Innovative and Inclusive Democratic Spaces for Deliberation and Participation
HE-101132431

D7.4 Quality Review Plan

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Lead Beneficiary	UPF
Contributing Beneficiaries	MAC

Summary

The Quality Plan described in this report defines the general approach to quality assurance and consequently the procedures to be followed by each beneficiary in regards to communication, documentation, deliverable production, deliverable and reports revision and software development.

Plain Language Summary

This report describes the Quality Plan for the iDEM Project. Guides the partners on how to communicate, when to write, and documents related to this project.

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Document History			
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	27/02/24	internal review provided	Patrizia Caruso
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V0.2	15/03/24	Final version prepared	Sandra Szasz
	19/03/24	Submitted	Sandra Szasz

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Acronyms	
D	Deliverable
DoA	Description of the Action
EAA	European Accessibility Act
EAB	External Advisory Board
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
iDEM	Innovative and Inclusive Democratic Spaces for Deliberation and Participation
MS	Milestones
MT	Machine Translation
NLP	Natural Language Processing
PC	Project Coordinator
PI	Principal Investigator
PM	Project Manager
PO	Project Officer
PU	Public
QP	Quality Plan
REA	Research Executive Agency
SEN	Sensitive
T	Task
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader
WWW	World Wide Web

Table 1: Acronyms used in this document

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1. Introduction

This document describes the Quality Plan for the iDEM Project[1].

It gives detailed account on:

- Communication procedures between beneficiaries.
- Procedures for the production of due reports, cost statements and deliverables. These procedures include document naming and version numbering protocols as well as formats to be used for various purposes.
- Procedures for decision-making and conflict resolution.
- A general approach to software development quality standards.

2. Quality Approach

This present Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) is devoted to describe general procedures and associated material and tools, supporting the following objectives:

- To produce high-quality Deliverables on time and specification, in accordance with the DoA.
- To produce high quality research papers and resources such as data and software to carry out careful evaluation in each of the technical work packages
- To identify any possible risks, or deviations from the Work Plan at an early stage.
- To take any necessary remedial actions as soon as possible.

  Project QAP is an important task throughout the project, as it monitors and reports on the achievements of the project objectives.

- **Quality assurance is the joint responsibility of all partners** and will be applied at all levels of the project's activities.

3. Communication Procedures

The Coordinator and the Project Manager are responsible for ensuring the management of communication within the Consortium.

Communications between beneficiaries should be made via email (mailing lists of the project), Slack, Zoom, Google Meet or any other suitable communication means to carry out the work.

[1] Throughout this document, and for completeness, we have included some information from the handbook which is relevant for QA procedures.

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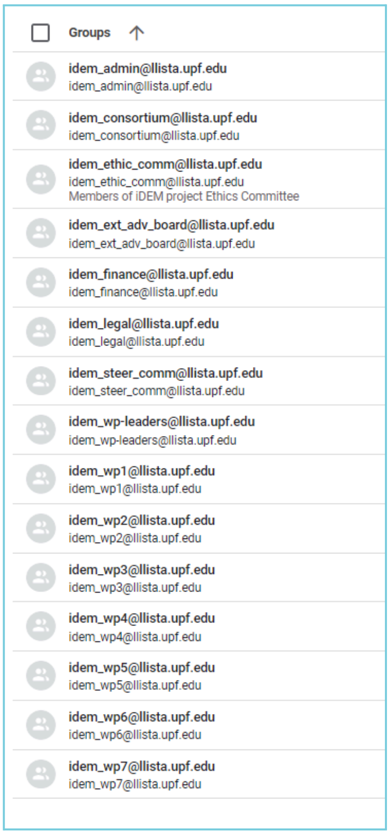
Communication on important legal, financial or administrative issues must be sent to the coordinator, by email to horacio.saggion@upf.edu and to the dedicated legal list idem_legal@llista.upf.edu , financial list idem_finance@llista.upf.edu or administrative list idem_admin@llista.upf.edu in order to ensure an efficient and prompt resolution.

The PC and the PM are responsible for communicating with the PO. Only in case of a confidential private issue should the PO be contacted by members of the consortium.[2]

3.1. Mailing lists/email lists

During the lifetime of the project several email lists exist to distribute project related information and messages.[3] These emails are to be used for all contact or requests for support. The lists are managed by the PM who adds and deletes subscribers upon request. The up-to-date members list is in the WHO-IS-WHO spreadsheet[4]. Lists are closed and not moderated.



It is recommended that **all messages should start** with the name of the project, **[iDEM],** for easy retrieval and identification.

[2] This information can be found on [iDEM_PROJECT] Google Drive spreadsheet WHO-IS-WHO_WPlists tab.
[3] Detailed lists are described in the D7.1 iDEM Project handbook, p.15
[4] of the [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive

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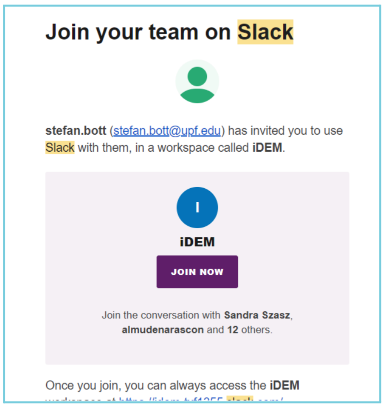
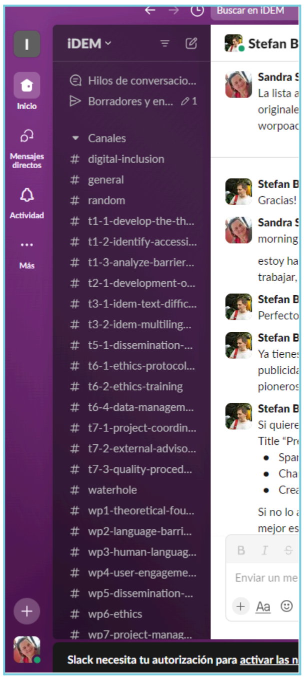
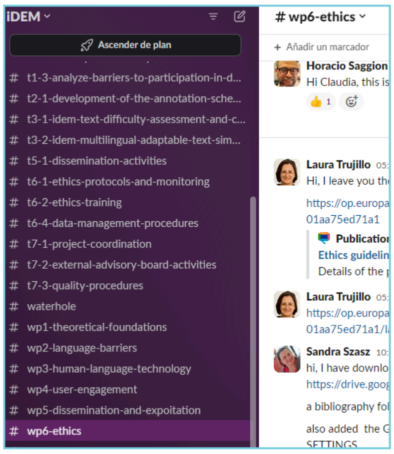
3.2. Slack

The chosen internal communication tool is Slack. The iDEM Team workspace was created at the beginning of January 2024, all consortium members were invited to join.







The project channels were created following the working groups as a starting point. It has been developing as groups meet and subgroups emerge. The slack workspace is administered by Stefan Bott.

We have considered Slack a good tool as it is a closed group defined by users, channels are ordered by topic and users can be assigned and subscribe directly, one can create its own channels as well as multilateral chats. We can share documents and links. It is user friendly and intuitive, and is proving to be very useful for real time discussions and collaborations.

4. Document repository

The Document Repository is the place for storing and sharing project-related documents/information (deliverables, working papers, etc.) managed through a Google drive within the UPF protected area.

[iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive

It allows all beneficiaries to download, archive and exchange project related data during the whole project duration.

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We encourage that email lists should normally NOT be used to distribute documents as attachments, in order to keep the mailboxes of each beneficiary and the data traffic as small as possible. Rather than circulate project documents to the beneficiaries by email, each beneficiary will upload their material intended for sharing with the Consortium on the document repository and inform them of their availability for download (by sending an email or slack message with the link corresponding to where the document is stored).

This repository is private. It is only accessible to beneficiaries of the project consortium, who have been granted access.

Should any problem arise, or new members need to have access, contact the PM, sandra.szasz@upf.edu with the request.[5]

Document Naming

To ensure correct identification and version of each document, a document identifier will be used.

For deliverables, the document identifier will be in the following format:

iDEM_<D#.#>_<document_short_name>_HE_101132431_<LeadAuthorAcronym>

Example: For the present document, Quality Review Plan, the document identifier is:

iDEM_D7.4_Quality_Review_Plans_HE_101132431_UPF

For other documents, the document identifier will be in the following format:

iDEM_<conference_name>_<document_short_name>_<version#.#>

Example: For the first draft of the paper Overview of iDEM submitted to X Conference, the document identifier is:

iDEM_XConference_Overview_of_iDEM_V0.1

5. Meetings

There are scheduled meetings which are arranged beforehand following a schedule and planification.[6] Others occur on a daily basis such as working groups, tasks meetings, etc.

[5] Description and structure of the [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive is described in the D7.1 iDEM Project Handbook, p.10-11
[6] Project meeting are described in the D7.1 iDEM Project handbook, p.16-17

5.1. Preparation and organization of scheduled meetings

Members of a Consortium Body or participants of project's meeting shall be given notice in writing (via email) of a meeting as soon as possible, and anyway no later than 21 calendar days preceding the meeting (10 calendar days for extraordinary meeting). With the meeting's notice, the chairperson will also circulate a draft agenda.

All the necessary working documents will be circulated by the chairperson no later than 7 calendar days preceding the meeting (3 calendar days for extraordinary meeting).

Any participant may add an item to the draft agenda by written notification to all participants up to 7 calendar days preceding the meeting (3 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting). Items might be added during a meeting if accepted unanimously.

Written minutes should be produced by the coordinator together with WP Leaders leading different meeting sessions, which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. The notes will be available in the Google drive and an email with the link will be circulated to all participants.

The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days from sharing the document, participants had added commentaries or notes and should no objections be recorded, the notes will be taken as approved.

5.2. Work Packages meetings

All work packages related to specific stages of the project shall have a kick-off meeting to get acquainted with the area of expertise of each of the partners involved and to elaborate a work plan, which can take place within regular technical consortium meetings, for instance, within the general kick-off meeting.

It is the responsibility of the WP Leader to organize and lead the kick-off, and the WP discussions within consortium meetings, as well as any other specific meeting of his/herWP[7] (including preparation of the agenda, preparation, and sending of the minutes).

6. Reporting

6.1. Deliverables

UPF, as coordinator, has the administrative responsibility for the transmission of all deliverables to the Commission through the Funding and Tenders portal.

6.1.1. Deliverable Template

The Deliverable template must be used to prepare the deliverable document as a starting point for the required information, the format and the complete review process. The template is used to ensure the key elements on the front page are met and that information is accurate as per the GA.

[7] that monthly WP meetings are foreseen for each WP.

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Some deliverables are reports in themselves (D7.2 iDEM Project Handbook) while others are not (the website, for example). For those that are not in themselves reports, a document (report, email, note) still has to be produced, as **evidence of deliverable completion** and to be sent to the Project Coordinator or PM.

For deliverable and review reports, templates are created with the standard essential information and shared in the [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive, there's a blank template in the templates folder, and the PM creates yearly templates for each of the Deliverables due within this period. These templates can be found in the Deliverables folder under each WP folder.

The IDEM Project logo and a front page with essential information must be used for all reports, as follows[8]:

- iDEM Project logo
- Deliverable/Report title
- EC Grant Agreement number
- Dissemination Level
- Delivery Status
- WP number and title
- Tasks number and title
- Approval Status
- Version
- Lead Beneficiary Acronym
- Contributing Beneficiaries Acronyms
- Short Summary
- Plain Language Summary
- Logo Funded by the European Union
- Acknowledgment
- Disclosure statement

All Deliverables must have a **Summary** and a **Plain Summary** (PS). The PS is created based on the Summary by CAPITO and reviewed by PIM, as a double quality assurance.

PS should be short, written in clear language and describe in a plain manner the contents of the document. The plain summary quality is also part of the quality assurance feedback form

[8] All the proper information is described in the D7.1 iDEM Project Handbook, p.7

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given by the deliverable reviewers.

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D#.#: Deliverable title

Dissemination Level	Public / Sensible
Contractual date of delivery	dd/mm/yyyy
Actual date of delivery	dd/mm/yyyy
Work package	WP# Title
Tasks	T#.# Title
Approval Status	Draft/Final
Version	V#.#
Lead Beneficiary	acronym
Contributing Beneficiaries	acronyms
Summary	
Plain Language Summary	

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All Deliverable reports shall also have the deliverable author list table, with authors and reviewers information and the version's table to assure that the information is accurate and traceable. By using the template provided it is assured this key information is included.

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iDEM_D#.#_Short_Title_HE-101132431_UPF D#.# - V#.#

Author List		
Organization	Name	Contact Information
Acronym	Name Last Name	email address

Document History			
Version	Date	Action	Revised by
		First draft	
		internal review provided	
		internal review provided	
		Final version prepared	
		Submitted	

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When adding images or captions the alternative text box should be filled with a brief description of the image to make it more accessible to text to speech readers for the blind.

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6.1.2. Deliverable Review

Each deliverable should undergo an internal quality review by 2 internal peer reviewers in order to ensure administrative accuracy and technical value. We take advantage of the "suggesting" option in Google Documents to provide useful comments to the authors. "Comments" can also be added to request information to authors. Authors are responsible to address suggestions and answer comments from the reviewers.

The process for this quality control for all technical deliverables (except for management reporting deliverables) should be as follow:

Each deliverable will undergo an **internal peer review**. The lead author is responsible for appointing the two reviewers, these are members of the consortium not directly involved in the document preparation,and they are called Deliverable internal reviewers.

The process starts with the project manager sending a reminder email to the lead of the deliverable 2 months before the deadline. The Lead partner appoints the reviewers.

The lead partner must submit the first draft of the deliverable for review 5 weeks before the final deadline; these drafts are located in the Deliverable - Working_Version folder, under each WP. The deliverable should remain there during review and corrections are made.

Once the final version is submitted it should be stored in the Final_Version folder[9].

Responsible	Action	When
Project Manager	Sends a reminder to the deliverable leader via email	8 weeks before the deadline
Deliverable leader	Chooses 2 reviewers and informs the PM	8 weeks before the deadline
PM	informs reviewers of incoming task and deadlines	7 weeks before deadline
DL	Collects contributions from involved partners; drafts the deliverable; sends it to the internal reviewer	5 weeks before the deadline

[9] All this information with dates and responsibilities for the action is kept in a spreadsheet in [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive to assure the traceability of the deliverable and its review process.

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Deliverable Internal Reviewer	Reviews the draft and sends the reviewed version back to the deliverable leader	4 weeks before the deadline
DIR	Completes the Deliverable Feedback for upon completion of review	4 weeks before the deadline
DL	Considering the reviews and comments revises the deliverable, and sends the final version to the project manager	3 weeks before deadline
PM	Proofreads and formats the deliverable	2 weeks before deadline
Project Coordinator	Approves the final version	1 week before deadline
PM	Submits the deliverable via the Funds and Tenders Portal	within the deadline

Table 2: Deliverable Review Process timeline

The reviewers are expected to support and help the author to assure a high-quality report. Comments and suggestions are to be provided in the reported manuscript with the "suggesting" mode + comments added for the authors.

The author of the deliverable will use the reviewers' input to improve the deliverable/report. This is mandatory, should the quality requirements are not fulfilled, and is also desirable even if they are. The review process is then repeated until the author and the reviewers are in agreement. In case of disagreements on the report, with regard to contents, format, or other aspects, the Project Coordinator will be notified and solving problem measures will be applied.

The reviewers will also fill the deliverable review feedback form at the end of the review task with comments on quality, appropriateness, style and readability.

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[iDEM - Deliverable Feedback Form]

iDEM Deliverable Reviewers Quality Assurance feedback

Please state your opinions on the Deliverable you have reviewed. Add comments on what's good, what needs to be improved, etc. Please grade the deliverable 1 to 5 where 1 is the worst, thank you for reviewing!

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

2. Deliverable Number *

3. Deliberable Title *

4. Reviewer's Name *

5. Does the executive Summary represents the contents? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1LCsoF2iX-TIT8zttNJMu8eJSmQSMDSwOZn0RucMfpaE/edit 1/3

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6. Does the Plain Language Summary makes easier to read and understand the executive summary? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

7. Is the deliverable well organized and well written? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

8. Are the references adequate? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

9. Please Comment

____

____

____

____

____

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1LCsoF2iX-TIT8zttNJMu8eJSmQSMDSwOZn0RucMfpaE/edit 2/3

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10. What is the overall quality of this deliverable? *

Mark only one oval.

1 ◯
2 ◯
3 ◯
4 ◯
5 ◯

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1LCsoF2iX-TIT8zttNJMu8eJSmQSMDSwOZn0RucMfpaE/edit 3/3

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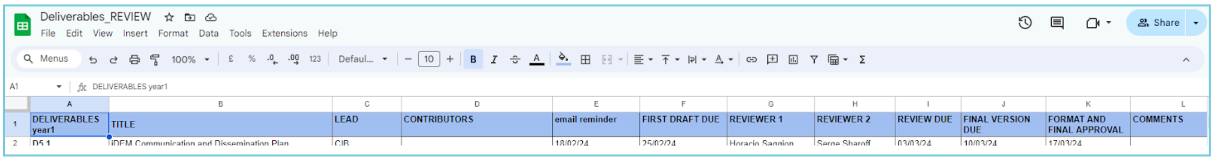
The whole process is recorded in the **Deliverable_Review spreadsheet**[10] for traceability, accuracy and transparency.



6.2. Reports

In addition to the final **Periodic Reports (PR)** (within 60 days following the end of each reporting period) **at M15 and M36**, **Internal technical and financial reports** must be filled, stating the efforts **of all partners.**

These reports are to assure good control and understanding of project progress and to identify any issues with regards to reporting of deliverables and expenses, **all partners are required to report every 6 months to the Coordinator (UPF)**, a reminder will be sent a month in advance to all involved. The flow of the project and expenses including the 6-month activities should be described in this internal document.

The Report is composed of two parts: the technical part and the financial part.The **technical report** has two parts:

- **Part A**, which contains structured tables with **project information**,
- **Part B**, a narrative description of the **work carried** out during the reporting period.

On the other hand, the **financial report** usually includes individual financial statements for each beneficiary, a summary financial statement, and a certificate on the financial statements (CFS) if the threshold is reached. Remember that Financial reporting to the EC is non-trivial and a complex endeavor.

The Financial Officer from the Coordinator Partner (UPF) will conduct training on how to avoid the most common mistakes associated with financial reporting, particularly for partners that are new to European Projects, this training is planned for early March 2024.

It is important to understand that the correctness of the financial reporting is a matter between **each project partner and the EC**. Each partner holds full responsibility for the correct reporting of its own expenses.

6.2.1. Internal reports

Internal reporting serves as a valuable tool to familiarize consortium members with the reporting process. By setting a date for an internal report, the consortium can gain a better

[10] hosted in the Deliverables folder in the [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive

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understanding of the required information, the time needed, and quality standards. This preparatory step allows for a smoother transition to the official reporting phase.

Moreover, internal reporting provides an **opportunity to assess the project's progress, identify challenges**, and **address any gaps** in the required data or documentation. By reviewing internal reports, the consortium can resolve any issues quickly, ensuring that the periodic report is comprehensive and accurate.

6.2.2. Technical Part

- an explanation of the work carried out by the partners,
- an overview of the progress towards the objectives of the action including milestones and deliverables,
- differences between work expected and work actually carried out,
- exploitation and dissemination of the results
- a summary for publication by the EC,

This report should be created by all the partners. A document in Google Drive will be uploaded by PM.

6.2.3. Financial Part

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- Financial statements (individual and consolidated; for all beneficiaries/affiliated entities). The eligibility of costs can be found in the GA
- Time-records, timesheets properly filled and signed the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table, if required)
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS)

By signing the financial statements (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the beneficiaries confirm that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true
- the costs and contributions declared are eligible (see GA-Article 6)
- the costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see GA-Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see GA-Article 19) or in the context of checks,reviews, audits and investigations (seeGA- Article 25)
- For the final periodic report: all the revenues have been properly declared (if required; see GA-Article 22).
- **NOTE: The reporting of expenses on the EC portal is the responsibility of each Partner.**

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6.3. Timeline

The reporting is divided into 2 reporting periods as outlined in the following table. At the end of each reporting period, a periodic/final report must be submitted. As mentioned before Periodic and final reports must be submitted to the EC within 60 days from the end of the reporting period M12 and M36.

There are 4 Internal Reports (IR), one every 6 months, and 2 Periodic Reports (PR), M12 and M36.

Report	Reporting period	Period covered by the report	Submission Deadline UPF	Feedback	Submission EC
iDEM_IR_1 **internal report**	1st period report	M1-M6, January - June 2024	July 31, 2024	Sep 2024	
iDEM_PR_1 **periodic report**	1st year	M1-M12 January - December 2024	January 15, 2025	January 31, 2025	15 february 2025
iDEM_IR_2 **internal report**	3rd period report	M13-M19 January - June 2025	July 31, 2025	Sep 2025	
iDEM_IR_3 **internal report**	4th period report	M19 - M25, July - December 2025	January 15, 2026	January 31, 2026	
iDEM_IR_4 **internal report**	5th period report	M26 - M32 January - June 2026	July 31, 2026	Sep 2026	
iDEM_PR_2 **final report**	2nd and 3rd year report	M13-M36 January 2025 - December 2026	January 15, 2027	January 31, 2027	February 15, 25

Table 3: iDEM Project Reporting periods

6.4. Procedure

It is important to consider that Technical and Financial parts must be submitted at the same time, as a "single package". If one document is delayed or requires changes or corrections, the whole package will be delayed or might be rejected. The technical Reporting is a single document compiled from all WP Leaders. The financial report is based on each institution's submission of their financial reporting directly into the EC portal.

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As with the deliverables a procedure timeline should be followed in order to comply, review and trace the evolution of the reports.

Technical Reporting

A shared document will be made available through the Google drive [iDEM_PROJECT], input will be requested by the Coordinator from **All WP Leaders.**

Financial Reporting

A shared spreadsheet will be made available through the Google drive [iDEM_PROJECT], input will be requested by the Coordinator from **Financial contacts from each partner of the consortium.**

Responsible	Action	When	Deadline
PM	Sends reminder excel reporting tables with the requested financial data	12 weeks before the deadline	
	sends link to the technical report shared document to WP Leads		
Financial Admin per each institution	Fill tables with requested data	6 weeks before the deadline	15 days after reporting period is over
WP Leads	Contribute technical data to		
PM	Sends feedback to each beneficiary on data submitted	4 weeks before deadline	15 days after receiving data
each financial officer	submit the financial data on Cordis Financial Statement	3 weeks before deadline[11]	within deadline
PM	submits reviewed Technical report	3 weeks before deadline	

Table 4: Project Reports Timeline

[11] it is important to comply to this deadline because technical and financial report should be submitted at the same period, any delays will cause a rejection on both reports

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7. EC Reviews

EC reviews will be organized to present the project results at regular intervals to the European Commission and their independent experts. This enables the Commission to monitor the project and to ensure that the contractual obligations are fulfilled. Additionally, future project plans are discussed and agreed within such a meeting. The annual payment to the project will be processed if the outcome of the annual EC Review is considered satisfactory.

EC Reviews will be called by the EC Project Officer, and they are scheduled to take place every year.

8. Time Sheets

Only the hours worked on the project can and should be declared. Working time to be charged must be recorded throughout the duration of the project by any reasonable means (e.g. timesheets, internal systems, etc).

Employees have to record their time on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis using a paper or a computer-based system.

The time-records have to be authorized by the project manager or Human resources office of your own institution.

Please, note that the **record of working hours timesheets is compulsory** unless there is another reliable way of measuring personnel working time.

Each partner is responsible for their own timesheets, the EC provides a basic form which can be used should your institution not have a time-record system[12].

[12] This form can be downloaded from the [iDEM_PROJECT] Google drive time declaration form

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Project: [insert number] — [insert acronym] — [insert call identifier]

EU Grants: Time declaration: V1.1 – 01.05.2022

EU GRANTS DECLARATION OF DAYS WORKED ON A PROJECT *To be kept on file in case of audits.*	YEAR:	

Project acronym:		Project number:	
Participant name:			
Name of the person:		Type of personnel: (employee/ natural person under direct contract/ seconded/ other)	

Month	Days worked in the action[1] (e.g.15, 7,5, 0,5)	Work Packages worked on (e.g. WP2; WP5)	Date and signature of the person	Name, date and signature of the supervisor
January			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
February			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
March			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
April			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
May			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
June			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
July			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
August			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
September			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
October			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
November			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
December			Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
TOTAL				

[1] 1 day = number of hours that a full-time employee of the participant has to work in a standard day (e.g. 8 hours).

1

9. Publications

The iDEM consortium aims at disseminating the findings of its research in relevant scientific forums such as national and international peer-reviewed conferences, workshops and reputed journals. Scientific articles, posters, demonstrations, press releases, etc. will be the means of communicating to the world the research activities and scientific advances of the iDEM Project.

The publication plan and dissemination strategy is established in deliverable D5.1 “Communication and Dissemination Plan”. Since not all dissemination venues can be

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anticipated at this point and new opportunities are always arising, the list of dissemination events is a living instrument.

iDEM partners are encouraged to seek the most appropriate venues which will help promote the visibility of the project in European and international fora. Authors should communicate in advance their intentions to submit their research ideas, a draft should be shared with consortium members to obtain their feedback. When appropriate (e.g. iDEM consortium presentations, project summaries), the main author of the dissemination initiative should encourage consortium members to contribute with the manuscript and get author recognition[13].

Author attribution should be consistent with the involvement in the production of the publication (research idea, data collection, experiments, writing, etc.) and postdocs and junior researchers should be encouraged to lead dissemination activities.

Consortium members are requested to deposit their submitted/accepted publications to the [iDEM_PROJECT] drive. The deposit should include the pdf version of the paper, the source code (e.g. LaTex, Word), and information about the venue. Papers published by iDEM should always acknowledge the funding agency as described in D7.1 Project Handbook[14], be fully Open Access, and be deposited in appropriate repositories to promote visibility.

10. Decision-making and conflict resolution

Conflict resolution will be based on the principle that any dispute should be resolved by consent and as near the source as possible. Thus, conflicts in the local sphere will be managed by the people involved (i.e. author and reviewer; WP Leader and WP contributor, etc).
If a conflict cannot be resolved within the local sphere, it will be raised to the higher level (Task leader, WP leader, PI), and if necessary to the Project Coordinator and finally to the General Assembly.

If an issue is submitted to the General Assembly, the Project Coordinator will coordinate the whole decision-making process and notify the members of the General Assembly with all the necessary information. The issue will be discussed during the first scheduled General Assembly meeting or, if the situation gets to a serious crisis that jeopardizes the success of the entire project, the Project Coordinator will call for a special General Assembly meeting. The General Assembly will decide which procedure will be followed to solve the conflicting situation and the corresponding corrective measures that should be taken.

[13] We recognize that on some occasions, partners may not want to take part in publications.
[14] European Funding logo as well as the disclosure text as follows

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Should the conflict cannot be resolved, the General Assembly will declare the participant that generates the conflict “not in line” with the project execution, and the Consortium will ask for contract termination for the participant concerned, with the contractually stated consequences.

The Project Officer (PO) will be immediately notified of the situation and the measures to be taken to solve it.

An appropriate review of the work plan will be suggested by the Project Coordinator, approved by the General Assembly, and sent to the PO for acceptance.

In case it is decided (by the Project Coordinator or General Assembly) that a conflict resolution will involve a voting procedure among partners, a majority will be required for the decision to go ahead.

11. General approach to software development quality standards

Given the distributed nature of the iDEM partners’ software development teams, collaboration and standardization are crucial. So the following are the best practice standards-based guidelines for the design, development, and testing of all software in the iDEM project, to ensure the quality of the overall system and its services:

I. Design Principles[15]

- User-Centric Design: Thoroughly understand the needs and challenges of individuals with language and reading difficulties. Engage them throughout the design process for feedback and validation.
- Personalization & Adaptability: Build flexible systems that cater to varying user needs and preferences. Allow customization of simplification levels, presentation styles, and supported languages.
- Scalability: Design with growth in mind. Ensure the architecture can handle increasing user bases and the integration of future modules from the distributed teams.
- Modularity: Break down the iDEM system into well-defined modules with clear interfaces. This fosters collaboration, simplifies testing, and enhances maintainability.

II. Development Practices

- Version Control: Use a robust system like Git for managing code changes, tracking revisions, and facilitating collaboration across distributed teams[16].

[15] ISO 9241-210:2019: Ergonomics of human-system interaction — Part 210: Human-centred design for interactive systems (https://www.iso.org/standard/77520.html)
[16] While Git itself isn't based on a specific standard, its distributed nature aligns with open-source development principles (https://git-scm.com/)

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- Agile Methodology: Employ an iterative and incremental approach, based on an initial fast prototype to deliver value quickly, adapt to feedback, and manage changes effectively[17].
- Code Reviews: Mandate peer code reviews to catch errors early, improve code quality, and share knowledge among developers.
- Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery (CI/CD): Automate build, test, and deployment processes to accelerate delivery cycles and ensure code changes are integrated seamlessly[18].
- Documentation: Thoroughly document code, APIs, design decisions, and user guides. This is crucial for knowledge transfer and long-term maintenance.

III. Testing Strategies[19]

- Unit Testing: Developers write tests for individual code modules to ensure they function as intended in isolation.
- Integration Testing: Verify the smooth interaction between multiple modules or subsystems.
- System Testing: Test the entire iDEM system from end to end to assess its overall functionality and performance.
- Usability Testing: Involve users with reading difficulties actively in testing for ease of use and effectiveness of iDEM services.
- Regression Testing: Regularly run a suite of tests to ensure new changes don't break existing functionalities.
- Performance & Load Testing: Assess performance under heavy usage to ensure scalability and identify bottlenecks.

IV. Additional Considerations

- Security: Prioritize data privacy and security throughout the development cycle. Implement appropriate encryption, access controls, and threat detection mechanisms[20].
- Open Source Collaboration[21]: Leverage tools for effective collaboration on open-source projects (e.g., issue trackers, discussion forums).
- Knowledge Sharing Conduct regular code reviews, knowledge-sharing sessions, and training for distributed teams to promote alignment and best practices.

[17] No single standard exists, but draws from Lean principles and iterative development philosophies.
[18] There are no specific standards but CI/CD embodies principles of automation and streamlining the software delivery process.
[19] While in line with ISO 9241-210:2019, these are not directly based on specific standards, but adhere to industry-recognized best practices in software testing, and are fundamental to software quality assurance best practices.
[20] ISO/IEC 27000 Series: Information Security Management Systems (https://www.iso.org/isoiec-27001-information-security.html). See also, OWASP: Open Web Application Security Project provides frameworks and guidelines (https://owasp.org/)
[21] Given iDEM's open-source fundamental approach.

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