



Operational Excellence - Behind the Scenes

February 4, 2025

Strategic Project Management Office

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- Executive Director for Project Management and Business Service Quality
 - Illinois alumnus
 - 22 years in Higher Education
 - 15 years @ Illinois

Agenda

1. History
2. Current State
3. 2025 and Beyond
4. Q&A



History

Next 150 Strategic Plan

Implement and promote Operational Excellence @ Illinois, a campuswide initiative to streamline, innovate, reduce costs, improve services, and coordinate processes at all levels.



Operational Excellence @ Illinois

Foundational goals underlying Operational Excellence as a means to preeminence



Promote successful and sustainable changes in **organizational structure, processes, and staffing models** that increase our ability to carry out institutional missions



Derive value from qualitative and quantitative data to identify opportunities for **organizational efficiency**

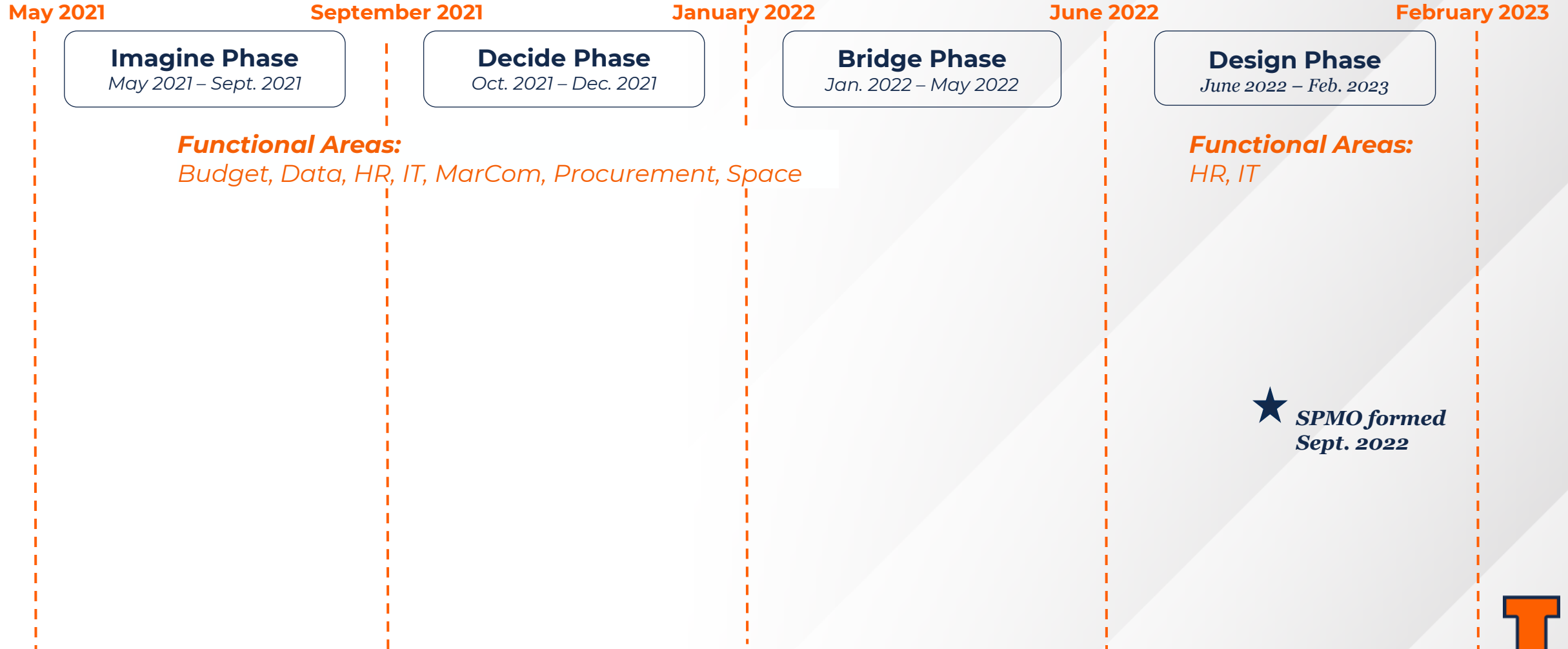


Introduce efficiencies that **increase staff, faculty, and student satisfaction**, allowing employees to see how their work upholds our missions and improves services

Eight Focus Areas:

- Budget
- Capital Delivery (new)
- Data
- HR
- IT
- MarCom
- Procurement
- Space

History



History

January 2023

January 2024

February 2025

MarCom Design

Jan – July 2023

Procurement Design

Jan – May 2024

Capital Delivery Assessment

May – Sept 2024

Implementation Phase – HR and IT

Mar 2023-Dec 2024

**Advisory Governance
Process Established**

March 2023



**OpEx Initial List Review
Completed**

Sept 2023



**Organizational
Consulting Services**

June 2024



SPMO Projects Start

April 2023



**Capital Delivery
Program Initiated**

February 2025



Implementation Phase – Budget, Data, HR, IT, MarCom, Procurement, Space

March 2023 - Current



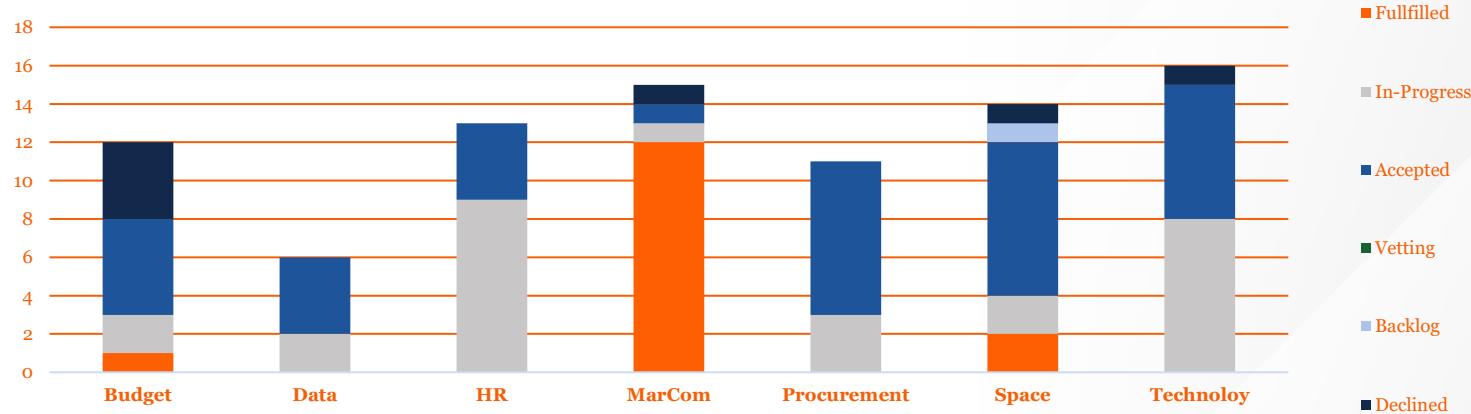
**Huron
Contract
Ends**

★ **SPMO led**



Progress

SPMO Operational Excellence Portfolio
(88 Total Opportunities)



18% Fulfilled

30% In Progress

43% Accepted

Inclusion and Coordination

Cross-functional efforts

- AI Chatbot
- Branding
- FABPlus
- GenAI Solutions Hub
- Data Mentorship
- Website Mgt. COE

40
SPMO led efforts to-date

32

Colleges / MAUs engaged in Design and Opportunity Implementation

590+

Services mapped for HR, IT, Marcom, Procurement

70+

People trained in Change Leadership and Service Excellence

65+

Best Practice documents artifacts created, shared

~25k

Brand templates wordmarks created



Current State

SPMO Teams and Roles

Strategic Project Management

Organizational Consulting



Operational Excellence

Oversees initiative, provides project and program management, **facilitates governance** process, **fosters collaboration** and communication, provides full and accurate visibility of project progress, strives for **continuous improvement**.



Other Project Management

Provides project and program management support for other **strategic initiatives**, established standard approaches to project management, offers templates, facilitates and **promotes PM collaboration across campus**



Facilitation Services

Provides **group facilitation** services that empower people to **deliver change**, works with units/depts/teams throughout campus to **improve processes** and discover **innovative solutions**, support focus groups, strategic **planning**, and creating action plans for other business needs

Governance



Structure

Executive Sponsors

Paul Redman, Kim Kidwell



Provide **executive leadership** as well as a link to the Chancellor and Provost. Together with the functional sponsors have **project approval** authority

Functional Sponsors

Robin Kaler, Mairéad Martin, Shari Mickey-Boggs,
Lowa Mwilambwe



Provide **functional area executive leadership**. Together with the executive sponsors have **project approval** authority

Advisory Governance Committees

Budget, Capital Delivery, Data, HR, IT, MarCom,
Procurement, Space



Offer **input** on project proposals, make **recommendations**, and provide oversight of ongoing initiatives. 8-10 participants per group (109 total)

Strategic Project Management Office

Becky, Kristie, Andy, Katy, Michelle, Stephen, Tom



Provide **program and project leadership**, facilitate governance committees, set direction for enablement teams. Monitor projects led by functional areas.



Key Collaborators

Project Team(s)

Other Project Managers

Other Program Managers

**Service Excellence Team (SET)
Best Practices**

**Service Excellence Team (SET)
Change Support**

**Service Excellence Team (SET)
Tracking Impact**

**Collaborative Leadership Team
(CLT)**

Committees, Councils, Caucuses

System Office(s)

Functional Area Leaders

Campus Executive Leadership

Provost's Office



Addressing Campus Needs

Representative Campus Issues

HR: *Distributed HR, prolonged time to hire*



50+
Distributed HR
departments consolidated

13%
Reduction in the year over
year time to fill for vacancies

IT: *Need for increased IT support and resources*



11
Op. Ex. efforts
supported

2
Collaborative solutions hub
implemented

MarCom: *Disparate branding strategy*



Unified Branding identity implemented

Data: *No solution for data governance*



Single Permanent structure recommended;
interim structure implemented

Budget: *Asset tracking constraints*



3 UI Campuses utilizing **FABPlus**

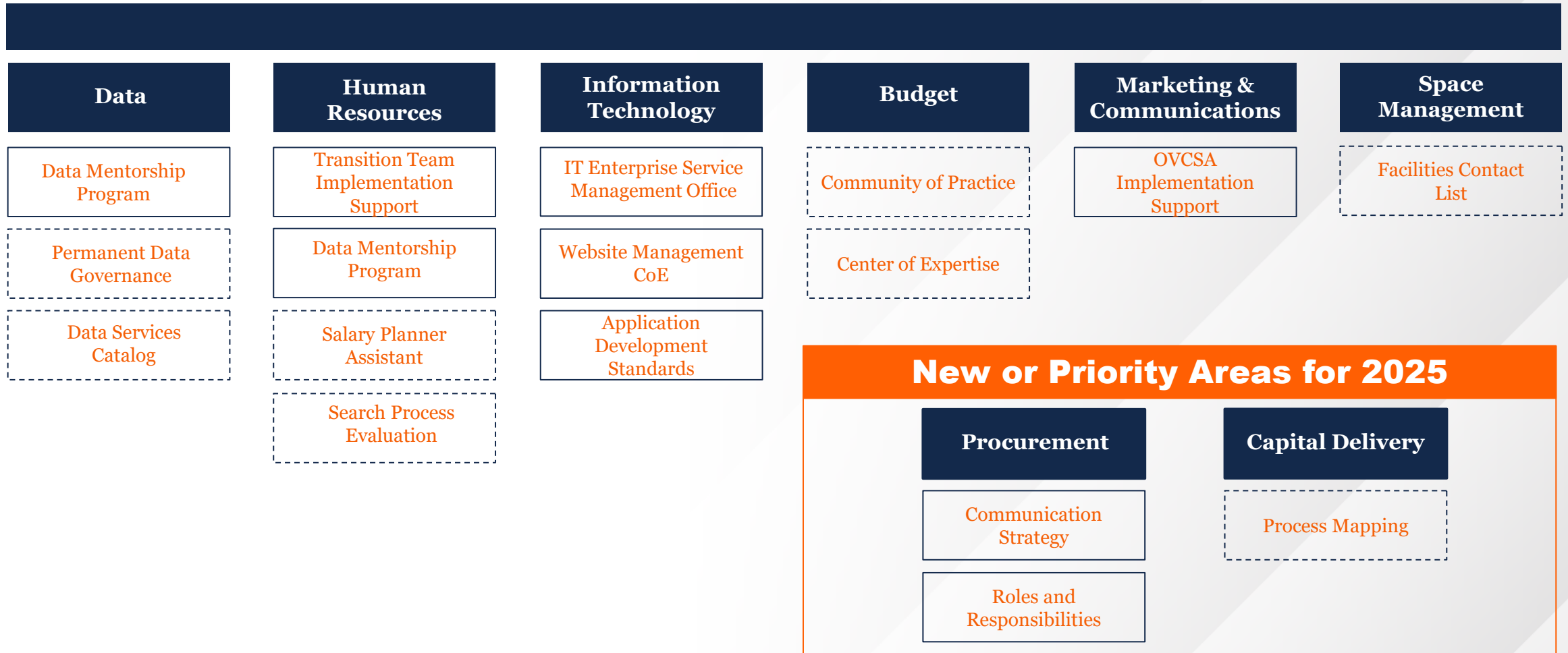
Procurement, Capital Delivery: *Operational and service challenges*



70+ Recommendations; **AI Chatbot implemented**



Current Efforts



 Planned or non-started project

Poll:

Please choose a current effort area that you would like to hear more about.

Survey link: <https://forms.office.com/r/ChjEdLYdcR?origin=lprLink>

QR code:



[Results Link](#)

2025 and Beyond

Boldly Illinois Strategic Framework

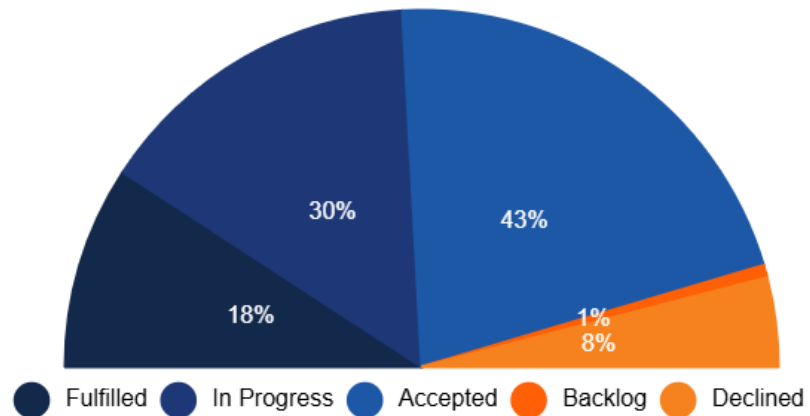
To create this framework, we must streamline our processes, reduce redundancies and improve the quality and quantity of services throughout campus.

**COLLABORATE.
INCLUDE.
EMPOWER.**

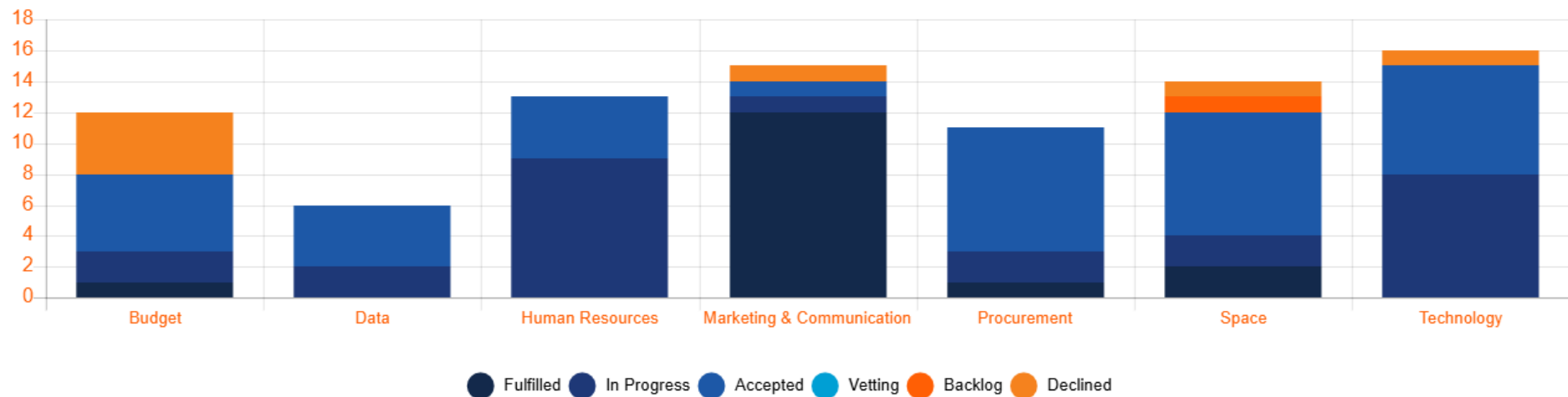
BOLDLY ILLINOIS 2030

Original Opportunity List

Opportunity Status



OpEx Portfolio



Procurement

Through collaboration with the PCMO, this portfolio of projects establishes the foundation for innovative solutions and projects in year-2.

Procurement Operational Excellence Priorities for 2025

Enhanced Communications

- Develop Communication Strategy
- Standardize Communication of Policy and Procedure Revisions
- Standardize Information Sharing Format

Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

- Publish PCMO v. Related Offices (e.g., Payables) Roles and Responsibilities

Update PCMO Website

- Simplify PCMO Website Navigation
- Align Terminology Across Resources
- Hyperlink PCMO Website from BusFin site

Provide Standardized process Guidelines

- Standardize Requisition Rejections v. Returns
- Develop and Publish Decision Trees

Establish Customer Training Program

- Build Customer Training Program

Enable Enhanced Data Utilization

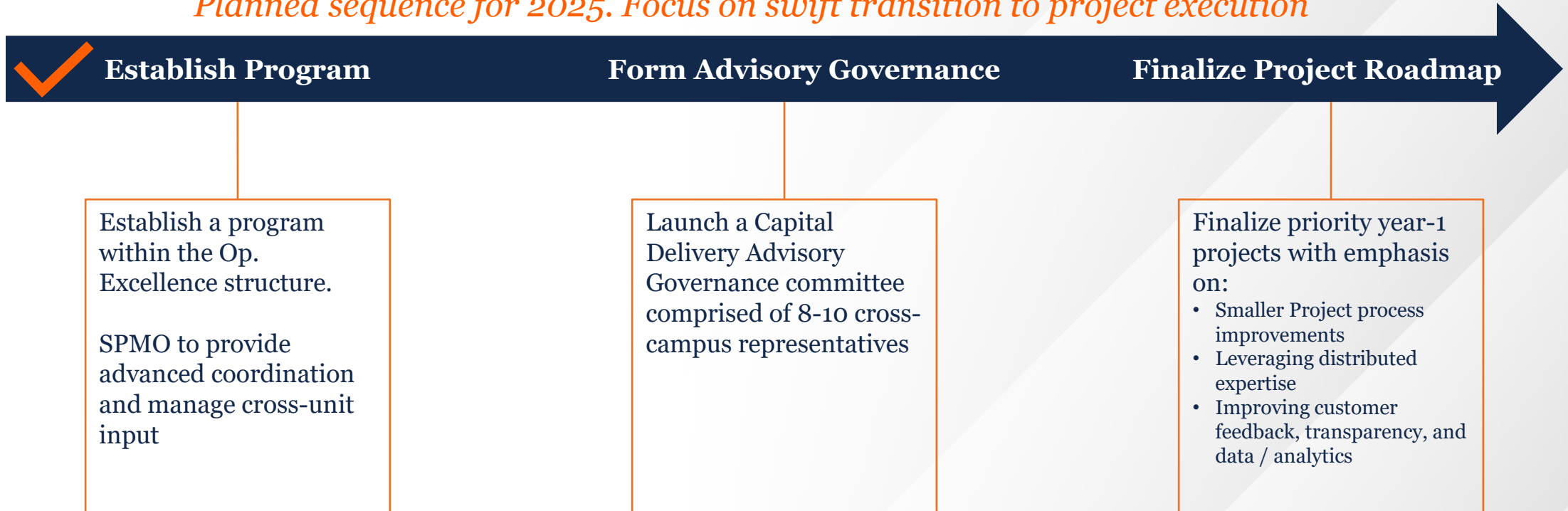
- Allocate Data Analyst Time to PCMO
- Establish and Leverage PCMO KPIs
- Create PCMO KPI Dashboard / Unit Templates



Capital Delivery

Building on the Capital Delivery Functional Design Team efforts, the SPMO in coordination with F&S, will **establish and facilitate projects identified and prioritized from recommendations** to improve the project delivery process.

Planned sequence for 2025. Focus on swift transition to project execution



Ideas

1. Advisory Governance
2. Campus
3. University Leaders
4. Collaborators



Organizational Consulting

- New service for campus!
- Help teams create plans, improve performance, and make decisions via facilitated dialogue
- Primary focus on Administrative, Business, and Operations units/teams
- Also available to Academic and Research units



Stay Informed



- SPMO Website
 - spmo.illinois.edu
- Operational Excellence Website
 - operationalexcellence.illinois.edu
- Newsletter 
- Campus Communications
- Invite Us!

Poll:

Please suggest a committee (council, caucus, etc.) or two that SPMO should contact to share information about the work we are doing.

Survey link: <https://forms.office.com/r/v3iNK6VqiG?origin=lprLink>

QR code:



[Results Link](#)

Questions



Thank You

spmo.illinois.edu

