

# ISSC OPERATING PROCEDURES

Version 2.0

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**Carleton**  
UNIVERSITY

Canada's Capital University

This Document outlines the procedures and processes  
for the efficient management of IT Projects.

## OVERVIEW

The Information Systems Steering Committee (ISSC) operates as the enterprise level committee for IT Governance. It is the prime venue for discussing Information Technology (IT) initiatives and proposals, approving those that best align with the University's strategic priorities, and providing funding as required.

ISSC approved proposals become part of the portfolio of IT projects under the management of the CCS Project Management Office (PMO), using a methodology based on the internationally recognized Project Management Institute framework. The Project Management Methodology is tailored to meet Carleton's requirements, and strikes a balance between a rigid, complex process and one that is flexible, adaptable, scalable, and easy to follow.

This Document describes the Project Management Methodology (PMM) and the role of ISSC in the development and oversight of the University IT project portfolio.

### 1.0 Project Definition

#### 1.1 Definition

A project is an endeavour undertaken to create a unique product or service. It is made up of defined processes and tasks, and has a definite beginning and end. The objectives of a project are to deliver on time, on budget, and meet customer expectations.

#### 1.2 Criteria

Many low level activities could be considered a project according to the definition above, but may not require extensive planning or funding to warrant using the full formal process; therefore, the ISSC project portfolio only includes projects with **one or more** of the following conditions:

- Fiscal funding of a minimum of \$10K
- Dedicated resources of more than 20 Person Days
- Project work has an impact on another department; for example, resources are needed from that department to work on the project, or business processes will have to change for that department as a result of the work.
- Strategic importance as determined by Project Sponsor and confirmed by ISSC

**Note:** With the exception of enterprise-wide administrative systems (Banner, LMS, CURVE), routine departmental upgrading of systems, applications, hardware, etc., **is not considered an IT project** under the ISSC mandate. Enterprise-wide systems impact the University as a whole and may be integrated with other systems, as opposed to a system or tool used by one or two departments.

## 2.0 Project Life Cycle (Overview)

The lifecycle of a project consists of four phases outlined below, each with a key **project management** deliverable document indicating the phase completion (a summary diagram is attached as Appendix “A”):

- Initiation Phase
  - Call for Proposals
  - Project Definition
    - Deliverable: Project Charter
- Planning Phase
  - Planning the implementation of the product or service
  - Refining objectives and details, and selecting the best course of action
    - Deliverable: Project Plan
- Execution and Control Phase
  - Executing the project according to the Plan
  - Monitoring and reporting project progress and budget
  - Submitting Change Request
    - Deliverable: Product or service, Project Change Request if applicable
- Closure Phase
  - Formalizing acceptance and closure of the project
    - Deliverable: Project Final Report

### 2.1 Project Initiation and the Role of ISSC

**ISSC** is most actively involved in the **Initiation Phase** in the ranking and approval of Proposals for IT initiatives; and subsequently the approval decisions of Project Charters. Using the PMO Project Management Methodology (PMM), the following is a step-by-step process for initiating a project:

- A “Call for Proposals” is sent annually by the Office of the CIO to the RPC (Resource Planning Committee) Chairs with an attached Proposal Template within the January/February timeframe
- RPC Chairs forward the Call for Proposals to their staff requesting input for IT initiatives
- Using the template, staff members prepare **Proposals** for IT initiatives for the coming year and submit them to their RPC Chair
- RPCs prioritize all their Proposals as “Mandatory, High, Medium, Low” with approval from their Chairs
- Chairs submit RPC Proposals to ISSC Secretary
- Prioritized Proposals are presented for review at one of the ISSC meetings dedicated for this purpose
- ISSC confirms the priorities and ranks the Proposals in order of priority and approves those initiatives that will potentially be executed for the coming year
- Proposals that are approved are given the go-ahead to prepare Project Charters

Approval to proceed to Project Charter does not imply automatic approval for the “project”; this is determined when the Charter is presented to ISSC.

**Note:** There may be a case where a new initiative has come to light during the year that is critical and cannot wait until the annual call for proposals. The Committee may approve an **urgent or critical** proposal which may take precedence over current approved initiatives.

## 2.2 Project Charter

The Project Charter defines the project and is a document that forms the basis for project development. Upon approval of a Proposal, the next steps are:

- A Project Charter is created, usually by the Project Manager in collaboration with the Functional Manager and other staff
- A Project Charter Review is held, attended by CCS Management and the Project Manager for a final review
- Final copy is submitted to the Project Management Office (PMO) for inclusion on the ISSC Agenda
- The Charter is presented by the Author, Project/Functional Manager to ISSC. The approval request may be either: **Approval to Execute or Approval to Plan**
- The ISSC decision may be either: Approve, Reject or Defer the project
- If funding is requested, the project is created in Banner and funds are allocated by the PMO
- **The Charter date of approval is the “official start date” of the project**

## 3.0 Planning

Approval to Plan is requested in a case where a project is large and/or complex and requires detailed planning, and/or funding and resources before it is possible to develop a realistic course of action.

If the Charter was “Approved to Plan”, the Project Manager completes a Project Management Plan document and submits it to ISSC for approval. The Plan outlines how the implementation will be conducted, and includes a Schedule (Timeline) and budget. The document also contains sections for other project management related activities; e.g.; Change Management Plan, Communication Plan, Training and Support Plan, Quality Assurance Plan, etc. ISSC may approve to Execute, Reject, or Defer continuation with the project.

## 4.0 Execution and Control, Closure

In these two Phases, ISSC’s role is essentially monitoring the progress of the project, making decisions on change requests brought forward by the Project Manager, and resolving major issues if necessary. The Project Team executes the implementation of the product or service according to the Project Plan.

### 4.1 Control – Progress Reporting

The progress of a project is reported to all stakeholders at defined periods, usually monthly. This is part of the “Control” in the Execution and Control Phase. Project Managers provide detailed monthly status updates on project progress and budget for each project with input from the project team.

For the ISSC, status updates are reported less often; i.e., quarterly, and at a higher level, namely:

- Is the project on track to meet the target finish date
- Is the project spending on track
- General health of the project
- Stalled projects – issues/solution

## 4.2 Change Management

Changes to the project “Scope” resulting in increases to the **budget and/or schedule** follow a formal Change Management process. The Project Manager completes a **Project Change Request** form and submits it to the PMO. Depending on the size of the change, the following courses of action may be taken:

- If the dollar amount requested is less than 10% of the original funding and up to a maximum of \$20K, the ISSC Chair has the authority to approve the Change Request and allocate the additional funding; however, this must be reported at the next ISSC meeting
- For amounts in excess of the above, the Change Request must be submitted for ISSC approval
- Similarly, if the time increase is not significant (+/- 10%), approval may be at the discretion of the ISSC Chair, but must be reported at the next meeting

**Note:** The project Sponsor is made aware of the Change Request and has approved it prior to its submission to the Project Management Office.

## 5.0 Project Closure

A **Project Final Report** is prepared by the Project Manager – with input from the project team – and presented to ISSC shortly after the system or product is in production (go-live). It captures a summary of the project overall performance and lessons learned. The Final Report formally closes the project.

## 6.0 Project Budget

Project funding is allocated annually by the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) to the ISSC Organization (Org 5571) as a lump sum. As **Project Charters** are approved by ISSC, the projects are added to Banner and the funding is dispersed to individual projects by the ISSC Secretary. Project funds are fiscal; however, they remain in the project until completion. Balances (including commitments) at the end of a fiscal year are carried forward to the following year.

Base funds for such things as software licenses, maintenance and support contracts, are not included in ISSC funding, but are identified for the purpose of informing the user department of future budgetary obligations.

Project funding **does not include** equipment used for everyday operational activities such as computers and printers.

## 6.1 Project Spending/Reporting

Expenses are charged to the project according to the line items identified in the Charter. The **Project Manager** is responsible for managing the budget and keeping spending within budget for each individual project. The Project Management Office retains all financial documents; i.e.; Purchase Orders, Cheque Requisitions, Internal Chargebacks, and records of salaries for backfills.

The ISSC Secretary is the contact for budget queries on the overall portfolio; and provides the Committee with a monthly report on all project spending. The report includes a summary of: “Total Funding, Committed, and Available” for the entire portfolio as well as individual projects.

## 6.2 Surplus/Deficit

At the completion of a project, surplus funds are transferred back to the ISSC Org (5571) account “Unallocated Budget Provision”. Conversely, completed projects with a deficit may be covered from that account at the discretion of the ISSC Chair. In either case, the balance must be zero in order to close the project in the system (Banner/FAST).

## 7.0 Organization

### 7.1 ISSC Membership

Chair:	Chief Information Officer
Secretary:	Senior Program Coordinator, CCS
Membership:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Vice-President (Finance and Administration) Associate Vice-President (Students and Enrolment) and University Registrar Associate Vice-President (Research Planning and Operations) Associate Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic) Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Design Dean, Sprott School of Business Dean, Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs University Librarian Assistant Vice-President (Financial Services) Assistant Vice-President (Human Resources) Assistant Vice-President (University Services) Manager, Project Management Office, CCS

### 7.2 ISSC Meetings

ISSC meetings are pre-scheduled by the ISSC Secretary for the year and occur on the second Tuesday of every month. An Agenda with reading material is emailed to Committee members a few days prior to the meeting. Minutes of ISSC meetings are recorded by the Secretary and distributed.

In terms of attendance, the Committee requires a quorum of at least seven (7) members be present (in addition to the Chair and Secretary); otherwise, the meeting will be cancelled. Members may send delegates in their absence; however, to maintain familiarity and continuity, the delegate should be the same person for each meeting. A meeting may also be cancelled at the discretion of the Chair depending on the number and/or the urgency of Agenda items.

### 7.3 Training and Support

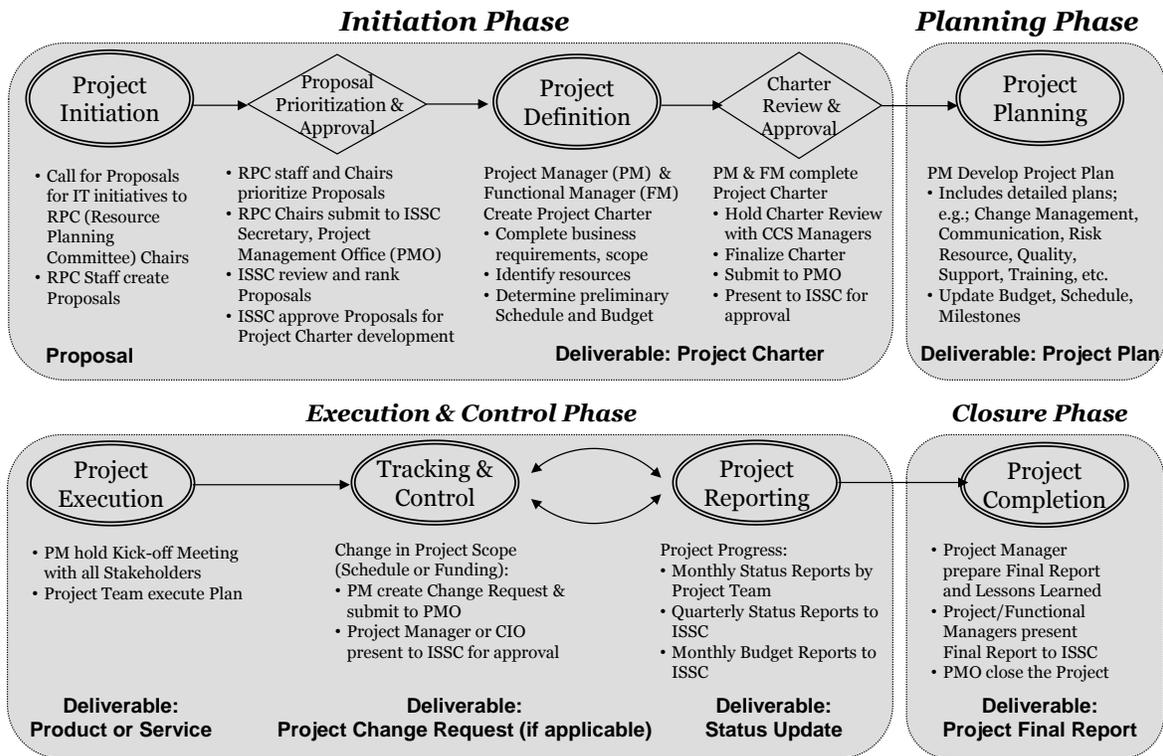
The Project Management Office in CCS provides training and mentoring services on Project Management and the Methodology, as well as on key document writing. In addition, templates, tools, checklists, examples, and detailed information on project management are available on the Project Management Office website at: <http://www.carleton.ca/ccs/project-office/>

### 8.0 Version Control

Version Number	Author/s	Date	Comments
1.0	Susan Nesrallah	May 2011	Initial Draft
1.0	Susan Nesrallah	July 2013	Update Draft
1.0	Susan Nesrallah	August 2013	Update draft with feedback from ISSC, PMO
2.0	Susan Nesrallah	May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revision of the Project Management Methodology Sections 2 – 5 &amp; Appendix</li> <li>- Revision of Base funding section</li> <li>- Membership – added Manager, PMO</li> <li>- Minor wordsmithing/clarifications</li> </ul>

Appendix "A"

**Project Management Methodology (PMM)**



CCS PMM 2.0