

D7.2

Project Quality Plan

Action acronym	ConnectedFactories 2
Action Full Title	Global-leading smart manufacturing through digital platforms, cross-cutting features and skilled workforce
Grant Agreement Number	873086
Instrument	CSA: Coordination and Support Action
Project coordinator	VTT
Deliverable Number	D7.2
Deliverable Title	Project quality plan
Lead Beneficiary	VTT
Work package	WP 7 - Coordination
Work package leader	VTT
Dissemination level ¹	PU
Type ²	RE (Report)
Due date according to DoA	31.01.2020
Actual submission date	30.01.2020
Main editors and contributors:	VTT

¹ PU: Public, CO: Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

² RE: Report, OT: Other; ORDP: Open Research Data Pilot



VERSION MANAGEMENT			
File name:		D7.2 Project Quality Plan.docx	
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Revision No.	Date	Description	Author
1	24.1.2020	Draft	GG
2	30.1.2020	Final	Virkkunen

TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	
CA	Consortium agreement
CO	Coordinator
DoA	Description of Action
DPO	Data Protection Officer
EB	Executive Board
EC	European Commission
GA	Grant Agreement / General Assembly
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ORDP	Open Research Data Pilot
QM	Quality Manager
QMP	Quality Management Plan
SyGMa	System for Grant Management
WP	Work package
WPL	Work Package Leader



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1 Introduction

The purpose of the Quality Plan is to collect all essential project practices and guidelines that contribute to the efficient execution of the project in one place. The guidelines partly reflect what has already been agreed in the grant agreement and consortium agreement and presents the most important ones that aim to ensure high quality of output in a more manageable form. The plan also include descriptions of practical arrangements and support systems established to support the project work.

This document is submitted as a project deliverable at the early phases of the project but is intended as a living document reflecting new additions and revised processes along the way. The current version is always available through the projects file repository in this form or as slide set extracted from the document.

2 Quality management overview

The purpose of project quality management is to assure that the outputs of the project meet agreed standards. The quality plan consists of a set of processes and agreements with the purpose to facilitate project work and to support a uniform approach throughout the project, thus ensuring consistent quality of output.

This quality plan deals with the following main topics:

1. Quality functions and main principles
2. Project work
3. Documentation
4. Communication
5. Risk management

The quality management principles adopted in the project is described in the following sections.

3 Quality Management functions

Quality management follows the principle of Plan - Do - Check - Improve. This implies a continuous quality process focusing on output. The corresponding quality functions are explained below.

The Steering Group is responsible for monitoring the performance of the project and ensuring the quality of the procedures and results.

3.1 Quality assurance

The CO and the Quality Manager, together with WPLs, act as the internal quality assurance group. The main task of the internal quality assurance group is to ensure that the milestones and deliverables are generated on time, and that these meet project standards and objectives for technical content, completeness,



uniformity of coverage, presentation and format. Quality of outputs and deliverables will be assured through a two-level quality control process overseen by the Quality Manager.

3.2 Quality control

While the respective WP leaders and CO have the ultimate responsibility for the project outputs, an internal peer review system will be set up among partners to ensure a high quality of all deliverables. The peer review will be heavily based upon on-site assessment and cross-partner evaluation. The WP leaders will be responsible for incorporating the peer review feedback into the final versions of their deliverables

4 Project management

The project management addresses all administrative, financial, and contractual issues.

Professional management will ensure efficient working processes and high-quality project outcomes through:

- competent overall project coordination including administration, quality management, risk management, financial management, ethics and data management, continuous progress monitoring, and corrective actions as required,
- the use of formal communication platforms ensuring efficient communication and timely information flows within the project, towards the Commission and the general public,

4.1 Governance structure

The project governance structure is presented in Figure 1.

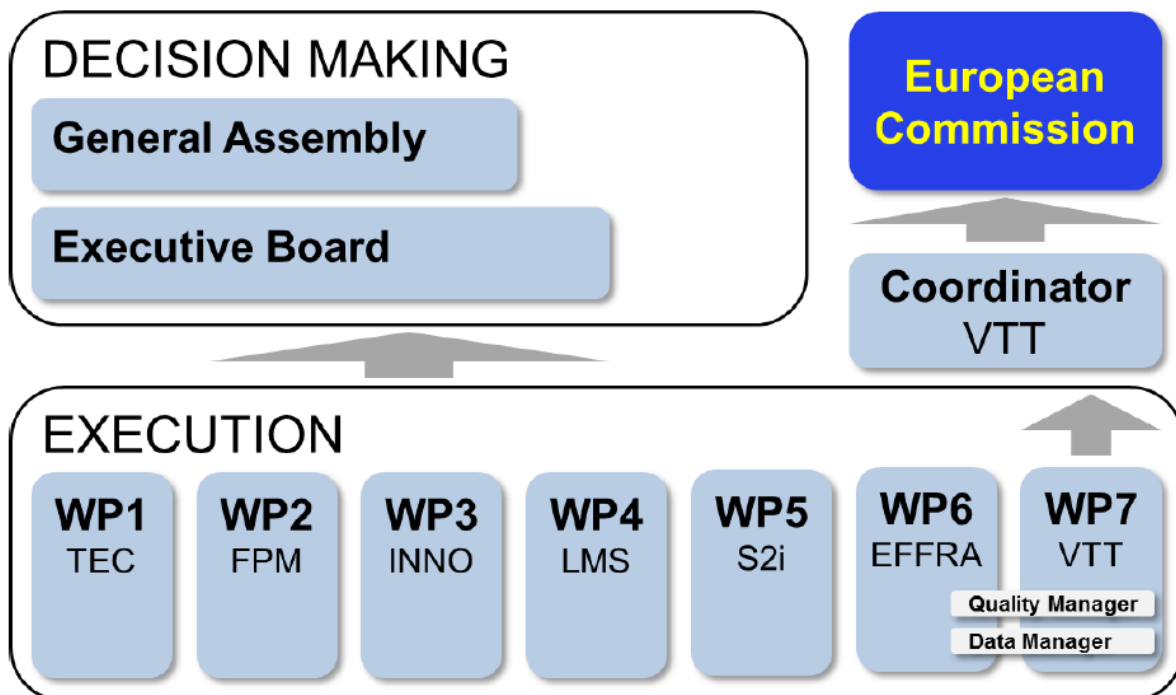


Figure 1. ConnectedFactories 2 governance structure.

4.2 Roles and responsibilities

4.2.1 General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly is the ultimate decision making body. It consists of one member from each party.

Unless otherwise decided the GA is chaired by the coordinator.

4.2.2 Executive board

The Executive Board is responsible for supervising the execution of the project and the implementation of decisions of the General Assembly. The EB consists of the Work Package leaders and the Coordinator.

4.2.3 Coordinator

The coordinator is the intermediary between the project and the Commission and is responsible for the tasks assigned in the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement.

4.2.4 Work Package Leaders

Work Package leaders undertake the day-to-day coordination including planning, monitoring and control of all tasks within their respective work package. The WPLs ensure the quality and timely delivery of deliverables, and carry the technical responsibility for their respective WP and keep the EB and CO informed of technical results of the project as well as any risks or concerns.

4.2.5 Data Manager (Data Protection Officer)

The Data Protection Officer is responsible for overseeing the project's data protection strategy and its implementation to ensure compliance with GDPR requirements.

4.2.6 Quality Manager

The primary role of the Project Quality Manager is to devise, implement, and maintain the Quality Management Plan (also known as QMP) as well as to enforce it on the technical level and through policies and guidelines.

4.2.7 Project Partners

Each Partner undertakes to take part in the efficient implementation of the Project, and to cooperate, perform and fulfil its obligations promptly and on time.

Partners must notify the project management of any significant problem or delay that may affect the project.

4.3 Partner contacts and assigned responsibilities

A list of all partner contacts with assigned responsibilities maintained in the shared project workspace.

5 Project work

5.1 Work plans

The WL will develop the overall execution plan for their respective WP, assuring consistency between tasks and alignment with related WPs.



5.2 Progress monitoring

The project adopts a process for continuous progress monitoring based on regular meetings and transparent reporting.

The progress of work against plans in each work package and task is monitored in monthly WP leader meetings. The meetings are held on-line and chaired by the Coordinator.

WP leaders will fill in a shared reporting template, which indicate the overall status of the work and helps identify possible gaps and needs for contributions in advance.

The template cover the following sections:

- Activities and progress of work
- Outputs and deliverables
- Next steps
- Collaboration needs, input requests
- Risks, challenges and open issues

The progress reports are stored and accessible to all project partners in the internal document management system.

5.3 Deliverables

WP Leaders are responsible for the timely submission and the technical and scientific quality of deliverables. In order to ensure timely delivery the planning and preparation of deliverable reports have to start well ahead of the due date.

A list of all deliverables with responsible partner, due date, reviewers and status is maintained in the document sharing system.

The quality procedure includes an internal peer review. The purpose of the review is to ensure both the quality of content and a consistency across deliverables. Reviewers for each deliverable are assigned and agreed at the start of the project.

Templates for deliverable reports are available in the internal document sharing system.

5.3.1 Deliverable process

The purpose of the deliverable process is to ensure that the scope and content is planned and agreed, and that the resources required for producing the reports are identified and allocated. The deliverable preparation schedule is presented in Table 1. The progress and status of deliverables is monitored as part of the regular progress reporting (Section 5.2).



Table 1. Deliverable process.

Time	Action	Responsible
Three months before deadline	Acknowledge upcoming deliverables at monthly WP Leaders meeting and agree on actions	CO
Two months before deadline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define deliverable structure and upload deliverable outline to the WP channel's file folder 2. Agree on contributors 3. Confirm assigned reviewers 	Lead Partner
One month before deadline	First draft available in Teams	Lead Partner, contributors
Three weeks before deadline	Draft sent to reviewers	Lead Partner, contributors
Two weeks before deadline	Reviewed draft	Reviewer
One week before deadline	Final draft to coordinator	Lead partner
Deadline	Submit deliverable to SyGMA	Coordinator

5.4 Other publications

Dissemination both scientific and R&D results through publication is encouraged. Horizon 2020 grant holders must ensure **open access** to all peer-reviewed publications resulting from funded research.

The procedures to be followed are described in detail in section 8.4 of the CA.

Basic principles:

- Publication of other parties' foreground or background always requires approval, even if "amalgated" with the publisher's foreground.
- Prior notice of any planned publication shall be given to the other Parties at least 45 calendar days before the publication
- Any objection to the planned publication shall be made in writing to the Coordinator and to the Party or Parties proposing the dissemination within 30 calendar days after receipt of the notice.
- The objecting Party can request a publication delay of not more than 90 calendar days from the time it raises such an objection. If no objection is made within the time limit stated above, the publication is permitted.

All published papers MUST contain this line: "This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 873086".

6 Communication

Project communication includes all activities undertaken by individuals, project partner organisations or the project as a whole to exchange information relating to the project. This includes both internal communication (between partners) and external communication within targeted stakeholders.



6.1 Internal communication

Internal communication serves to facilitate the execution of the project work. Primary means of internal communication are:

Email

Email is the main messaging tool. According to the Consortium Agreement section 11.3 e-mail with acknowledgement of receipt, fulfils the conditions of written form.

Distribution lists are set up to enable better targeted messages and reduce unnecessary email traffic.

The following distribution lists (groups) have been defined:

CF2_All	All partner contacts involved in the execution of the project
CF2_WPLeaders	Work Package Leaders, their deputies and coordinator contacts

Additional distribution lists can be set up as needed.

Any change of persons or contact details shall be notified immediately by the respective Party to the Coordinator. The address list is be accessible to all Parties in the shared Project workspace (Teams).

Project workspace

An on-line project workspace based on the Microsoft Teams platform is used to collect all project related data. The tool also includes other collaboration features, such as discussion forums, Wiki pages and task lists. A separate area is set up for each work package.

The project workspace is described in more detail in D7.1 Internal document sharing system.

6.2 External communication

Communication with other projects, stakeholders and external audiences is a key function of the project. This includes European, national and regional workshops, presentations at conferences, newsletters, flyers, websites and direct contacts with companies and project consortia.

According to the Grant Agreement, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.

External communication should be planned, executed to a standard appropriate with the action.

The material used for communication should be of high quality and clearly indicate the relation to the ConnectedFactories project.

The results of each communication action should be followed up and the related documentation stored in the internal document sharing system.

All external communication material should display the EU emblem and include the statement: *“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 873086”*



Before engaging in a communication activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the Commission.

7 Meetings

Regular meetings are important in order to share information effectively and to build and maintain personal contacts and trust. Meetings are also needed for quality procedures such as planning and executing work tasks and for quality control.

To reduce travel costs, frequent on-line meetings are encouraged.

Consortium-wide face-to-face meetings are preferably arranged alongside other important events.

7.1 General meetings

Project general meetings are held three times per year. To reduce costs and for synergy benefits GA meetings are generally arranged in connection to other public events.

Table 2. Frequency of general meetings.

	Ordinary meeting	Extraordinary meeting
General Assembly	At least once a year	At any time upon written request of the Executive Board or 1/3 of the Members of the General Assembly
Executive Board	On a 4-monthly basis	At any time upon written request of any Member of the Executive Board and agreed upon by the Majority by two-thirds (2/3)

Work package meetings, steering group meetings and meetings of special work groups can be arranged in connection to the General Assembly.

7.2 Monthly WP Leaders' meeting

Work package leaders or their deputies, together with the technical coordination team will meet every month to discuss and coordinate the execution of the project. The meeting includes a standardised progress monitoring as described in section 5.2.

7.3 Notice of a meeting

Notice of upcoming meetings shall be given in advance. The minimum advance notice for General meetings are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Minimum advance notice of General meetings.

	Ordinary meeting	Extraordinary meeting
General Assembly	45 calendar days	14 calendar days
Executive Board	14 calendar days	7 calendar days

7.4 Agenda

Meeting agendas with topics, time and venue shall be distributed in advance of General meetings according to Table 4.

Table 4. Agendas are stored in the project workspace in a dedicated meeting folder.

General Assembly	21 calendar days, 10 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting
Executive Board	7 calendar days
General Assembly	21 calendar days, 10 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting
Executive Board	7 calendar days

Table 4. Minimum advance issue of general meeting agendas.

7.5 Minutes

The chairperson of a Consortium Body shall produce written minutes of each meeting which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. He/she shall send the draft minutes to all Members within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days from sending, no Member has sent an objection in writing to the chairperson with respect to the accuracy of the draft of the minutes

The meeting minutes are stored and accessible in the project workspace.

8 Risk management

Risks are uncertain conditions that may have a degrading impact on the project schedule, cost, or scope. The coordination tasks (WP7) manage project risks.

Purpose

The purpose of project risk management is to identify potential risk in order to be able to take appropriate action.

Approach

The project assumed an informal, “light” approach to risk management based on direct personal communication and good working relations between all partners. Reporting of any identified risks were encouraged.

Unurgent risks and mitigation strategies are discussed in general meetings, when needed. Urgent risks are dealt with without delay.

Identification

The leading principle is that only identified risk can be dealt with. The identification of a risk is therefore always positive. All participants are encouraged to speak openly of potential problems.



Monitoring

The evolution of individual risk items is monitored systematically to be able to detect if mitigation measures have the desired effect.

Mitigation

Risk mitigation plans are allocated to all identified risk items. The plan includes concrete and immediate actions to be taken if an identified risk is activated.

Risk categories

The following describes the main risk categories, including some examples and mitigation strategies adopted in the project.

- External
- Technical
- Organisational
- Risk communication

Identified risk factors regarding the implementation of this project are described and commented Table 5.

Table 5. Critical implementation risks.

Description of risk (indicate level of likelihood: Low/Medium/High)	Work package(s) involved	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
Low response to consultations, due to confidentiality issues, market strategies and existing global or national alliances. (low risk)	WP1-6	Strength of consortium – good interfaces to projects and stakeholders. Good communication and transparency enables more information sharing.
Overlap with consultations by other projects, initiatives outside the CSA including the risk of losing the consistency in terms of the project approach and consultation methodology, both with regard to the already ongoing national and regional initiatives and European initiatives (low risk)	WP1-6	Consortium – addressing synergy. Take into the account the already existing approaches when defining the general guidelines for conducting national and regional workshops. Focus on synergy with actions that are already ongoing. - Many participants are active in practically all potentially overlapping initiatives, thus being best possible experts in solving possible issues.
Lack of consensus due to particular political and economic national and/or regional interest. (low risk)	WP1-6	EFFRA as working on a European level can leverage and balance the various and different interest for the European good.
Some partners underperforming (low)	WP1-7	The coordinator and WP leaders will actively follow performance and support partners' work. Regular web meetings will be arranged to monitor and plan activities.

The EB meetings include a risk review where identified project risks are re-evaluated and decisions on necessary mitigation measures are taken.

The monthly work package leader meetings include reporting and follow-up of risks relating to the execution of the work package tasks, which enables early identification and mitigation of emerging risks.

9 Documentation and data management

9.1 Project documents

Project documents include all shared documents created in the project as part of the execution of the work or in the administration and management of the project, and documents relating to the interaction with the Commission.

Examples of document types include:

- Agreements, such as the Grant Agreement (GA), Consortium Agreement (CA), etc.,
- Deliverable documents, reports and white papers,
- Presentations, such as conference papers, presentations, slide sets etc.,
- Source documents, such as results of interviews and questionnaires, and other input data,
- Documents relation to correspondence with external parties, stakeholders and communities

Unless otherwise indicated project documents are by default confidential within the project. The rules applying to the handling of confidential data can be found in the Consortium Agreements section *10 Section: Non-disclosure of information*.

Project documents are stored in the Project Workspace. Official project documents can also be found in the Commissions SyGMA portal.

9.2 Open data access

Dissemination scientific and R&D results through publication is encouraged. Horizon 2020 grant holders must ensure **open access** to all peer-reviewed publications resulting from funded research.

The majority of project deliverables are public. In addition the project uses the Effra Innovation Portal and its website to publish information and to make public deliverables available

The project participates in the Open Research Data Pilot (ORDP). The corresponding arrangements and practices are described in more detail in D7.3 Data Management Plan.

9.3 Management of Personal Data

A project specific Data Protection Officer (CF2 DPO) is assigned to assess and control the project's personal data processing activities, in order to respect the obligations of the GDPR. The partners will individually execute the measures necessary to prevent the use and loss of personal data, as prescribed by the GDPR and their respective national legislation detailing the execution and guidelines for its implementation, and following recommendation by the CF2 DPO. In case of data breaches in relation to personal data processed or controlled by the project, all impacted Parties will have to take the necessary measures towards their respective DPO's and their respective data protection authorities (DPA).



Personal Data, means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, including but not limited to a name, an identification number, tracking/location data, an online identifier or one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person, as being stipulated by the GDPR and the Member States specific legislation adoptions of the GDPR.

Each Party shall be responsible for its operations involving collection or processing of Personal Data, and warrants that it has appropriate technical and organisational measures in place in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of data subjects.

Where third parties are used in processing of Personal Data, each Party warrants to have appropriate technical and organisational measures in place in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of data subjects.

Each Party engaged in collection or processing of Personal Data in implementation of the Project warrants that:

- where so required by applicable data protection legislation, it has appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO), who monitors the data processing activities of the pertinent consortium member in connection with the implementation of the Project, with the details of the respective DPO made available to all data subjects involved in the research activities of that Party;
- where not required by applicable data protection legislation to appoint a Data Protection Officer, it will have in place a detailed data protection policy for the Project, and that the policy is kept on file and made available to the Coordinator on request.

Any sharing of Personal Data across the consortium shall be strictly based on necessity, i.e. where needed for the implementation of the Project. Each Party disclosing Personal Data shall take all reasonable measures to anonymize, as far as reasonably possible, any Personal Data prior to disclosure. The terms of disclosure, as well as the pertinent roles and responsibilities, shall be agreed on separately between the disclosing and receiving parties.

Each Party shall be fully and solely liable for a breach of warranties stipulated herein, whether the breach is attributable to the Party itself or its employees, officers, affiliates or related third parties.

10 Evolving the Quality Management Plan

Changes and updates to this Quality Management Plan are part of the continuous improvement process. Suggestions for improvement can be made by any partner at any time by notifying the Coordinator or Quality Manager.

Changes to the Quality Management Plan are approved by the General Assembly.

11 Related documents

The documents referred to in this report are listed in Table 6

Table 6. Related documents.

Document	Location
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Project grant agreement	SyGMa, project workspace folder
ConnectedFactories2 consortium agreement	project workspace folder
D7.1 Internal document sharing system	SyGMa, project workspace folder
D7.3 Data Management Plan	SyGMa, project workspace folder

ENDS

