



SEAI Guidelines on Milestones and Deliverables for Research, Development & Demonstration (RD&D) Funding Programme Calls

Guidelines on Milestones and Deliverables

This document aims to provide guidance for applicants to the SEAI RD&D funding programme calls on developing work plans and defining appropriate milestones and deliverables for their proposal.

- Milestones are verification points that signal readiness to proceed.
- Deliverables are tangible submitted outputs that document completed work.

Milestones	Deliverables
Control points in the project that help to chart progress (<i>kick-off meetings, steering committees, first-draft of a survey, prototype, etc.</i>). They may correspond to the completion of a key deliverable, which allows the next phase of the work to begin or is needed at intermediary points.	Outputs to be submitted to SEAI (<i>publication, leaflet, progress report, brochure, policy brief, list, dataset etc.</i>) It is recommended to have at least one project deliverable per 6-month reporting period where possible.
Milestones are critical checkpoints in the project timeline. They mark the completion of key project phases or activities and are a means to control if the project is advancing as planned. When defining milestones, the SMART principles should be followed, i.e. milestones should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.	A deliverable captures the implementation of project activities in analysis reports, feasibility studies, strategy documents, pilot action reports, training documentation, etc. It presents, in an aggregated form, the outcomes of intermediate steps of a certain activity. Deliverables contribute to a project output. It is recommended to limit the number of project deliverables to 2-3 per work package, depending on project size and duration.
Each milestone should correspond to the completion of a significant task or group of tasks. Milestones often align with decision points when important decisions must be made.	Deliverables are the documentation that capture the implementation of project activities. They can be analysis reports, feasibility studies, action plan documentation, pilot action reports, training modules, permits, etc. Deliverables contribute to project outputs.

In summary, milestones check progress and readiness while deliverables demonstrate completed outputs.

A milestone is not a “task done”; rather, it is a decision/verification point signalling that:

- a critical step is complete,
- a risk has been reduced,
- or a go/no-go decision can be made.

Category	What they are	What they are not
Milestones	<p>Control points in the project that help chart progress — used to verify that key steps or conditions are met before the next phase begins.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a verifiable decision • a control point • a readiness check • a phase gate • a validation event 	<p>Not routine activities – “Kick-off meeting held” — meetings alone are not milestones in themselves but may contribute to a milestone if a clear verifiable decision or output results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an activity • a meeting • a deliverable • a vague statement • a task • a document submission
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable for formal submission to SEAI and may be reviewed as part of technical and financial reporting. • Tangible outputs such as reports, datasets, publications, prototypes, or brochures. • Items with clear submission dates, used for monitoring progress in periodic reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not vague descriptions or activities (e.g., “analysis conducted” without an output). Deliverables must produce a concrete item. • Not internal working documents that are not intended for funder submission. Deliverables must be formally submitted. • Not decision points or checkpoints — they do not indicate “go/no-go” readiness. Milestones perform that role.