Designing a Project Management Structure
To define project governance in line with the size of your project.

Before you start

➢ **Taking reference from your project design:** Reflect on the type, size and complexity of your project as a starting point for choosing a suitable project governance structure.

➢ **Building on experience:** Consult with colleagues and your project partners who have experience in implementing similar projects and compare their project management approaches.

➢ **Designing the project management and governance structure:** Ideally with relevant project partners and/or stakeholders jointly design the basic framework of the structures and bodies for your project.

➢ **Refining the initial structure:** Describe the roles and responsibilities of each identified management and governance body and position clearly. This process will highlight any duplication or any potential over or under-design of structures and positions.

It is important to think through what type of management and governance arrangements might be most suitable for your project. Every project needs to have some sort of management and governance structure to succeed and to ensure that the project objectives are being achieved efficiently.

This tool is an **Aide Memoire** of a number of key project management positions and their key roles and responsibilities, including examples of a small number of project management entities

What for?

➢ To ensure that the quality of the funding application is as high as possible to maximise its chances of success.

How to use it?

Step 1 Form a small team with those who are interested in taking a role in the management /implementation of the project.

Step 2 Consult with colleagues and partner organisations that have managed similar projects in the past and gather their type of project management structures and styles.

Step 3 Reflect jointly on the size, length and complexity of your project in comparison to other projects and their management structure. Consider the various roles and responsibilities which would be relevant for your project and use the Aide Memoire Tool to help this process.

Step 4 Once you have an outline of a structure start thinking it through in more detail, i.e. how it would work in practice.

Step 5 Consider which roles some of the stakeholders, project partners, target groups or community representatives could take, to grow a sense of 'ownership' and keep the momentum going.

Step 6 Test your draft project management structure for effectiveness and efficiency. Ask yourselves if there are too many layers of management, or too few. You could potentially ask a project partner or experienced colleague to peer review your design.

URBACT

Co-funded by the European Union
Interreg

Project Management Structure - Aide Memoire

A project management structure should always be defined and visualised. If the project operates as a partnership of organisations, each of the project partner should agree with its structure, entities, procedures and roles.

The range and number of positions and their titles often depend on your organisation's existing systems and ways of steering and managing projects.

The titles of positions are less relevant than the description of their roles and responsibilities which is crucial to be clearly defined and well differentiated.
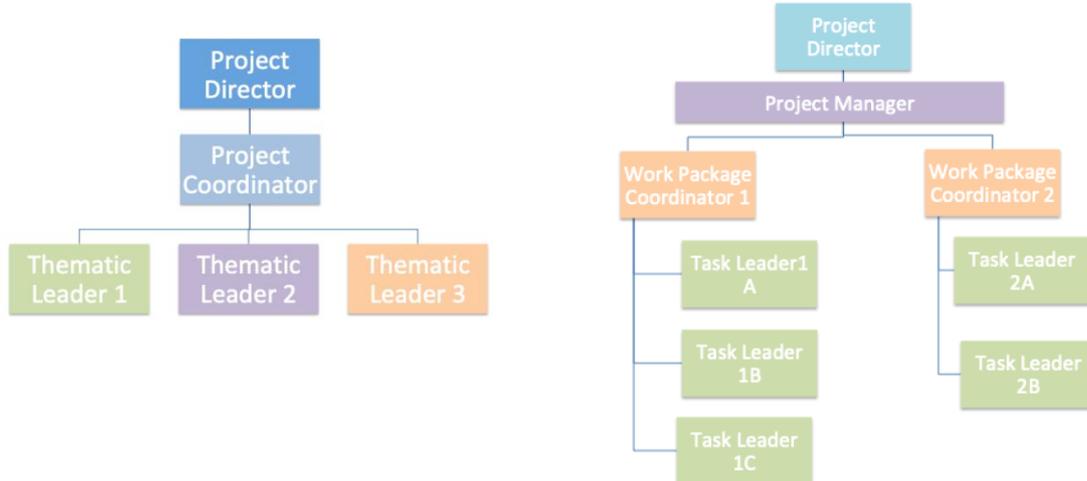
The number of positions in a project should be in proportion to the project's size and complexity. For example, the project management structure of a 3-months project delivering a community survey and workshop is more likely to require a minimal management outfit than a 3-year project delivered by four partner organisations involving various stages of project implementation.

The key message for designing a suitable project management structure is **proportionality**; the management structure of a project needs to ensure **effectiveness** as well as **efficiency**.

Project Management Positions

The position of **Project Director** is usually allocated to a senior, experienced member of staff. His/her role is often defined as that of who is responsible for project implementation, who is in charge of all legal and contractual obligations, quality control, and client/funder liaison.   However, in smaller projects the role of Project Director is often merged with that of a **Project Manager**.

Project Manager/Project Coordinator

The roles of a Project Manager and a Project Coordinator are often similar and either the one or the other title is chosen for a project. Only very large and complex projects might incorporate both positions, but it will be important to differentiate their roles and responsibilities clearly so that there is no duplication of tasks. Typical roles and responsibilities of Project Managers/Coordinators include:
- being in charge of the day-to-day management and coordination of the project, ensuring that tasks are allocated and completed in line with the project plan.
- dealing with all administrative tasks, data management, ethics management, quality control, risk management
- allocation of tasks, time management and project team coordination
- financial management of the project
- monitoring and reporting of progress.

If a project has a number of thematic strands, work packages, and/or distinct project activities or tasks, the positions of '**Team Leaders**', '**Work Package Leaders**', or similar are often used to delegate and share responsibilities and organisational work load. Team or Work Package Leaders are usually responsible for a small team of staff in charge of delivering certain aspects of a project. It is important that their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood. Potentially, in very large projects a further layer of leaders can be introduced, often called '**Task Leaders**' with a responsibility for specific task within a larger Team or Work Package context.

Decision Making and Advisory Bodies

Particularly for large, multi-annual projects and projects with a number of partner organisations involved, it is often important to set up a project body that can ensure their involvement in strategic decisions and project direction. These bodies can have different titles, such as **Project Steering Board, Management Committee, General Assembly**. Depending on the length of the project, these type of entities usually convene annually for overall performance monitoring and future direction at the strategic level.

For any size of project, an external project body could be appropriate depending on the type and purpose of the project. External project bodies are often called **Advisory Board, Review Committee, Expert Panel**. Their main role is to assist the project in certain key aspects of project implementation, thematically, technically or operationally. In a community-based project for example, a Community Panel can create an effective link between the project and a specific geographic location or target groups and provide advice on how the project might become more effective in reaching citizens and communities.

Selected Management Procedures

The more numerous the title holders and management entities of a project become, the more important it is to have **appropriate procedures** in place to help coordinate and manage them.
- **Communication and Lines of reporting** need to be established to ensure a good oversight of activity, transparency and quality control.
- Specifying **Roles and Responsibilities** and ensuring that everyone is aware of them.
- **Project meetings** at the appropriate levels (Team Meetings, Management Meetings, Project Board Meetings, etc.) will need to be set up to ensure a good internal communication flow of exchange, knowledge sharing, reviewing of progress, identifying implementation issues, and forward planning of project tasks. Identifying a Chair for each meeting, minuting rules and the frequency of the meetings also need to be specified in line with the level of project activity.
- **Further important procedures** include: Procurement of goods and services, Risk reviews, Quality Control, Data management and data security, Financial Control, Monitoring and evaluation of progress