Project Intake, Evaluation and Decision-Making Process

Summary and Recommendations

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Prepared by: Rafi Lazimy

1. **Introduction**

The IT leadership appointed a committee, the "IT Project Intake, Evaluation, and Decision-Making Committee" (the "Committee"), to develop guidelines and recommendations to IT governance for IT project proposals intake, evaluation, and decision-making.

2. **Charges, Scope of Work**

   a. Develop a definition of an "IT project proposal."

   b. Develop a project proposal intake form and identify the necessary information to be collected in the intake process.

   c. Develop a scoring methodology that will allow meaningful classification of project proposals and facilitate effective review, evaluation, and decision-making processes by IT governance.

   d. Classify project proposals to determine routing to relevant IT Advisory Group(s): DTAG, TLTAG, IAG, and RTAG.

   e. Route proposals to the relevant Advisory Groups for review and, subsequently, for making recommendations to the IT Steering Committee (ITSC).

   f. Identify major issues, considerations, and types of proposals that will help the work of the Advisory Groups and that will need further scrutiny by the IT Steering Committee.

3. **Objectives, Principles**

   a. **Rationalization**. Creating a rational, effective and consistent framework for the evaluation and decision-making processes of IT project proposals across campus. The objective is to make decisions that are aligned with and support the mission and objectives of the campus in the areas of teaching, learning, research, administrative excellence, and outreach, and that represent an effective and efficient use of resources.

   b. **Prioritization - no more "one-off" project evaluation and requests for funding**. An important element of rationalization is to get out of the practice of "one-off" project proposal evaluations, funding requests, and "back-door" funding. Rather, the proposed process will collect information about all proposals, allow evaluation and prioritization by IT

governance, and, if needed, approach campus leadership periodically with a prioritized list of requests for funding.

c. **Minimizing duplications and redundancies**. The intake process includes mechanisms to identify potential duplications and redundancies of IT services and of on-going projects across campus, and allows IT governance to scrutinize these proposals for the purpose of minimizing duplication and redundancy.

d. **Assess impact on IT infrastructure/resources**. The intake process should identify and, to the extent possible, assess the impact of proposed projects on the campus IT infrastructure and resources. This will help to develop awareness of resource capacity issues and assist the IT leadership in assessing the campus resource and infrastructure capacities and gaps.

e. **Innovation**. The framework recognizes the importance of encouraging the development of new and innovative IT services. (See further discussion in Section 12.)

f. **Governance-driven, collaborative, transparent, and expert-based processes**. IT governance plays a central role in the evaluation and decision-making processes. These processes should be done in a collaborative and transparent manner. Different perspectives in vetting project proposals by experts from across campus will lead to better evaluation and decision-making.

g. **Agility, flexibility**. The evaluation and decision-making framework is designed to be agile and flexible so it can be modified/improved in the future as needed. Flexibility also means that not all project proposals will be treated the same way in the data collection, review and decision-making processes. ("One size does not fit all.") In particular, research computing proposals should be evaluated differently. (See further discussion in Section 11 below.)

h. **Pace/speed**. The framework allows for rapid evaluation and decision-making processes, especially with respect to project proposals that are classified as having "Low Impact" (see Sections 8.a and 8.b below). Making the process less onerous and more responsive is a key success factor. To speed-up the process, we will collect minimal information on the Intake Form that will allow quick classification of proposals, and collect additional information on Medium and High Impact proposals.

4. **Assumptions**

a. **Mandatory**. All IT project proposals from all units on campus will go through the intake, evaluation, and decision-making processes, regardless of their funding sources.

b. **Funding**:

    i. It is expected that the vast majority of projects will have their own funding: **This is NOT a "request for funding" process**.

    ii. Request for campus funding: A prioritized list of projects with request for campus funding will be taken to campus leadership three times a year: September 15, January 15, and May 30.

c. **Service Catalog; Project Portfolio/Repository**. The proposed recommendations assume the existence of a campus-wide Service Catalog (actively in development) and a Project Portfolio/Repository (yet to be developed). All projects that align with the definition of an "IT project" should be added to the campus IT Project Portfolio/Repository. (See further discussion in Section 13.e below.)

d. **Adequate professional and administrative staff**. We also recognize – and assume - the need for adequate professional and administrative staff in the CIO Office for implementing the proposed process. (See Implementation Plan in Section 13 below.)\

5. **Organization of the Committee Work**

a. The Committee created two working groups; each was charged with specific tasks. Each group met on a weekly basis; the full Committee met bi-weekly (approximately). The Executive Committee met bi-weekly to review the Committee's work, assess progress, determine gaps, future directions, set the agenda for the full committee meetings, and address specific issues/concerns.
(See Appendix A for the memberships of the Committee and Executive Committee.)

b. The Committee used various sources in its work and recommendations, including work done previously by the EITDM, which was disbanded in September 2016.

c. This draft recommendations document will be presented and reviewed by each Advisory Group and then revised as needed based on feedback. It will then be submitted to the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) and the campus IT Committee (ITC) for endorsement.

6. **Definition of "IT Project Proposal;" Types of Projects**

a. **Definition**. For purposes of UW-Madison IT governance, a "project proposal" is a request by a campus unit to create or significantly modify an IT service – including expanding the scope,

functionality and/or capabilities of existing services - that is owned by the campus unit (department, college, school, administrative unit) and is designed to support the mission and the operational and managerial business needs of the unit with well-defined business outcomes. The service employs information technologies and resources, people, and processes to collect, manipulate, store and disseminate information to achieve its objectives.

b. **Types of services**. We envision three types of project proposals:

    i. **Customer-facing.** Proposals that aim to develop new services or modify existing services that deliver value to customers by facilitating outcomes customers want to achieve. Users/customers are those that directly use the service or those that benefit from the outcomes. They may be internal (faculty, students, staff), or external (e.g., parents, prospective students, alumni, donors, and visitors and guests, and users of conference services).

    ii. **Infrastructure services.** Proposals that aim to develop or re-design core infrastructure services that enable customer-facing services.

    iii. **Innovative projects.** Proposals that aim to create new, innovative IT services. (See Section 12.)

7. **Who Can Submit Proposals; Project Sponsor; Notifications to Divisional Officials**

a. Divisional CIOs have the authority to submit proposals. They can delegate that authority to officials in their college/school/division (the "submitters"). The divisional CIO should receive a copy of the proposal.

b. If a proposal seeks campus funding: The divisional CIO must notify the appropriate divisional officials (such as dean/director; associate dean/director; CFO) so they can weigh in on the proposal.

c. A project proposal should have a sponsor. Typically, the sponsor is the owner/manager of the business process and/or functionality that the proposed IT service will support. The sponsor must approve the submission.

8. **The Intake and Scoring Process**

a. **The approach**. The Committee developed an Intake Form and a Scoring Matrix for the initial classification of project proposals into Low, Medium, or High Impact proposals.

b. **Low Impact proposals**. These proposals will be approved "automatically," except when they need further governance scrutiny. Notification to that effect will be sent to proposers as soon as the classification is done.

c. **Medium and High Impact proposals**:
   i. These proposals will be routed to IT governance for further review, analysis and decision-making.
   ii. Additional information may be collected for these proposals beyond the information collected in the Intake Form.

d. **The Intake Form**. The form has about 20 questions/attributes. (The (current) Intake Form document is attached.) Major information to be submitted:

   i. Project name and description; Proposer and sponsor information.
   ii. Reasons for the project: The business case.
   iii. Proposed solution or general approach.
   iv. Alignment with the campus strategic framework.
   v. Similar existing campus IT services or IT projects.
   vi. Potential to become campus-wide service.
   vii. Privacy, security concerns.
   viii. Estimated cost and effort to complete and implement the project; to operate the solution.
   ix. Scope of impact: Users/roles, and total number of people that will be impacted.
   x. Funding.
   xi. Impact on IT resources/infrastructure capacities.

e. **Scoring, classification**:
   i. Ten (10) of the questions on the Intake Form are impact filtering questions (highlighted in yellow in the Intake Form).
   ii. Each impact filtering question is scored numerically on a scale of 1, 3, 5. Some of the questions are weighted.
   iii. The Scoring Matrix is attached. The aggregate weighted score determines the classification of a project proposal into Low, Medium, and High Impact:

Low Impact	34 - 99
Medium Impact	100 - 139
High Impact	140 - 170

f. **Validation**. The Intake Form and Scoring Matrix were validated by the Committee using several test cases based on actual completed campus projects. The validation tests were successful, indicating that the impact filtering questions and scoring methodology reflect the impact of the projects in hindsight.

g. **Second-round information collection; Initial review in the CIO Office; "Red flags".**

   i. Additional information will be collected for Medium and High Impact proposals.
   ii. The initial review in the CIO Office will focus on proposals that need further scrutiny in the review and decision-making process. (See Implementation Plan, Section 13 below.) Major "**red flags**" that will prompt further review include:
   - Proposals that seek campus funding.
   - Proposals that duplicate existing IT services or IT projects.
   - Proposals with significant impact on campus IT infrastructure, resources; systems, and/or people.
   - Proposals that have the potential to become shared, campus-wide services, and/or the proposed solution could benefit multiple campus units and offers opportunities for collaboration.
   - Proposed projects that may have Federal, state or campus policy compliance implications.
   iii. The various "red flags" will not be treated the same way. The review will vary from one issue/concern to the other. These issues are weighed equally.

h. **Comments:**

   i. The intake and, in particular, the impact filtering questions are designed to simplify the intake and classification process, make the process **less onerous** on the part of proposers, speed up the process by quickly classifying proposals into Low, Medium, and High Impact, and provide feedback to proposers in a timely manner.
   ii. We capture important information but recognize that not everything could - or should - be scored numerically. Consequently, the numerical classification will be reviewed in the CIO Office and further analysis will be performed before proposals are routed to Advisory Groups: See Implementation Plan in Section 13 below.
   iii. Research-related proposals are the exception to this process. See further discussion in Section 11 below.

9. **Review by Advisory Groups**

   a. **Medium and High Impact proposals:**

      I. Will be routed to the relevant Advisory Groups (TAGs): DTAG, TLTAG, IAG, RATG.

      II. A proposal may be routed to more than one group; one group will be designated as the "primary" review/recommendations group.

      III. Full information will be provided to the Advisory Groups, including the Intake Form, the initial classification, and any additional information collected and/or analysis done in the CIO Office.

   b. **The Advisory Groups are charged with**:

      i. Reviewing the proposals and doing any additional analysis as they see fit. They may interact with proposers and consult with subject matter experts (SMEs).

      ii. The review will primarily focus on the issues that need scrutiny by IT governance, that is, on the "red flags" listed in Section 8.g above.

      iii. Making recommendations to the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) as necessary.

   c. **Managing review process by TAGs**. We recommend that each Advisory Group establish a process to manage the review and recommendation process, including appointing standing and/or ad-hoc committees/subgroups to carry out such duties. As mentioned in 9.b.i above, these committees/subgroups may engage project proposers and subject matter experts from outside the Advisory Groups. It is the responsibility of the Chairs of the Advisory Groups to manage this process, including interacting with the CIO Office and the ITSC.

   d. **Uniform, consistent form to make recommendations**. We recommend that the Advisory Groups collectively establish and maintain a uniform, consistent form/format for making recommendations to the ITSC. This template may focus on the Groups' analysis of the "red flags" listed in Section 8.g above. (See Implementation Plan, Section 13 below.)

10. **Decision-Making**

   a. The IT Steering Committee (ITSC) will make decisions about project proposals, based on recommendations by the Advisory Groups.

   b. In particular, we expect the ITSC to focus on major issues and considerations (the "red flags" listed in Section 8.g).

c. The ITSC may prioritize high impact projects, assemble a prioritized list of requests for campus funding, and take other necessary action(s). IT leadership will go to campus three times a year with a prioritized list of funding requests.

11. **Research Computing Proposals**

   a. We recognize the special nature of research computing proposals.
   b. The main objectives of IT governance with respect to research computing proposals are:
      i. Collect, to the extent possible, information about the impact of research proposals/grants on the campus IT infrastructure and resources, such as storage, speed, network bandwidth, etc.
      ii. Identify possible duplication of existing services.
      iii. Include information about these proposals in the Project Portfolio/Repository.
   c. Research computing proposals will not be scored. Research-specific information will not be collected or evaluated. The goal of IT governance is to anticipate and support the IT needs of research projects, not to delay or interfere with the research process in any way.
   d. Research computing proposals will be routed to RTAG, which will be free to decide on any additional analysis.
   e. **Challenges**. We recognize the existence of challenges in this area, and do not expect to get information about 100% of research proposals/grants. In particular:
      i. IT resource/infrastructure requirements of research proposals/grants are not necessarily included in the grant process, and RSP (Research and Sponsored Programs) does not track this information. These requirements are not always known in advance. Not all grant-funded IT spend can be realistically observed/discovered.
      ii. Certain grant restrictions may exist around IT cost recovery, particularly for UW provided services (e.g., distributed IT services).
      iii. RSP does not drill down into grants, due to volume. It mostly focuses on Federal compliance (particularly around costs) of funded research.
   f. We recommend greater interaction between RSP, IT Governance (primarily, RTAG), and the CIO Office that aims at supporting the mission and work of RSP, on the one hand, and getting information about research proposals/grants, on the other hand.
   g. More detail will be worked out with respect to research-computing proposals.

12. **Innovation Project Proposals**

   a. We support and aim to enable IT innovation.

   b. The main objectives of IT governance with respect to innovation proposals are:

      i. Provide a means to raise awareness of and garner support and funding for strategic IT innovation projects that will ensure the UW-Madison IT project portfolio is balanced between efforts to run, grow and transform campus services.

      ii. Include information about these proposals in the Project Portfolio/Repository, recognizing that these projects may be conceptual at the time of submission but that project information will be updated as it becomes available.

   c. Innovation projects will be scored and routed to the appropriate IT governance bodies for consideration.

13. **Implementation Plan**

   a. **The Intake Process will "go live" on Oct. 1, 2017**. An announcement will be made to campus units so they may start submitting project proposals.

   b. **Review in the CIO Office**:

      I. The Review Team in the CIO Office will include:

   - Executives/directors in the CIO Office: the Executive Director for IT Planning & Strategy; Director of the Center of Excellence; Cloud Architect.
   - Chairs of the Advisory Groups: DTAG, TLTAG, RTAG, IAG.
   - Professional staff: Business Analyst(s); Enterprise Architect(s).
   - Subject matter experts (as needed)
   - Administrative staff.

      II. The review will be conducted after collecting the necessary "second-round" information.

      III. Main responsibilities of this team:

   - Assembling project proposals, including working with proposers to complete the Intake Form.
   - Scoring proposals and classifying them into Low, Medium, and High Impact.
   - Identifying issues and proposals that need scrutiny by IT governance regardless of their classification ("red flag" issues).

- Collecting additional information on Medium and High Impact proposals and on Low Impact proposals that seek campus funding (second round questions).
- Analyzing the answers to the non-scored questions on the Intake Form and the information collected in the second round.
- Addressing some of the issues that raise "red flags" (see below).
- Routing Medium and High Impact proposals to the relevant Advisory Groups.

iv. Reviewing issues that require further scrutiny ("red flags"):

- Proposals that seem to duplicate an existing service or project:
  o The proposer/sponsor will be required to meet with the IT and/or business sponsors of the existing similar services/projects in order to explore opportunities for collaboration and consolidation.
- Proposals with significant impact on campus IT infrastructure and resources:
  o The review group will periodically aggregate the impact of proposals on the campus IT infrastructure and resources.
  o It will then discuss the aggregate impact with the "owners/managers" of IT infrastructure and resources in order to assess the effect on the campus infrastructure capacities and capabilities.

c. **Review by Advisory Groups, recommendations template**:

I. The Advisory Groups (TAGs) will appoint a cross-TAGs standing Review Group, composed of:
- TAG members.
- Non-TAG members
- Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs) (as needed).

The Review Group may also engage proposers/project-sponsors.

II. The Advisory Groups authorize the Cross-TAGs Review Group to act on behalf of the TAGs.

III. The Cross-TAGs Review Group will conduct analysis. The analysis will focus primarily on "red flag" issues. The Group will present its analysis and recommendations to the Advisory Groups. This will be done monthly.

IV. The Advisory Groups will make recommendations to the ITSC using a uniform, consistent form/format. Possible template:

Project Name	Descrip-tion	Red Flags					summary analysis	reco-mend-ations	Prio-rities
		campus funding	duplicate service	impact on infra-structure	poten. to be shared service	compli-ance issues			

    d. **Process and data management**. The Review Team in the CIO Office will also establish and execute process and data management activities, including:

       i. Process management: Coordinate and manage the flow of proposals throughout the data collection, review, and decision-making processes by IT governance.

      ii. Data management:

- Create and maintain an automated system for the intake and impact assessment (scoring) of proposals.
- Create and maintain a Projects Portfolio/Repository that will store information about all proposals.
- The repository will be available to IT governance and proposers for the identification of essentially similar existing projects/proposals, and to support analysis and periodic reporting on the status and progress on on-going campus projects.

14.   Communication Plan

    a. **The campus Interim CIO will:**

      I. Announce the new process on Oct. 1, 2017.

      II. Communicate with the campus leadership, including the Deans' Council and the Administrative Council (AC).

    b. **The CIO Office will**:

      I. Prepare a comprehensive "Project Intake Procedures and Guidelines" document that will include:

- A high-level description of the intake, review, evaluation, and decision-making process.

- Instructions on how to complete the Intake Form, including definition of terms and examples of completed intake forms.

II. Issue broader communication and information to all TAG members, Associate/Assistant Deans/Directors across campus, etc..

III. Hold orientation sessions to explain the Intake Form and submission process.

c. **Value to "end users:"**

Communications will emphasize/demonstrate the VALUE of the Intake process to "end users:"

i. The campus already has a license for this software that a proposer requests.

ii. The existence of similar services that satisfy the needs/requirements of a proposed project.

iii. Providing help to users as early as possible in the submission process; Helping them get the necessary resources they need.

iv. Assessing the impact on the campus infrastructure and IT resources – will benefit everyone on campus.

v. Contributing to the "greater good on the campus" will benefit everyone.

15. **Attachments**

Intake Form

Scoring Matrix

Guidelines

Appendix A

Committee Membership:

Tamra Dagnon,	Senior IT Business Analyst, Project Management Office, ADI, DoIT
J.J. Du Chateau,	Enterprise Architect, DoIT, (Chair of Subgroup B)
John Ford,	Deputy Director, Academic Technology, DoIT
Eric Giefer,	Director, Information Technology, Law School
Karen Hanson,	Manager, Project Management Office, DoIT
Elizabeth Harris,	Director of CEETE, College of Engineering
Phil Hull,	Associate Registrar, Enrollment Management
Rafi Lazimy,	Exec. Dir. for IT Planning & Strategy, CIO Office, (Chair)
Sabrina Messer,	Manager User Services, School of Education
Alan Ng,	Director of Outreach Technology and Faculty Associate, Administration/Humanities, Division of Continuing Studies
David Pagenkopf,	Director of Application Development & Integration (ADI), DoIT
Jason Pursian,	Interim CIO, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
Greg Putnam,	Senior Information Procurement Consultant, College of Letters & Sciences
Bruce Riley,	Procurement Specialist, Purchasing Services
Alan Silver,	Computer Systems Administrator, Department of Chemistry, (Chair of Subgroup A)
Sara Tate-Pederson,	IS Specialist, AIMS
David Towers,	CFO, Wisconsin School of Business
Steve Van Der Weide,	Director of Information Technology Solutions, Wisconsin School of Business

Executive Committee:

Rafi Lazimy; Alan Silver; J.J. Du Chateau; Tamra Dagnon; Sara Tate-Pederson

Administrative Support:

Kayla M Melland