

Sample project plan

A project plan maps out all your major work so your funder, working group – and you! – have an easy reference to see how your activities fit within the big picture.

It is important to remember that the project plan should align with your evaluation plan to make sure your activities can be measured.

Your project plan should also align with your program logic.

Keep in mind that most plans change as the project is implemented. You should be able to adapt your plan in response to changes that may affect your work, but just make sure you're keeping your funder, working group and other stakeholders in the loop about what is changing and why.

Example

Background

(Why you chose your community)

People from low socio-economic communities continue to experience systematic and significant disparities in health outcomes compared with the rest of the population. They tend to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage, have lower survival outcomes and higher mortality rates.

(Aim of the project)

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has established the UnderScreened Program, a partnership approach to improving the participation of underscreening groups in the national population screening programs for breast, bowel and cervical cancer.

(any other relevant information such as funding, or precedence)

Aim*

*The aim (or goal) is a broad or long-term change that the project is working towards.

To increase cancer screening participation in <name of community>, through community engagement and the development and implementation of innovative cross-program (breast, bowel and cervical) and evidenced-based recruitment strategies.

Objectives*

*Objectives are statements about more specific and immediate changes you want in order to progress towards your overall aim.

Since these statements talk about change, you may use words such as: to increase, to improve, to reduce.

Objectives should be SMART.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-framed

Outcomes*

*Outcomes are the likely short-term and medium-term effects of the project.

When you think about outcomes, consider sustainability (the capacity to sustain the project's activities on an ongoing basis) and how your activities work towards your outcomes.

Objective 1: To raise awareness and knowledge of cancer screening (breast, bowel and cervical) in <your community>

Impacts

Increased community health related knowledge and awareness of cancer screening

Activity	Deliverable	Timeframe	Responsibility	Status
Test and (if necessary) adapt joint screening messages to be locally relevant.	Community consulted on joint screening messages	Feb-Mar 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vic partners of national cancer screening programsWorking Group	In progress
Identify and develop local resources. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Information resource for community members on cancer screening e.g. brochure, poster, postcards, etc.Information for community members on location of cancer screening servicesPictograph of how to use the bowel screening kit	Adapted joint screening messages documented	Mar-Apr 15		
	Local resources identified and developed	Apr-Aug/Sept 15		

Scope

List the:

- Timeframe of your project** (including planning period, implementation period and evaluation period).
- Target audience** – be specific! (if relevant include age, sex, language, SES). You can list primary and secondary audiences (i.e. Primary: Males aged 50–74 that are bowel under-screeners, Secondary: Wives and health professionals that influence males' decision-making)
- Approximate number of audience** (how many people do you expect your interventions to reach?)
- Geographical location** – again, be specific! (define if it's a PHN region, LGA, by postcode, etc.)
- List relevant local services**
- Include any involvement of the National Cancer Screening Programs** (i.e. This project includes the national breast, bowel and cervical cancer screening programs and specifically their Victorian partners – BreastScreen Victoria, Cancer Council Victoria and the Victorian Cervical Cytology Registry. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services will provide input on behalf of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.)

Working Group membership

Organisation name	Contribution

Implementation methodology and key activities

For example:

1. <The organisation> will establish the working group. The working group will be facilitated by <your organisation> and are responsible for contributing to the development, implementation and evaluation of the project.
2. <Your organisation> will use a community engagement approach and lead the implementation of the project in partnership with the working group, local services and Victorian screening partners.
3. <Your organisation> will facilitate consultation with key community organisations and individuals to develop the project plan. <Your organisation> will continue to engage with the community throughout implementation.
4. The Victorian representatives of the national cancer screening programs (BreastScreen Victoria, Cancer Council Victoria and representative from DHHS for National Bowel Cancer Screening Program) will provide specific cancer screening knowledge and skills to develop and implement the project plan.
5. Joint cancer screening messages will be implemented at a local level (through a local communications plan and resources) to complement state-wide and national communications.
6. <Your organisation> (and working group) will contribute to the evaluation of the project by collecting evidence as per the evaluation plan.

Governance

Outline your governance here.

Evaluation

<Your organisation> will develop an evaluation plan against this project plan. The evaluation plan will outline the measures, activities and resources required to monitor and evaluate the project. <Your organisation> will collect data against this plan.

Here is an example of how the project and evaluation plan will complement one another:

Project plan		Evaluation plan	
Project plan level	Results framework	Example of measures	Data source
Aim High-level change that this project will contribute to achieving. There should be clear logic about how the objectives contribute to the aim.	Long-term change Long-term effects measured long after the project timeframe, and acknowledging broader context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening participation rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2-yearly participation rate published by registries
Objective Objectives describe the highest level of change that this project can directly achieve. Objectives will be attained by implementing the strategies described in the Project Plan.	Impacts Long-term effects produced by the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour of target group• Practice of workforce• Demand for services• System design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer satisfaction survey• Appointment booking• Client records• MBS data on FOBT ordering

Strategy Strategies describe the key approaches and initiatives undertaken, demonstrating how the objectives will be achieved. A coherent set of strategies should achieve the objective. The strategy is implemented through a defined set of activities.	Outcomes The likely short-term and medium-term effects of the project Measures the type of change, extent of change, change by whom, where, for how long.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety of services • Change of knowledge of workforce • New procedures in place for opportunistic screening • Services are experienced as safe by target group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-survey • Process map of the service from process evaluation • Client pathway map from process evaluation • Service protocol documents
	Outputs The direct outputs resulting from the strategies. These are specific, quantified, and agreed targets or benchmarks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of staff trained • # resources developed or distributed • # proportion of clients received health promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training attendance sheets • Records of resource stock-takes
Activity Activities describe the sequence of steps – demonstrating what will be done to implement the strategy. Relate to how the inputs (resources, time, staffing, etc.) come together in a sequence of steps to implement the strategy.	Deliverables Immediate and interim achievements to demonstrate the project is progressing as expected, to scope, to time, and to budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key decision points • Key documents • Key events • Key resources developed • Key training delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes and agendas • Desktop review of project documents
Methodology/Project description Describes the key theories, scientific or technical methods underpinning the project, and links the planned solution with the identified problem. Explains why the activities are an effective and efficient way to deliver the strategies (including focus on the target groups and their needs), why the strategies are likely to deliver the outcomes for the target groups, and how the outcomes contribute to achieving the aim.		Evaluation questions set the context of the evaluation, and how the evaluation measures will be analysed to measure the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and appropriateness of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Analysis workshops

Reporting

(Your reporting needs will probably be outlined in your funding agreement and should be repeated here).

For example:

The project coordinator will provide a written monthly report including implementation progress, learnings and opportunities, barriers and how they were overcome, major consultation/community engagement and next steps. The project coordinator will also provide a quarterly status update against the project plan. The plan will be reviewed every 6 months in line with quarterly reporting to allow for changes to be incorporated throughout implementation. An end-of-year evaluation report will be produced by <your organisation> and include progress on the project.

A final evaluation report of the project will be undertaken by <your organisation> commencing <date> and completed approx. <date>.

Risk management and mitigation

To prevent things going wrong, you need to:

- identify what the risks to your project are (they may involve strategies/processes/activities co-ordinated through your project, or outside factors like changes to national screening programs)
- rate the likelihood of the potential risk from happening (low, medium, high). You should also rate the impact of the potential risk, meaning how harmful it would be if the potential risk happened (low, medium, high)
- outline steps to reduce the likelihood of the risk from happening. This is called risk mitigation
- think about who should be responsible for mitigating the risk (responsibilities) and when they would need to respond (timeframe)
- outline your risk management plan in your overall project plan – an example is below.

Potential risk	Risk rating	Impact	Impact rating	Response	Responsibilities	Timelines
Poor attendance at staff engagement forums / focus groups	Medium	Poor planning because not enough relevant staff attended the meeting	Medium	<p>Promote events using multiple communication channels (intranet, word-of-mouth, flyers)</p> <p>Make sure timing of event works for the staff (schedule event during work hours and make sure managers allow attendance)</p> <p>Consider linking your activity to an existing meeting</p> <p>Consider if a meeting needs to be held (can we get feedback from a survey?)</p>	<p>Project team – entice staff to attend; prepare well; create sense of urgency; plan thoroughly including broad engagement</p> <p>Executive sponsor/ managers – encourage and permit staff to attend</p>	Commencement dates