AWESOME
WATER-ECOSYSTEM-FOOD

PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

June, 2020

AWESOME - Managing water, ecosystems and food across sectors
and scales in the South Mediterranean
PRIMA Nexus 2019 RIA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Abbreviations

AB: Advisory Board
CA: Consortium Agreement
CS: Case Study
DDP: Deliverable Development Plan
DoA: Description of Action (Annex I of the Grant Agreement)
DM: Deliverable Manager
EC: European Commission
GA: Grant Agreement
GAs: General Assembly
MB: Management Board
Mx: Month number
PC: Project Coordinator
PI: Principal Investigator
PO: Project Officer
PR: Project Review
QC: Quality Control
QM: Quality Management
RP: Reporting Period
WP: Work Package

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AWESOME Project Management Plan is designed to facilitate cooperation and clear information flow within the AWESOME project by defining rules and standards for joint work. The intention is that all partners have the same point of reference and a common understanding of methods and procedures.

This deliverable contains a description of the project management structure, and of the quality control procedures for meeting, deliverables, and communication within the project, as well as for internal and external reporting.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the procedures that guide the management of the AWESOME project. In order to avoid any doubt, the AWESOME Grant Agreement (GA) and Consortium Agreement (CA) take precedence over this document. This document on the Management Plan does not replace by any means the contractual obligations among partners and between partners and the PRIMA Foundation, i.e. the Contract, its Annexes and the CA.

This document is instead an aid to facilitate the adoption of cooperative principles in the AWESOME project, by defining rules and standards for the day-to-day work. The intention is that all partners have the same point of reference and a common understanding of methods and procedures, which are essential to harmonise their work.

If used with discipline, these guidelines will reduce project overhead, alleviate project management for all partners and increase efficiency, quality and effectiveness of the work carried out. Specifically, this plan will facilitate:

− collaboration to achieve a common objective, share experience and know-how and develop results using the partners' complementary skills.

− organisation and planning the work in a results-driven way. Whilst the internal organisation of each partner's work is his/her own responsibility (as long as each partner meets their commitments), the interactions between partners working at a distance must be based on the flow of results. Common planning must henceforth be a guiding principle for every partner and must always be up to date.

− effectiveness of meetings between and among the partners, which is absolutely critical to the progress of work. An inconclusive meeting can cause serious delays, risks and costs.

− coordination, clear rules for communication and unambiguous mechanisms for decision-making, involving different levels of decision-makers in different domains (strategic, technical, financial, and administrative). The rules for such decision-making need to be clear.

It is thus imperative that all AWESOME partners are aware of this document, and understand and use the rules, guidelines and standards that are here specified.

The document starts by describing how the project is organised and what its management structure is (Sections 1 and 2). This is derived from the content already available in the Description of Action (DoA, Annex I of the GA) and CA, but presented here with larger emphasis on the decision-making activities. This is a good starting point for understanding how AWESOME is managed, in particular for anyone new joining the project.

Section 3 describes the Quality Control (QC) Procedures put in place for AWESOME Meetings, how decisions are taken and what should be entered in the minutes. The way to prepare for a Review by the PRIMA Foundation is also examined.

In Section 4, the QC Procedures for Communication of working and official documents within the project are presented. Principally, communication takes place through the AWESOME data repository accessible via browser on the POLIMI server[1]. In particular, the Administration Area website is examined, illustrating where to find officially released deliverables, contractual documents, minutes of meetings and supporting information such as document templates can be found. An overview of internal communication tools such as e-mail, Skype and Zoom is then provided.

A major section (Section 5) concerns the QC procedures for producing Deliverables. Document standards and templates are introduced, and an explanation of document coding given. This section also explains how to prepare a Deliverable Development Plan (DDP), and the quality control procedures that are implemented to ensure that released documents have gone through the appropriate level of assessment prior to release.

Finally, the QC procedures for Project Management in general are presented in Section 6. These include the Reporting principles actively used in AWESOME and the necessary content to be provided in the Progress Reports. How problems are managed is then illustrated from perspectives of both the partners and the management structure. The section concludes with a summary of Financial Management issues, including the preparation of Financial Statements, how the advance payments by the PRIMA Foundation are distributed and the obligations of the partners.

In conclusion, this document is effectively a handbook presenting how to be involved in the project. All the administrative issues are explained, as well as how reporting must be performed, and how the overall project management is set up to ensure that the project reaches its goals.

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[1] https://131.175.15.9/cgi-bin/

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2. PROJECT ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

AWESOME is a Collaborative Project with seven Work Packages (WPs) and seven partners. It will be managed according to the project management structure summarized in Figure 1.

The global project management responsibility relies upon the AWESOME **Management Board** (MB), composed by the Project Coordinator and the Deputy Coordinator, the WP Leaders, and the Case Study Leader. They all ensure the day-to-day management of the project. The MB decides on the project work plan, changes or further specifications of the budgets, and of payment transfers, takes action in the event of non-performing partners and addresses other matters necessary for the project advancement and success.

The Management Board will report directly to the AWESOME **General Assembly** (GAs), which represents the partners' interests, being the highest decision and strategy-making body of the project. The GAs – composed of one representative per partner organisation – ultimately validates the major decisions concerning the project and is also the ultimate decision-making body for any issue concerning the proper operation of the consortium. The GAs will also inform the engaged Stakeholders of any relevant progress and changes in the project advancement and keep an open communication line with them.
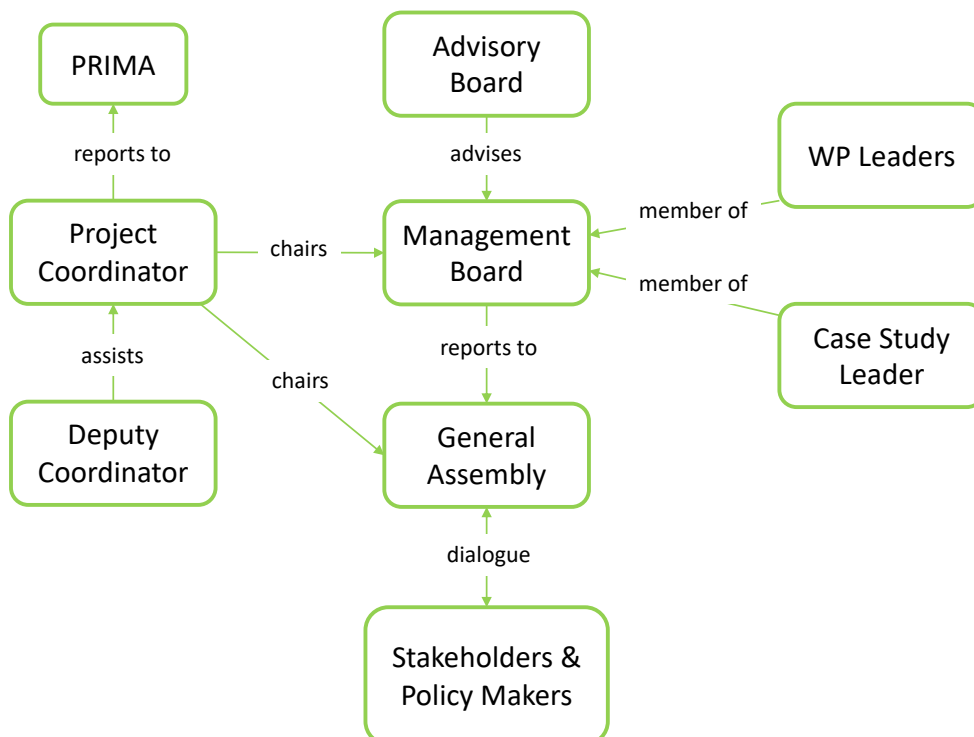

Figure 1 – AWESOME management structure.

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2.2 COORDINATING PARTNER

The **Coordinating Partner** is **POLIMI** (Politecnico di Milano), which is the single point of contact between the EC (PRIMA Foundation) and the AWESOME consortium. The Coordinator receives all payments from the PRIMA Foundation and transfers them to the partners in accordance with the conditions specified in the **Consortium Agreement** (CA). The Coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that all contractual documents are provided to PRIMA.

The Project Coordinator (or Director) is **Prof. Dr. Andrea Castelletti** of **POLIMI**.

2.3 PROJECT COORDINATOR

Management and coordination activities are conducted by POLIMI. The AWESOME **Project Coordinator**, **Prof. Dr. Andrea Castelletti** of **POLIMI**, is responsible for running the project and all aspects of the interface between the project and the EC. He is assisted by **Prof. Dr. Phoebe Kondouri** of **AUEB** (Athens University of Economics and Business) as **Deputy Project Coordinator**. The Coordinator's main responsibilities will be to:

− manage the PRIMA contract, ensuring the interface with the PRIMA Project Officer;

− handle and distribute the funds according to the rules agreed within the consortium;

− evaluate the advice of operational management bodies and representatives to meet the project schedule and objectives.

Additional activities include:

− the strategic, financial and contractual management of the consortium, ensuring the official interface between the consortium and the PRIMA Foundation;

− the day-to-day operational project management, providing the consortium with its project management experience, methods and tools.

Specific management responsibilities are:

− to chair the General Assembly (§ 2.5.1 of this document) and Management Board (§ 2.5.2) meetings and to ensure follow-through of decisions;

− to establish and benchmark project milestones, to monitor achievements and project progress, to control quality and consistency against technical and contractual aspects and to make proposals for workplan development to the management board as required;

− to administer the PRIMA financial contribution, and to distribute partner shares according to the rules defined in the GA and the CA;

− to establish and implement procedures, project management methods and tools;

− to initiate and support periodic project meetings (planning, preparation, meeting logistics, minutes) for progress reviews, decision making and conflict resolution;

− to coordinate internal and contractual (interim) reporting;

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- to coordinate timely production of deliverables and reports, financial statements and specific requested documents, reviewing them to verify consistency, and submitting them to the PRIMA Foundation; and maintain the project archiving repository;

- to coordinate administrative issues, e.g. financial statements submission by project partners, follow-up of PRIMA payments, calculate partner shares according to rules agreed in the CA;

- to maintain contractual documents (DoA, CA);

- to provide a helpdesk to assist individual project partners on administrative issues;

- to provide access to and administration of tools that facilitate collaboration, communication and coordination, such as a file archive system, electronic archives, dedicated mailing lists.

In conclusion, the Project Coordinator and the Deputy Coordinator will handle day-to-day management, quality, and logistics. They will take care of the operational management, the various day-to-day management and coordination tasks summarized above.

2.4 QUALITY MANAGEMENT (QM) FUNCTION

The Quality Management (QM) function covers all WPs. The QM is delegated to WP leaders and deliverables' lead authors. They must:

- assess the compliance of deliverables with Milestones and Target Objectives;

- evaluate deliverables for compliance with the DoA (Annex I of GA);

- verify the technical and non-technical quality of deliverables;

- verify the compliance of deliverables and reports with regard to correct formatting and numbering, prior to the submission to the PRIMA Foundation and, more specifically they are responsible for providing documents that adhere to the AWESOME visual identity, ensuring correct formatting and numbering.

The QM task is covered in each WP by the WP leader, who report to the Project Coordinator. The latter is, in turn, responsible for the overall QM.

2.5 DECISION MAKING

2.5.1 General Assembly

The **General Assembly** (GAs), which is **chaired by the Project Coordinator**, is composed of the institutional representative appointed by each of the partner organisations. As indicated in the CA, **one member of each partner has the right to vote**. It is the GAs that ultimately validates the major decisions concerning the project. The General Assembly is the **arbitration body** for all decisions taken by the MB (§ 2.5.2 of this document). Thus, any Partner may request for arbitration by the GAs any decision by the MB that it deems to be contrary to the interests of the project. The GAs is also the decision-making body for any issue concerning the proper operation of the consortium. Under normal circumstances, the GAs is expected to meet **every six months**. However, the approval of any issue of competence of the GAs can be also given by mail vote, upon communication by the Coordinator. Decisions within the General Assembly will be taken based upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority, each partner having one vote. It is anticipated that additional formal meetings of the GAs

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will only be necessary under exceptional circumstances. The matters to be acted upon by the GAs may include:

− issues ranging from activity planning to budget and financial allocations (decisions will be taken by qualified majority);

− the political and strategic orientation of the project;

− approving any change to the structure of the project that requires contractual amendments to be submitted to the PRIMA Foundation;

− approving changes in work sharing and budget proposed by the MB and approving respective amendments in Annex I of the Contract;

− approving proposals made by the MB concerning non-performing partners;

− approving the entering into the Contract and the CA of new Contractors (decisions by qualified majority);

− approving the (even premature) completion or termination of the project;

− approving alterations to the CA proposed by the MB (note: eventual alterations of the CA – approved by the GA – must be signed by the legal representatives of each partner);

− hearing appeals from any partner and deciding on appropriate action concerning decisions taken by the MB that any partner concerned considers to be unfair and contrary to its interests;

− arbitration of advice received from the MB (decisions by qualified majority).

The **voting members of the GAs** are listed in Table 1. Should a voting member be unable to attend the GA, he/she **can delegate** a member of his/her organisation after informing the Project Coordinator.

Table 1 – AWESOME General Assembly voting members.

Organisation	Name	e-mail
POLIMI	Andrea Castelletti	andrea.castelletti@polimi.it
AUEB	Phoebe Koundouri	pkoundouri@aueb.gr
YVC	Ruslana Rachel Palatnik	rusalik@gmail.com
UH	Mordechai Shechter	shechter@econ.haifa.ac.il
ZG	Mostafa Hassanen	mostafa@agrimaticfarms.com
RWTH	Christiane Pyka	pyka@lfi.rwth-aachen.de
FEEM	Sergio Vergalli	sergio.vergalli@unibs.it; sergio.vergalli@feem.it

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2.5.2 Management Board

The **Management Board (MB)** consists of the Project Coordinator, the Deputy Coordinator, the WP Leaders, and the Case Study Leader (§ 2.5.3 of this document). The main role of the MB, which is **chaired by the Project Coordinator**, is to ensure the day-to-day management and implementation of the project, assess the work package activities and correspondingly check the consistency of the budget and effort allocations. The MB takes action against non-performing partners and implements the project decisions approved by the GAs. The MB reports to the GAs.

The MB's responsibilities include to:

− support the Coordinator in preparing meetings with PRIMA and in preparing related data and deliverables;

− prepare the content and timing of press releases and joint publications by the consortium or proposed by PRIMA in respect of the procedures of the GA;

− address financial and administrative issues;

− mediate between the project partners in case of possible disputes;

− support the consortium for protection and access rights to knowledge based upon the CA.

In general, the MB will propose any and all decisions required for the proper development of the Project and conduct of Partners. The MB will normally meet **monthly or as needed** and be in charge of preparing the abovementioned activities. The **MB members** were nominated during the Project kick-off and they are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – AWESOME Management Board members.

Role	Name
Coordinator	Andrea Castelletti
Deputy Coordinator	Phoebe Koundouri
Case Study Leader (ZG)	Mostafa Hassananen
WP1 - Project Management (POLIMI)	Elena Matta
WP2 - Future scenarios generation (AUEB)	Achilleas Vassilopoulos
WP3 - Macro-economic models (YVC)	Ruslana Rachel Palatnik
WP4 - Meso Level models (POLIMI)	Matteo Giuliani
WP5 - Micro Level models (RWHT)	Christiane Pyka
WP6 - Stakeholder Engagement and Interaction (AUEB)	Ebun Akinsete
WP7 - Dissemination, communication, outreach and policy (FEEM)	Sergio Vergalli

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2.5.3 Work Package Leaders and Case Study Leader

The Work Package (WP) Leaders are responsible for coordination of tasks within their sector of activity, for integrating the work of the partners, controlling and updating the planning of the tasks, organising thematic meetings as appropriate, monitoring productivity, coordinating work with other WPs, and stimulating scientific and technical exchange within their WP. They report to the MB and/or to the Project Coordinator.

The WP Leader's **roles** are to:

- drive the implementation of the WP, and ensure it is reaching its planned milestones;

- present progress reports on the state of advancement of the WP;

- make proposals on the allocation of WP tasks, financial needs and allocation among the Contractors, and the need to bring in new Contractors;

- prepare and validate WP Deliverables;

- identify risks within a WP and inform the MB and/or the Coordinator;

- inform the MB of any other difficulty arising in connection with the development of the WP.

The WP leaders will prepare at the beginning of each half a year a **micro-plan** outlining the WP activities for the next **six months** and ensure that these are implemented through online meetings. The micro-plans are laid out on a rolling basis in order to allow the WP leaders and the Project Coordinator to carefully monitor the project progress. Partners are also asked to complete an **activity report** structured as a logbook, stored in a reserved area on the project portal. Each WP will hold **regular web-conferencing meetings** with its participant partners to check on progress and report on issues that may be blocking progress.

The following principal investigators are designated as **WP Leaders**:

- WP1 (Coordination and Management): Elena Matta, POLIMI

- WP2 (Future scenarios generation): Achilleas Vassilopoulos, AUEB

- WP3 (Macro-economic models): Ruslana Rachel Palatnik, YVC

- WP4 (Meso-level models): Matteo Giuliani, POLIMI

- WP5 (Micro Level models): Christiane Pyka, RWTH

- WP6 (Stakeholder Engagement and Interaction): Ebun Akinsete, AUEB

- WP7 (Dissemination, Communication, Outreach and Policy): Sergio Vergalli, FEEM

The **Case Study Leader** is appointed by the General Assembly and is part of the MB. The Case Study Leader takes responsibility for the following tasks:

- identification of the existing historical data sources;

- organisation of the historical data collection;

- identification of the key stakeholders;

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− proposition of selected case study regions ("hot spots") within the Nile River basin;

− coordination, implementation and facilitation of research activities in the case study of AWESOME, through interaction with basin authorities and stakeholders, and with WP Leaders;

− facilitation of contacts of partners with the appropriate stakeholders for specific project needs;

The principal investigator designated as Case Study Leader of AWESOME is Mr. **Mostafa Hassanen** of **Zon Gardens** (ZG).

2.5.4 Project Advisory Board

The role of the Project **Advisory Board** (AB) is formalised in the CA and is to provide advice during the project lifetime on technical issues. More specifically, the experts will be asked to provide their feedback on selected deliverables, either during the progress of the associated task, or prior to the submission to PRIMA. To facilitate the interaction with the AB and to maximize the impact and effectiveness, the AB has been composed of **experts** covering the different themes faced by the project, from research-oriented issues, to technical matters. The deliverables will be therefore directed to those members whose expertise is closer to the topic under discussion. The AB composition might change during the project lifetime, when need should arise. Further, the opportunity to appoint additional members to the AB, with higher specific expertise in some project's matters, will be considered as the project evolves.

The tentative list for the AWESOME AB is reported in the following:

- Prof. Jim Hall from Oxford University (https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/people/jhall.html);
- Prof. Paolo d'Odorico from Berkeley University (https://ourenvironment.berkeley.edu/people/paolo-dodorico);
- Prof. (Emeritus) Pinhas Alpert from Tel Aviv University (https://english.m.tau.ac.il/profile/pinhas);
- Dr. Rabi Mohtar (PhD) from from American University of Beirut (AUB) - Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) (https://www.aub.edu.lb/fafs/news/Pages/2018_Dean-Rabi-Mohtar.aspx);
- Prof. Dr. Mohammed Abo El Seoud of the Central Lab for Agricultural Climate (technical agriculture expert);
- Dr. Wael R. Soliman (PhD) of the African Development Bank Group and the Southern Africa Resource Center (https://www.afdb.org/en).

2.6 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Each WP will be expected to follow the instructions of the overall AWESOME coordinating bodies. Within a WP, the **internal management** will attempt to resolve any conflicts. The WP leader may call upon the Coordinator for assistance. Concerning conflicts between WPs, it is expected that first initial attempts will be made to solve any problems bilaterally. In the exceptional case, that conflicts cannot be solved at the level of WP, the MB may be called upon by the respective WP leaders and asked to solve the conflict.

The MB will be in charge of ensuring that all pending conflicts are resolved within reasonable time frames. In very serious cases, for example when a decision is appealed to the GAs, the GAs will meet

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in **emergency session** and take a decision within 20 working days. The GAs decision is then final and binding for all management bodies.

In a project of this size, duration, and complexity, **risk management and contingency planning** is important to ensure that the project strategy, operations, outcomes, and budget remain on track. The MB is in charge of defining the risks and detecting risks. Risks will be mitigated by the MB to prevent any deviation from the plans. To this end, a comprehensive risk management process and risk register will be implemented over the duration of the project. WP leaders will present an assessment of progress and risks to progress at the MB meetings and propose contingency plans, where necessary to address any specific identified risks. A list of the risks that will be monitored is provided in the DoA.

More details about the conflict resolution procedures and the management of risk are provided in § 6.5 of this document. Further, the next deliverable of WP1 (i.e. Risk Management Plan - D1.2) will present in higher detail how to manage risks within the AWESOME project.

2.6.1 Risks related to COVID-19

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has become the global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge faced by the entire Continent since World War Two[2], which deeply impacted not only health, but also economics, politics and society.

The AWESOME project can be slightly adapted according to the new circumstances, and its scope enlarged, by including pandemics impacts in the model-based framework at the different macro, meso and micro scales, and under multiple future scenarios of climate, society, and economics.

Looking at the schedule of deliverables and milestones, some may be affected by the COVID-19 crisis. E.g., the actual start of WP5 (micro-scale model/pilot plant in the study case area) may be delayed, depending on the European and Egyptian travelling restrictions. Nevertheless, the Project Coordinator and the WP Leaders will put high efforts to ensure that the scheduled deliverables and milestones will not be affected by delays and, if so, to promptly reschedule to guarantee the project achievements.

2.7 CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

A **Consortium Agreement** (CA) based on the DESCA model (www.desca-2020.eu/) has been compiled to complement the **Grant Agreement** (GA). The CA duly signed by all Partners defines, among other aspects:

− the organisation of the consortium;

− the financial distribution of the Community Financial Contribution, based on each participant's effort and activity type;

− the procedures for changes in the consortium composition;

− the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and exploitation;

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[2] https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/coronavirus.html

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- the definition of the background brought by all participants and related access;

- the Partners' rights and rules for joint ownership, access rights to project results for participants and 3rd parties;

- the tasks and responsibilities of partners and management bodies;

- the dissemination rules in relation to managing confidentiality and approving public presentations and publications.

3 QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR MEETINGS

3.1 GENERAL RULES FOR MEETINGS

Whether virtual or physical, a meeting is convened by the chairperson, who also determines the location in consultation with the foreseen attendees. For plenary meetings and GAs meetings or meetings with the PRIMA Foundation, the Coordinating Partner will act as **chairperson** and keep track of the action items. For WP meetings, it is the responsibility of the WP Leader in his/her capacity of chairperson to prepare and distribute the action items.

Meetings should be convened with **at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior notice** for an ordinary meeting, while at least seven (7) calendar days prior notice for an extraordinary meeting and be accompanied by an **agenda** proposed by the chairperson. The agenda will be sent to the participants at the latest seven (7) calendar days before the date of the meeting and will be considered to be accepted unless one of the partners notifies the chairperson and the other partners in writing of additional points to the agenda. Specifically, for **GAs meetings**, they should be convened with at least forty-five (45) calendar days prior notice for an ordinary meeting, while at least fifteen (15) calendar days for an extraordinary one. The agenda will be sent to the participants at the latest twenty-one (21) calendar days before the ordinary meeting, while at least ten (10) calendar days for an extraordinary one. Partners may also participate in physical meetings by teleconference, if the required facilities are available.

As good practice **action items or minutes** of every meeting will be compiled, in order to disseminate homogeneously the outcome of the meeting to all Partners and to support any audit checks that PRIMA may carry out, e.g., concerning claimed travel expenses.

3.2 PROJECT PLENARY MEETINGS

Project plenary meetings take place with the participation of the Partner teams contributing to the project. The **project kick-off** meeting was the first plenary meeting and marked the effective launch of the project. It reinforced the sense of common purpose of all partners and identified the responsibility of each in the endeavour. Unresolved technical issues were identified and debated; cooperation between work packages was initiated, and further technical meetings are taking place. The management described what is expected of each partner in terms of results, performance and reporting. The detailed course for the whole duration of the project was confirmed and fine-tuned.

The next project plenary meeting will take place **online in November 2020** (due to the COVID-19 pandemic, s. § 2.6.1), **the following one in May 2020** (in Milano), and then **yearly in May**, with the

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aim of timing them with project milestones or the preparation of the progress/annual reports and rolling updates of the implementation plan, and will be conducted **jointly with GAs meetings** (§ 3.3). They will involve all partners' teams. These meetings will be complemented and prepared by MB meetings to be held in the same time frame. Additional MB meetings will be convened as required, generally every four months (§ 2.5.2). Technical meetings on specific topics will be organised by the WP Leaders as needed for the progress of their tasks.

3.3 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

In normal circumstances, the GAs itself will meet **jointly with project plenary meetings** (§ 3.2), although additional *virtual meetings* may be held by e-mail or teleconference if necessary. **Next GAs meeting** will take place **online** (due to the COVID-19 pandemic, s. § 2.6.1) in **November 2020**; afterwards, **in presence yearly in May**. All GAs meetings, whether virtual or physical, are convened by the Project Coordinator, who also determines the location in consultation with the MB.

Any decision requiring a vote at a GAs meeting must be identified as such in the pre-meeting agenda, unless there is a unanimous agreement to vote on a decision at that meeting. In the case of *virtual meetings*, decisions may be taken by e-mail using suitable tools for authentication of sender, such as certified e-mail.

The GAs shall not deliberate and decide validly unless a **majority of two-thirds (2/3)** of its voting members are present or represented ("quorum"), including those participating by teleconference. Where decisions are to be taken unanimously, all members must be present or represented at the meeting.

3.4 MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETINGS

3.4.1 General

MB meetings or video/audio conferences can be held as necessary. Periodical meetings are normally scheduled **every month**. During the Project kick-off meeting of May 22, it was decided that the MB should meet **every first Wednesday of each month** (further modifications of the day of the month will be promptly communicated by the Coordinator). Nevertheless, the Project Coordinator in his capacity of chairperson of the MB can convene meetings of the MB whenever required, giving members at least fourteen (14) calendar days' notice (7 for an extraordinary meeting) and providing an agenda at least seven (7) calendar days before the actual meeting. Additional MB meetings can be called by the Coordinator upon request of one of the MB members to address specific urgent project issues.

3.4.2. Decisions

Day-to-day decisions can be taken by a **majority of 75%** of the partners present or represented in the meeting. For major decisions, i.e. any decision affecting the structure and the development of the project, the MB chairperson must inform the GAs for final approval.

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3.5 WORK PACKAGE MEETINGS

3.5.1 General

Technical WP meetings or video/audio conferences can be held as necessary. A WP chairperson can convene meetings of the WP whenever required, giving members **at least seven (7) calendar day notice** and providing an agenda. Minutes and any other useful material (agenda, presentations, etc.) should be made available to the whole project partnership, i.e. uploaded to the AWESOME file archiving system (§ 1, § 4.2).

3.5.2 Decisions

Day-to-day decisions can be taken by a majority of 75% of the partners present or represented in the meeting. For major decisions, the WP chairperson should consult with the MB and the Project Coordinator for final approval.

3.6 PROJECT REVIEWS

3.6.1 General

The PRIMA Foundation controls the progress of the project essentially by three means:

− Annual Monitoring Reports;

− Deliverables (D);

− Project Reviews (PR).

PR are normally one or two-day meetings held every 18 months, where the participants present the advancement status of the project to the PRIMA Project Officer (PO) and a number of independent Reviewers nominated by the PRIMA Foundation.

These meetings are the most important events in the life of a project, for the following reasons:

− The PO and the Reviewers usually do not have much time to dedicate to the project. For them, PR are the main events for evaluating the project.

− PR are the only occasion to present to the PO and Reviewers results of the project and to discuss its progress.

− PR are real opportunities to demonstrate the cohesion of the consortium and the commitment of the partners to achieve project objectives.

As a consequence, PR should be given special attention by all the partners and their management should follow well defined rules, as described in the next section.

3.6.2 Preparation

The following procedure is recommended for the preparation of PR meetings:

− approximately one to two months before the PR, the Project Coordinator in consultation with the GAs will define the main objectives to be accomplished during the Review, and consequently assign roles to the partners, prepare a detailed agenda and ask partners to prepare their contributions;

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- once agreed, the agenda will be sent to the PO for consultation, possible amendments and final confirmation;

- approximately two weeks before the Review, all project deliverables for the time period concerned must be made available to the Reviewers. This will be done by granting them access to them to the AWESOME file archive system located on the POLIMI server (§ 1, § 4.2);

- two weeks before the Review, also all presentation material must be ready internally, so that all partners can check its consistency and the quality of the presentations, thus choose the best approach. The Project Coordinator and the QM (§ 2.4) will ensure that the necessary quality checks are carried out.

- the day before the Review, a final rehearsal will be held for fine-tuning. Rules among the attending partners will be agreed to (e.g. order of presentations, signals to warn that time is almost finished, etc.).

3.6.3 Logistics

In case the review meeting is not held on PRIMA premises, a detailed description of travel details (not just the address – but details of train, metro, taxi, schematic map of the meeting location, telephone number of someone in contact with the meeting coordinator) must be made available to the reviewers at least three weeks before the Review. This is to ensure that the Reviewers do not encounter any difficulty prior to the Review. The Project Coordinator must liaise with the PO for logistics information, checking that all the necessary information has been supplied.

The location should be easy to access to avoid long and complicated travel arrangements and unnecessary waste of time. It must be ensured that the Review meeting location has internet access, printing services and photocopy equipment available.

3.6.4 Agenda of Project Review

The objective of a Project Review is to:

- demonstrate project progress to the PO and the Reviewers;

- demonstrate achievements through presentations, demonstrations, etc.;

- explain modifications to initial project objectives or planning to the PO and the Reviewers.

The agenda must be organised accordingly, and include the following contents:

- welcome

- introduction (by Project Coordinator)

  - presentation of the partners

  - presentation of project objectives

  - presentation of project organisation

- management summary

  - activities performed since last Review

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- dissemination efforts (publications, participation to conferences, press releases, contact with other Projects, etc.)

- stakeholder interaction (if applicable)

– technical summary

- major results achieved since last Review

- modifications to the DoA

– answer to questions, comments made by the PO or Project Reviewers since last Review (if applicable)

– technical presentation of major results (presentation documents, demos, visit of laboratories, etc.)

– conclusions and plans for the next period.

4. QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION

4.1 PUBLIC WEBSITE

Public information about AWESOME, supporting external communication and dissemination purposes and targeted to the public at large, is available at the following URL: **http://www.awesome-prima.eu**.

This site will be kept updated and improved during the project lifetime, by adding new content and functionality as needed, under the responsibility of **WP7** (Dissemination and Communication).

4.2 AWESOME ARCHIVING FILE SYSTEM

The AWESOME file archiving system is hosted on the **POLIMI server repository** (§ 1), where all technical information about the project are stored. Partners should use the repository to share information, upload intermediate versions of deliverables, and working documents explaining the activities being carried out. The structure of the file archiving system is constantly updated by the coordination office as the need for changes arise.

The access is controlled by login and password, which are available to the designated members of the GAs. These are for the exclusive use of the officially designated project collaborators and must be neither transferred to third parties nor accidentally made accessible outside the official AWESOME collaborators.

The AWESOME file archiving system also contains a structured repository of officially released documents, together with all contractual information, templates and so on.

4.3 AWESOME DATABASE

The data necessary to carry out the project as well as the project results will be archived on the POLIMI repository (§ 1, § 4.2). In case of storing data of larger dimensions, a **cloud service** external to the project (*Dropbox Business Solution or Zenodo*) will be made available. Further details concerning data management will be presented in the deliverable D.1.3 of WP1 (i.e. Data Management

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Plan); also, the external cloud service will also be password-protected with access restricted to officially designated project partners.

4.4 COMMUNICATION TOOLS

4.4.1 Electronic Mail

Electronic Mail will be one of the major means used in the AWESOME project to exchange information, while the main exchange of documents in electronic form over the Internet will be accomplished using the AWESOME file sharing and archive system.

AWESOME specific **mailing lists** were setup to advise the partners of the availability of new information, circulate agendas of meetings and events relative to the project and, more in general, to facilitate communication among the project partners and specific sub-sets of them. The two AWESOME mailing lists include respectively all participants to the project ("AWESOME-ALL") and the principal investigators only ("AWESOME-PI"), as reported in Table 3. The use of mailing lists is strongly recommended, and, as a self-discipline, the use of person-to-person private emailing should be limited, so as to privilege visibility within the project to all people working in the project.

It is not recommended to send e-mails with attached documents to large mailing lists. It is more effective to **store documents on the AWESOME file archiving system** and **invite** each participant through the mailing lists to download them.

Table 3 – AWESOME mailing lists (ALL, i.e. all project participants; and PI, i.e. Principal Investigators).

AWESOME-ALL
achilleas.vassilopoulos@icre8.eu
antonios.alevizos@unsdsn.gr
chatzistamoulou@gmail.com
davide.bazzana@unibs.it
drittmittel_eu@zhv.rwth-aachen.de
ebun.akinsete@icre8.eu
eleftheroglou@rc.aueb.gr
elena.matta@polimi.it
felixn@yvc.ac.il
floriana.nappini@feem.it
h.elgabry@agrimaticfarms.com
ilenia.romani@feem.it
lydia.papadaki@icre8.eu
marta.castellini@unibs.it
mostafa@agrimaticfarms.com
nacken@lfi.rwth-aachen.de
omraviv@gmail.com
pkoundouri@aueb.gr

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pyka@lfi.rwth-aachen.de
rusalik@gmail.com
sekretariat@lfi.rwth-aachen.de
sergio.vergalli@unibs.it
shechter@econ.haifa.ac.il
silvia.merlo@feem.it
emanuela.colombo@polimi.it
diletta.damin@polimi.it
matteo.giuliani@polimi.it
chiara.guerrini@polimi.it
matteo.giuliani@polimi.it
matteo.rocco@polimi.it
mariacristina.rulli@polimi.it

AWESOME-PI
achilleas.vassilopoulos@icre8.eu
ebun.akinsete@icre8.eu
elena.matta@polimi.it
mostafa@agrimaticfarms.com
pkoundouri@aueb.gr
pyka@lfi.rwth-aachen.de
rusalik@gmail.com
sergio.vergalli@unibs.it
shechter@econ.haifa.ac.il
andrea.castelletti@polimi.it
matteo.giuliani@polimi.it

4.4.1 Online conference calls

It is recommended to each participant to use Zoom (https://zoom.us/) – eventually Skype (www.skype.com) – for voice communications, which involve more than one partner. Zoom or Skype allow freely available voice communications over the Internet, and if a Webcam is available, also videoconferencing. Multi-conference audio and video calls can also easily be made. They also allow to record online meetings, after participants' consensus.

Telephone conference calls are also a powerful tool for organising short meetings. They can be set up at short notice.

The following principles should be respected for a successful teleconference meeting:

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− following the same organisational rules as for a physical meeting, the date, time, expected duration, agenda and name of participants should be communicated in advance, together with all required documents;

− all participants must make sure that they will not be disturbed during the teleconference meeting and that they join the meeting (i.e. dial the phone number) on time;

As with all other meetings, **minutes** must be produced by the meeting **chairperson**, circulated to the other participants for verification and finally uploaded to the AWESOME file sharing and archive system (§ 1, § 4.2).

5. QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR DELIVERABLES

5.1 FOREWORD

Most deliverables in a collaborative project are written with contributions from several partners. In order to minimise the effort for handling such documents, it is important for all participants to follow **agreed standards for formats and tools** to be used in document editing and exchange. This chapter specifically deals with the procedures for the release of official documents.

5.2 DELIVERABLE TYPES: REPORTS

5.2.1 Standards

The standard software to be used in compiling AWESOME related documents is listed in Table 4.

Table 4 – Standard software to be used for AWESOME documents.

Tool	Software Name	Software Developer	Reference version
Word Processing	MS WORD	Microsoft	Office 2007 or newer
Spreadsheet	MS EXCEL	Microsoft	Office 2007 or newer
Overhead slides	MS PowerPoint	Microsoft	Office 2007 or newer
Web publication	Acrobat	Adobe	Acrobat pdf V9.0 or newer
File compression	Winzip™	Corel Corporation	Winzip 12.0 or newer (compatible compression software is also allowed)

5.2.2 Document codes

All document codes are assigned and maintained by each QM. Each document will be filed with a unique filename coding. The standard coding is:

"*AWESOME_TNm_AAA_WPx_VyyZ_YYMMDD_short_title*"

where:

− *T:*   Type of document (D=Deliverable; I=Internal document; MS=milestone report; M=Minutes, P=Presentations);

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- *Nm*: Sequential number:

  - for Deliverables, *Nm* follows the official deliverable code from the DoA, which is *N*=WP, *m*=deliverable sequence number;

  - for Milestone Reports, *Nm* is the milestone number as indicated in the DoA;

  - for Internal documents, Minutes and Presentations *Nm* is omitted

- AAA: Issuing partner as identified by the abbreviations in the contract/DoA for each institution (or entity within the institution)

- WPx: The WP associated with the document, where *x* is the number of the WP;

- VyyZ: The version number *yy* is progressively numbered from "01". The version identifier *Z* is equal to *"D"* to denote the final draft undergoing the quality check, whereas the entire version identifier (*VyyZ*) is set equal to *"F"* to denote the final documents for public release.

- YYMMDD This identifier applies only to minutes of meetings and presentations and indicates the date of the meeting or event, which, respectively, the minutes or the presentation refer to. It is omitted for deliverables, internal reports, and milestones.

- Short_Title A short identifier of the document title.

For example, the code "AWESOME_D11_POLIMI_WP1_V06D_Mgmt_Plan indicates this deliverable, that is: "Deliverable D1.1, issued by partner POLIMI, relevant to WP1, version 0.6, draft". Each QM will keep an up-to-date list of the documents produced for his/her respective WP and will transfer this **information to the coordinator** as well as **upload it to the AWESOME archiving file system** (§ 1, § 4.2).

The aim of these codes is to give clear access to the project documentation, both for internal purposes but also for external references.

The filename coding for the deliverable pdf files to be uploaded to the PRIMA Smartsheets (see § 6; only the Project Coordinator has the rights to edit them) will follow a simpler format, which includes the project name and the deliverable number, i.e. "*AWESOME_TNm*", where the identifiers "T" and "Nm" have the same meaning as above. For instance, this document will be named "AWESOME_D11".

5.2.3 Document Versions

When a document is issued for the first time, its version identifier in the filename (see table in § 5.2.2) should be set to "D" (Draft). Usually, the approval process requires that a document is circulated for comments among the interested partners. Upon receiving the comments by the specified deadline, the author will make the proper modifications, therefore changing the version number, without affecting the identifier.

Normally, the official release of a document will be characterised by the identifier set to "F". This numbering/coding will be assigned by the QM when he/she has approved the document. The

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version number (the figure preceding the identifier) is increased by one unit only if a different version of the final document is delivered to the PRIMA Foundation, or if major modifications have significantly altered the contents of the document. The editor must not forget to update the version number in all its occurrences in the document. These are stored in the "File Properties" of the Word file and automatically update the document version in all pages where they are reported, e.g. cover page, header/footer). Clearly, every care should be taken to avoid distributing different documents with the same version number.

Every time that modifications are made to a document, the new version must contain a clear indication of what has been added, modified or removed. Every modification to text documents should be done using the "track changes" option of MS Word.

A table on the verso of the cover is used to keep track of the version, of a summarised description of the changes, and of the author who has implemented the summarised changes.

5.3 EDITING GUIDELINES

5.3.1 Logo

The logo of the AWESOME project shown on the front page of this document is available for downloading from the AWESOME archiving file system, under "AWESOME_public\Visual_identity\logo", and is also included in all document templates, which are also available at the same location.

5.3.2 Page Formats

The rules summarised in Table 5 have been used in the present document, are implemented in the Word templates to be used for the production of reports and must be followed in the production of all official AWESOME documents (Deliverables, Reports, etc.).

Table 5 – Standard of page formats for AWESOME documents.

Document size and orientation	A4, portrait
Margins	Top: 2 cm; Bottom: 2 cm; Left: 2 cm; Right: 2 cm Header: 1 cm; Footer: 1 cm.
Normal Font (for text)	Calibri 12 pts. Titles use larger fonts, as shown in this document and defined in the heading styles.
Headings	Headings are defined up to level 4, being the first 3 levels only numbered, should be applied as implemented in the Word template and should not be modified. Authors should make sure that importing text from other files does not lead to the disruption of the predefined formatting (both standard text and headings).

5.3.3 Templates

Reports and documents

Basic models for the production of official project documentation are available on the AWESOME archiving file system. They are Microsoft Word and the Template for official document is named "AWESOME_Report_template.docx". All AWESOME deliverables must use the standard template provided, ensuring in such way that the visual identity of all deliverables follows the AWESOME

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style. The templates for reports and documents are stored in the AWESOME file archiving system in the directory "AWESOME_public\Visual_identity\templates"

When using the template, first select "File" "Properties" and in the "Summary" sub-menu compile the following information (see section 5.2.2 for codes and identifiers):

- Title: Name of document (e.g. for this document "Management Plan")

- Subject: TNm_VyyZ (e.g. D11_01D for draft version 01 or D11_F for final version)

- Author: Name of author

- Company: Name of organisation

The "Title" information will appear on the cover page and on the pre-defined header of the document, while the "Subject" will be shown on the cover and in the pre-defined footer.

This same information should also be copied into the table summarising the revision history of the document, which is located on the verso of the cover page of the document (see this Management Plan by way of example).

Presentations

A template for presentations has been defined and stored in the AWESOME file archiving system in the directory "AWESOME_public\Visual_identity\templates", and the name of the file is "AWESOME_PPT.pptx". The key elements of this template that should **not** be modified are:

- The layout of cover page

- The AWESOME and PRIMA logos, which should be present on each page

- The last page with the partner logos

- The fonts

- The slide title font size and colour

Whenever possible/appropriate the structure of the presentation based on sections should be kept. However, this is not a strict rule, as some presentations may have specific requirements. As very general rule, presentations should not be long, each page should contain only a few items (avoiding extensive verbal descriptions that can be made by the speaker). The fonts used in both text and graphics should be large enough for the audience to read, cryptic abbreviations should be avoided, the use of colour can improve readability.

5.4.4 Styles

A few basic styles have been defined in the editing of the present document. The different versions of Word in the different languages should automatically translate the basic styles (such as Normal, Heading 1, ..., etc.). Extra styles include styles for use in figure captions, table text and table titles, bullet lists and a few others. The styles for the Table of Contents are assigned automatically during the creation of the Table (command: Insert / Table of Contents). Specific styles are used in the cover sheet. In order to keep consistency across documents, newly defined styles should be avoided. QM are responsible for managing exceptions.

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Every time that part of a document is pasted into a second one, all the styles defined in the first document are automatically transferred into the second one. To avoid this (which results in an exponential growth of styles) this kind of operation should be carried out following a specific procedure, i.e.:

1) create new documents using the "AWESOME_Report_template.docx" rather than modifying an existing document;

2) use the command "*Edit-Paste Special"* to paste text from another file as "*unformatted text*";

3) do not modify styles in a document.

The titles have been defined as they appear in this document. When using Word, chapter and paragraph titles should be defined using the Heading styles, following the hierarchical structure, so that all the functions for automatic titling and numbering and for the creation of the table of contents can be easily applied.

5.4 DELIVERABLES

5.4.1 Overview

Each deliverable has to be submitted to the PRIMA Foundation on the due date indicated in the DoA. Final acceptance of deliverables can only happen in a **review**. AWESOME's policy is, however, to obtain a preliminary approval from the PO. If deliverables are not accepted, then payment of Financial Statements could be delayed. It is thus in the interests of all concerned that deliverables be produced to a high quality and in the required format.

The AWESOME Deliverables are strictly tied to the breakdown into WPs that constitutes the structure of the project and are listed in the DoA. Deliverables are generally **technical documents** and have an essential importance for the PRIMA's appraisal of how the project is evolving, since they are written reports in which results produced during the project are collected and analysed.

5.4.2 Deliverable Production

Each deliverable tackles a specific subject, and has a **Deliverable Manager** (DM) who will coordinate the production of the document, interacting as necessary with the other partners involved. Unless agreed otherwise among the partners involved, the DM is the person working for the consortium Partner that is responsible for the deliverable according to the DoA.

Before starting on its production, the DM will define the document structure and the contributions expected from each partner in a **preliminary document** named **Deliverable Development Plan** (DDP) and will propose the calendar for the meetings considered necessary for the development of the deliverable. The contents of the DDP must be agreed with the QM and finalised at least 60 days before the contractual date of the deliverable.

Then the deliverable will be produced. The DM will merge all contributions into a single document following as much as possible the structure defined in the DDP. This **first draft** will then be circulated and asked for comments. Each partner will check its consistency with the plans and give their feedback and approval.

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The DM will then prepare a **final draft**, which will be sent to QM at least 30 days before the contractual date. The QM team is composed by 2 partners (a reviewer team will be composed during the next MB meeting in July 2020). The QM team will not normally enter into the technical merits of the deliverable, but will essentially ensure that it is of sufficient quality to be sent to the PRIMA Foundation. Further iterations could take place, then the deliverable will be provided to the MB for final approval. The **Project Coordinator** will **upload** the **final document to the PRIMA Smartsheets** (§ 6).

The diagram in Figure 2 summarises the procedure to be followed for the preparation of deliverables.
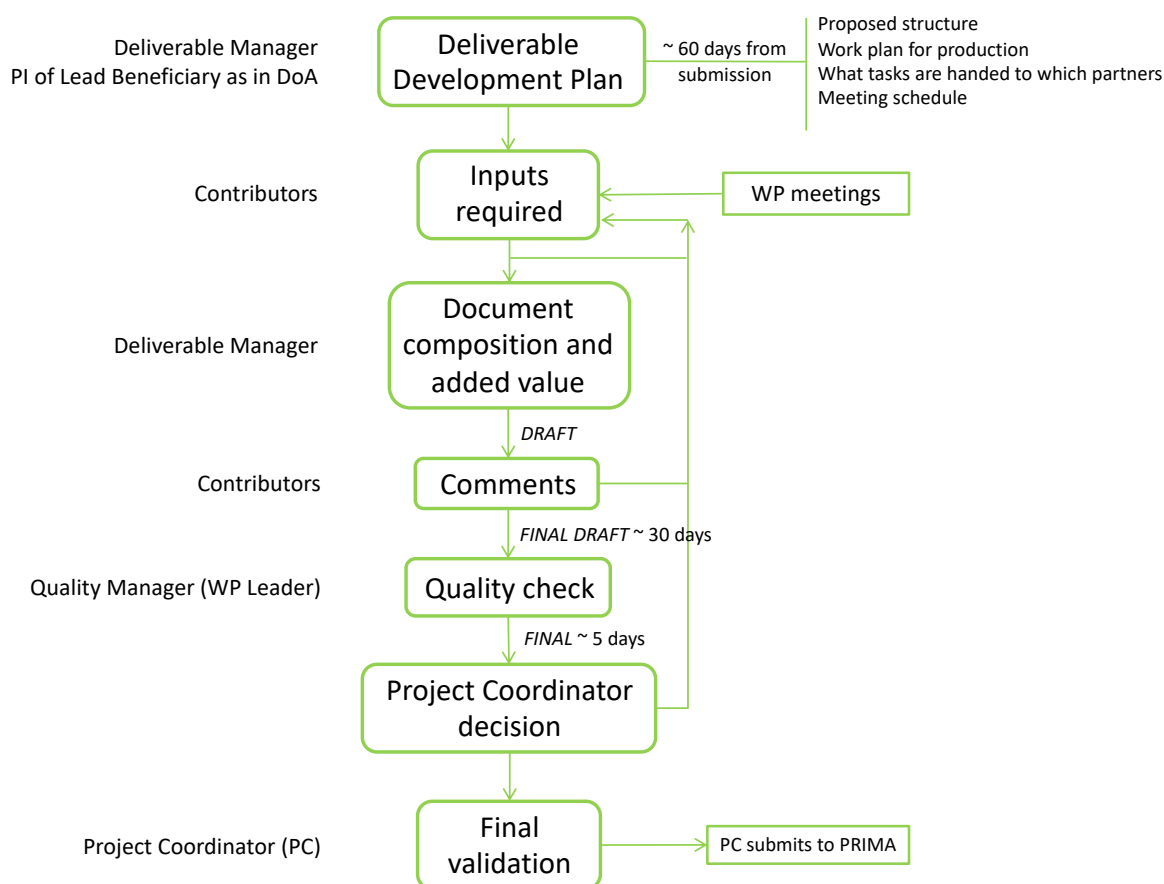

Figure 2 – AWESOME deliverable production process

5.4.3 Deliverable Development Plan (DDP)

The DDP is issued by the DM in order to clarify the main objectives of the Deliverable and to assign the different contributors with specific tasks in the report. It should be agreed with the QM **at least 60 days before the due contractual date of the deliverable**. The DDP must sketch the structure of the future Deliverable, and therefore contain a clear indication of:

1) Person responsible for the deliverable (DM)

2) Table of Contents

3) Persons in charge of each chapter/section

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4) A timetable for the deliverable development, setting deadlines at least for:

   a) Submission of contributions

   b) Production of the first draft (version 01)

   c) Internal review (partners' comments), **latest 30 days before the contractual date of the deliverable**

   d) Production of further versions of the draft (versions 0x – for versions)

   e) Delivery to the QM.

6 QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

Deliverable status and upload, Management and Reporting monitoring must be edited by the Project Coordinator in the PRIMA Smartsheets (https://app.smartsheet.com). A new system is being developed by PRIMA and should be available after Summer 2020. The new system will substitute the Smartsheets as Project Management tool.

6.1 CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS - MANAGEMENT REPORTS

AWESOME has 2 Reporting Periods:

− Reporting Period 1: From M1 to M21

− Reporting Period 2: From M1 to M42

Contractual obligations imply that, within 60 days of the end of each reporting period (including the last reporting period), a periodic report must be submitted to the PRIMA Foundation, organised by sections as follows:

− an overview, including a publishable summary of the progress of work towards the objectives of the project, including achievements and attainment of any milestones and deliverables identified in DoA. This report should include the differences between work expected to be carried out in accordance with DoA and that actually carried out;

− an explanation of the use of the resources;

− a Financial Statement (Annex 4 to the GA) from each beneficiary and each third party, if applicable, together with a summary financial report consolidating the claimed Community contribution of all the beneficiaries (and third parties) in an aggregate form, based on the information provided in Form C by each beneficiary.

− financial statements should be accompanied by audit certificates, when this is appropriate or, respectively, required (see Art. 22 of the GA).

The financial reports will be submitted as written in the foreword (§ 6), but paper versions signed by the authorised person have still to be sent by regular mail.

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6.2 INTERNAL QUALITY PROCEDURE

To support the efficiency and quality of the AWESOME project activities, an internal reporting procedure is set up in AWESOME to occur **every 6 months at the WP level**. The six-month Progress Reports (PRP) are to be compiled by WP leaders on the basis of information provided by the Partners actively contributing to the WP.

Prerequisites for this process are:

● All participants to keep **timesheet records** of who is involved in the AWESOME project. These can follow the normal practice of the partner concerned, but must track, month for month, who worked on what part of the project. The information stored should be at WP level for every person concerned.

● For **travel costs**, again the normal practices of each partner organisation can be used. Thus, if itemised travel costs are normally kept, then the total cost of the travel for each person involved should be reported in the management reports. If, on the other hand, a default daily reimbursement is used (irrespective of the real costs involved), then these default values can be reported again for every person involved. Although this may lead to some more reporting activity than officially required by the official progress reporting, specifying all travel costs per partner for every person who travelled even at the level of internal reporting will make the official reporting (§ 6.1) straightforward. Therefore, travel costs should not be grouped together, but indicated as be specific costs per person. Also, receipts must be archived, as the PRIMA Foundation may want to see them and they are required for all partners undergoing an auditing procedure.

6.2.1 Six-Months Progress and Resource Reports

Every six months, a progress report and an update of resources spent (resource report) must be prepared and each partner must provide the necessary information to the WP leader. Each WP leader should keep the Project Coordinator updated with regular periodic project progress checks, which concern the advancement status of the WP under his/her leadership. The six-months progress report will be based on the information periodically collected within the last six months of project activity and will typically **not be more than four to six A4 pages**, which briefly describe the progress that has been made, and any problems that have arisen. Reference should be made to the milestones achieved and to the deliverables completed. The report should also outline the major items that the WP will be working on during the coming month.

Following the collection of the reports, the Project Coordinator will send within one week a "status report" to the Management Board and to the PO, who will thus be continuously informed concerning the progress of the project and any arising problems.

Guidelines to fill in the progress reports

Every six months the WP leaders collect inputs from partners collaborating in the WP they lead by means of the template named "AWESOME_Report_template.docx", which is available on the AWESOME file archiving system in the "AWESOME_public\Visual_identity_templates\" directory. The document structure follows the WP Task structure, thus reporting for each Task:

— Overall status of the Task

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— Activities of the partners involved in the Task

- Work performed and achievements

- Deviations from plan

— Meetings

For each Task in the WP, the WP leader prepares a summary of the task status and progress, and outlines the main activities for the next semester (§ 2.5.3). Then the reports of each partner involved in the tasks are added. Each partner must report on the work done, on possible deviations from plan and on meetings that were attended. The reported activities must also include progress towards any milestones and/or deliverables occurring within the given reporting period.

Guidelines to fill in the resource reports

Effort and expenses reports (ER) will be provided for each informal and formal reporting period by each partner using the Excel files named "AWESOME _ER_AAA_MXX_YY.xls", which is available on the AWESOME file archiving system (under the "AWESOME_public\Reporting\Financial\" section. "AAA" is the partner name in the filename, whereas "MXX_YY" indicates the period to which the template refers, i.e. from month (M) "XX" to month "YY" as measured in months from the beginning of the project. The ER Excel files – one for each partner – are organised in different worksheets, containing expenses i.e. financial data (personnel, travel, equipment and other goods) and effort for each WP. Concerning financial data, detailed compilation of all data worksheets is not mandatory, but is recommended (i.e. in the personnel file it is not mandatory to enter the name of the person, but it can be replaced by e.g. "researcher A", "researcher B"). Nevertheless, **it is mandatory** to enter the total sums of personnel expenses and other direct costs (indirect costs and total amounts are automatically calculated). Only the partner ZG has an amount in subcontracting, which must be entered. Once data are entered in the detailed worksheets, the total amounts will be automatically generated and reported in the "Summary'" sheet. The Excel files provided to each partner can be used for all reporting periods. An indication of the information needed by each partner is shown in Table 6. Each partner sends the duly compiled worksheets to the Project Coordinator and to all the WP leaders. The Project Coordinator will be in charge of inserting the data received in the PRIMA Smartsheets (or in the new project management system of PRIMA, that should be available after Summer 2020; see § 6).

Table 6 – Overview of the worksheets to be compiled by each partner for effort and expenses reports.

Summary	A-Personnel	B-Direct costs of subcontracting	D-Other direct costs	Effort
mandatory	recommended	mandatory only for ZG	mandatory	mandatory

6.3 TECHNICAL REPORT

At the end of each of the two reporting periods – at month 21 (M21) and at month 42 (M42) – the Project Coordinator will prepare the Project Technical Report, based on the progress reports described in Section 6.2.1 above. It will contain the following summary information:

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- Major achievements during the reporting period;
- Major problems identified;
- Deviations from the project plan;
- Resources used during the period.

The Coordinator will be in charge of preparing this and will ask each partner for any additional contributions. This report will summarise the major achievements to date, any critical issues, the expected organisation for the remaining months of the project. It will include also a critical self-evaluation.

6.4 FINANCIAL REPORT

At the end of every reporting period, the Project Coordinator will prepare a consolidated overview of the budgetary situation of the project, on the basis of the cost statements he has received from the partners. This report will be submitted to the PRIMA Foundation. The payments that have been made will also be reported. The budgetary situation will be compared with the original annual budget plan.

6.5 PROBLEM MANAGEMENT

6.5.1 Introduction

The guidelines provided in Section 3 describe the procedures to be followed during meetings, and the decision-making mechanisms.

Most decisions will be taken to help move the project forward and will correspond to specific tasks in the DoA. Other actions will need to be taken, typically those by the MB, to ensure that the partners respect their contractual agreements. If for any reason, a partner is not performing at the expected level, this will need to be managed.

6.5.2 Problems Identified by a Partner

If at any time during the execution of the project, a partner perceives a problem, he/she may raise it with a higher authority in the project so that appropriate action can be identified and implemented.

If the problem is technical and relative to a particular WP, the procedure to be adopted should first be to flag the problem to the WP Leader. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the WP Leader may also decide to involve the MB, which could, if the problem cannot be dealt with at the level of MB, raise the matter at a GAs meeting. In the latter case the GAs has the ultimate authority to solve the problem.

6.5.3 Problems Concerning the Performance of a Partner

A more serious issue concerns when a partner is not performing its technical tasks satisfactorily. This will most likely first be raised by the WP Leader involved and reported to the MB who may raise the issue with the General Assembly, once the problem settling procedures at the level of MB are not producing any improvement.

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The first actions to be taken will be direct discussions with the partner concerned to correct the inadequacies. If these do not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, the MB, as first instance, and the GAs, as ultimate instance, will meet to decide on action. Possible sanctions could be:

- to suspend the next payment from PRIMA, be it part of a previous advance that had been partially paid, or the next phase advance payment;
- to decide to move part of the outstanding work from the partner concerned to another partner in the same WP, with a subsequent transfer of budget;
- to request the partner to leave the consortium.

Similar actions could also result if the reporting provided by the partner is considered to be unsatisfactory. A short time to correct the reporting will be allowed, before more severe sanctions are considered by the GAs.

6.5.4 Problems concerning the financial stability of a partner

The consortium has joint technical and financial liability concerning the project. If serious concerns regarding the financial soundness of a partner exist, or a partner is increasingly going into debt, or if the financial situation of the partner changes in a substantially negative way, there is an obligation on the partner to report this to the Project Coordinator.

The Coordinator will act with the MB to prepare an assessment of the risk to the project, which will then be discussed first within the MB and, ultimately, with the full GAs. First, a complete assessment of the work satisfactorily completed by the partner will be carried out, and, based on the progress reports to date and the advance payments received by the partner, a calculation will be made of the credit or debit of the partner to the PRIMA Foundation. Then a direct discussion with the partner concerned will determine the capacity of the partner to carry out the contractual work in the next period.

This will allow the MB first and the GAs as ultimate instance to evaluate the risk to the project, both financial and technical. Concerning the financial risk, an evaluation will be made of the risk of providing the next advance payment to the partner. In any case, at this stage an audit certificate for the work done to the date will most likely be requested of the partner.

In moderately serious cases, the next advance payment will be suspended until the work planned for the next six months is completed. Then the partner will be requested to provide an audit certificate for the period involved, and the GAs will decide upon proposal of the MB whether to pay the costs sustained by the partner. This is again a risk assessment activity, as the MB first and the GAs as ultimate instance will assess whether the PRIMA Foundation accepts the partner's declared costs in the next Cost Statement.

6.5.5 Management of Changes

Any modifications that may be required in the work plan necessary to implement the activities included in the DoA must be promptly reported to the Project Coordinator. Requests for modification could come from a particular WP: in this case, the WP Leader should report the situation to the Coordinator, who will discuss the issue with the MB, as first instance, and, if necessary, with the GAs, as ultimate instance.

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Other instances of change could occur based on general project assessments, carried out as part of the normal management. If the work plan needs to be changed, the Coordinator will need to discuss this with the PRIMA Foundation. If a Review is imminent, it may be more practical to present the revised situation to the Reviewers, who can then recommend the change as an outcome of the Review.

6.6 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

6.6.1 Coordinator Responsibility

Overall financial management of the project is under the responsibility of the Project Coordinator, whose responsibilities are:

- to receive the entire financial contribution from PRIMA Foundation, and allocate it to the Contractors pursuant to the DoA and the decisions taken by the GAs;
- to prepare annual accounts to keep track of the distribution of funds among the Contractors;
- to provide overall administrative and financial management of the coordination;
- to keep track of budgets.

6.6.2 Management of Funding Contribution from PRIMA Foundation

In accordance with the CA, the Project Coordinator has promptly notified to the partners about the amount transferred by PRIMA, which has been distributed to the partners.

Following the submission of the Financial Statements at the end of each Reporting Period and the request(s) of interim payment, the PRIMA Foundation will make interim payments, up to 90% of the total project funding (as ruled by Art. 20 and 21 of the Grant Agreement). The final 10% will only be available after the project successfully concludes and the final Financial Statements have been approved.

6.6.3 Partner Responsibility

Each partner in AWESOME is responsible for ensuring that it has all the necessary financial and technical resources to carry out the activities it has contracted to do. Each partner is responsible for their correspondent Financial Statements.

As explained above in § 6.6.2, at the start of the project, each partner will receive an advance payment from PRIMA, and further payments will be after the first reporting period at M21 and at the end of the project.

6.6.4 Audit Certificates

In line with the GA, an audit certificate is required with the Financial Statement only for direct costs higher than €325.000, together with the latest financial report at M42 (case of POLIMI).