Project Management and Resource Estimation to Drive Impact

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How does the Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE) assess and select research project concepts? Leveraging a unique blend of cost estimation, project management, and program evaluation, PHCoE evaluates and approves psychological health research projects. PHCoE developed a cost estimation tool, known as the Project Resource Estimator (PRE), that aids in cost estimate development and categorization, and helps shape budgetary planning. The PRE drives determinations of project feasibility using an order of magnitude approximation. Upon approval, the project undergoes project management processes that have been developed internally using industry-recognized practices.

Project Resource Estimator (PRE) Definition

The PRE is a supplemental document that is used to forecast resource expenditures. Key data from the tool include a full-time equivalent (FTE) projection and cost estimate for a proposed project. Costs are differentiated as budgeted or non-budgeted.

Budgeted costs include any funding requirements – labor and/or other direct costs (ODCs) – that have already been accounted for in the budget within a given fiscal year (e.g., filed billet(s), salaried positions under an existing contract). Non-budgeted costs, however, are funding requirements (labor and/or ODCs) above and beyond the current allocated budget; development of a new contract or modification of an existing contract may be required to meet these costs.

Program Evaluation

PHCoE draws on proven evaluation methods to enhance project management practices. PHCoE is a flexible process that includes key input for project feasibility, resource, and impacts.

Key Questions

- What is the intended impact?
- Is the project structured to realize intended impact(s)?
- Are there any unintended consequences?

Outcomes

- Robust project management discipline and successful project implementation which results in IMPACT for Service members

Case Study

The Concept Approval & Project Review (CAPR) process is a project management methodology that provides a decision-making platform to approve proposals and review projects, enabling PHCoE leadership to gauge project health and mission coverage. The CAPR process encompasses the entire project lifecycle, includes standardized tools & templates, and facilitates project evaluation measured against pre-determined baselines.

References
