Round-Table discussion on International Projects

Project Management of International Projects

Presented by

Nanda Gunawardhana

SLTC Research University

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Why Proposals (Getting Grants)

Welcome onboard

- Only a few scholars write competitive research grant proposals in Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka is ranked 101th place in Innovation Index, 2020

“Nation that has no innovation will not arise” - *Kumaratunga Munidasa*

Bitter Truth: No real way of teaching/knowledge sharing for project management concepts among academic community in Sri Lanka (good academics poor managers)

Hard Part: Managing projects are harder than getting grants

Project management is the practice of applying knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to complete a project according to specific requirements

International Projects

Types of International Projects

- Research
- Capacity Building
- Industry Collaborations
- Student/Staff Exchange

Ways of Institutional Management

- Granting Body
- Implementing Institution(s)

Ways of Managing a Project

- Individual (Self Management)
- Consortium (Group Management)

Before you start writing, start managing

1. The most important things is to **read the "Project Call"** and attend information sessions

2. **Underline the specific words, phrases, guidelines, directions, etc. realted to project managemtn**
   If not "Most great proposals become good proposals at this stage"

3. Learn the objectives of the call:
   1. What is the funding agency and their objectives,
   2. Why they advertise this,
   3. Does this call is different from previous calls (if so why)

4. **Communicate** with funding agency (if you have doubts in PM)

5. Analyse your **competitive advantages**

6. Have a sense about the **"managing a project"** before you start

More than 15% of proposals miss important parts of instructions, guidelines, etc. (NSF, USA proposals)

Plan well ahead during Implementaton

Select a team

- **Individual:** From whom you can get support and instructions
- **Group:** Collaboration, corporation and punctuality are more important than “Smart Brains”

*Brainstorming: describe their **exigence** (why they are personally interested in the topic) and **kairos** (why this is a relevant and timely topic for others), Write down their current understanding of each topic and enthusiasm*

External information (Preliminary and secondary information)

- Collect sets of information/data well in advance (For CB projects: interviews, surveys, etc.)
- Though we need quick responses, pleople may need time
- Assign some work to your group members and educate them well in advance

Time Management

- **Do many academic and admin work in addition to project work**

Satisfying People during the PM Cycle

Reviewers

- They know (at least act) better than you: if you convince that is not enough, they have to be convinced and convincing them is tough
- They also look for evidence (photographs, signatures, emails, etc.)
- Reporting mechanism should be well understood
- **Writers and Readers see text/graphs/etc. differently**

Funding Agency

- Address all requirements mentioned in the “grant call”
- See the flexibility, this will reduce the stress

Collaborators/Students

- Distribute appropriate workload and budget for them to manage a project properly
- Not sync with meetings and KPIs (Need many negotioations)
- Students need attention and proper support

Uncontrollablle in PM

Rules and Regulations

- Government, Central Bank/Treasury, DNP/ERD, Ministry, University
- Take long time to get approvals and start “real” work: Collaborators are well ahead of us
- Import ban

Covid 19

- Cannot meet KPIs and deadlines

Finance/Procurement

- Currency fluctuations
- Procurement (Natinal/International)
- Non availibility of Chemicals/Instruments/Infrastructure

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Confluence

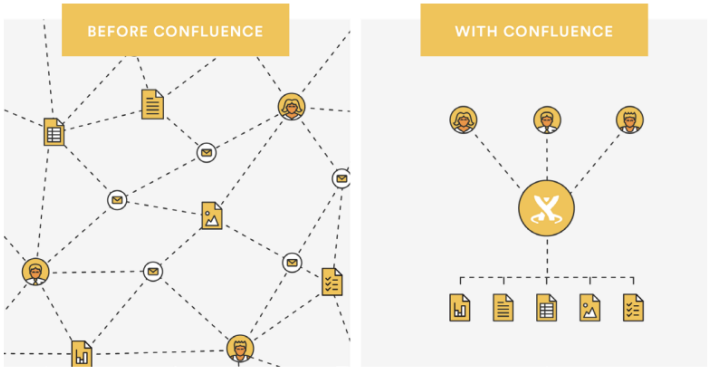
My Personal Experience:
2 International Reseaarch Grants, 4 Large Scale CBHE projects, One mobility, One Industrail Collaboration

Core concepts of Confluence

• What is Confluence? **An online application built to help teams organize, create, and discuss their work.**

• Where do I put my stuff? **Everything in Confluence is organized in spaces,**
which are a collection of related pages.

• How are spaces organized? **Spaces are made up of pages. Pages are the documents in which your team will create, edit, and discuss work.**



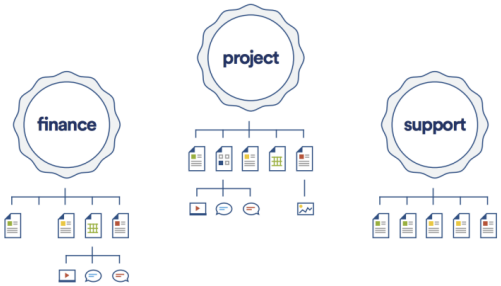
Confluence is a new way for teams to work together.

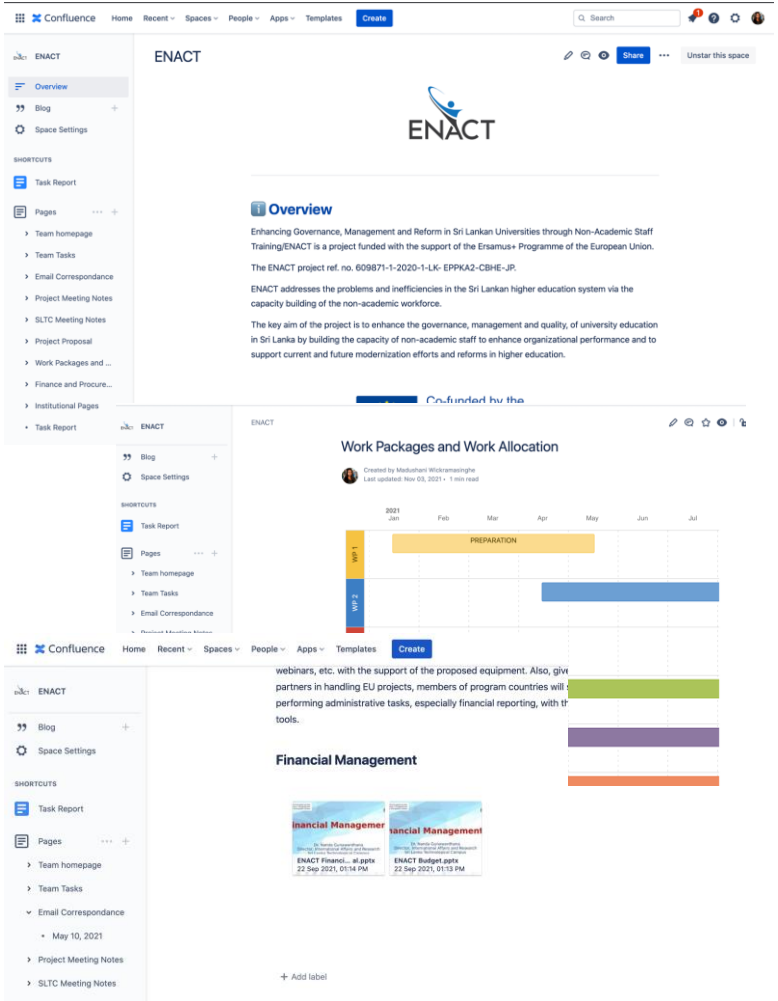
Confluence

Confluence Spaces - Everything your team is working on—meeting notes and agendas, project plans and timelines, technical documentation and more—is located in a space. This is the portal for your team.

A space as the container that holds all the important stuff a team, group, or project needs.

A small team should plan to have a space for the team, as well as for big projects.





National Project Management

National Instrument Database

https://idb.nsf.gov.lk/