TIPS FOR MANAGING IT PROJECTS UNDER SOCIAL WELFARE DEVELOPMENT FUND

PURPOSE:

The tips provide some best practices and guides promulgated by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in project management with an aim to enabling more efficient and effective delivery of IT projects. Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) may make reference to the following in undertaking application for IT projects under the Social Welfare Development Fund (SWDF).

FOUR PHASES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT LIFECYCLE:

Introduction

Under **Initial phase**, a project is triggered by a sound business case and commences with the acquisition of the required budget (i.e. funding application).

When funding is available, the project enters into the **Plan phase** where a project management plan is developed. The Plan phase can be relatively short, the purpose of which is to identify what and when tasks must be completed, in particular, to produce the project deliverables required.

The **Execute phase** is where the project is expected to produce the project deliverables. For outsourced projects, it is normally the phase where contractors turn up (upon contract award) to complete the project deliverables.

The project ends in the **Close phase** where performance of the project is measured and assessment is made on whether business benefits defined in the business case are achieved.

Highlight of Tasks on each phase

1. *Initial Phase ~ Building the project foundation*

- ✎ Establish project organisation to manage and execute the project
- ✎ Identify business needs for the project and make reference to similar SWDF project(s)
- ✎ Identify and document stakeholders involvement
- ✎ Prepare funding application
- ✎ Estimate project costs
- ✎ Identify future annual recurrent costs
- ✎ Establish a project library for knowledge sharing and reference amongst project team members

Points to note

☺ NGOs are encouraged to identify and prioritise IT projects well ahead of the funding application. They can consult IT professionals to plan, to collect and to explore the agency's needs for IT development.

☺ The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) has launched, since 12 June 2014, the "e-Platform for SWDF – Sharing Knowledge and Experience", which is designated for NGOs eligible for SWDF to share, among others, their experience in IT project implementation. All subvented NGOs can get more information and references about IT projects from https://e-platform.hkcss.org.hk/mainlogin.php.

☺ Application Form and Guidance Note under SWDF can also be found at Social Welfare Department (SWD) Homepage.

http://www.swd.gov.hk/tc/index/site_ngo/page_swdf/

☺ Please follow the Guidance Note issued by SWD when filling the application form, especially the footnotes associated with the form.

2. *Plan Phase ~ Getting prepared and organised*

- ✎ Review current business and operation situation to refine project scope
- ✎ Refine project schedule and budget
- ✎ Define project risks and management process
- ✎ Prepare Project Management Plan (PMP)

Points to note

☺ Depending on the size of the project as well as the resource and manpower availability, the project monitoring /project governance organisation, such as project steering committee (PSC), project assurance team (PAT), can be formed to oversee the whole project. The roles of each member in PSC and PAT, such as Project Owner, Internal Project Manager (IPM), Risk Owner, Technical Advisor, Contractor Project Manager, have to be clearly defined. For more details on each role, please click the following:-

http://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/proj_mgmt/doc/Appendices_to_Practice_Guide_to_Project_Management_v2.1.pdf

☺ Among all the roles, IPM plays an essential role to ensure project completion in accordance with the work schedule, project scope and estimated budget. He/She is responsible for overseeing project performance and monitoring the contractor in delivering the project deliverables according to the PMP.

☺ PMP is a formal document that defines how the project is executed, monitored and controlled. It encompasses management of various aspects of the project including organisation, scope, schedule, financial, procurement, communications, risk and issue, quality, logistics and change. A clear PMP can facilitate monitoring on project schedule against each milestone.

☺ PMP is prepared before start of tendering process to ensure that this process is properly monitored and controlled. All stakeholders' views are considered while preparing the PMP to gain early project buy-in and to ensure the plan is practical.

☺ Changes are inevitable throughout the project lifecycle. Any aspect of the project including organisation, cost, schedule, scope, quality and deliverable is subject to change. It is thus crucial to have an agreed change control process to request, analyse and approve the changes.

☺ User requirements are often unclear and not comprehensive at the beginning of the project. A focus group may be formed among the dedicated users and representatives in order to discuss about the user requirements. A detailed, well-defined and agreeable set of user requirements is a good entry for smooth development of the IT project.

☺ Project risks should be continuously checked and updated, where risk response strategies are simultaneously developed.

☺ **Documentation**: It is a good practice to well document the project progress. This can ensure project continuity despite unexpected staff turnover.

3. *Execute Phase ~ Delivering the Solution*

- Procure services for implementation of project deliverables
- Kick start outsourced IT project
- Procure hardware and software, if required
- Manage project execution
- Manage project scope, schedule and budget
- Administer contracts
- Manage risks and changes
- Gain project acceptance

Points to note

☺ Procurement procedures: To exercise good corporate governance, NGOs' IT projects should comply with their own procurement guidelines, which should be devised in line with those set out in Chapter 6 of the Lotteries Fund (LF) Manual, in particular the number of returned quotations/tenders as stated in para. 6.2 of the LF Manual.

☺ Procurement requirements should be clear, concise, consistent and unambiguous to minimize opportunities of misinterpretation.

☺ IPM must ensure that the contractor understands completely its contractual requirements and the performance standards. To achieve this, IPM should ensure that the contractor's project plan aligns with PMP before kicking start project activities. Particular attention should be paid to project processes, schedule, project requirements and acceptance criteria, communication needs and quality control mechanism.

☺ Stick to the schedule: It is very crucial to stick to the original project schedule. Prompt measures should be adopted to catch up with any delay identified. Besides, special attention and consideration should be taken into account if more than one IT projects are to be implemented at the same time.

☺ ***Interim Report*** is required to reach Information Systems and Technology Branch (ISTB) / SWD when the project approaches half-way of the approved implementation plan. This can serve as a reminder about the project progress to meet the schedules according to each milestone. Soft copy of the Interim Report can be downloaded from SWD Homepage at below link and the completed report should be returned to sist4@swd.gov.hk :-

http://www.swd.gov.hk/tc/index/site_ngo/page_swdf/

4. *Close Phase ~ Wrapping up the Project*

✍ Perform administrative closeout
✍ Close project
✍ Lessons learnt

Points to note

☺ For knowledge transfer, it's a good practice to document business benefits and lessons learnt. Practice wisdom and difficulties can be stored in project library for future use.

☺ The ***Overall Evaluation Report*** is required to reach ISTB within three months after the completion date. Soft copy can be downloaded from SWD Homepage at below link and the completed report should be returned to sist4@swd.gov.hk :-

http://www.swd.gov.hk/tc/index/site_ngo/page_swdf/

USE OF OFF-THE-SHELF PRODUCTS

☺ The operations of some business workflows, such as financial and human resource management, are very similar in nature and a start-up kit designed for them may help reduce project failures and save resources. NGOs are encouraged, having considered its business workflow and users' requirements, to use off-the-shelf* product readily available in the market where it can be obtained at a lower cost over in-house development.

(Commercial off-the-shelf or commercially available off-the-shelf (COTS) is a term used to describe the purchase of packaged solutions which are then adapted to satisfy the needs of the purchasing organisation, rather than the commissioning of custom made solutions.)*

PROMOTION OF IT SECURITY MANAGEMENT

☺ Information security is an important pillar to support the fast pace with which the e-business environment in Hong Kong needs to develop. OGCIO accords great importance to information and cyber security and strives to raise public awareness of information security.

☺ For an application system, IT security management involves a series of activities as follows:-

     a. Assessing the Security Risks – to identify threats, vulnerabilities and impacts;

     b. Implementing and Maintain a Secure Framework – to define policies, assign security responsibilities and apply safeguards;

     c. Monitoring and Recording – to handle the security incident and keep the record; and

     d. Reviewing and Improving – to review, revise relevant security guidelines and conduct security audit periodically.

☺ The benefit of security risk assessment and audit is to provide a complete and systematic view to management on the existing IT security risk and necessary security safeguards.

Enquiries

☎ IT projects ➔ Mr Vincent Chan Shu-ka, Social Work Officer (Information Systems and Technology)4, of ISTB at 2136 8737

☎ Subvention matters and use of SWDF ➔ Ms Chuang Hong-mei, Social Work Officer (Subventions)14, of Subventions Branch at 2832 4365

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Useful links from the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO): *(For reference only)*

📖 *Project Management*

1. Practice Guide to Project Management for IT Projects under an Outsourced Environment

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/proj_mgmt/pm_practice_guide_outsourced.htm

2. Practice Guide for Scoping & Planning of Large-scale IT System Development Projects

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/proj_mgmt/lsp.htm

📖 *System Development*

1. Best Practices for Business Analyst

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/system_development/best_practices_for_ba.htm

2. Effective Systems Analysis and Design Guide

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/system_development/effective_guide.htm

3. Practice Guide for Agile Software Development

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/system_development/agile_software_development.htm

📖 *Others useful links*

1. Web Accessibility

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/community/web_accessibility/handbook/

2. IT Infrastructure and Standards

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/infrastructure/methodology/proj_mgmt/

3. IT Security

   https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/information_security/

   https://www.infosec.gov.hk/english/main.html

   https://www.govcert.gov.hk/en/links.html