APPROACH

Good Practices in Research Administration, Leadership and Team Management

Workshop 13/3/2025

Managing multiple projects with limited resources. How to maintain consistent quality throughout.

euproject-approach.eu/

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What is a good practice?

- A **good practice** can be defined as ”anything that has been tried and shown to work in some way — whether fully or in part but with at least some evidence of effectiveness — and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere” (Serrat, 2008).
- A good practice can be e.g., methods, tools, techniques, models, and processes that has been shown to be effective in some context and might be effective in another too.

- Process of identifying and sharing good practices could include three main phases in the **APPROACH** project (adapted from Skyrme, 2002):

1. Discovering and documenting good practices through **online questionnaire** (workshop pre-assignment).
2. Sharing and validating good practices during the **workshops through peer discussion, reflection and voting**.
3. **Disseminating good practices** by publishing a collection of “Good Practices in Research Administration and Leadership” with guidelines and tips as a learning tool for upcoming managers and team leaders.

Today’s Workshop

10:00–10:15 **Welcome and introduction to the workshop (15 min.)**

Topic: *Managing multiple projects with limited resources. How to maintain consistent quality throughout*: General Description and Overall Strategy. Tips to be discussed.

10:15–11:15 T**opic of the workshop session (60 min.)**
Miro Exercise related to internal communication:
Individual reflection (10 min.)
Group discussion (30 min.)
Presenting and voting on the best practices (20 min.)

11:15-11:30 **Closing up and next steps (15 min.)**

Introduction

•Managing multiple research projects is complex due to limited funding, expertise, and infrastructure.

•Balancing **innovation, quality, and efficiency** is key.

•This presentation will provide some tips for best practices for prioritization, resource optimization, quality control, and team management.

The Challenge – Why Is This Important?

Many professionals manage multiple projects simultaneously with limited:

- Time – Deadlines overlap.
- Budget – Limited funding per project.
- People – Small teams or shared resources.

The risks:

- Declining quality due to stretched resources.
- Burnout among team members.
- Project delays and inefficiencies.

The key: Strategic planning, prioritization, and process optimization.

Prioritization Strategies – Focus on the Right Things

Assess Project Value: Not all projects are equal—some are high-impact, others can wait.

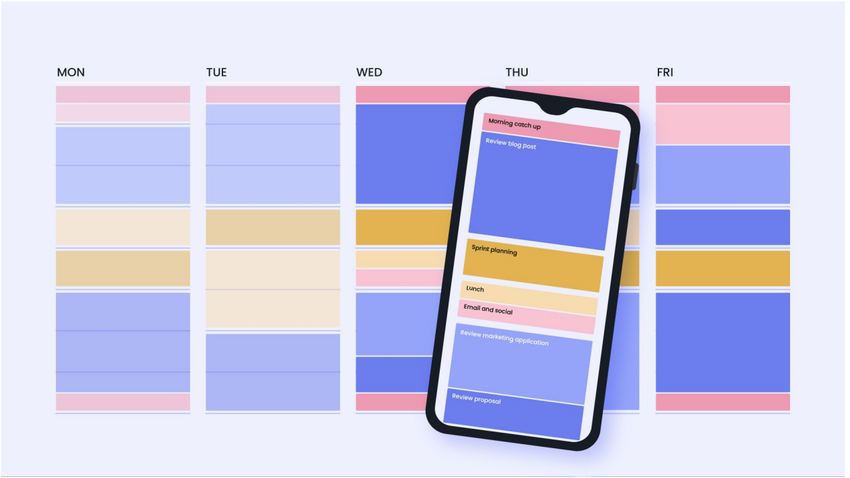
Align projects with strategic objectives: Consider funding opportunities, societal impact, and technology readiness levels (TRLs).

Use **Impact vs. Feasibility Matrix** to prioritize efforts.

- Example: Use the **Eisenhower Matrix** to classify tasks:
- **Urgent & Important:** Do these first.
- **Important but Not Urgent:** Schedule them.
- **Urgent but Not Important:** Delegate if possible.
- **Neither Urgent nor Important:** Consider eliminating.

Prioritization Strategies – Focus on the Right Things

Time Blocking & Scheduling: Allocate dedicated time slots for each project to avoid overlap and inefficiencies. Ensure resource allocation aligns with high-priority projects.



Agile & Iterative Approaches: Break down projects into manageable tasks and adapt dynamically to resource constraints. *The agile iterative approach focuses on delivering value as fast as possible in increments, rather than all at once.* Implement **Milestone-based decision gates** for go/no-go decisions.

Efficient Resource Allocation

Optimize Human Resources: Assign personnel based on skill sets, availability, and project demands. Use shared expertise across projects. Know the dynamics of your team.

Leverage Automation: Use digital tools for routine tasks to save time and increase productivity. Set up protocols where is possible. Knowledge sharing.

Resource Sharing: Utilize cross-functional teams and shared equipment to maximize efficiency.

Outsource when necessary – If internal resources are stretched, external help can be a cost-effective solution.

Set Realistic Deadlines: Avoid overcommitment by aligning project timelines with resource availability.

Maintaining Team Morale & Avoiding Burnout

Prevent burnout by setting realistic workloads and monitoring stress levels.

Celebrate small wins – Recognition boosts motivation.

Encourage learning – Teams that grow their skills are more engaged and productive.

Build flexibility into schedules – Avoid last-minute rushes.

Effective Communication

Set clear expectations – Define objectives, deliverables, and responsibilities upfront. Be consistent.

Use a centralized platform for tracking project progress (e.g., Notion, Trello, Monday.com).

Hold short, structured check-ins:

Weekly stand-ups to track progress.

Monthly reviews for strategic alignment.

Encourage transparent communication – Openly address issues before they escalate.

Quality Assurance Methods

Standardized Workflows: Develop templates, checklists, and documentation to ensure consistency. Create SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) for recurring tasks—this ensures consistency. Use checklists to maintain uniformity across projects.

Regular Reviews & Feedback Loops: Implement progress reviews and peer evaluations to catch issues early. Define KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and review work regularly.

Continuous Improvement: Use lessons learned from past projects to refine processes. Document best practices to speed up future projects.

Risk Management Planning: Identify potential risks early (e.g., resource shortages, technical challenges). Create mitigation strategies to maintain quality. Encourage a problem-solving culture – Team members should proactively suggest solutions.

Tools & Techniques - Leveraging Technology to Work Smarter

- **Project Management Software:** OpenProject, Trello, Asana, Microsoft Project, Planner, or Jira for task tracking and collaboration.
- **Version Control & Documentation:** Use Git, Confluence, or Notion to maintain project records and ensure traceability.
- **Communication Platforms:** Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom for real-time collaboration.
- **Data Analytics & KPI Tracking:** Monitor performance using dashboards and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Conclusion & Key Takeaways

Prioritize wisely – Not everything is equally important.

Optimize resources – Allocate time, budget, and people strategically.

Standardize for consistency – Create templates, checklists, and procedures.

Communicate effectively – Keep all stakeholders informed and engaged.

Stay adaptable – Expect changes and plan for them.

Use technology to your advantage – Automate where possible.

Case Studies & Real-World Examples Exercise

- **Research & Academia:** Strategies from successful EU-funded projects. Share insights from EU-funded projects (e.g., Horizon Europe consortia).

- **Industry Best Practices:** Lessons from companies that optimize multi-project execution. Highlight successful multi-project research teams and their strategies.