

GOVERNANCE

Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Goals

1. Enumerate the strategic and tactical decisions program stakeholders are faced with, and the areas of responsibility those decisions fall under
2. Enumerate the roles and/or groups responsible for making decisions
3. Match roles and/or groups with decision-making authority / areas of responsibility
4. Validate governance plan against real-life program scenarios

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Program leadership,
Program management,
Participants from the larger community

Length

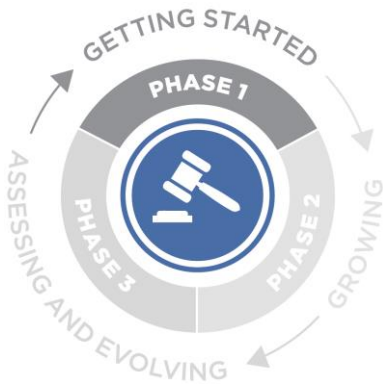
120 minutes

Pre-Work Instructions

- Read: [Organization and Structure of Open-Source Software Development Initiatives](#)
- Review existing governance examples:
 - [ArchivesSpace](#)
 - [DSpace](#)
 - [Samvera](#)

Activity Instructions

1. Review the list of strategic and tactical decisions and areas of responsibility for open-source programs serving cultural and scientific heritage. This list is not intended to be exhaustive; feel free to remove items from the list that are not currently relevant to your program or add high-priority elements that are not represented.
2. Review the list of roles and groups that could have decision-making authority or responsibility over certain areas. As above, you may remove roles/groups from the list that are not currently relevant to your program and add ones that are not represented.
 - a. Note: It is likely that this list will change as you move through this activity, so treat this as a first pass, not a final decision.
3. Using the collaboration tool of your choice (e.g., Google Docs, Miro, etc.), list out the roles and groups, and take a first pass at assigning decisions and areas of responsibility to them.
 - a. For example, you may place User Documentation and User Testing with the User Council, Strategic Planning and Fundraising with the Program Director, and Budgeting and Resource Allocation with the Organizational Home.
 - b. This can be done in-person using a whiteboard or easel, or virtually using a shared online document or virtual whiteboard platform. Examples below.



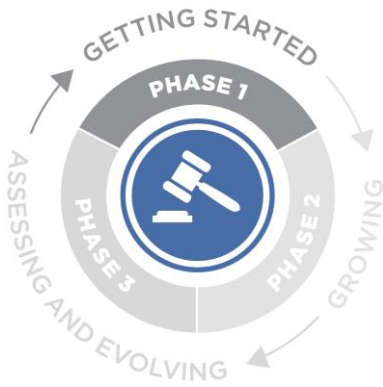
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4. Once the roles and areas of responsibility are mostly sorted, walk through two or three governance scenarios that your program is currently facing or is likely to face in the future, understanding how the decision would be made or scenario resolved with the structure you have created.
 - a. Example scenarios may be taken from the Catastrophizing exercise, a quick brainstorm, or the below:
 - i. Two developers have submitted pull requests for pieces of functionality that are vastly different.
 - ii. A for-profit organization wants to participate in the program.
 - iii. An organization wants to make a sizable financial donation to the program but wants a role in governance and control over the technical roadmap.
 - iv. The program wants to rebrand with a new name and visual identity.
5. Based on the results of the scenario walkthrough, make changes to your draft structure.
6. Repeat steps 5 and 6 until you've reached consensus on the governance structure.
 - a. Note: The structure just needs to work for your program right now - it can always be changed as program needs change.
7. Move to [Activity: Documenting and Implementing a Governance Structure](#)



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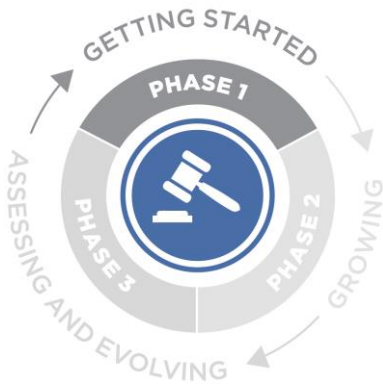
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Example Strategic / Tactical Decisions & Areas of Responsibility

Dimension	Decision / Responsibility Examples
Ownership	IP ownership Control over branding/identity ...
Leadership / Chartering	General program leadership Strategic planning Mission and vision Program initiatives ...
Community Management	Community definitions Membership policies Path to leadership/governance ...
Software Development	Technical roadmap Functional requirements UX / Design Quality assurance / Testing Release management ...
Resource Management	Budgeting and resource allocation Fundraising Grant writing and management ...
Conflict Resolution and Rule Changing	Conflict resolution Changes in how conflict is managed, or decisions are made ...
Use of Information and Tools	Program infrastructure management (bug tracker, website, etc.) Community communications User docs management and sharing Developer docs management and sharing ...



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Example Roles and Groups

Note: Titles are given below to give a general sense of roles. Any of these can be renamed to reflect your program's needs.

Groups

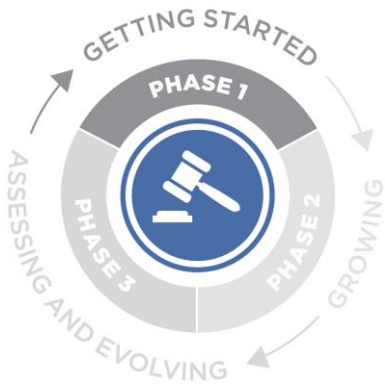
- Board / Leadership Council
- User / Member Council
- Technical Council
- Ad hoc / Project-based
- Code Committers
- Etc.

Roles

- Program director
- Program manager
- Technical lead
- Community manager
- Etc.

Other

- Organizational home
- Fiscal sponsor
- Etc.



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Example 1: Virtual Governance Modeling with Google Docs

Board / Leadership Council

- General program leadership
- Strategic planning - e.g., mission and vision
- Set membership policies
- Approve program initiatives

Organizational Home

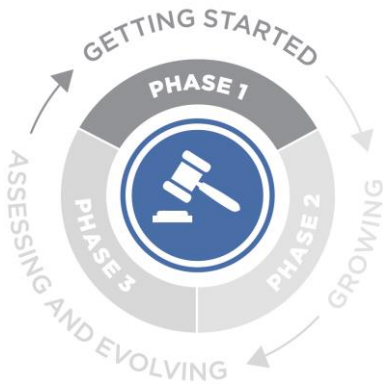
- Approve budgets and resource allocation
- Raise funds and secure resources
- Manage program infrastructure (e.g., bug tracker, website)

User Council

- Receive, suggest, discuss, and vote on new features/functionality
- Create and update user documentation
- Conduct user testing of the application

Technical Council

- Create and update technical documentation
- Conduct ongoing usability studies



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Example 2: Governance Modeling with Sticky Notes

Note: This example can be done in-person with physical sticky notes, or virtually using an online whiteboarding tool such as Miro or Google Jam.

