Hard Facts: Estimating Cost and Workload

The money and time you need to be able to implement your project are a crucial factor you need to think of in the beginning:

How much money do your project activities require? Where will you get it from?

How much time will the project activities take? Do you have this time, besides your studies/job/family etc.?

MONEY

The costs for everything you have to organize, prepare and buy make up to budget of your project. The can be of different types

- Material costs can be, for example, books you need for the preparation of a speech or fair-trade chocolate for participants of a workshop.
- Travel costs can arise for group meetings or travel to the location of the organized event.
- Personal costs might occur if you need to pay a speaker for a workshop or a public discussion.

First of all, you need to decide if and how much you want to spend out of your own pocket for the project.

Inform yourself of the possibility to receive funding. If you want to apply for funds or sponsorship, it is crucial to have planned a budget. So it is important to define a limit for the material and travel costs in advance.

TIME

The biggest resource required is the time you want to spend implementing your project. Make sure you still have enough time for your job, university and other duties.

The questions below will help you to define the time you can spare for your project.

Estimate workload and costs

- You should estimate the time and costs of every single activity. If your project will be implemented by a working group, a moderated discussion (by a member of the group) is helpful.
- An important precondition for a realistic estimation of costs and workload is that everyone has the same understanding of the activities. Therefore,

the more detailed the objectives and the project planning, the better. This will make it easier for you to estimate the workload of the activities. If your estimations differ from each other, usually an averaged workload can be defined. In this case the group moderator can also encourage everyone to explain on which basis you estimated the workload.

- The estimated workload and costs should be written down in a table. The total amount of estimated time and workload can now be compared with the resources that have been allocated as the time you are willing to spend.
- If a significant gap between resources and estimated costs becomes apparent there needs to be adjustments to the project activities. In this case the planned project needs to become smaller (fewer activities, fewer outputs created) in order to fit to the limited resources.

Example:

Name of Activity	Workload (Hours)	Budgetary Items (€)				
		Travel costs	Material costs	Fees	Other costs	Sum
visit the room in the city hall	2,5	€8,5	-	-	-	€8,5
Promote the event	5	€10,5	€40	-	€5	€55,5
Preparing Catering	2	€5,0	€20			
...						
Total Amount	9,5	€24	€60	-	€5	€64

Your Workload

Answering the following questions will help you estimate realistically how much time you are willing and able to spend for your project – additional to your obligations in university or your job and other duties.

Question 1: weekly workload (assuming a normal week)
How many hours per week are you able and willing to spend on the project realistically?
_____ hours per week

Question 2: daily workload

divide the number of hours per week through 7

result: _____ hours per day (if the result is less than 1 hour, specify with 0,xy)

Question 3: "preoccupied-days"

How many days are there until the end of the project during which you do not have time at all for the project (full-time job, studies, vacations, free week-ends,..)?
Please count these days.

result: _____ preoccupied days

Question 4: total workload

There is a total number of ____ days until the end of the project.

Please subtract the number of preoccupied days from the total number of days.

____ days minus ____ blocked days is ____ free work days.

Please multiply you daily workload in hours with the number of free work days.

____ hours/day multiplied with ____ free work days is ____ total number in hours.

Total result: _____ hours of workload do you have available for the project.