PILLAR ROBOTS

Purposeful Intrinsically motivated
Lifelong Learning Autonomous Robots

D12.1
Project Quality Handbook

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 101070381.

1. Change Control

1.1. Document Properties

Name deliverable	**Project Quality Handbook**
Deliverable No.	**D12.1**
Work Package title	**Management**
Author/s	**BOTIFOLL, Lluís**
Contributor/s	**-**
Reviewer/	**DURO, Richard**
Editor/s	**DURO, Richard**
Dissemination Level	**PU**

1.2. Revision History

Version	Date	Change	Modified by
0.1	13/10/2022	Draft Table of Contents	Ll. Botifoll
0.2	09/12/2022	Internal version proposed (first full draft)	Ll. Botifoll / R. Duro
0.3	13/12/2022	Comments and contributions received by other partners	-
0.4	23/12/2022	Final full draft submitted for internal review	Ll. Botifoll
0.5	28/12/2022	External version approved	R. Duro
1.0	28/12/2022	Final submission to EC	R. Duro

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

2. Contents

3. Executive summary

The Project Quality Handbook represents an essential document of the PILLAR-Robots project as a large and complex collaboration that depends on people being able to work together in an effective manner. It outlines the internal procedures of the PILLAR-Robots project consortium in terms of project execution, administrative management, management structures, communication and collaboration.

This handbook contains all relevant information for Consortium Partners, members of the Advisory Board and the Equality & Ethics Committee, and Associate Partners to refer to during the project lifetime. It aims to establish an environment in which all the members involved in the project can work within the agreed standard of quality and completeness, in order to fulfil the project objectives.

The project quality handbook describes the following aspects of the project:

- The consortium and work packages;
- Overall Management of the project and decision-making structure;
- The procedures and channels in place for Internal and external communication;
- Deliverable and milestone management;
- How the project performance will be measured, monitored and accounted during the project;
- Reporting;
- How changes and issues will be identified, dealt with and reported;
- How ethics, gender and other equality issues are addressed.

4. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
AB	Advisory Board
AMGA	Annotated Model Grant Agreement
EA	Ethics Advisor
EC	European Commission
EEC	Equality and Ethics Committee
IM	Innovation Manager
IP	Intellectual Property
IT	Information Technologies
ITM	IT Manager
ITSC	IT Standards Committee
MC/GA	Management Committee / General Assembly
PC	Project Coordinator
PM	Project Manager
WP	Work Package

5. List of Figures

6. List of Tables

7. Introduction

7.1. Deliverable structure

The current deliverable is structured in the following sections:

- **Project management -** This section consists of the roles assigned to the various management structures established within the consortium;
- **Communication management -** In this section of the deliverable, internal and external communication procedures are presented;
- **Deliverables management -** This section deals with the procedures and tools designed to ensure the timely delivery and the quality of project deliverables;
- **Reporting -** The periodic, the final and the internal progress reports are described in this section, with details concerning the technical and the financial reporting;
- **Project Re-planning and Change Management -** This part of the current deliverable covers the actions to be taken during the project lifespan, in case it needs to be adjusted, in order to better answer the identified need;
- **Ethics –** In this section key ethical issues identified by the consortium are described;
- **Gender and diversity –** This section describes the initial assessment made by the consortium on gender equality issues.

7.2. Methodology

This document is based on the terms and conditions established in the Grant Agreement and its Annexes, as well as in the Consortium Agreement specifications and requirements. This handbook has been produced following the European Commission guidelines and templates.

Document	Access	Availability
Grant Agreement	Confidential	Participant portal Teams Project Management Platform
Annotated Model Grant Agreement (AMGA)	Public	EC website[1] Teams Project Management Platform
Consortium Agreement	Consortium	Teams Project Management Platform
Horizon Europe Online Manual	Public	EC website[2]
OEI - Requirement No. 1 (D1.1)	Confidential	Planned for M15
Dissemination & Exploitation Plan (D11.1)	Public	Planned for M6
Data Management Plan (D12.2)	Public	Planned for M6
Quality & Risk Management Plan (D12.7)	Public	Planned for M3

Table 1 - Documents used for PILLAR-Robots project implementation

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf
[2] https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Online+Manual

8. Project management structure

8.1. Introduction

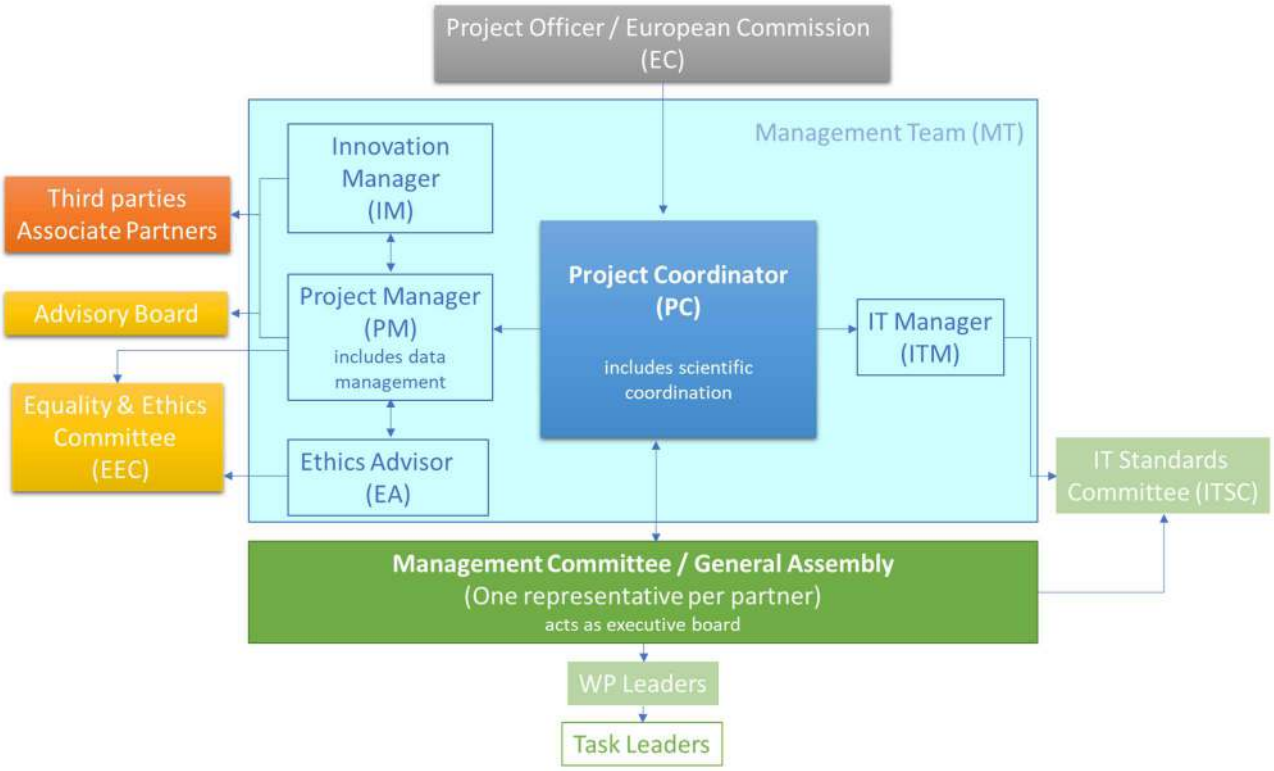

Figure 1 - Project management structure

UDC plays the role of coordinator and bears overall responsibility for the management of the project, and for all liaisons with the European Commission (EC). Project governance bodies are presented in the table below.

Level	Management body	Composition	Main responsabilities
Task	Task Leader	One person, from partner leading the task	Co-ordinate and report on progress of detailed work in the task; responsible of the deliverable/s connected
WP	WP Leader	One person, from partner leading the WP	Co-ordinate and report on progress of detailed work in the WP; management of the operational plan
Project	Management Committee / General Assembly	Consortium representatives, Project Manager and Project Coordinator	Make strategic decisions concerning project co-ordination, direction, and overall management and planning; project risk management ; strategic decisions on major changes; resolution of any major conflicts.
Project	Management team	Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Data manager, Innovation Manager, Ethics	Overall coordination; day-to-day project management; implement decisions of the MC/GA; assist all other management bodies.

		Advisor and IT manager	
Project	Project Coordinator	Richard Duro	Ensures the project is fully implemented in line with the DoA and along the rules and procedures contractually agreed. This role includes scientific coordination of the different outputs.
Project	Project Manager	One person from UDC	Assistant to the Project Coordinator
Project	Innovation manager	One person from PAL, as T12.5 Leader and WP11 Leader	Works closely with the Project Manager in the exploitation strategy and involvement of third parties
Project	Data manager	One person from UDC as T12.4 Leader	Monitor the implementation of the Data Management Plan
Project	Ethics Advisor	External independent person	Manages ethics-related sensitive aspects and interact with the EEC. (WP1, T12.6)
Project	IT manager	One person from UDC	Assist the IT Standards Committee (WP12)
Project	Equality and Ethics Committee	3 members external to the consortium	Advice on ethics, gender and other equality isues (T12.6)
Project	Advisory Board	At least 5 members, external to the consortium	Advice on key deliverables and potential project impact (T11.8)

Table 2- PILLAR-Robots decision-making structure

8.2. Project Coordinator and Project Manager

The Project Coordinator (PC) is Richard Duro, who is assisted in his role by the Project Manager (PM), Lluís Botifoll.

At the Kick-off Meeting it was decided to bring together the two functions of Project Coordinator (PC) and Scientific Coordinator (SC) in the person of Richard Duro (UDC). Hereinafter, both denominations have to be understood synonymous and be used interchangeably. As Project Coordinator, it is ensured the project is fully implemented in line with the Technical Description (Annex I) and along the rules and procedures contractually agreed between the consortium and the European Commission. As Scientific Coordinator, it is ensured that the work plan is implemented in conformity with the objectives, methods and quality standards described in the Grant Agreement and internal control. For the sake of simplicity, the Scientific Coordinator activity will be considered subsumed within the Project Coordinator role.

The duties of the Project Coordinator include:

- Overall control the progress of the Project;
- Contact with the European Commission representatives, at technical and administrative level;
- Prepare conclusions and recommendations on project management ;

- Monitor the implementation of the Operational Plan at task level;
- Promote project efficiency;
- Procurement management (budget line of Other Direct Costs);
- Resolve technical and IPR incidents and consultations arisen from project partners;
- Validate project deliverables ;
- Identifying potential risk factors ;
- Supervision of the IT Knowledge management tool functioning;
- Ensure the contact with the WP leaders;
- Watch over the contractual documentation;
- Maintain an electronic infrastructure for ease of communication within the Consortium, and for the controlled, shared access to project documents.

The duties of the Project Manager include:

- Manage day-to-day project development from the administrative perspective.
- Contact with the European Commission representatives, at technical and administrative level.
- Support the communication activities of the WP leaders;
- Make all practical arrangements in connection with meetings and other events;
- Prepare and distribute agenda and minutes of the Management Committee /General Assembly meetings;
- Coordinate the activities of the two external bodies: Equality and Ethics Committee and Advisory Board;
- Prepare technical and financial EC reporting;
- Internal reporting (through quarterly reports and informal means) that progress is produced according to plan;
- Verify agreed time-table development;
- Undertake a quality analysis of the project deliverables;
- Interact closely with the Innovation Manager in the accomplishment of WP11;
- Coordinate Amendment preparation;
- Resolve administrative incidents and consultations arisen from project partners;
- Provide and feed the knowledge in the TEAMS tool;
- Assisting partners in financial management: cost statements, CFS, EC platform.

8.3. Innovation Manager

The role of the Innovation Manager (IM) is described in the Annex I (Technical Description § 3.1.) This role is tightly intertwined with activity streams of all work packages but specially in WP11 (“Dissemination, communication and exploitation”).

Innovation management is a process that requires an understanding of the market aspects and technical aspects of the project, with the goal to convert the project results in sustainable long-term sources of value. Therefore, it requires the contribution from research / academic organisations, end-users, and industrial suppliers, all well represented in the PILLAR-Robots consortium. Innovation management is led by Alessandro di Fava (PAL).

This role of the IM is supported by all partners, and includes the following activities:

- Detect unmet needs: the project will provide unique insights on the market needs, and the way these needs are currently served by suppliers, therefore allowing the consortium to identify unmet needs that will be the source of further innovations;
- Identify relevant actors: it is key to the project success to establish a short list of stakeholders interested in the results of the project who can become Associate Partners;
- Identify results created during the project implementation (and propose appropriate IPR management);
- Contribute to the establishment of a better structured PIMOL community;
- Monitor external innovations: as technology landscapes tend to evolve rapidly in the area, the IM will conduct regular searches and inform the consortium;
- Establish the primary contact with friendly stakeholders and PPPs and platforms: the consortium will require Associate Partners (during and after the project) to bring the technology to market and reach mainstream adoption, as part of the exploitation planning, the consortium will therefore start discussions with ecosystem partners required to bring the project results to the next level.

The activity carried out by the Innovation Manager will be presented in D11.3 Stakeholders Activity Report and is framed within task 12.5 (IP and Innovation management).

8.4. Data Manager

The Data Manager (DM) will create and monitor the Data Management Plan compliance, including data protection requirements. This role is described in the Annex I (Technical Description § 3.1.). It is agreed in the Kick-off Meeting, the role of DM to be carried out by Lluís Botifoll, so that this activity be subsumed in the more general role of Project Manager.

8.5. IT Manager

This role is not foreseen in the Technical Description (Annex I) and included in the Management Team during the Kick-off Meeting. The IT Manager will supervise the functioning of the internal communication tools (Teams, GibHub). In addition, the IT Manager will be member of the IT Standards Committee and act as a liaison between the Management Committee / General Assembly and the IT Standards Committee; in this line the IT Manager will prepare the background for the ITSC meetings and report the recommendations adopted. Activity of the IT Manager will be framed within WP12 (T12.1 Task 12.1: Project administration). The IT Manager will be José Antonio Becerra (UDC).

8.6. Ethics Advisor

The involvement of an Ethics Advisor (EA) with appropriate expertise in ethics is highly recommended by the Ethics Executive Summary Report received from the EC, considering the project may raise significant ethics risks. The EA is aimed at preventing ethics issues from occurring by integrating ethics values-based requirements into the design of the project solutions.

Activities to be undertaken by the EA include:

- Preparation of an “Ethics Risk Assessment”, consisting of the evaluation and support in the monitoring of global ethical risks of the PILLAR-Robots project, with a duration of 48 months;
- Connection between the “Equality and Ethical Committee” (EEC) and the Consortium;
- Connection with the external ethics committees related to the partners;
- Membership of the EEC assuming the role of ‘rapporteur’ in it: preparation of the background for the meetings, internal procedure for documenting the sensitive aspects and mitigation measures;
- Writing of D1.1 – “OEI Requirement No 1”, to be delivered in M15;
- Writing of D12.3. "Trustworthy AI Assessment", to be delivered in M48;
- Writing of D12.6 “Ethics Management Activity Report”, to be delivered in M45.

A contract with Plus Ethics S.L. (https://www.plusethics.com) has been signed in order to ensure proper external and independent management of the ethics-related aspects. Francisco J. Castro, CEO of Plus Ethics S.L. will act as Ethics Advisor.

8.7. Management Committee / General Assembly

For the sake of a simplified decision-making structure, it has been decided to bring together in a single body the functions of the Management Committee (MC) and the General Assembly (GA). At the same time, considering the small consortium size, no executive board representing / acting on behalf of the Management Committee / General Assembly (MC/GA) will exist. This implies that the issues that affect the project and those that affect the consortium will be settled before the same body. This avoids having to discern between both aspects (project and consortium) that are inextricably linked. Thus, both denominations will be considered synonymous and may be used to refer to the executive body par excellence.

The MC/GA is the decision-making body of the project, chaired by the PC. The MC/GA will be composed of one senior representative from each of the partner organizations and the PC. It is responsible for the strategic orientation of the project: overall direction of all activities, reorientation whenever necessary, budget revision, incorporation of new contractors if necessary, and measures taken to manage defaulting partners. To ensure the project is advancing according to the work plan, and is adapting as necessary to external changes, the MC/GA approves any proposal to the EC for modification of the Grant Agreement or Annex B (Technical Description) and approve all progress reports prior to submission to the EC. The MC/GA meets at least once year face-to face, but it is making intermediate decisions, when necessary, in a fluid manner via online communications, at least twice per year.

The MC/GA is composed of the PC and one representative of each partner. The role of the MC/GA is to make decisions on high-level management issues, involving mainly technical, financial, exploitation, dissemination, planning and control matters. The PC chairs all meetings of the MC/GA (unless decided otherwise in a meeting of the MC/GA). The MC/GA will be responsible for all high-level decisions that have an impact on the project at the consortium level. This includes decisions on technical refocusing proposed by the participants, the allocation of funds (received and distributed by the Coordinator), dissemination and exploitation issues, possible changes in the Consortium and resolutions of conflicts on technical, financial and strategic issues. In this sense, the MC/GA will cope

with the collective responsibility of the consortium for the technical implementation of the project. It will also pay attention to all problems that might arise from the technical implementation, especially when participants' financial liability is concerned. Potential solutions to overcome those issues are detailed in the Consortium Agreement. The decisions adopted by the MC/GA may have an impact on agreements such as the contract signed with the EC and/or the Consortium Agreement.

As part of the MC/GA, the Coordinator is the solely responsible with notifying the EC of any changes that could alter the contract signed with the Commission, to obtain their approval. On the other hand, the MC/GA is also responsible for updating the Consortium Agreement once modifications have been approved and for making amendments, which should be signed by all partners.

The MC/GA will take place evenly spaced over the duration of the project at the request of the Project Coordinator (at least 3 per year), or whenever necessary, at any other time at the request of one of the partners. The MC/GA is not necessarily face-to-face and can be held through electronic means. The PC shall propose an agenda for each coordination meeting. Formal procedures and rules, such as voting mechanisms, are defined in the Consortium Agreement.

8.8. Advisory Board

The project is actively supported by a group of at least five external international experts, a part of them having industrial and SME background, that could promote the advancement of TRL of project results by facilitating its dissemination and exploitation. Experts of the Advisory Board (AB) are providing their expertise to the project's benefit. The aims of this body are twofold: a) review main project deliverables and b) discuss main open project topics and produce recommendations. In a rotating way, each of them will be invited in one of the face-to-face MC/GA meetings. An individual contract establishes the legal framework for this cooperation. No remuneration is foreseen for the members of this body; however, travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the Coordinator.

8.9. Equality & Ethics Committee

The Equality & Ethics Committee (EEC) is an external independent body composed of 3 members that are selected by the MC/GA, according to the candidates proposed by the Ethics Advisor and/or the members of the consortium. One of the members is Flavia Roteda, from Plus Ethics S.L. The EEC is created to monitor the ethics dimension in the relevant project activities, and the equality measures and impacts. This committee will have direct connections with the corresponding equality & diversity offices of the partners that have them as well as the development of WP10 on ethics and regulatory aspects. The effort required by the EEC has been established in four meetings throughout the project, with a maximum duration of 2 hours each. An individual contract establishes the legal framework for this cooperation. No remuneration is foreseen for the members of this body. Meetings of this body will be online.

8.10. IT Standards Committee

The IT Standards Committee (ITSC) is not foreseen in the Technical Description (Annex I). The ITSC is an internal consultation body that defines software / hardware standards for the different technical project results during the entire project duration. It is made up of 6 members, one per participant in the consortium. The activity carried out is framed within WP10 - Socio-economic, ethics and regulation impact of open-ended learning systems. An 'activity report' summarising the main topics discussed and the recommendations produced will be prepared for M48. Eventually, activity carried out may constitute a formal project task, if it is judged convenient to request an Amendment by the Management Committee. The ITSC is coordinated by Jose A. Becerra (UDC).

8.11. Work Package Leader

The WP Leaders are responsible for the implementation of the foreseen activities in each of the corresponding WPs they are leading.

The WP Leader must:

- Secure the accomplishment of the technical objectives of each task;
- Monitor and report deliverables and milestones;
- Ensure the transmission of the work to other tasks and/or WPs;
- Follow the person month specific allocation;
- Assess the quality of the outputs;
- Facilitate and actively participate in the technical meetings required to track the work progress and discuss and report project details;
- Archive all documents related to the work package that they are leading;
- Refer to the Project Coordinator and/or the MC/GA in case of major issues that affect the completion of the expected work.

8.12. Task Leader

The Task Leaders are responsible for the implementation of the task, in close collaboration with the WP Leader.

The Task Leader must:

- Secure the accomplishment of the technical objectives of each task;
- Monitor and report deliverables and milestones;
- Follow the person month specific allocation;
- Assess the quality of the outputs in collaboration with the WP Leader;
- Facilitate and actively participate in the technical meetings required to track the work progress and discuss and report project details;
- Archive all documents related to tasks;
- Refer to the WP Leader and/or MC/GA in case of major issues that affect the completion of the expected work.

9. Meetings

9.1. Project Meetings

Meeting dates are established using the Doodle online service (http://www.doodle.com) or similar services, to ensure the participation of all partners. The frequency of the following meetings has been decided upon, for a smooth collaboration between all partners of the consortium:

- Ordinary face-to face Management Committee / General Assembly meetings – at least one per year;
- Online Management Committee / General Assembly meetings – at least 2 per year;
- Equality and Ethics Committee – four times throughout the project;
- Online Advisory Board meetings – as needed;
- Work Package status review meetings (WP Leader and PC) – as needed;
- Working meetings at WP level – as needed;
- Extraordinary meetings – as needed.

It is mandatory for all the partners to participate in the face-to-face MC/GA meetings. It is highly recommended to participate in the online MC/GA meetings.

A rotating system will be established for face-to-face meetings in order to visit all the partners' headquarters.

The structure of face-to-face meetings differs from online meetings. The face-to-face meetings will usually last two/three days, the first being intended for a broader audience than that of the consortium and allowing contact with third parties and Advisory Board members. Online meetings will be of short duration and much more focused on operational issues of the project.

Besides that, additional meetings carried out by the PC will take place for bilateral coordination with the partner or dissemination purposes with third parties (conferences, meetings with other projects, dissemination, international presentations, etc.)

9.2. Meeting's agenda

The PM is responsible for distributing the agenda and the meeting minutes. He is in charge of making sure that all the items in the agenda start and end at the correct time and cover all the envisaged topics.

An agenda is prepared in advance and distributed to the members, in order to gather their feedback on the topics to be discussed at the meeting. Any partner can notify the meeting chair about adding extra items to the original agenda. If a decision regarding a certain item must be made by the Consortium, it has to be specified in the agenda.

The PM shall prepare and send a written agenda for each MC/GA meeting with 15 calendar days in advance. Any agenda item requiring a decision by the Members of a Consortium Body must be identified as such on the agenda.

Any Member of a Consortium Body may add an item to the original agenda by written notification to all the other Members of that Consortium Body, sent at the latest 7 calendar days in advance.

9.3. Meeting Minutes

Minutes should be written for all meetings at project level. Meetings at WP or task level do not require minutes.

The PM shall produce written minutes of each MG/GA meeting, which shall be the formal record of all decisions made. The PM shall send the draft minutes to all participants within 10 calendar days of the meeting. The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days from transmission by the PM, no participant has sent an objection in writing to the PM with respect to the accuracy of the draft of the minutes. The PM shall upload the meeting minutes in the TEAMS workspace, in the Meetings section.

The minutes will contain the following information:

- Meeting info, date, venue, agenda;
- List of attendees;
- Schedule of the meeting;
- Decisions adopted;
- Action list, detailing the task, action holder, and due date;
- Annexes (optional).

10. Communication Management

10.1. Introduction

Communication is an important aspect in achieving significant results in a complex project such as PILLAR-Robots. In order to maintain an efficient communication among the Consortium partners during the project lifecycle, a series of communication guidelines and tools are implemented.

10.2. TEAMS collaborative space

A collaborative space has been set-up on the ©TEAMS Platform. The TEAMS platform will be used for almost all project management activities. TEAMS is a single, flexible project and work management platform that unifies planning, controlling, execution. TEAMS will help all project partners work together while maintaining maximum control and transparency. Although the parent company is American, the content of TEAMS is hosted and developed in the European Union. TEAMS guarantees the highest security standards.

Every person interested receives a private invitation to the project workspace by the PC. The access is secure, all partners having to be authenticated in order to access the workspace. Every partner

has full permission to read/write within this shared folder. The platform allows for collaborative work on documents.

The TEAMS platform is supporting the following activities:

- File sharing and document repository;
- Knowledge management system;
- Internal videoconferencing communication; and
- Group calendar

10.3. Repository Gibhub

An organization account has been created in GitHub for the project which is accessible at this web address: https://github.com/pillar-robots.

There will be two acceptable ways of using the GibHub organization: a) directly, by creating the repositories into the project site; and b) indirectly, by forking other research groups' repositories and syncing periodically.

The role responsible for maintaining the repository will be the IT Manager held by José Antonio Becerra (UDC). Agreement on repository names and other details required will be decided by the IT Manager after consultation with the IT Committee. The Project Coordinator will invite the Management Committee, the rest of project team members, and the Advisory Board to join the GitHub's organization.

10.4. Contacts list

In order to facilitate the communication between consortium members, a contact list is assembled. The contact list includes:

- Organization name;
- Partner representative's name and surname;
- Representative's email address;
- Representative's position into the project;
- Representative's related involvement into the project work packages (leader or participant).

The contact list will be updated periodically if any personnel change will incur during the project lifecycle. After the final contacts list has been created, for a better management of the list, only the PC or the PM will make any changes in the Contacts List. Each consortium member will inform the PC of any change in the personnel working on the project and the PC will make the necessary modifications within 7 days.

10.5. Email communication

To facilitate email communication between PILLAR-Robot partners, the following rules will be applied:

- Avoid spamming - Send email only to persons responsible or in charge or that are directly involved into communication;
- Avoid sending all emails as “High Importance” – This feature should be used as is intended, only for communications that are very important and requires special attention from the recipient;
- Use explicit details in the email “Subject” field – Provide a short explicit description for the email content in order to easily identify the email, especially email threads;
- Use structured content for “Subject” – structure: <Project Name> “-“ <WP/Task/Deliverable related> “/” <Short description>.
- Example: PILLAR-Robots – D10.1 / Quality Handbook Final Version Review for Partners.

10.6. Emailing repository

All email communication related to the implementation of PILLAR-Robots, addressed to the consortium as a whole, to anyone of its members, external bodies (AB, EEC) and third parties (such as PIMOL community, stakeholders) will be copied to the following account: pillar-robots@pillar-robots.eu for the purpose of producing a central PILLAR-Robots e-mail repository that allows to monitor the level of advancement in the project implementation and, in case of disagreements, trace aspects such as dates of notifications or decisions adopted.

11. External communication

The external communication for the project is handled through WP11 – Dissemination, communication and exploitation. In D11.1 (Dissemination and Exploitation Plan) carried out under Task 11.1 (Plan for dissemination and exploitation) the different external communication means to be used will be specified.

After executing dissemination activities, the members of the consortium will provide relevant information (i.e. type of event, when and where it was held, target audience and number of attendants, number of dissemination material handed, contacts made, photographs from the event, contact lists and etc.) to the WP11 leader – PAL. WP11 leader will provide a template of a feedback form to be filled in by partners after each event. PAL will keep a log of dissemination activities and publications with minimum information. A report compiling factsheets of the different dissemination, communication and exploitation events organized/attended will be presented within D11.2 (Dissemination and Exploitation Impact Report)

12. Reporting

12.1. Introduction

Over the course of the project, Periodic Reports and Final Report must be submitted to the European Commission as scheduled. The Periodic Reports will be submitted at the project mid-

term stage (in the duration of 60 days after M18) and one at the concluding stage of the project (M36).

General reporting principles will be as follows:

- The PM will request WP Leaders to report on their WP;
- WP Leaders will prepare inputs for the periodic report by collecting inputs from their WP Task Leaders;
- The PM will combine all this information into a coherent periodic report;
- Also, during the project, Internal Periodic Reports will be submitted to the TEAMS platform, in preparing the Periodic and Final Reports for the EC.

12.2. Periodic reporting

With respect to the reporting periods of PILLAR-Robots for the European Commission, reporting will be ensured over three reporting periods, the first from month 1 to month 12, the second from month 13 to month 30 and the third one from month 31 to month 48. UDC will be responsible for writing and delivering the corresponding reports and the policy brief at the end of each reporting period. All partners will contribute whenever required.

The periodic report must be submitted by the coordinator within 60 days following the end of each reporting period. It contains the periodic technical and financial reports.

The periodic technical report consists of two parts:

- Part A - it contains a publishable summary and the answers to the questionnaire covering issues related to the project implementation and the economic and social impact, notably in the context of the Horizon Europe key performance indicators and monitoring requirements. Part A is generated automatically within the Partner's Portal, based on the information entered by the participants through the periodic report and continuous reporting modules of the electronic exchange system in the Participant Portal. The participants can update the information in the continuous reporting module at any time during the life of the project;
- Part B - it is the narrative part that includes explanations of the work carried out by the beneficiaries during the reporting period. Part B needs to be uploaded as a PDF document following the template of Part B Periodic Technical report.

The periodic financial report consists of:

- Individual financial statements (Annex 4 to the Grant Agreement) for each beneficiary;
- Explanation of the use of resources and the information on subcontracting and in-kind
- Contributions provided by third parties from each beneficiary for the reporting period concerned;
- A periodic summary financial statement including the request for interim payment.

12.3. Final Report

For the final reporting period, the coordinator must submit, in addition to the periodic report, the final report within 60 days of the end of the final reporting period. The final report covers the whole project and is composed of a final technical and a final financial part:

- Final technical report is a publishable summary of the entire project:
  - Overview of the results and their exploitation and dissemination;
  - Conclusions on the project;
  - Its socio-economic impact of the project;
  - An up-to-date link to the project website;
  - Project logos, diagrams, photographs and videos illustrating its work (if available).
- Final financial report:
  - Final summary financial statement that is automatically created by the system (consolidating the data from all individual financial statements for all beneficiaries and linked third parties, for all reporting periods) and that constitutes the request for payment of the balance;
  - In some cases (and for some beneficiaries/linked third parties) it must be accompanied by a certificate on the financial statements - CFS (one certificate per beneficiary/third party).

Like the summaries for the periodic reports, the final summary must be written in an understandable style for a non-specialist audience. The coordinator must ensure that none of the materials submitted for publication include confidential or 'EU classified' information.

12.4. Internal Progress Reports

Internal Progress Reports will be used to monitor both technical activities, resources, and budget expenditures. Internal Progress Reports process consists of a technical report and a financial report for the period in question. Technical Progress Reports will be prepared and issued by the WP Leaders, with the contribution of Task leaders, in correspondence with periodical technical meetings for each face-to-face MC/GA meeting of the consortium.

12.5. Quality Evaluation Reports

By implementing the Quality Management Plan, the PILLAR-Robots consortium will carry out quality checks and will present the results in regular quality evaluation reports to be produced by all partners; summarized and formatted by the Project Manager, and approved by the MC/GA.

These internal quality evaluation reports will be produced in project months 12, 30 and 48 immediately before the preparation period of the official reporting to the EC. Considering Periodic and Final reporting as key project milestones, face-to-face MC/GA meetings will preferably take place on dates close to the reporting deadlines. The most important conclusions in the quality evaluation reports will be presented in the Periodic and Final reports, as requested by the Grant Agreement.

13. Project Re-planning, Change Management and Conflict Management

13.1. Project re-planning and change management

In an ambitious and dynamic project of this type, changes of customer requirements are expected and will generate changes to the project plans. Handling changes in project plans will therefore be regarded as a normal part of project management, to be carried out without any undue formalities.

Project progress will be continuously monitored, and wherever discrepancies between plans and progress are observed (or predicted), corrective actions will be initiated. In particular, the MC/GA will carry out risk assessment activities at their regular meetings. This involves identifying project risks and assessing their probability and the nature of the consequences, should the risk be incurred. If the risk level is considered high, changes in project planning may be necessary. A set of project risks has already been identified. It will serve as the basis for risk assessment at the first meeting of the MC/GA and will be continuously updated thereafter.

Decisions on any necessary re-planning of detailed tasks at the work package level will be made by the Work Package Leader, in consultation with all partners involved in the work package. Results should be reported to the Project Coordinator. Project level changes will be the responsibility of the MC/GA (except in the case of major changes). In addition to any reviews arising from regular risk assessment, the detailed project plan will be reviewed at least once per year and revised if necessary. Certain types of re-planning may require the approval of the European Commission (EC), according to the terms of the Grant Agreement. It will be the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to contact the EC regarding the matters.

Project re-planning which results in changes deemed to be major must be handled by the MC/GA, using voting procedures. Changes will be deemed to be major if any one partner protests about a proposed change, or automatically if the change involves:

- Modifications to the Consortium Agreement or to the management structures and principles;
- Problems with the performance of any partner, or partner request to leave the Consortium;
- Re-allocation of budget between work packages and/or partners.

Implementation of major changes may require a change in the overall project plan, detailed project plans or the work breakdown structure of the project. As explained above, the management structure of the project essentially follows the work breakdown structure of the project. The management structure can therefore adapt to changes in the work breakdown structure.

13.2. Conflict Management

Identification of any conflicts that arise in the project is the responsibility of all project participants. Any signs of disagreement between project participants should be notified to the WP Leader or the PC (as appropriate), who should then initiate the conflict resolution procedure, escalating to higher level only if necessary.

The manager (WP Leader or PC depending on the case) should separately contact all parties either in person, through videoconference or by telephone, to identify the different viewpoints (it is important not to use email: that medium very often leads to a rapid escalation of disagreements). Based on a clarification of viewpoints, the manager should try to propose a solution. If one is achieved, it should be recorded in a short report; if not, the problem should be escalated. If level 1 fails, the matter should be taken up by the PC. If level 2 fails, an extraordinary MC/GA meeting should be called. At this level, all work should be in writing. If conflicts relate to matters that would normally be assessed as part of the reviews by the EC, the views of the EC should be sought.

14. Ethics

Ethical aspects must be seen from a double perspective: a) procedural with respect to the activities of the project itself, and b) impact, with respect to the expected results of the project.

Procedural aspects are addressed in the work plan in the newly created WP1 (Ethics requirements) and WP12 packages (Management). There is a specific external and independent body (the EEC) and above all the role, also external and independent from the Consortium, of the Ethics Advisor.

At the kick-off meeting, and following the recommendations of the Ethics Executive Summary Report (ESR-ETH) received from the EC, the creation of the role of the Ethics Advisor in the Management Team was decided. This role will support the PM and address the potential ethical risks derived from the research carried out within the project. Furthermore, WP 12 establishes an Equality & Ethics Committee (EEC) devoted to advice the consortium in ethical sensitive project activities. The Ethics Advisor will act as rapporteur for the EEC meetings, preparing the necessary documentation for ethically sensitive aspects to be discussed in this body and measures to alleviate undesirable effects of sensitive activities carried out in the project. In this way ethical desirability and social acceptability will be tackled and accounted for all throughout the lifespan of the project.

According to the analysis carried out by the PILLAR-Robots' consortium during the submission of the proposal, the project could potentially present ethical issues concerning 3 categories, which are the following:

- Human beings (block 2).
- Personal data (block 4).
- Artificial intelligence (block 8)

To test and validate the PILLAR-Robots solutions, participatory and training activities will be conducted as part of WP7-9. These processes will involve the participation of humans and the treatment of different categories of personal data, which requires the establishment of specific safeguards. It is expected that all participants will be adults, members of stakeholder organisations and able to provide consent. It is not planned to include minors, other specific vulnerable groups or any type of volunteer that is not a stakeholder in the AI, data and robotics ecosystem. There is an exception in WP8 where the validation will involve several groups of minors. Specific consent informed measures will be adopted in this WP and a particular task of monitoring and reporting will be in place (D8.9: Informed consent requirements report). Consent forms will be adapted, maybe, in

case of some members of industrial organizations who may need it. Thus, the project will undertake research on seeking to develop the PILLAR-Robots technologies requiring a particular approach by analysing the stakeholders' needs, perceptions and opinions, as well as best practices. In order for the project to be acceptable from an ethical perspective, legally compliant and socially desirable, it is of the utmost importance that ethical issues are appropriately addressed from the outset of the project.

Ethical aspects related to the ethical and societal implications of the project will be addressed in WP10.

15. Gender and Diversity

The PILLAR-Robots consortium has not identified so far significant sex/ gender-related issues related to the research and innovation activities of the project. The only issues identified as relates to the technologies to be developed in the project or in future commercial deployments are connected to the potential of the PILLAR-Robots algorithms to discriminate on the basis of gender identifiers. However, we will monitor the algorithmic model once created and address these risks.

Furthermore, the robotics industry is usually male dominated, but the PILLAR-Robots consortium hopes to make major gains in this area, promoting a more prominent role of women in Security research and innovation. The consortium also pledges to take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. The PILLAR-Robots project will aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level. PILLAR-Robots will also actively support the Horizon Europe objective to promote gender equity by ensuring that females have the same opportunities as male team members to participate in the project team and project events, such as technical workshops, training courses, consortium meetings, etc. and to take leading positions in the project.

Indeed, the consortium make-up already shows active participation of women in the key activities of the project. Specifically, at the proposal submission time there were 16 women in a total of 48 total staff identified as key personnel in the PILLAR-Robots project team, i.e. is 33% (this percentage will be monitored throughout the duration of the project). The general picture however is progressively improving, also because of gender equality policies and career development programs that are in place at the participant organizations which promote diversity and equality of opportunities.

16. Conclusions

This document presented the main information of the day-to-day project management and provided links to further details where needed in order to offer a common reference for all PILLAR-Robots consortium partners.

Furthermore, the document described the main tools for communication, planning and management. It also specified the quality plan and provided guidelines on procedures to be applied during the project, as well as security, ethical and gender and diversity issues addressed by the consortium.

The guidelines in the PILLAR-Robots Project Quality Handbook shall be followed and the tools provided shall be used by the Project Consortium members.

This handbook will be updated throughout the project lifetime whenever needed.

www.pillar-robots.eu

Funded by the European Union