

Collaborative Project

Holistic Benchmarking of Big Linked Data

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Abstract: This deliverable serves as the core management handbook and describes the structure that will provide guidelines for the project manager and the project members to follow during the full cycle of the project. The handbook will set out the governance structure (e.g. responsibilities of partners, lead roles, etc.) as well as the mechanisms and tools (e.g. mailing lists, project calendar, reporting etc.) used for the management and administrative coordination of the project. In doing so, it will define the communication processes within the consortium as well as to the EC and outline the consortium's formal communication of the project's activities and outcomes.

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Executive Summary

This deliverable presents the core management hand book for the HOBBIT project. In general, the project management revolves around administrative, legal and financial issues. This work is substantially supported by the use of HOBBIT-related mailing lists as well as by using a GitLab repository for creating and sharing documents, providing relevant templates and distributing guidelines and central project information. The latter is largely assembled and made available through the GitLab wiki. These pages will be focusing on describing internal work processes, summarizing reporting strategies and requirements as well as outlining organizational structures related to different project levels. The pages will be regularly updated when required. Google services will also in some instances be used, for example, for sharing mainly public documents and project-related information.

Project administration for HOBBIT covers the following tasks:

- Management of the consortium,
- Communication within the consortium as well as with the Commission,
- Provision of guidelines on quality assurance and report writing, including the provision of various templates,
- Organization of regular conference calls for all partners and provision of minutes, etc.,
- Monitoring of resource expenditure and
- Submission of reports and deliverables

Legal and financial tasks in the HOBBIT project cover the following:

- Management of contractual issues and timely distribution of corresponding documents and relevant information to partners (e.g. regarding Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement),
- Communication between consortium partners and the EU on project- and funding-related questions and
- Management of budget and distribution of payments to partners, etc.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

HOBBIT	Holistic Benchmarking of Big Linked Data
Ben	Beneficiary
CA	Consortium Agreement
CO	Coordinator
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
FO	Financial Officer
FS	Financial Statement
GA	Grant Agreement
AMGA	Annotated Model Grant Agreement
PM	Person month
PO	Project Officer
PP	Participant Portal
SyGMa	System for Grant Management
WP	Work Package

Contents

1 Governance Structure	7
2 Communication	10
2.1 Communication with the European Commission	10
2.2 Internal Communication	10
2.2.1 Email Lists	10
2.2.2 Online Collaboration Platforms	11
2.2.3 Conference Calls	12
2.2.4 Meetings	12
3 Reporting	13
4 Financial Management	13
5 Monitoring of Resource Expenditure	16
6 Quality Assurance of Deliverables	16

List of Tables

1	List of beneficiaries	7
2	List of members of the Project Board	8
3	List of WP leaders and deputies	9
4	Overview of pre-financing payments to partners	14
5	Explanations for FS	15

List of Figures

1	Recommended Timeline for Deliverable Writing	17
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1 Governance Structure

The HOBBIT consortium is based on the close collaboration of 10 partners from 6 EC countries. Their names and acronyms (mostly used within project communications) are listed in Table 1:

Ben. No	Participant Name	Participant Short Name	Country	Date Enter Project	Date Exit Project
1	Institute of Applied Informatics eV	InfAI	Germany	1	36
2	Fraunhofer Institute for Intelligent Analysis and Information Systems	Fraunhofer	Germany	1	36
3	Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas	FORTH	Greece	1	36
4	National Center for Scientific Research "DEMOKRITOS"	NCSR	Greece	1	36
5	Iminds VZW	IMINDS	Belgium	1	36
6	USU Software AG	USU	Germany	1	36
7	Ontos AG	Ontos	Switzerland	1	36
8	Openlink Group Limited	OpenLink	United Kingdom	1	36
9	AGT Group (R&D) GmbH	AGT	Germany	1	36
10	Tomtom Polska Sp Zoo	TomTom	Poland	1	36

Table 1: List of beneficiaries

The collaboration within the consortium and with the EC is, first of all, based on the Grant Agreement (GA). Relevant for the proper implementation of the project work are especially Annex 1 (i.e. Description of Action Part A and B) and Annex 2 (estimated budget). In this respect, partners have also been made acquainted with the Annotated Model Grant Agreement (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf) that offers additional explanations for manifold aspects of the GA in relation to project implementation and grant management. Moreover, the consortium's work is based on the Consortium Agreement (CA) which has been duly prepared by the Coordinator (CO) and signed by each partner before the beginning of the project. Both the GA and CA have been made available in the project's GitLab repository at: <https://git.informatik.uni-leipzig.de/hobbit/workpackage9/tree/master/Documents>

The governance structure within the consortium is laid out in the GA and specified in the CA (Section 6) in more practical terms (e.g. prescribing agenda and meeting schedules, outlining voting rules and veto rights, etc.). Consisting of the Project Board (also called General Assembly), the Executive Board and the CO, the consortium is managed by three consortium bodies which mutually support, guide and control the implementation and achievement of the project's objectives. The

Project Board executes the role of the ultimate decision-making body of the HOBBIT consortium and is responsible for the overall management, planning and control of the project’s proper implementation. Its mission is to define the project strategy, to assess progress and to propose corrections if needed. Decisions to be taken by the Project Board relate to, for instance, changes of Annex 1 and 2, contractual matters, budget, timeline, deliverables, milestones, re-allocation of resources, and accession/recession of partners. The board is composed of the CO and one representative per party, which includes the members shown in Table 2:

Ben. No	Organisation	Partner Representative	Deputy
1	InfAI	Axel-Cyrille Ngonga Ngomo	Michael Röder
2	Fraunhofer	Jens Lehmann	Monish Dubey
3	FORTH	Irini Fundulaki	Giorgos Flouris
4	NCSR	George Paliouras	Anastasia Krithara
5	IMINDS	Tom De Nies	Ruben Taelman
6	USU	Henrik Opperman	Roman Korf
7	Ontos	Daniel Hladky	Alejandra Garcia Rojas
8	OpenLink	Hugh Williams	Mirko Spasic
9	AGT	Martin Strohbach	Panayotis Kikiras
10	TomTom	Oliver Kannenberg	Marcin Graczyk

Table 2: List of members of the Project Board

The above members were officially accepted as the representatives of each partner at the kickoff meeting on January 19, 2016. Likewise, the WP leader roles as listed in the following table were distributed and agreed on within the consortium. Finally, two more specific roles were identified for the HOBBIT project. A technical manager who is represented by Dr. Irini Fundulaki from FORTH oversees the technical vision of the project. An outreach manager who is represented by Dr. Ruben Verborgh from IMINDS sees to the efficient and successful outreach of HOBBIT in all relevant communities.

The Executive Board consists of the CO as well as the WP leaders. Its tasks are to assure the execution of all activities in accordance with the DoA and ensure the project’s progress towards the attainment of targeted outcomes and objectives. Tables 3 shows the members who have been assigned the role of a WP lead.

The responsibilities of the WP leads will specifically focus on the following tasks:

- coordinate the implementation of the WP-related tasks in accordance with the objectives laid out in the DoA,
- coordinate involved partners,

WP No	WP Title	Lead Partner	WP Lead	Deputy
1	Requirements Elicitation and Community Building	IMINDS	Tom De Nies	Ruben Taelman
2	Benchmarking Platform	InfAI	Michael Röder	Timofey Ermilov
3	Benchmarks I: Generation and Acquisition	InfAI	Timofey Ermilov	Michael Röder
4	Benchmarks II: Analysis and Processing	FORTH	Irini Fundulaki	Tzanina Saveta
5	Benchmarks III: Storage and Curation	OpenLink	Mirko Spasic	Hugh Williams
6	Benchmarks IV: Visualisation and Services	Fraunhofer	Jens Lehmann	Monish Dubey
7	Evaluation Campaigns	NCSR	Anastasia Krithara	George Paliouras
8	Dissemination	Ontos	Alejandra Garcia Rojas	Daniel Hladky
9	Project Management	InfAI	Nadine Jänicke	Axel Ngonga

Table 3: List of WP leaders and deputies

- coordinate timely delivery of deliverables and/or full organization of workshops, challenges and community meetings,
- identify and evaluate unforeseen risks and communicate them to the CO and
- perform quality assurance in accordance with the Quality Assurance and Risk Assessment Plan, etc.

Last but not least, the CO who is represented by Dr. Axel-Cyrille Ngonga Ngomo from InfAI is the main interface between the partners and the EC. All communication with the Project Officer (PO) and/or the Financial Officer (FO), for instance, is conducted via the CO. Moreover, the CO is especially responsible for the following tasks:

- establish management procedures, communication channels, and organize regular calls,
- gather, maintain and submit deliverables, project reports and financial statements and
- assure achieving the project goals as defined in Annex 1 on time

2 Communication

2.1 Communication with the European Commission

The CO acts as the intermediary for all communications between the beneficiaries and the Commission. This task mainly involves correspondence with the PO/FO on matters revolving around:

- the preparation, completion and submission of periodic reports and Financial Statements (FS) for the consortium,
- the preparation, completion and submission of deliverables and
- project- and funding-related questions raised by the consortium that need explicit feedback from or agreement with the PO/FO.

Additionally, the interaction between consortium, CO and PO/FO is mainly handled through the EC's grant management system for Horizon 2020 called SyGMA. This web-based system is available through the EC's Participant Portal (PP) at <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>. During the project's runtime SyGMA fully supports the grant management related to the submission of deliverables and reports, to payment execution and audit implementation as well as to potential amendments. In SyGMA partners can also find the signed PDF version of the GA and an overview of relevant project information. The digital sealing of documents complements this paperless exchange through SyGMA, allowing digital signatures for most legal transactions.

2.2 Internal Communication

Since its start in December 2015, the HOBBIT project has relied on a collaboration tool suite that supports the organization and management of the project in an easy manner and has made the communication among the partners most efficient. It comprises a number of dedicated mailing lists, a HOBBIT event calendar as well as cloud-based storage solutions for the management and versioning of documents.

2.2.1 Email Lists

Several target group-specific mailing lists have been established to address HOBBIT-relevant topics and activities as well as circulate important HOBBIT-related news among the project members. A general mailing list (hobbit-eu@googlegroups.com) with currently around 35 subscribers is frequently used for internal communication focusing on the following areas:

- research and development in the HOBBIT project (e.g. coordinating collaborative work on deliverables; preparation of review and plenary meetings, planning of contributions to HOBBIT-related events as well as announcements of HOBBIT-relevant events and call for papers),
 - joint efforts of dissemination and exploitation in the HOBBIT project (e.g. updating website and other dissemination material, common publications by the HOBBIT consortium, etc.),
 - project management issues of the HOBBIT consortium (e.g. project coordination in legal, financial and administrative respects as well as submission of reports and deliverables).
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These topics are, if appropriate, addressed and discussed within more specialized mailing lists related to different fields of activity:

- Dissemination and Community Building (mainly related to WP1, 7 and 8 tasks): 11 members at present reachable via dissemination@project-hobbit.eu
- Technical Work (mainly related to WP2-6 tasks): 18 members at present reachable via tech-team@project-hobbit.eu
- Project Management (mainly related to WP9 tasks): 21 members at present reachable via management@project-hobbit.eu

In addition, HOBBIT manages an open mailing list for interested third parties at community@project-hobbit.eu. Here, the community gathered around the project interests can interact directly with the consortium as well as exchange potentially interesting pieces of information all around benchmarking Big/Linked Data. Several other communication channels are used continuously (e.g., [Twitter](#) with currently 101 followers, [LinkedIn](#) with currently 23 members as well as the project website and weblog at <http://project-hobbit.eu/>. The press corner at <http://project-hobbit.eu/press/> aims to reflect and support the project's prominence to the interested public by publishing press releases and reactions from the press as well as making available dissemination material such as logos and leaflets.

2.2.2 Online Collaboration Platforms

In order to easily share, coordinate and collaboratively develop project-related activities, the HOBBIT consortium has decided to use a GitLab repository. It is used actively for sharing documents including among others:

- contracts (e.g. GA, CA and Accession Forms, DoA),
- dissemination material (e.g. press releases and clippings) and
- collection of templates for the generation of various HOBBIT materials (e.g. presentations, deliverables, reports, timesheets etc.)

It is, moreover, used for the organization of individual WPs, the execution of specific tasks within the WPs, the submission of deliverables and report writing. Minutes of meetings and audio conferences held between the HOBBIT members are mainly collected and shared through the project's Google Drive repository. Guidelines on report writing and cost reporting will be provided in the GitLab wiki within the next few months. Project information relevant to internal work processes and to the promotion of HOBBIT has also been gathered to ease, for instance, the introduction of new HOBBIT members and their integration into the work of HOBBIT. A checklist that will also be made available in the wiki is to show which steps a new member has to follow to join the HOBBIT project:

- subscribe to mailing lists via CO and respective WP lead,
 - add contact details to the member list assembled in the WP9 Google folder [here](#),
 - add HOBBIT to your social networks,
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- the HOBBIT Google calendar to see relevant events (any HOBBIT member can add further contacts) and
 - send an introduction mail to the general mailing list (hobbit-eu@googlegroups.com)

Finally, the project's Google Event Calendar HOBBIT allows the coordination of the partners' dissemination and networking activities as well as the organisation of internal conference calls. It is regularly updated with detailed information about events which HOBBIT members organize, participate or are involved in.

2.2.3 Conference Calls

A general telephone conference is organized by the CO every first Tuesday of the month. At least one representative of each partner who is preferably the WP lead is required to participate or to be represented by its deputy. Apart from being displayed in the HOBBIT event calendar, these calls are explicitly announced by the CO via email a week before. The CO drafts and sends the agenda to the consortium by two-to-three days in advance. Partners are invited to check the agenda and add items to be discussed. Likewise, every partner is expected to participate in these calls in an active and reliable manner. If anyone is unable to be present, they ought to give prior notice to the CO and send feedback to relevant points raised in the agenda. The agenda usually focuses on the following areas of discussion:

- progress within each work package with a particular focus on due deliverables,
- recent and coming events attended by HOBBIT members,
- dissemination, networking and community building efforts and
- management, esp. reporting, organization of review and plenary meetings, etc.

Moreover, telephone and skype conferences are scheduled on a regular basis for and among individual work packages. For instance, a technical call related to the development of the platform is organized by the WP2 team on a monthly basis. Further calls will be implemented with the start of the corresponding work packages. These calls are made known in the HOBBIT calendar for every member and announced via email by the respective WP leads. Tools mostly used for these calls cover Skype, GoToMeeting or Google Hangout.

2.2.4 Meetings

Three times a year the consortium will hold a plenary meeting in which all members involved in the project meet and discuss ongoing work, achievements so far and next steps to take. Each meeting will be organized by another partner who is responsible for managing on time issues such as venue, agenda, co-located events like community meetups with stakeholders and/or invitations of external guests from other EU-funded projects. Focus in these meetings is largely laid on the following aspects:

- summarize the project's achievements and lessons learned so far,
 - define actions and measures to meet the project's objectives as well as review preparations,
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- discuss the structure and organization of upcoming project work per partner and WP and especially define strategies to meet challenges identified at previous reviews or other events and
 - outline relevant dissemination and management issues for the upcoming period

The partners will generally also meet in different subgroups to plan and discuss specific work and collaboration efforts with respect to their WPs and tasks.

3 Reporting

The project consists of two reporting periods covering M1-18 and M19-36. That is, periodic reports are due after M18 and M36 within 60 days following the end of each period. Additionally, a final report is due within 60 days after the end of the project. All reports are coordinated and monitored by the CO who also provides guidance on required contents and style. The periodic reports will generally include the following parts:

- progress reports per WP/task,
- a list of publications,
- a list of dissemination and networking activities,
- a deliverable and milestone table and
- a table presenting planned versus actual resource usage (PMs) per partners

In more detail, this report provides an overview of the progress made towards the objectives of each WP/task and domain as well as of the work performed and results achieved within the reporting period. If applicable, it also specifies deviations from the work plan and outlines corrective actions to be taken. Moreover, it briefly presents plans for the next phase and illustrates major dissemination and cooperation activities carried out during the current reporting period.

Report writing will be mainly managed through the project's GitLab repository. While the CO is responsible for requesting and reviewing the reports, for verifying their accuracy and completeness and submitting them to the EC, the beneficiaries must provide in good time the data needed for these reports. That is, contributions are expected from all partners which is specifically monitored through the WP leaders. Revisions, if required for the report's final acceptance, are managed by the CO.

The periodic reports are also always written with the aim to substantiate the corresponding FS for the period under review. The requirements for cost reporting and the cost reports themselves are described in more detail in the next section.

4 Financial Management

The CO administers the financial contribution of the EC to the project. That is, apart from maintaining an account solely dedicated to the project, the CO transfers payments to the partner's bank accounts without undue delay and in conformity with the rules laid out in the EC-GA. The CO also monitors the submission of FS (Annex 4 of the GA) and handles with Project Board any kind of re-allocation of funding within the consortium.

No	Short Name	Requested EC Contribution	5% Guarantee Fund Retention	Pre-Financing	Global Share (%)
1	INFAI	782,000.00 €	39,100.00 €	469,200.00 €	12.62 %
2	Fraunhofer	529,375.00 €	26,468.75 €	317,625.00 €	8.54 %
3	FORTH	354,250.00 €	17,712.50 €	212,550.00 €	5.72 %
4	NCSR	370,062.50 €	18,503.13 €	222,037.50 €	5.97 %
5	IMINDS	378,125.00 €	18,906.25 €	226,875.00 €	6.10 %
6	USU	376,250.00 €	18,812.50 €	225,750.00 €	6.07 %
7	Ontos	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 %
8	OpenLink	353,562.50 €	17,678.13 €	212,137.50 €	5.71 %
9	AGT	400,250.00 €	20,012.50 €	240,150.00 €	6.46 %
10	TomTom	174,375.00 €	8,718.75 €	104,625.00 €	2.81 %
	TOTAL	3,718,250.00 €	185,912.50 €	2,230,950.00 €	60.00 %

Table 4: Overview of pre-financing payments to partners

Moreover, the CO has collected bank details from all partners who are requested to inform the CO about updates or other changes. They are notified about upcoming payments well in advance with relevant references to the amount of distribution. When the CO received the pre-financing for the HOBBIT project in December, 2015, from the Commission, the partners were informed about the amount of payment and the 5% retention that was directly paid into the Guarantee fund by the EC on behalf of the beneficiaries (see Table 4).¹

Furthermore, within the project's runtime there will be one interim payment based on the submission of the FS in M18. This payment is transferred within 90 days after the EC's approval of the FS and is limited by the ceiling of 85% for funding to be received prior to the end of the project. The final payment is made available only after the end of the project and covers then up to the remaining 10% retention of the maximum grant as well as the 5% already deducted for the Guarantee Fund. It is again paid within 90 days following the approval of the final report and its accompanying FS. These payments are also closely defined in the GA, e.g. Art. 21.2 and 21.4.

Management activities in this field will also largely focus on cost reports including the preparation, collection and review of partners' FS and cost explanations. The latter is also called the use of resource (UoR) table that provides a more detailed explanation of individual cost items. Costs can principally be claimed on the project when they are incurred during the duration of the project, used for the sole purpose of the project and recorded in the accounts of the beneficiary. More information on the in-/eligibility of costs is laid in Art. 6 of the GA. The UoR table is to justify these costs more specifically in terms of their project relation that helps the EC to understand a partner's cost claim better. Although it has been suggested for H2020 actions that travel costs can be presented in aggregated form if the total amount remains lower than 15% of the total personnel costs claimed, it is always recommended to establish internal systems from the start for cost justifications. Generally, the UoR

¹Ontos' funding is provided by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) in Switzerland.

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table focuses on the following major types of costs and requires explanations as outlined in Table 5.

Type of Costs	Focus of Explanation
Personnel Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list name, job title, cost and person month per staff member • specify PMs, i.e. effective time a HOBBIT member has been working in the project without illness, special leave and vacations as reflected by timesheets, for instance • PMs should align with partner’s input provided for the resource table in the periodic report. Let the CO know if revisions are required. • link cost items to WPs
Other direct cost ‘Travel and Subsistence’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list costs per travel, name and number of attendants, place of destination, date of travel and travel purpose (special justification for travels outside Europe) • aggregate travel costs of several attendees to the same event • link cost items to WPs
Other direct cost ‘equipment’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specify whether equipment has been acquired purely for the project (or to which extent equipment is used in project) and what it is used for • specify depreciation methodology according to financial regulations of your organisation • link cost items to WPs

Table 5: Explanations for FS

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During the cost reporting the CO will especially give guidance in the following ways:

- by facilitating the collection of financial figures for the relevant reporting period,
- by informing about required documents such as Certificates of the Financial Statement (i.e. CFS, Annex 5 of the GA),
- by clarifying how to enter figures into SyGMA in the PP
- and by reviewing the cost explanations for consistency and completeness.

Advice will be offered via email and/or Skype. When finalized, each beneficiary enters their financial information into SyGMA as well as electronically signs their FS and submits them to the CO. Revisions requested by the EC will be organized and submitted without delay via the CO.

5 Monitoring of Resource Expenditure

The allocation of resources is controlled on a half-year basis by the CO. Partners are asked to document the distribution of PMs for their organisation, which is reviewed by the CO mainly to see whether efforts are in line with the DoA. To improve the quality assurance, a distribution of PMs per task was carried out by the partners. This planned allocation has been integrated into an overall spreadsheet designed by the CO for the consortium's reporting of PMs which the partners will need to complete with their actual use of resources every nine months. This data collection allows the CO to track the resource allocation per partner throughout the project and provides a detailed summary of planned versus actual resources for controlling purposes. Each partner will also be asked to justify any major over/underuse of resources to make sure that the deviations from the planned resources will not result in an overall delay of the project or otherwise jeopardize the project's objectives. Moreover, a wiki page for the purpose and use of timesheets as well as timesheet templates were provided to the partners.

6 Quality Assurance of Deliverables

In total, 52 deliverables are scheduled in the HOBBIT project. 25 of these are due between M1-M18 and 27 deliverables are due between M19-36. Templates for deliverables have been created in Word and LaTeX and are made available via the project's GitLab repository. They can be found at <https://git.informatik.uni-leipzig.de/hobbit/workpackage9/tree/master/templates>. In order to ensure the quality of deliverables, a clearly structured review process has been defined by the consortium. This process is based on minimal rules which are implemented mainly by the WP lead together with the CO:

1. There should be at least one reviewer per deliverable, but one can choose more if one thinks it suitable.
 2. The peer reviewer should be chosen from an organisation other than the one(s) responsible for the deliverable.
 3. The approval delegate is usually the WP leader.
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The assignments of deliverable author(s) and reviewer(s) have been determined in advance for the entire project duration and are collected in a spreadsheet by the CO in collaboration with the WP leads. If adjustments are required, the spreadsheet is updated accordingly. The overview it provides details each deliverable's nature, dissemination level and delivery date. It also specifies the exact deadlines for internal reviews and revisions as well as calculates the remaining days until the different deadlines. In this respect, it serves to manage better the creation, finalization and submission of deliverables in the current project year.

For the timely production of deliverables the CO has prepared an advance work schedule and recommends partners to adhere to this process as illustrated in the Figure 1 below:

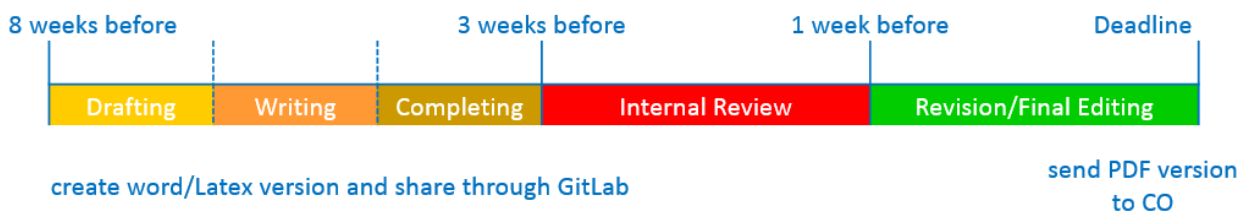


Figure 1: Recommended Timeline for Deliverable Writing

Moreover, the CO prepared a checklist to ensure the quality and consistency of the HOBBIT deliverables. Deliverables are created and shared through the project's GitLab repository which also allows to collaboratively work on and have versioning control of the documents. Review activities are coordinated via the above mentioned spreadsheet and the mailing list. Deliverables are not only reviewed by one or two consortium members, but, if needed, are also given a final revision for style and language by the CO. The WP leader of the respective deliverable is responsible for its final approval. The submission of deliverables is monitored through the project website where those planned as public are made available at: <http://project-hobbit.eu/about/deliverables/>

The CO officially submits the deliverable by uploading them to SyGMA in the EC's PP. The PO is additionally informed by sending either the deliverable's URL or a PDF version of those that are restricted to internal use or are confidential. The submission is tracked by the CO for the consortium by documenting planned deadlines, delays and actual submission dates at:

The status of overdue deliverables is persistently checked and discussed within the consortium during its monthly calls. Regular notifications are sent via email. Their owners are required to provide an update of the deliverable's progress and explanation on its delay. The CO informs the PO accordingly if encountering more than a one-month delay and provides feedback from the partners involved in the WP and specifically in the deliverable at issue.