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GN5-2 WP6 Incubator Process

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Abstract

This document describes the WP6 incubator process for adding new areas of work during the GN5-2 project in an agile way.



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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Incubator Process Phases	2
2.1	Phase 1: Proposal Submission	2
2.2	Phase 2: Focus Group	2
2.2.1	Focus Group Closure Report	3
2.2.2	Proposal for an Incubator Project	3
2.3	Phase 3: Incubator Project Execution	4
3	Conclusions	5
Appendix A	Templates	6
A.1	Template 1: NETDEV Incubator Project Proposal	6
A.2	Template 2: Closure Report	7
A.3	Template 3: NETDEV Focus Group Proposal for the Incubator Project	7
	References	9
	Glossary	9

1 Introduction

The incubator process within the Network Development Work Package (WP6) of the GN5-2 project provides a mechanism to include new areas of work throughout the duration of the project in an agile way. The process aims to be simple and transparent, and to ensure that the proposed work will be of clear value to the community.

The process is open for anyone to participate and propose a topic for a new area of work at any time during the GN5-2 project lifecycle. Proposed topics should be within the scope of the GN5-2 WP6 objectives. The output of the proposed project can include, but is not limited to, a study, an analysis, code development, a proof of concept, and a solution deployment. It is important that the planned outcome can be delivered by the requested resources and within the incubator project duration. Proposals are processed on a first-come-first-served basis.

Value for the community is demonstrated through the support given by other GÉANT partner organisations who are willing to use the results of the work in their own environment. Proposals with sufficient support from the community can be funded for a limited period of time if/while the resources are available. After the resources are no longer available, new work can still be proposed and the process can continue (e.g. as self-funded), but the work will not be funded from the WP6 budget. A proposal is considered to have sufficient support if at least three GÉANT partner organisations are willing to use its results. Whoever provides the support should have the authority to speak on their organisation's behalf and be able to implement the results later.

As the budget and duration of the incubator process and projects are limited, the proposed project needs to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound (SMART), and it needs to be in accordance with the Network Development Work Package scope and objectives.

This document describes the three phases of the process (Section 2). Templates needed to support the process are provided in Appendix A. Further information is available on the incubator wiki page [\[Wiki\]](#) and through direct contact with the WP6 team using netdev-incubator@lists.geant.org.

This is a working document and will be updated to reflect any changes to the process.

2 Incubator Process Phases

The incubator process consists of three phases: Proposal Submission, Focus Group and Incubator Project Execution. Each of the phases is described in more detail below. In addition, process flow diagrams and summary information are available on the incubator wiki page [\[Wiki\]](#).

2.1 Phase 1: Proposal Submission

Before proposing a topic, proposers are advised to look at already submitted proposals— both active and retired – which are available on the wiki [\[Wiki\]](#). Where applicable, supporting existing topics should be preferred over submitting a similar proposal.

Proposals for incubator projects should be submitted to netdev-incubator@lists.geant.org, summarising the information outlined in Template 1 (see Appendix A.1) in a maximum of three A4 pages.

The proposal should demonstrate that the planned output will be achievable within the given period of time and with the requested resources, and that the proposal has support from at least three (3) GÉANT partnering organisations that are willing to use the results the project plans to produce.

By submitting a proposal, the proposer is considered to confirm that their submission is not infringing any Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of others. The proposal and proposers should comply with the GÉANT Project IPR Policy [\[IPR Policy\]](#). Any personal data collected via the proposal will be used only for processing and promoting the proposal. Consent to such use of this personal data is considered to be provided when the proposal is submitted.

Once a proposal is submitted, it will be reviewed in the shortest possible period on a first-come-first-served basis by the WP6 leadership team to check whether it is in accordance with the WP6 scope and objectives. If it is considered not to be, the reasoning for the decision will be sent to the proposers. If it is, the proposal progresses to the next phase.

As the call for proposals is always open, in case the WP6 incubator budget is unavailable, persons proposing and supporting the project are welcome to work on the proposal without being paid by the GÉANT project. It can still be coordinated and supported by the WP6 team.

A proposal can be retired, for instance if the person or organisation that proposed the project withdraws the proposal, or if a proposal is submitted without sufficient support. In that case, the WP6 incubator team will create a short closure report, containing the information outlined in Template 2 (see Appendix A.2). As the proposal will not be deleted, but stored as retired, if the situation changes, it could be proposed again under the same conditions.

2.2 Phase 2: Focus Group

In this second phase, a focus group is formed out of organisations that have submitted and supported the proposal, with the goal to review, define and refine the project proposal in more detail from the technical and project management perspective, to prepare it for execution as a part of an incubator project.

If not already done, market research will need to be undertaken as a part of the focus group work, resulting in a description of how the proposal relates to other solutions on the market or in the community.

For a project to be sufficiently well-defined to be considered for progression to the third and final phase, by the end of the focus group activity it must meet the following requirements:

- The expected output is well-defined – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound (SMART) – with clear value for the community.
- The project is structured, with clear tasks and timelines.
- The project is supported by three or more organisations from the community.
- There is sufficient budget within WP6 to cover the needed project budget.
- The expected project duration fits the project timeline so that the project results will be delivered and visible during the current iteration of the GÉANT project.
- Any new inputs have been taken into account.
- More detailed information about the people that will participate in the incubator project has been added.

The duration of a focus group should not be more than 3 months in total:

- 2 months to refine and submit the proposal to netdev-incubator@lists.geant.org.
- 1 month for proposal evaluation and final decision.

The outcome of the focus group work can be:

- Closure report if there will be no incubator project proposal.
- Proposal for an incubator project.

Each of these is described below.

2.2.1 Focus Group Closure Report

The conclusion of the focus group can be that no proposal will be submitted as an incubator project and continue to Phase 3. This might happen for various reasons, including no consensus about the work that would be done in the incubator project, a SMART project cannot be defined, interest has decreased and is insufficient to continue with the project, a project team cannot be formed, etc.

If the focus group concludes that the work will not be continued as an incubator project proposal, the group will summarise its conclusions in a document containing the information outlined in Template 2 (see Appendix A.2) and send it to the WP6 incubator team at netdev-incubator@lists.geant.org. The topic will be retired and added to the list of retired proposals (but not deleted) with an explanation of why the project is being retired, with a possibility to revisit it if the situation changes.

By completing a closure report for a project that is not continuing to the next phase and submitting this report to the WP6 incubator team, the focus group closes without any additional follow-up work.

2.2.2 Proposal for an Incubator Project

If the decision of the focus group is to propose an incubator project, the focus group team should:

1. Finalise the project proposal, providing the information outlined in Template 3 (see Appendix A.3); this can be done by updating the originally submitted proposal (from Template 1 – see Appendix A.1).
2. Define the team in more detail, specifying exact names (with contact email addresses), organisations, and allocated manpower, clearly stating what should or should not be funded by the GN5-2 WP6 budget. By specifying a name to participate in the incubator project, it is considered that their participation has been agreed with the individual, as well as agreed and supported by their organisation.
3. Ensure that the project is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound (SMART), realistic and relevant to the community and target user groups.
4. Define the project manager for the project.

By completing the proposal document and submitting it to the WP6 incubator team the focus group closes. The WP6 incubator leadership team will review the submitted documentation and determine whether or not the project should enter Phase 3 as an incubator project. The incubator project can be moved to another WP6 Task if it is seen to be more appropriate.

2.3 Phase 3: Incubator Project Execution

When a focus group defines a SMART project and the group's proposal has been approved by the WP6 incubator leadership team, the prerequisites are complete to start an incubator project. For an incubator project:

- The title, objectives, project (subtask) leader, team members, final outputs and outcomes are taken from the document produced by the focus group.
- A separate subtask in WP6 will be created to execute the project, within the Task where the objectives and goals of the incubator project fit the best.
- The resources to work on the project will be assigned through a change request (if needed) from the unallocated budget pot in the WP6 budget.

Management of the incubator project is done with the following roles:

- The incubator project (subtask) leader is accountable for delivering the incubator project results, within the specified timeline and resources. The incubator project leader also has to make sure that the project work results are publicly reported (in a white paper, infoshare, training material, etc.).
- The Task leader of the Task where the incubator project is assigned (hosting Task) is responsible for ensuring that project outputs and objectives are delivered and met, and that they are in accordance with WP6 scope and objectives.
- The NETDEV incubator coordinator in Task 0 is responsible for supervising the timeline and budget consumption, and if needed will escalate towards the incubator project leader, leaders of Task 0 and the hosting Task, and Work Package leaders.

An incubator project can last a maximum of six months. Wrapping up should start at the end of month 4, including summarising the work in a closure report (using Template 2, see Appendix A.2), a white paper and an infoshare. When the project is finished, the incubator leadership team will perform the final assessment of the completed work and results. Depending on the results, interest from the community and available budget, the work might continue, funded or not funded by the GN5-2 project, or can be closed.

3 Conclusions

In order to provide a mechanism to include new areas of work throughout the duration of the project in an agile way, the incubator process has been created within the Network Development Work Package (WP6) of the GN5-2 project. The process is open for anyone to propose a new work topic, which must be within the scope of WP6, and its planned results must be of interest for use and deployment by at least three project partners. The output of the proposed project can include, but is not limited to, a study, an analysis, code development, a proof of concept, and a solution deployment. It is important that the planned outcome can be delivered by the requested resources and within the incubator project duration.

The three-phase process aims to provide flexibility, transparency, openness and benefits for the community. The WP6 team is offering its help and support in all stages of the project proposal preparation and all phases of the incubator process execution.

Appendix A Templates

A.1 Template 1: NETDEV Incubator Project Proposal

Template 1: NETDEV Incubator Project Proposal

1. **Name and Organisation** of the person that is submitting the proposal.
2. **Title** – Name of the proposal that describes what is being proposed.
3. **Rationale** – Describe why this work is important, which problem it solves.
4. **Output** – Tangible and intangible outputs that will be produced as a result of this proposal. The output should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound.
5. **Users** – Who are the users that would use the results of this work.
6. **Value** – Describe the value that the proposal will provide to the users.
7. **Team** – Organisations and names of people that will work on the proposal.
8. **Time** – Expected duration of this project.
9. **Resources** – Which resources and budget are needed for this project:
 - a. Manpower (per each individual that would participate in the team).
 - b. Equipment (needed/existing equipment, which equipment should be bought).
 - c. Travel budget.
 - d. Other (please specify).
10. **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)** – As a proposer I declare that my submission is not infringing any IP rights of others.
 - a. Does any code or previous work exist that is the subject of an existing IPR? Yes / No
11. **Information about gathering and processing any personal data**
 - a. Will you be processing any personal data for this project? Yes / No
 - b. If Yes:
 - i. Which data are you processing, how, and for what purposes?
 - ii. Do you have a privacy notice for it? Yes / No. If yes, please provide it.
12. **Contribution to an existing GÉANT project service** – Will it create or contribute to an existing GÉANT project service? Yes / No. If yes, please specify which one.
13. **Organisations supporting the proposal** – To be filled in for each organisation:
 - a. Your Name.
 - b. Your Organisation.
 - c. Will you implement the work results in your own organisation? Yes/No
 - d. How much of an FTE will your organisation dedicate to work on this project?
 - e. Would you work on this proposal even if not being paid from the GN5-2 project? Yes/No

A.2 Template 2: Closure Report

Template 2: Closure Report

1. Title of the project proposal.
2. Name and the organisation of the proposer.
3. Date of the proposal submission to netdev-incubator@lists.geant.org.
4. Link to the original proposal.
5. Activities performed by WP6 related to the proposal.
6. List of organisations that supported the proposal.
7. Reason for retiring the proposal.

A.3 Template 3: NETDEV Focus Group Proposal for the Incubator Project

Template 3: NETDEV Focus Group Proposal for the Incubator Project

1. **Name and Organisation** of the person that is submitting the proposal.
2. **Title** – Name of the proposal that describes what is being proposed.
3. **Rationale** – Describe why this work is important, which problem it solves.
4. **Output and Outcome** – Tangible and intangible outputs that will be produced as a result. These should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound (SMART).
5. **Users** – Who are the users that would use the results of this work.
6. **Value** – Describe the value that the proposal will provide to the users, and how it differs from other solutions that might exist in the community or on the market.
7. **Team** – For each individual nominated to participate in the project, provide the following information:
 - a. Name
 - b. Organisation
 - c. Email address
 - d. Manpower available to work on the project
 - e. Manpower to be funded by GN5-2 WP6
 - f. Support from their organisation Yes/No
 - g. Role and job in the team
8. **Time** – Expected duration of this project.
9. **Resources** – Total resources and budget needed for this project:
 - a. Manpower
 - b. Equipment (needed/existing equipment, which equipment should be bought)
 - c. Travel budget
 - d. Other (please specify)

10. **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)** – As a proposer I declare that my submission is not infringing any IP rights of others.
 - a. Does any code or previous work exist that is the subject of an existing IPR? Yes / No
11. **Information about gathering and processing any personal data**
 - a. Will you be processing any personal data for this project? Yes / No
 - b. If Yes:
 - i. Which data are you processing, how, and for what purposes?
 - ii. Do you have a privacy notice for it? Yes / No. If yes, please provide it.
12. **Contribution to an existing GÉANT project service** – Will it create or contribute to an existing GÉANT project service? Yes / No. If yes, please specify which one.
13. **Organisations supporting the proposal** – List the organisations and contact persons that would like to use the project outputs.

References

IPR_Policy https://about.geant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/GEANT-IPR_Policy_2022.pdf

[Wiki] <https://wiki.geant.org/display/NETDEV/NETDEV+Incubator>

Glossary

FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource- and Time-bound
WP	Work Package
WP6	Work Package 6 Network Development