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Best Practices for Management of the Construction Phase of Research Infrastructures: A Preliminary Case Study

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The standard project management methodologies were developed to serve a world where the business objectives are focused on financial benefit. Such methodologies with emphasis on delivering programmes and projects within the triple constrain need to be strongly adapted to the unique environment of research infrastructures (RIs). Even the definition of project, programme and portfolio needs to be adapted to this environment.

The “business case” of RIs are far from the profit-oriented culture, and the stakeholders range from several international funding authorities to society in general (depending on the type of RI). The word “business” itself also needs to be revisited since the main output of RIs are scientific achievements (such as articles, patents, spin-offs, etc.), as well as collaborations and political gain.

The boundary conditions to obtain the funding for a large-scale RI such as ESS e.g., are based on political interests which results on overly optimistic schedules and budgets. This leads to the commonly known issue of RI construction repeatedly being delayed and presenting increasingly overrunning costs.

One way to contribute to solving this issue, is to have a standard lean methodology to manage the construction phase of such facilities.

A proposal for a new approach for project, programme and portfolio management during the construction phase of RI's based on best practices with the construction of large-scale neutron facilities will be presented.

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