



Standards for lightweight  
IT service management



 **APMG** International

# FitSM Case Study

EOSC-HUB PROJECT

Service Management

MALGORZATA KRAKOWIAN | SERVICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MANAGER  
SY HOLSINGER | CONTINUAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENT MANAGER  
PAVEL WEBER | SMS COORDINATION SUPPORT

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#### Contact us at:

eosc-hub.eu  
[info@eosc-hub.eu](mailto:info@eosc-hub.eu)  
 @EOSC\_eu

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

EOSC-hub project (eosc-hub.eu) brings together multiple service providers to create the Hub: a single contact point for European researchers and innovators to discover, access, use and reuse a broad spectrum of resources for advanced data-driven research.

**The EOSC Marketplace (marketplace.eosc-portal.eu) is a tool where researchers can discover, order and access the services, analytical tools, data management tools, storage and computing resources they need for their work.**

The EOSC-hub project mobilises providers from the EGI Federation, EUDAT CDI, INDIGO-DataCloud and major research e-infrastructures offering services, software and data for advanced data-driven research and innovation.

### Project Objectives

- **Simplify access to a broad portfolio of products, resources and services provided by the major pan-European and international organisations through an open and integrated service catalogue**
- **Remove fragmentation of service provisioning and access to high-quality digital services in Europe and beyond through the technical integration and adoption of standards for interoperability of compute, storage, data and software platforms**
- **Consolidate e-Infrastructures by expanding capacity and capabilities and improving service quality**
- **Widen the access to services to all user groups including researchers, high-education, business organisations and expand the user base**
- **Increase innovation capacity of research e-infrastructures.**

### EOSC-hub in numbers

- €30M funding, 108 FTEs, 3 years (2018-2020)
- **100 Partners from 53 countries, 76 beneficiaries:**
  - Major e-Infrastructures service providers (EGI, EUDAT): compute, storage, data management
  - 20+ Research infrastructures: domain specific services

# BACKGROUND OF THE EOSC-HUB PROJECT & SERVICE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

The EOSC-hub SMS ensures all participants have a clear understanding of all concepts, terminology and activities to be carried out

Implementation and running Service Management Systems is one of the main goals of the EOSC-hub project with approx. 624 'Person months', billing around 4 million EUROS

**The EOSC-hub project adopts a service integration and management approach to coordinate suppliers and integrate them to provide a single business-facing "EOSC Hub". The approach aims at integrating interdependent services from various service providers into end-to-end services. EOSC-hub addresses service integration and management by:**

- allowing the end-to-end composition of services,
- aligning scope, value, service catalogue entries and their specifications across providers,
- managing relationships and collaboration between the providers, who will be represented in the Service Management System through a dedicated board,
- defining standardisation and modularisation.

EOSC-hub manages the suppliers to provide flexible, innovative, standards and consistent services. In addition, the project will act as the central point where demand of advanced services for data-driven research meets supply.

EOSC-hub defines and implements an EOSC Service Management System (SMS), i.e. the entirety of activities performed to facilitate service delivery to the customers. These activities are directed by policies and are structured and organised by processes and procedures.

The EOSC-hub SMS ensures all participants have a clear understanding of all concepts, terminology and activities to be carried out. EOSC-hub implements best practices based on the lightweight standard, FitSM ([www.fitsm.eu](http://www.fitsm.eu)), incorporating service planning, delivery, operation and control of the services in the service catalogue.

The project gathers requirements for the implementation of ITSM processes by all the service providers in the catalogue. The processes include the management of: **Service Order, Service Portfolio, Service Level and Reporting, Customer Relationship, Supplier/Federation Member Relationship, Capacity, Service Availability and Continuity, Incident and Service Request, Problem, Configuration and Change**, and finally **Release and Deployment**.



## Q: What issues & challenges have you had to face in establishing a SMS for EOSC-hub?

Changing the mindset from competition to collaboration

A

**The team has encountered a range of service management-related issues and challenges.**

**These can be summarized as;**

- Defining scope of centralised and delegated activities within the processes.
- Integrating existing management systems.
- External expectations (coming from outside the project) are forcing changes in the initial implementation plan.
  - Quick wins were expected by funders faster than anticipated.
  - Additional requirements regarding integration with other projects were not part of the initial scope
- None of the involved members of the team was dedicated to the task. The project needed to share human resources.
- Changing the mindset from competition to collaboration.
  - EOSC SMS needs to integrate existing systems from organisations that have been providing services individually for a long time.





## Q: What made you choose FitSM?

**A** FitSM was chosen during the project preparation phase by the project management and editorial team responsible for writing the project proposal for European Commission evaluation.

FitSM has a history in the e-Infrastructure landscape, as the standard was an output of the FedSM project. This was an initiative co-funded by the European Commission Seventh Framework Programme to improve service management in a select set of federated ICT infrastructures whilst bringing experience from this improvement to a broad network of federated communities (2012-2015).

FitSM can cope with federated environments, which often lack the hierarchy and level of control seen in other situations

### There are a number of reasons why FitSM was right for us;

- FitSM can cope with federated environments, which often lack the hierarchy and level of control seen in other situations. It provides a baseline level of ITSM that can act to support 'management interoperability' in federated environments, where disparate or competing organisations must cooperate to manage services, such as in the European Open Science Cloud.
- FitSM has been widely adopted, especially in the research community, public institutions, federations and e-Infrastructures as well as other relevant EC-funded projects.
- FitSM is an open standard with material freely available, a feature which is appreciated in the academic and research space.
- Project Coordinator, EGI Foundation, achieved ISO 9000 and ISO 20000 certification by starting from FitSM.
- Many partners of the EOSC-hub projects had previous experience and training in FitSM, so the community already had a good understanding of the standard.
- For all of the above reasons, it was the clear choice for the EOSC-hub management system.

## Q: What kind of projects is FitSM used for?

**A** FitSM was and is used for EC projects with a high number of partners (e.g. EGI-Engage 43 partners, EOSC-hub 74 partners, EOSCpilot 33 partners) collaborating in a federated environment. The majority of partners are research departments and research institutions spread across Europe - Projects usually last approximately 3-4 years.

FitSM provides a common language

**Q:** Prior to FitSM, did your service management teams / professionals follow a prescribed framework or methodology?

**A** Several partners from our community attempted to implement ITIL best practices, but due to a lack of clear requirements and the large volume of processes required to be implemented, it was not successfully adopted.

ITIL concepts were used to write formal reports, but only around individual topics rather than for any organisational modelling.

**Q:** How do you envisage FitSM addressing the problems and challenges highlighted?

**A** In a complex environment, managing a large number of people from different backgrounds, a blocking issue can be as simple as poor communication. People may understand concepts and terms differently.

FitSM provides a common language for people to clearly communicate and articulate an organisational model based on a shared methodology – it crosses the boundaries.

**Q:** Describe your initial experience with FitSM

**A** The standard is described in easy to understand language and structure and is free of charge. This allowed the project to easily adopt it without the need for additional use of financial resources.



## Q: What is the initial feedback on FitSM from your colleagues?

**A** FitSM standard is highly appreciated - especially the fact that there is a clear, well developed training program supporting implementation.

Additional resources offered free of charge by FitSM are very useful, although it would be good to see more guidelines and templates.

## Q: How have you been able to tailor it to your individual requirements?

**A**

- The standard comes with a small number of generic requirements without imposing an implementation process.
- It recommends (rather than stipulates) activities and roles. It allows stakeholders to have a starting point for discussions to take place, rather than a blank sheet, which facilitates discussions on existing processes and helps to identify what is missing.
- The lightweight approach means that it is something realistic to implement.
- The processes are well-structured to force interconnectivity between them. The interface brings together the various teams and departments across the organisation, breaking any potential silos.

The lightweight approach means that it is something realistic to implement

## Q: What do you think are the top features of FitSM?

**A**

- It clarifies expectations between parties.
- It makes work more efficient through the definition of procedures that are needed.
- It provides a list of topics the providers should honestly consider.
- With a small number of requirements, it is easy to put a management system in place, achieving fast results.



**Q:** What are your initial thoughts on FitSM as a resource for companies and service management teams and individuals?

**A** We think FitSM provides a relevant and accessible approach even for companies/institutions without any previous experience in service delivery methodology. It comes with clear definition of requirements, objectives, activities and roles. In addition a set of templates and guidelines is available.

**Q:** Do you see any restrictions in terms of industries and types of projects?

**A** We think that FitSM has no restrictions although it doesn't go deeply into budget and legal topics so it's possible that larger organisations would seek to complement FitSM with additional resources.

In addition, approaches, strategic decision-making and market drivers are not covered by FitSM in detail.

**Q:** Are there any specific tips, advice or recommendations you would offer to others to get the most out of the standards and resources?

**A**

- Invest in staff training at the beginning.
- Treat FitSM as a supporting tool rather than a bible. It should support Management System Implementation rather than restrict.
- Start with trust rather than excessive control over everyone and everything.
- It is better to start with a small scope and later extend it based on experience.

We think FitSM provides a relevant and accessible approach

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### More about training and certification

- FitSM Standards for Lightweight IT Service Management  
[apmg-international.com/product/fitsm](https://apmg-international.com/product/fitsm)
- More information on FitSM and ITEMO  
[fitsm.itemo.org/](https://fitsm.itemo.org/)



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+44 (0) 1494 452450



[servicedesk@apmgroupltd.com](mailto:servicedesk@apmgroupltd.com)



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