolio and Project Management Office (PPMO) supports consistent project management practices for project teams, enabling project leaders to deliver the value promised to customers. It provides project managers for selected IT projects, conducts project management training, and assists with project documentation, project management tools, and communication between various projects and project teams. The Business Analysis Team plays a critical role in bridging the gap between business objectives and IT solutions. They are responsible for guiding the team through the entire ITS Intake Request process, ensuring effective support, management, and coordination from ticket submittal to project approval. The organization aims to strengthen collaboration, streamline processes, and ensure the successful implementation of projects. The PPMO oversees the IT Project Management Framework to ensure it remains current and aligns with the structure of the organization. It also oversees the online tools and PPMO website which support the Framework.




Additional Project Definitions

To ensure consistency and alignment around each project, there are more definitions that Project Managers need to be familiar with. The following include, Request Type, PPMO Role, and Project Size.

Request Type

There are three request types that can be defined through this Framework. Explore the definitions for various request types, including Project, Operational & Technical efforts, and Program, along with shared examples and guidance on the appropriate project management ownership, all presented below.

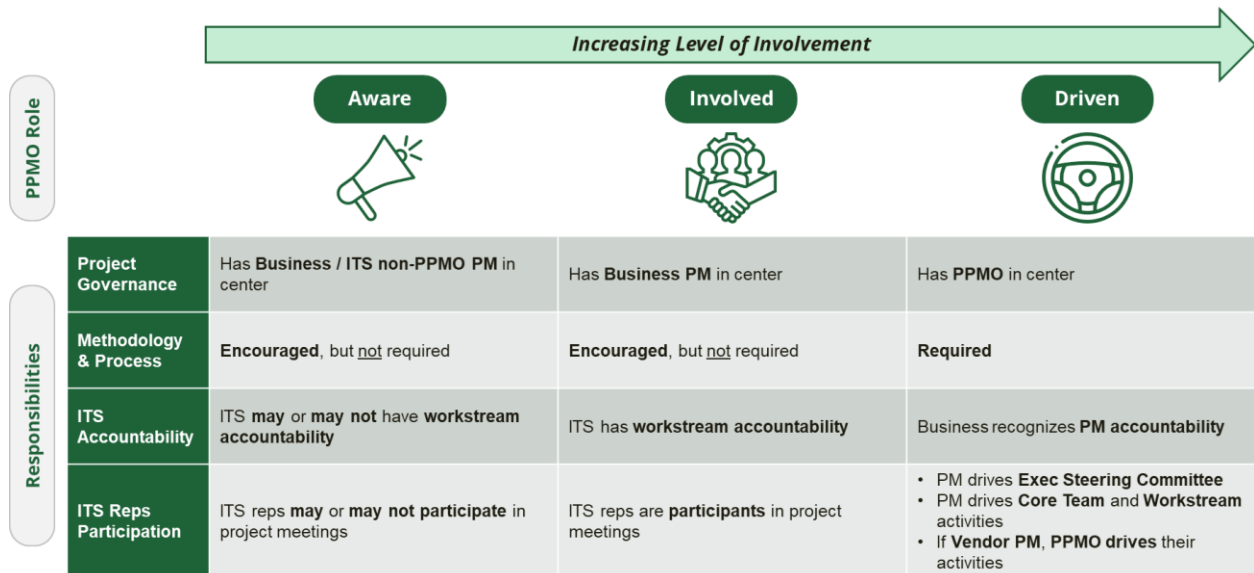
- **Project (PRJ)** – A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result; the purpose is to attain its objective and then terminate.
- **Operational & Technical Effort (OTE)** – Support of an ongoing operation that sustains the business; involves permanent or semi-permanent functional work to repetitively produce the same product or service.
- **Program (PGM)** – A collection of related projects that may span multiple departments and/or impact the Mason enterprise.

Type	Definition	Examples	Project Management Ownership
Project (PRJ) 	A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result ; the purpose is to attain its objective and then terminate. Can have a multitude of requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple PIDs Data Quality Improvement • Position Management & Applicant Tracking System 	PPMO or Domain / Department
Operational & Technical Effort (OTE) 	Support of an ongoing operation that sustains the business ; involves permanent or semi-permanent functional work to repetitively produce the same product or service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Tasks • Network Upgrade • Banner Upgrade 	Department
Program (PGM) 	A collection of related projects that may span multiple departments and/or impact the Mason enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Governance • Change Management • Enterprise Architecture 	PPMO or Domain / Department

PPMO Role

There are three types of PPMO Roles. Outlined below are the diverse roles and responsibilities within the PPMO concerning project involvement, categorized as Driven, Involved, or Aware, offering clear insights into each role's level of engagement.

- **Aware**
- **Involved**
- **Driven**



Project Size

The Framework is intended to be flexible and adapt to various classes of projects and their complexity. The size of a project is determined by a project’s cost, duration, project team resource requirements, project risk, and mandates. Mason has developed a simple size model that identifies the size and project management requirements of any project. The model consists of two sections:

1. What managing body will oversee the project? *i.e., Will the project be managed by Domain Council or at the Enterprise Level?*
2. What is the project size?

The size drives minimum project management, status reporting, and documentation requirements related to the project.

During the proposal, within the Intake Process, the project size will have a preliminary project size identified with a conversation between the BA and ESG leads. The project size would be validated in the project charter with the PM, BA, and ESG Leads. Then during Domain Council 1 (DC1) the council will accept the proposal of the preliminary project size and prioritization. Domain Council 2 (DC2) would approve the project charter and finalize the project size.

What Managing Body will Oversee the Project?

The first step in determining the management oversight body for a project is answering the following questions. If **any** of the answers is **Yes**, then the project will automatically be managed on the **Enterprise Level**. However, if **none** are answered as **Yes**, the project’s size will determine which managing body will oversee the project.

1. **External Mandate** – Is this project required to comply with a requirement from either outside Mason (e.g. State or Federal) or the Office of Audit, Risk, and Compliance?
2. **Internal Mandate** – Has Senior Management (e.g. President, Provost, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration) determined a compelling need and provided authoritative instruction?




3. **Organizational Risk** – Is this project related to or address a risk on the University’s Risk Inventory?

If it is determined that a project will be managed at the Enterprise Level based on the initial assessment, the calculation of the Project Size Model **must be executed** to determine and **ensure compliance** with reporting requirements.

The Project Size

Once the managing body that will oversee the project is determined, the second section helps determine the level of project management that is needed for the project. The base questions relate to:

1. **Expected Cost** – What is the estimated total cost to complete the project including software, hardware, licensing, contractor / implementation services, **AND** internal Mason labor (use \$100/hr. to estimate)?
2. **Duration** – What is the total time expected to complete the project including planning, development, and testing (if applicable)?
3. **Project Team** – Who from Mason will be completing the work on the project? How many teams will be involved in this project?
4. **Project Risk** – Have we done this type of project before? Do we have the necessary Project Management and/or Project Team Experience?

Factor		Small (S)	Medium (M)	Large (L)	Weight
Cost		< \$250,000	\$250,000 - \$1,000,000	>\$1,000,000	25%
Duration		< 6 Months	6 – 12 Months	> 12 Months	25%
Project Team		1 Team	2-4 Teams	5+ Teams	20%
Project Risk Have we done this before?		Yes – Experience from Project Manager AND Project Team	Yes – Either Experience from Project Manager OR Project Team	No Experience from either Project Manager or Project Team	30%

Each of the questions above has a specific weighted value. When answering these questions, the chosen value will determine the complexity and point value towards the total. This total will then determine the Project’s Size.

Determine Project Size					
Criteria	Description	Value	Complexity	Weight	Points
Cost	What is the estimated total cost to complete the project including software, hardware, licensing, contractor / implementation services, AND internal Mason labor (use \$100/hr. to estimate)?	a) < \$250,000 b) \$250,000 - \$1,000,000 c) > \$1,000,000	a) 1 b) 2 c) 3	25%	a) 0.25 b) 0.5 c) 0.75
Duration	What is the total time expected to complete the project including planning, development, and testing (if applicable)?	a) < 6 Months b) 6 - 12 Months c) > 12 Months	a) 1 b) 2 c) 3	25%	a) 0.25 b) 0.5 c) 0.75
Project Team	Who from Mason will be completing the work on the project? How many teams will be involved?	a) 1 Team b) 2-4 Teams c) 5+ Teams	a) 1 b) 2 c) 3	20%	a) 0.2 b) 0.4 c) 0.6
Project Risk	Have we done this type of project before? Do we have the necessary Project Management and/or Project Team Experience?	a) Yes – Experience from Project Manager AND Project Team b) Yes – Either Experience from Project Manager OR Project Team c) No Experience from either Project Manager or Project Team	a) 1 b) 2 c) 3	30%	a) 0.3 b) 0.6 c) 0.9
Project Size		Complexity*Weight = Points Total Points / Score: Small = <1.66 Medium = >1.66 and <2.33 Large = >2.33			

Project Management Requirements

The results of this model help deliver the minimum requirements for managing the project, status reporting, and what work is needed to document the work accurately and completely. If a project's size was determined to be either Small or Medium, it will be managed at the Domain Council level. If the project is determined to be Large, it will automatically be managed at the Enterprise Level. The table below outlines the project management requirements, tailored according to project size and encompassing vital aspects like status reporting and documentation.

Project Management Requirements			
Requirement	Small (S)	Medium (M)	Large (L)
Minimum Project Management	Project manager assigned (not required to be part of the PPMO)	Professional Project Manager assigned (not required to be part of the PPMO)	PPMO Project Manager assigned as primary
Status Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly status reporting to the Project Inventory System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly status reporting to the Project Inventory System • Monthly with Project Sponsor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly status reporting to the Project Inventory System • Monthly with Project Sponsor • Quarterly review with Executive Council
Project Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) • Project Charter or Statement of Work (must include schedule) • Project Closeout Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) • Project Charter • Project Planning Document • Project Schedule • Issues and Risks log • Communications Plan • Deliverables Acceptance • Approvals to Proceed & Operate • Project Closeout Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) • Project Charter • Project Cost Estimate • Project Planning Document • Project Schedule • Issues and Risks log • Communications Plan • Deliverables Acceptance • Approvals to Proceed & Operate • Quality Management Plan (test, transition to operations, training) • Project Closeout Document

Project Framework Components

The Project Framework consists of multiple elements working together to help ensure successful delivery of projects. These elements are:

- **Project Phases** – The project lifecycle broken into specific blocks, each with its own purpose, deliverables, and actions required to progress.
- **Action Items** – The required activities that need to be completed to ensure compliance and uniformity for each project.
- **Templates** – Standardized forms or documents that collect and report consistent data about the project so that it may be effectively tracked through the project lifecycle. All project templates are available on the ITS Website at <https://its.gmu.edu> within the “Working with ITS” section.

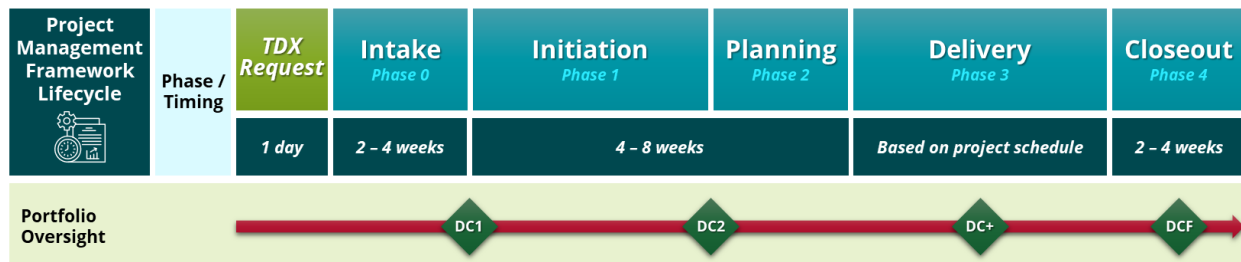
Project Management Framework Lifecycle

The Project Management Framework Lifecycle consists of a series of phases with specific project management deliverables and Domain Council meetings which control the movement between the phases. Domain Council (DC) is the portfolio structure based on client area domains. Each council will be accountable for project activation approval, prioritization, and progress monitoring. There are four Domain Councils within the lifecycle: Domain Council 1 (DC1), Domain Council 2 (DC2), Domain Council + (DC+), and Domain Council Final (DCF). Each phase of the lifecycle builds on the work done in the previous phases and serves the structure to help keep the project moving forward.

The IT Project Management Framework Lifecycle consists of four phases:

1. **Initiation** – Document the project deliverables and resources needed to complete the project.
2. **Planning** – Develop the project schedule, assign resources, clarify risks.
3. **Delivery** – Do the project work (execution) and report on progress (monitor and control).
4. **Closeout** – Capture lessons learned, document project successes for future use.

The following table is a summary of the Project Management Framework Lifecycle, associated responsibilities, action items, and PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents. They will be described in detail in subsequent sections:



Intake*



Note: While not part of the Project Management Framework Lifecycle, Intake is vital to the

capture and review of project requests.

Intake is separate and distinct from the Project Management Framework Lifecycle. A project is established after formalized reviews are conducted and governing bodies have been determined. From this point, the request then enters the project management process framework. For additional details on Intake, see the Working with ITS section of the ITS website.

ITS Intake Request Process:

Guidance for submitting an ITS Intake Request is provided below. Any Mason employee is eligible and qualified to submit a proposal. The ITBA Team, in collaboration with the requesting functional office, are responsible for coordinating this process.

Please note that submitting an ITS Intake form does not imply acceptance of the request. Instead, the request process aims to promote equity and transparency among stakeholders by employing consistent selection criteria and review procedures for all submissions.

The Intake Process:

1. **REQUEST: Submit Your Request** – To initiate the process, the requestor must obtain sponsorship, gather all supporting business case materials, and complete the TeamDynamix Technical Business Solution Intake form and submits to ITBA. The Intake document for project requests provides a short description about the request, the current state, current pain points and restrictions, the audience, and the ideal state for the requested solution.
2. **INTAKE: Initial Review** – The ITBA will complete the Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) with input from requester, sponsor, and stakeholders. The ITBA will send the completed PCW and additional DC1 One-Pagers to Governance.
3. **ASSESS: Governance Review** – The Governance team will determine the DC1 topics and will notify the appropriate parties if selected to discuss. If agreed upon to move forward as a project, there will be three emails documented, DC1 Action Items, DC1 Minutes, and Assigned Project Number and Project Manager.
4. **AUTHORIZE: Approval, Prioritization, and Scheduling** – The final review of new proposals, including approval, activation, resource assignment, and prioritization, takes place within the leadership roles at Mason. This stage ensures alignment with university business needs and objectives.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the ESG IT Business Analyst Team at itba@gmu.edu.

Primary Responsibility: Business Analyst (i.e., ITBA)

Action Items:

After the Requester completes the form and submits it to ITBA, the following action items are required during the Intake Phase:

- The ITBA team develops the Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) with input from requester, sponsor, & stakeholders.
- The ITBA team populates the DC1 One-Pagers.
- Once these documents are completed, ITBA sends the Proposal to Governance.

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW)** – This document concentrates on defining the project's scope and purpose. It serves as an official record of authorization for the use of resources and marks the initiation of the project acceptance phase. The report gathers pivotal information for the domain council, enabling them to make a well-informed decision on the project's viability. It includes an overarching view, specific aims and objectives, stakeholder risk evaluations, and a value scoring report that assesses the project based on various critical factors. The original name of this worksheet was known as the "Request Proposal Report".
- **DC1 One-Pager** – This document completed by the ITBA Team provides a one-page summary of the PCW for Domain Council meetings. It includes an executive summary, key stakeholders, and a link to the full report. The page also presents value scoring and recommendations for council discussions and decision-making.

Domain Council 1 (DC1):

During DC1, the Requester completes a Project Request presentation to the Domain Council. The Domain Council will complete the following activities:

- Confirm the preliminary project size and prioritization criteria
- Approval to proceed with project creation and PM assignment, or defer the project
- If approved by the Domain Council, the project goes into the inventory and is updated to Accepted in the Portfolio Request Lifecycle

The Domain Council will approve a request that **SHOULD** become a project in the Information Technology Domain Portfolio. Following this determination, the below will be completed:

- A PPMO Project Manager will be assigned
- Additional project vetting is approved to proceed

Primary Responsibility: Governance

Action Items:

- In preparation for DC1, Governance will determine DC1 topics and notify the appropriate parties.

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

After DC1 is completed, the subsequent emails are sent out:

- Email: Including the DC1 Action Items
- Email: Sharing the DC1 Minutes
- Email: Stating the assigned Project Number and Project Manager

Initiation



The Initiation Phase is the first phase of the project lifecycle. The phase begins after DC1 approves a request that **should** become a project in the Information

Technology Domain Portfolio. During initiation, the project is more fully defined so that it may be properly resourced and realistically planned in the next phase. The Business Analyst (i.e., ITBA) will still be the primary responsible party during this phase and will be the primary point-of-

contact (POC) of coordination for the additional engagement. During this time the project manager proceeds to fully describe the project scope and prepare the project charter. The major deliverable of the phase is the project charter, which:

- Identifies the stakeholders
- Defines the project timeframe
- Provides the rationale for the project
- Identifies the core project deliverables, assumptions, and potential risks
- Outlines project cost estimates and resource needs

Primary Responsibility: Business Analyst (i.e., ITBA) with support from the Project Manager

Action Items:

After DC1, the Business Analyst will still be the primary responsible party. They will lead the following activities:

- ITBA will coordinate additional engagement between requester, sponsor, & stakeholders

The PPMO Project Manager will be supporting and responsible for the following activities:

- PPMO Project Manager to complete the Project Charter
- PPMO Project Manager to submit the Project Charter to Governance

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Project Charter** – This document focuses on the scope and purpose of the project. It documents the authorization to utilize resources and begin the planning phase of the project.
- **DC2 One-Pager** – This document will be completed by ITBA. The DC2 One-Pager, an extension of DC1, offers a detailed one-page overview enriched with project charter information for Domain Council meetings. It delves into key personnel, business goals, project objectives, risks, scope, and timelines, aiding informed decision-making on project approval, deferral, or rejection.

Domain Council 2 (DC2):

During DC2, the Requester completes a Project Planning presentation to the Domain Council. The Domain Council will complete the following activities:

- Scope, Cost, Schedule, Resources, Governance
- Reconfirm the project size and prioritization criteria
- Rank project within active portfolio
- Schedule the project start date
- Update the Project to Scheduled or Active in the Portfolio Request Lifecycle

The Domain Council will determine **WHEN** a project should be started considering the full Information Technology Domain Portfolio. Following this determination, the below will be completed:

- Current Active inventory is considered
- ITS and Stakeholder capacity is considered
- Project may be scheduled to begin at future date due
- Project is given priority rank within portfolio

The IT Project Management Framework (v5.0)

Primary Responsibility: Governance

Action Items:

- In preparation for DC2, Governance will determine DC2 topics and notify the appropriate parties.

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

After DC2 is completed, the subsequent emails are sent out:

- Email: Including the DC2 Action Items
- Email: Sharing the DC2 Minutes
- Email: Stating the Project is Approved with a Project Start Date

Planning



The Planning Phase builds on information captured in the Initiation Phase and is traditionally considered the most important phase. Unfortunately, many times

project teams often minimize or overlook planning activities, anxious to begin the development activities of the Delivery Phase as soon as possible. A well-developed and holistic plan, however, helps ensure that the project team completes a project successfully, on time, and on cost with fewer surprises and deviations from the originating charter. The project plan must consist of the schedule and resources for the project, budget requirements, performance measures, and clear actions for managing change, risk, and communications. The phase concludes with a sponsor-approved project plan.

Primary Responsibility Project Manager with *support* from the Business Analyst (i.e., ITBA)

Action Items:

After DC2, the PPMO Project Manager will work in collaboration with the Business Analyst to complete the planning documentation.

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Planning Document** – The planning document further refines the information in the Project Charter by identifying the actual resources assigned to the project as well as the durations and work required for the deliverables.
- **Project Schedule** – The project schedule provides an actual timeline of the project tasks and deliverables and assigns them to specific resources on the team.
- **Communications Plan** (*Required for Medium and Large Projects*) – Outlines the communications needs of the project from the start so that audiences may be identified, and messages properly defined throughout the project execution.

Delivery



Delivery consists of two specific sub-phases that occur concurrently. It is when the actual project deliverables are completed, and progress is reported.

Specifically, it includes:

- **Execution** – Doing the work identified in the project plan.
- **Monitoring and Control** – Keeping the plan and schedule up to date, reporting project progress, issues, etc. and ensuring the project is on track.

With an approved plan, a project can move into the Delivery-Execution (Execution) Phase of the project lifecycle. This is where “the work gets done;” where the project team completes the tasks outlined on the project schedule and develops the project deliverable(s). The Execution Phase concludes with the project deliverable(s) achieved and accepted by the users and the sponsor. The second portion of the Delivery Phase is Monitor and Control. Monitor and Control consists of the activities needed to track the work. The team delivers status reports, monitors, and reports on issues and risks, creates change requests, and conducts procurement activities.

Primary Responsibility Project Manager

Action Items:

- The PPMO Project Manager will execute the project.
- Steering Committees are established to include initial project kickoff and regular updates to leadership

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Project Status and Reporting** (*Ongoing*) – Based on the project’s size, it will determine the level of project status reporting. At a minimum it is required to have bi-weekly status reporting to the Project Inventory System.
- **Acceptance of Deliverables** – The Acceptance of Deliverables clearly articulates how each of the deliverables identified in the Project Planning Document and prior was completed and approved during the project’s execution.

Domain Council + (DC+):

During DC+, the Project Manager will share Project Status Updates due to scope and/or schedule changes to the Domain Council to discuss any major risk and mitigation strategies.

The Domain Council will approve any **SCOPE / SCHEDULE CHANGES** to a project in the Information Technology Domain Portfolio. During DC+ the following items will be discussed and approved:

- Major risk and mitigation strategies are discussed
- Approval to Operate is approved
- Approval to Closeout is approved

Primary Responsibility: Governance

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Approval to Proceed** (*Optional*) – In some cases where the project is iterative or agile in nature, multiple releases may require interim checkpoints during the Delivery Phase.
- **Approval to Operate** (*Optional*) – The Approval to Operate provides an opportunity to provide for interim releases of deliverables while the overall project is on-going. This clarifies how key project elements are transitioned to full production use.

Closeout



Projects are temporary in nature and a project team must complete the activities of the final phase – Closeout – in order to officially complete the project. Conducting

the activities of this phase is vital to continuous improvement efforts and the successful transition of the project deliverable(s). After achieving acceptance of the deliverable(s), the project team documents lessons learned and archives project documentation for future use. The project manager transfers the project deliverable(s) to operations and support staff or unit, who will maintain it as an operational activity. Finally, and often overlooked, the project team disbands. The project team is recognized for the accomplishments associated with the project, and an optional virtual or in-person team celebration is held.

Primary Responsibility Project Manager

Action Items:

- The PPMO Project Manager will complete the Closeout Document.

PPMO Project Lifecycle Documents:

- **Project Closeout Document** – This document provides the final disposition of the project for ITS leadership and senior stakeholders. Completion and agreement by the project team on this document indicate the project is closed.

Domain Council Final (DCF):

During DCF, the Project Manager and Project Sponsor will inform the Project Completion to the Domain Council.

The Domain Council will confirm **COMPLETION** of the project in the Information Technology Domain Portfolio. During DCF the following items will be discussed and approved:

- Project Manager Proceeds with Project Closeout Activities

Primary Responsibility: Governance

IT Project Management Policy and Reporting Requirements

George Mason University currently operates under a Level 3 operating authority within the Commonwealth of Virginia. This authority provides a level of autonomy as it relates to the management of information technology projects. University Policy 1310

(<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/information-technology-project-management/>),

provides overall guidance for project management. However, in certain cases, there are types of projects that must be reported at the state level, and Mason must comply with this requirement.

There are two situations which require reporting:

1. Software Development Projects over \$100,000
2. All IT projects costing over \$1,000,000 unless they are deemed instructional or research in nature.

When a project meets one or both conditions, it must be reported to the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA). Details on reporting requirements can found in COV ITRM Project Management Standard at: <https://www.vita.virginia.gov/policy—governance/itrm-policies-standards/>.

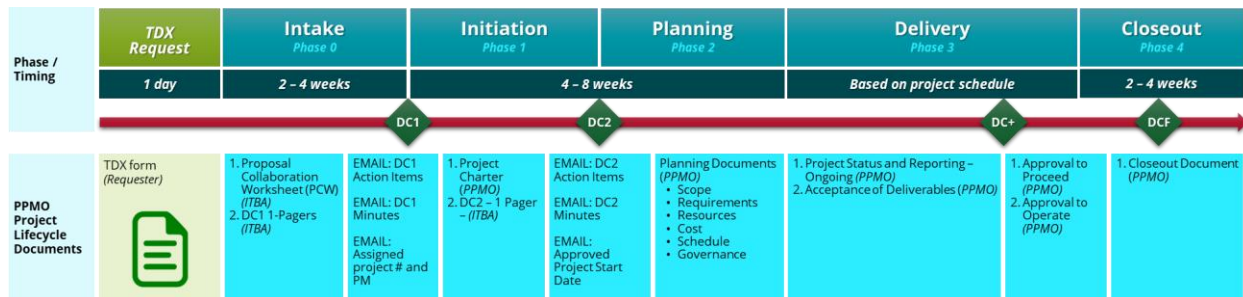
Appendix 1 – Efforts Not Considered ITS PPMO Projects

To aid in distinguishing operational efforts from projects, the list below is a compilation of examples that **do not meet** the criteria for being classified as ITS PPMO Projects.

- Service provisioning (hosting, voice, network, enterprise applications, etc.)
- Hardware refreshes to maintain support for existing services (Servers, PC's, Storage)
- Network refreshes if other than a complete swap out of equipment for new models offering new functionality (e.g. upgrade to use of Nexuss technology)
- Software or technology upgrades except where the upgrade is a major release that adds additional functionality and requires more extensive testing and coordination with the customers directly or indirectly utilizing the software
- Increasing capacity for an existing system
- Application patch release updates
- Operating system patch release updates
- Desktop integration release
- Problem identification, research, and resolution for daily issues due to program, technical, or business errors
- Operation and application security updates
- Minor process and/or procedure modifications
- Database reorganizations and general housekeeping
- Business process re-engineering that changes process but not technology

Appendix 2 – IT Project Management Templates

Templates are the lifeblood of the PM Framework, as they provide the means for capturing the needed information to manage the project scope, effort, and deliverables throughout the lifecycle. The Mason IT PM Framework includes the following lifecycle templates to satisfy the project management deliverables:



Each deliverable applies to a specific phase of the project lifecycle, and the approval of the deliverable is what constitutes completion of the phase. Templates are available on the ITS Website in the Project Management area: <https://its.gmu.edu/working-with-its/ppmo/>. These templates are provided to ensure that the required information is captured and reported at each phase of the project lifecycle.

#	Template Name	Lifecycle Phase	Primary Responsible
1	Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW)	Intake	ITBA, Business Analyst
2	Project Charter	Initiation	PPMO Project Manager
3	Planning Document	Planning	PPMO Project Manager
4	Project Status and Reporting (Ongoing)	Delivery	PPMO Project Manager
5	Acceptance of Deliverables	Delivery	PPMO Project Manager
6	Approval to Proceed (Optional)	Delivery	PPMO Project Manager
7	Approval to Operate (Optional)	Delivery	PPMO Project Manager
8	Project Closeout Document	Closeout	PPMO Project Manager

Each project template is intended to be self-explanatory; instructions are written directly within each template explaining the type of information to capture and how to complete it.

Core Project Information – The Header

Each template consists of a standard set of project information that links the templates and provides key background and contact information for the project. The remainder of the template includes the information required to satisfy the project management needs for the project phase.

Core information includes:

- Project sponsor information
- ITS points of contact
- Core customers (Impact Group)
- Strategic Alignment / links to other efforts (e.g., Audit finding)

For projects working with ITS, the ITS Portfolio and Project Management Office (PPMO) team typically assists with completing this information.

1-Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW)

The Proposal Collaboration Worksheet (PCW) is the starting point for all internal IT/infrastructure project requests. It is a high-level description that aids governance bodies, advisory councils, and/or George Mason leadership in reviewing a request to identify any obligations for compliance, regulations, policy adherence, and other standards identified by federal, state, university, or any other applicable governing bodies.

The document concentrates on defining the project's scope and purpose. It serves as an official record of authorization for the use of resources and marks the initiation of the project acceptance phase. The report gathers pivotal information for the domain council, enabling them to make a well-informed decision on the project's viability. It includes an overarching view, specific aims and objectives, stakeholder risk evaluations, and a value scoring report that assesses the project based on various critical factors.

Primary Responsibility: ITBA

2-Project Charter

The Project Charter focuses on the scope and purpose of the project. It documents the authorization to utilize resources and begin the Planning Phase of the project. The charter includes the following information not previously captured:

- **Solution Description** – What it is and what it will do
- **Scope** – What the project will and will not achieve
- **Deliverables** – What will be developed and what constitutes the definition of done for the project
- **Resource Requirements** – What types of resources will be needed to complete the project deliverables
- **Dependencies** – Any external dependencies that may limit or impact this project's completion
- **Assumptions** – Technical or functional project assumptions around the delivery of this project
- **Risks** – Any potential risks that would impact the project's success
- **Cost Estimates** – The estimated costs to implement and operate the solution. Use the project estimation tool to develop the estimates.

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

3-Planning Document

The Planning Document provides an overview of the project plan for IT leadership and senior stakeholders. It must always be accompanied by a Project Schedule, and when required, a Communications Plan. These documents are presented at an Execution Readiness Review and whenever possible should be approved before the execution of the Project Schedule.

The Planning document builds on the Project Charter by identifying the specific project approach, formalizing the deliverables by estimating the work involved, responsibility, and acceptance criteria. Charter information refined includes:

- **Dependencies & Assumptions**
- **Risks & Mitigations** – Including what will be done to mitigate or address the risk vs. merely defining it

- **Project Team** – Named resources are also identified from the teams identified within the Charter

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

Project Schedule

The Project Schedule may be in any format that is most useful to the project team; however, it must include tasks, durations, resource assignments, and dependencies across the deliverables. Each deliverable should be clearly articulated within the project schedule.

Communications Plan

During the Planning Phase, communications needed for the project are identified and captured on a Communications Plan that includes:

- Types of communication – email, website, in-person, news blast, etc.
- Audience – who will receive the information, the target audience
- Timing – when during the project lifecycle the communications are needed (note, specific dates may not be formalized here, but general timelines relative to the project lifecycle should be identified)

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager / Communications Specialist

4- Project Status and Reporting (Ongoing)

Project Status and Reporting is a crucial aspect of Project Management, involving the systematic collection and communication of project-related information. It provides stakeholders with real-time updates on project progress, milestones achieved, and potential challenges. Effective status reporting ensures transparency, facilitates informed decision-making, and helps in identifying and mitigating risks promptly. It also serves as a communication tool, aligning team members, management, and other stakeholders towards common project goals.

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

5-Acceptance of Deliverables

Acceptance of one or more deliverables occurs with an Acceptance Review. The review would ideally occur as an in-person demonstration to the relevant stakeholders of the deliverable completed, which can also serve as an official acceptance test date. However, an in-person meeting is not required. As many projects have more than one deliverable that may be completed at different times during the Delivery Phase, all deliverables may be on a single document, or it is also acceptable to have more than one Acceptance of Deliverables document for a single project. Multiple Acceptance Reviews may be used to facilitate the implementation of the full solution when a single Acceptance Review is not feasible.

The deliverable(s) and acceptance criteria listed here should match what is in the signed/approved Project Plan. Information captured about the deliverable includes:

- Completion Date
- Acceptance Criteria
- Scope accomplished
- Dependencies or Risks addressed
- Estimated and Actual hours if available

Additionally, any information about deliverables that were originally identified but not completed during the project will also be captured so that they are noted for other disposition (e.g., future project, no longer required, etc.).

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

6-Approval to Proceed

Approval to Proceed is an optional tool used, typically in Iterative projects where there are specific Go/No-go points identified during the project's Delivery or if there is a key decision point during the lifecycle. This tool is used to grant approval to proceed to the next step during any phase of the project (go / no-go, checkpoint, move into dev or production server, or any other next step that is not a completed deliverable).

The document simply captures the action or decision point with a description of what is being approved as well as the next steps after the approval. The document is then signed/approved by the sponsor or delegate to grant the approval to move forward.

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

7-Approval to Operate

The Approval to Operate is an optional tool used to designate when one or more deliverables is officially released and transitioned to operational status, effectively ending the project work on that particular deliverable. There may be one or more Approval to Operate documents completed for a project as needed to satisfy all the deliverables requiring a move to an operational state within the project.

The Approval to Operate captures:

- The deliverable moving to operations, including who will own it once it is in production and operational
- Any deliverable previously transitioned to operations earlier in the project lifecycle

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

8-Project Closeout Document

The final required template in the Project Management Framework Lifecycle is the Project Closeout Document. This document builds on the Deliverable Acceptance by capturing additional details about the project that are not deliverable-specific. There are two main purposes of the Project Closeout:

Communications – capture key elements of the project and its related successes that can be used in marketing and communications materials such as Annual Reports, Executive Briefings, newsletters, and more.

Future process improvements – capture lessons learned, successes, areas for improvement related to the effort to improve performance and planning on future projects.

Primary Responsibility: PPMO Project Manager

Appendix 3 – Automated Project Tools

There are many different project management tools available for various aspects of project management. This IT Project Management Framework is tool-agnostic. Project Managers may use any tools that assist with the management of their projects as long as the core project management templates and deliverables are captured and reported consistently. Examples of tools available at Mason for project management include:

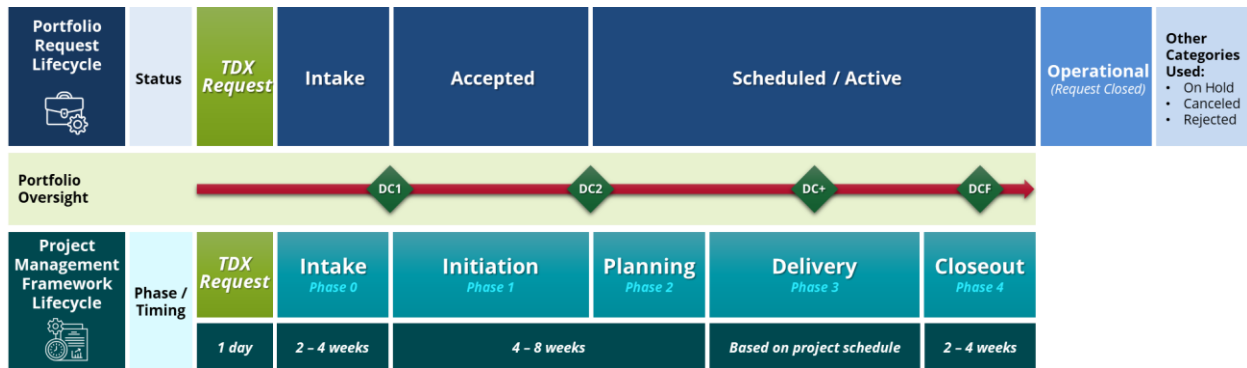
Tools that are available as IT service at Mason without additional costs:

- **Microsoft Teams:** Microsoft Teams is a unified communications platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage (including collaboration on files), and application integration. The service integrates other Office 365 applications.
- **Microsoft Planner:** Microsoft Planner is a planning application available on the Microsoft Office 365 platform. Planner enables users and teams to create plans, assemble and assign tasks, share files, communicate, and collaborate with other users, and receive progress updates via various means on the Office 365 platform.
- **Microsoft Power BI:** Microsoft Power BI is a business analytics tool that provides interactive visualizations and business intelligence capabilities. The Projects Power BI dashboards contain visual representations and analyses of current projects and requests in Mason’s Project Inventory. The purpose of the dashboard is to provide stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of the project landscape and enable informed decision-making. The dashboards consist of multiple visualizations, each offering various options to sort and filter the information to focus on what is most relevant to you.
- **Project for the Web:** Project for the web is Microsoft’s most recent offering for cloud-based work and project management. Project for the web provides simple, powerful work management capabilities and can be used by project managers and team members to plan and manage work of any size.
- **Project Online:** Project Online provides powerful project management capabilities for planning, prioritizing, and managing projects and project portfolio investments—from almost anywhere on almost any device. Project Online can be used by administrators, portfolio managers and viewers, project and resource managers, and team leads and members.

Appendix 4 – Portfolio Request Lifecycle *relationship to* Project Management Framework Lifecycle

In addition to the Project Management Framework Lifecycle, IT project requests also travel through a Portfolio Request Lifecycle. The Portfolio Request Lifecycle focuses on the project request as it moves through a governance cycle – approval, prioritization, queue, etc. While project management ensures projects are done the right way – “doing projects right” – the portfolio lifecycle ensures that Mason is selecting and working on the correct project – “doing the right projects.”

In addition to the intake process, ITS tracks projects and requests through their entire portfolio lifecycle. The lifecycles often share governance and templates throughout the processes, though they are used for different purposes. The following diagram shows where and how the Portfolio Request Lifecycle aligns with the Project Management Framework Lifecycle:



The project phases align with the core phases of the Portfolio Request Lifecycle:

Portfolio Request Lifecycle	Request Lifecycle Description	Project Management Framework Lifecycle Alignment
Intake	Project requests are submitted for analysis, evaluation, and decision-making.	Intake
Accepted	Project is accepted into the portfolio queue.	Initiation
Scheduled / Active	Project has been approved via DC2. Projects could be conducting high-level planning/scheduling. Projects could also have an assigned a planned start date and allocated resources. Projects transition to actively being worked on from Project Management Planning through Closeout – planning and completing project deliverables.	Planning Delivery Closeout
Operational (Request Closed)	Project has been approved for closure via DCF. Project is officially complete, and all the project management closeout documents are approved. Request is formally closed as complete.	N/A
On Hold	Request has been approved but has been placed on hold due to resource or other issues	Initiation Planning

		Delivery
Canceled	The project has been terminated before completion.	Any
Rejected	The project request has been evaluated and deemed unsuitable for implementation.	Any

Appendix 5 – Definitions

Term	Definition
Agile (Software Development)	A project management approach utilizing a series of repeating short development cycles called sprints to design, develop, and deliver the final project deliverables. For more information, see the Agile Alliance website: https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/
Deliverable	A final product or product component that must be provided to a client or stakeholder according to contractual stipulations.
Domain Council (DC)	The portfolio structure based on client area domains. Each council will be accountable for project activation approval, prioritization, and progress monitoring. There are four Domain Councils within the lifecycle: Domain Council 1 (DC1), Domain Council 2 (DC2), Domain Council + (DC+), and Domain Council Final (DCF).
Governance	The structure by which roles and relationships between project team members and an organization’s high-level decision makers are defined.
Phase	A distinct stage in a project life cycle. Each phase has its own purpose and associated project management deliverable.
Portfolio	A collectively managed set of programs and projects
Project	A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. A project is temporary in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources, and a project is unique in that it is not a routine operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal. (PMI). See the Project Management Institute’s (PMI) website for additional information: https://www.pmi.org/about/learn-about-pmi/what-is-project-management
Project Management	The application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. (PMI)
Project Type	A pre-defined set of Framework components configured to support delivery within certain project dynamics
Resource(s)	The elements needed for a project to successfully meet its objectives. Examples of resources include equipment, staff, locations, facilities, and money.
Scope	The scope of a project constitutes everything it is supposed to accomplish in order to be deemed successful.
SCRUM	An Agile-specific project management approach to support teams in complex product development. Scrum consists of Scrum Teams and their associated roles, events, artifacts, and rules. For additional information, see https://www.scrum.org/
Template	A recommended grouping of data required for the IT Project Management Framework
Waterfall	A sequential, linear process of project management consists of several discrete phases; no phase begins until the prior phase is complete, and each phase’s completion is terminal. Waterfall management does not allow you to return to a previous phase.