Project Lifecycle Process

MIT Libraries
All-Staff Meetings
November 4 & 5, 2010
Keith Glavash, AD for Administration
Why do we need this process?

• The new library organizational structure needs a way to **move new ideas from conception through implementation**

• MIT Libraries have a strong desire to **support good ideas** when they align with our strategic directions and are affordable
Goals of the new process

• Advance worthy projects
• Clear and relatively simple process
• Transparency
• Equal access
• Encourage initiative and creativity
Project Review Committee

- Nicole Hennig (2 yrs)
- Marlene Manoff, convener (3 yrs)
- Christine Quirion (3 yrs)
- Rich Wenger (2 yrs)
- Barbara Williams (3 yrs)

New members rotated as terms are completed
Certainty vs. Risk

• MIT Libraries value experimentation and creativity
• Limiting projects to “sure bets” conflicts with the MIT culture of measured risk-taking
• Best ideas will flow from an environment and process which encourage both pragmatic problem solving and “out-of-the-box” thinking
What’s OUT of scope?

• “Large” space projects which normally require Institute approval and funding

• “Large” system-wide projects whose scale, impact and costs require very wide involvement and support (e.g. new ILS, new organizational structure 😊)

• Very small “local projects” which don’t have significant staffing or out-of-pocket cost requirements

• Capital equipment purchases which do not represent a new service, collection or capability
What’s IN scope?

Factors include…

• Some extent of involvement beyond originating unit/department
• Staffing level and nature of the work
• Direct costs
• Project Leader & Sponsor

_Not limited to “technology” projects_
Action Librarian

Pre-Proposal

Full Proposal

Process Overview
Defining a Project – 1

• **REQUIRED FEATURE**
  – **More than one unit/department** – Project will need collaboration and participation with groups or individuals beyond the originating unit/dept

• **AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FEATURES**
  – **Staff time** - Significant amount outside the normal work of the affected staff in their unit(s) (e.g. equivalent of at least one full-time person for one month)
  
  – **Costs** - Out-of-pocket costs estimated to be beyond what can be supported by existing local or central budget lines
Defining a Project – 2

- **Leader/Project Manager**
  - ALL project PRE-PROPOSALS are required to identify a potential leader/manager
  - This role is filled by a specific person, but need not be full time

- **Sponsor**
  - FULL PROPOSALS also need to identify a sponsor at the department head or associate director level to support and advocate for the project
Process steps - 1

1. A GOOD IDEA!

2. Pre-proposal (1-2 pages, template format) submitted to Project Review Committee
   a) Basic concept and proposed project leader
   b) Anything that’s known about required resources, outcomes, impact

3. Approved pre-proposals expanded to full proposals (template format) with the assistance of Expert Advisors, as needed
Process steps - 2

4. Full proposals **submitted to the Project Review Committee**, including these elements:
   - Description and justification of need/strategy
   - Budget and staffing resources required
   - Identified leader and sponsor
   - Timeline
   - Project and assessments plans

5. If approved by Project Review Committee, forwarded to **Steering Committee** for final review and funding prioritization
Expert Advisors - 1

• Rights assessment/copyright (Ellen Duranceau)
• Budget planning (Keith Glavash)
• User interface design (Darcy Duke)
• Assessment planning (Lisa Horowitz)
• Software analysis/develpmt (Richard Rodgers)
• IT infrastructure (Alex Brennen & Pam Nicholas)
• Foundation & other funding options (Steven Horsch)
Expert Advisors - 2

- Archives/Records Management (Tom Rosko)
- Project planning/vendor ID (Beverly Turner)
- Metadata schema (Rob Wolfe)
- Images, audio/video, GIS, CAD, statistical data, etc. (Specialized Content & Services Staff)

Also any other staff who are knowledgeable in the specific parameters of a given proposal
Budget

$100,000 in direct costs for FY11

*Divided any number of ways, depending on the proposals*
Alternative Funding

• Some ideas may make sense to propose to *external funding sources*, like foundations or government agencies.

• Process intended to help leverage such possibilities as well as introduce more staff to the realm of *developing grant proposals*.
Cost of Staff Time

• Staffing is our largest expense; every hour spent on a project represents a **diversion of that resource from one activity to another**, often with impacts on other staff and units

• The average cost of a librarian devoted 100% to a project for one month is about $6K

• Important to keep in mind the consequences of substantial staffing requirements

• Projects can also represent **interesting and rewarding activities for staff**
Sustainability

What type of project is this?

– One-time project to fix or improve something that already exists and **deserves to continue to be sustained**

– Or is it a project to implement something new that, if successful, **will need to be sustained**
High-level Strategy

• How does this project support the Libraries’ strategic priorities?

• Who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries of this project?

• Are there collaboration possibilities within the Libraries, MIT, or outside organizations?
When can I submit a pre-proposal?

- Templates for pre-proposals and proposals must first be developed.
- Criteria and evaluation method must be developed.
- Project Review Committee will message all-lib when they’re ready to begin receiving your ideas.
- projectreview-lib@mit.edu
Questions?