Aurora Earth Focus Group Liaison Handbook

Version 1.0

SPARKING TOGETHER

What exactly is this "**Focus Group**"? It is a way to facilitate the flow of ideas from the first spark through to manifestation as functionality on the Aurora Earth website. Ideas are collected and documented as described here in this handbook. They first pool in the Spark Reservoir (having been collected using this Focus Group Process) and then through the Project Management processes they continue on to the Implementation Team (IT) where they are brought into full manifestation on the website.

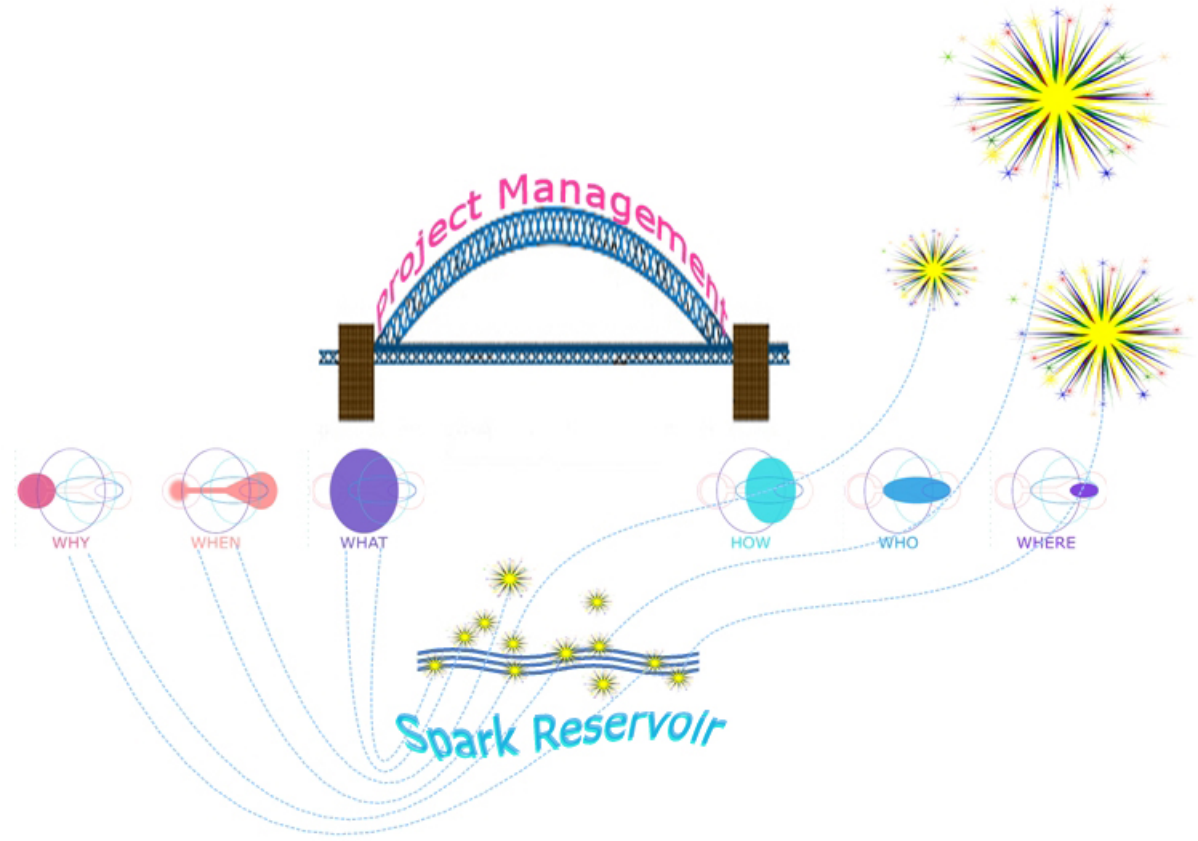


Figure 1 – Shows the flow of Sparks through Aurora Earth

PROJECT ANATOMY

The following explains the anatomy of an Aurora Earth Project as it enters and traverses the IT process. Whether the timeline for a project is measured in minutes or months, Figure 2 represents the process for success from start to finish. It depicts the relationship between the various project attributes. The attributes are the set of six important questions about any project: Why, When, What, How, Who & Where (and their answers, of course).

This section also explains how to avoid some of the common pitfalls for example: locking-in the "Where" before clarity is reached on "What" & "How" or letting the "How" drive the "What." There are certainly overlaps in the work of answering why-when-what-how-who-where, but approaching the questions in that order with the relative effort shown is a proven strategy for successful IT implementations that meet or exceed expectations.

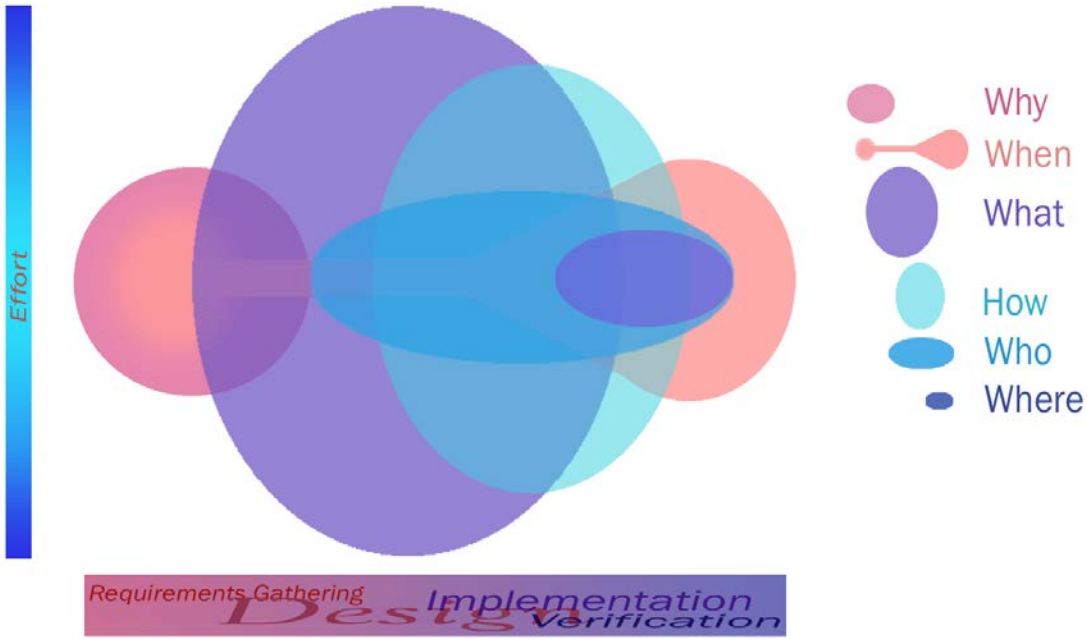


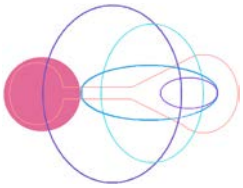
Fig 2 – VENN diagram of a Project Life Cycle

It's important to note that the Effort scale on the Y-axis is not necessarily directly proportional to man-hours, but rather a measurement of the effort related to focus and vision of the project's potential scope and implementation. This diagram depicts the value of clarifying the scope of exactly "What" needs to be done (and "Why") before implementation begins in earnest. That said, it is common for the total man-hours associated with "How" to exceed the "What" because usually more individuals are involved in implementation than design. The X-Axis shows the overlap and integration of the four typical phases of an agile IT Project Development Life Cycle.

Initially, the expectations of customers and stakeholders are revealed in the answers to Why, When & What. It is mission critical for all parties to clearly communicate their expectations and consistently understand the expectations of the other team members throughout the project in order to design and implement a win-win deliverable that meets or

exceeds expectations. Later in the project How, Who & Where are worked out to accommodate expectations.

Each of the six questions is explained and followed by a list of **exploratory questions** that frame and identify the complete answer. The **responders** for the question are named. And the required **doc set** is listed for each of the three types of projects (**Task**, **SCRM** & **Full Production Roll** as described in the Project Management Section).



WHY

This is the spark of inspiration that begins everything. It is a desire to solve a problem, enhance an existing solution, or simply to expand a business or market penetration. But above all, it must be said that "Why" nearly *always* has an emotional foundation. It's important for the service provider *(as well as the customer and stakeholder)* to discern and acknowledge that component of the inspiration because the determination of their ultimate satisfaction will be built upon that emotional foundation.

The "Whys" are the intention, they set the initial encryption of the work.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

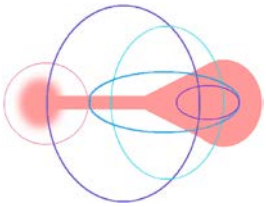
- What are the problems or issues you are trying to address with this project?
- Who are all people, organizations or entities your idea will affect and how will it affect them?
- What is your dream, your ultimate goal for this project?
- How will it feel when this project succeeds?
- What inspired you to commit to this project?

RESPONDERS: Stakeholders & Community Members

DOC SET:

Task	SCRM	Production Roll
Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper
	Specification	Specification
		Requirement Traceability Matrix

Bolded documents are required. Templates for each appear in the Appendices.



WHEN

Possibly the most contentious and least understood project attribute … "When will it be done?" Contentious, because frankly those with the most desire to pinpoint a ship date are not typically the same individuals who have the most control over project completion. So, process transparency and effective communication are essential to bypass issues regarding "When." The answers to "When" are set and handled by the Project Management processes.

The truth is it's very difficult to know exactly when an IT project will be complete until the full scope and technical details are examined and understood. And that doesn't happen at the onset of the project.

Initially the answer to "When" is a desire nestled inside the "Why." But even though the reliability of the initial target date is fuzzy at that point, it's very important to identify the intended delivery date as an attribute/input for the potential scope of the project. Then once work proceeds the focus on "When" typically fades a bit into the background behind all of the other project activities only to reemerge and gain clarity during the "Where" selection and once the "Hows" start winding-down.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

- What is the reason for selecting the target delivery date?
- Is this deliverable dependant on, or prerequisite for any other deliverable?
- Are there any critical third-party deadlines relevant to this deliverable?
- Who are all the people depending on this deliverable and what are their expectations for launch date?
- Are there market conditions that create an optimal window of opportunity?
- Are there resource constraints (i.e. skill set availability, dev environment availability, or domino tasks) that necessitate some of the work in this project to be performed sequentially rather than in parallel?
- Are there areas of the spec'ed functionality that are undefined and/or require research?
- What is more important: what is delivered or when it's delivered?
- What are the risks that could impact the schedule?
- Is there flexibility in the feature set if the implementation of certain features jeopardizes the delivery date?

RESPONDERS: Stakeholders, Project Management & IT

DOC SET:

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	Project Plan	Project Plan

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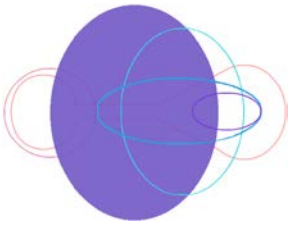


WHAT

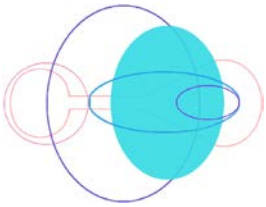
The "What" question captures expectations for the scope and functionality of the deliverable. This is the part of the project where all of the "Whys" get fleshed-out and are translated into ideas and solutions. It's important to have every stakeholder and customer represented for the "What" to be considered complete because this is where the actual boundaries of the scope of the project are decided.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

- What features do you need in this deliverable (full functionality description)?
- Can you prioritize the feature list based on your needs & interests?
- What are the details of the business issues you expect to improve or solve?
- Do you see this project unfolding in phases, or as one deliverable?
- What are the keywords that describe this idea (something that facilitates searchablity)?
- Are there any things that should be explicitly excluded from this deliverable?
- Does this deliverable need to integrate with any other product?
- How does this Spark overlap or integrate with other Aurora Earth Elements?
- How many simultaneous users can be expected to use this product and what are the performance (System Load/Stress) expectations?
- What OS/Platforms need to be supported by this deliverable?
- What third-party products are planned for this deliverable (e.g. Partner Integration, database back-end or security/encryption etc.)?
- Are there any needs to provide accessibility functionality for disabled users?
- What are the languages and/or international currency this deliverable needs to support (now or in the future)?
- Are there any eCommerce features required for this deliverable?
- Will every user of this deliverable have the same access to the features, or will there be different user types?
- What kind of documentation needs to accompany this Spark?
- What kind of Help functionality is required from inside the product itself?
- Will this product need to available on a 24/7 basis?
- Are there any requirements for this deliverable that are not related to the functionality of the software?

RESPONDERS: Stakeholders, Community Members & IT

Task	SCRM	Production Roll
Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper
Specification	Specification	Specification
Uses Cases	Requirements Traceability Matrix	Requirements Traceability Matrix
	Project Plan	Project Plan
	Quality Assurance Plan*	Quality Assurance Plan*
	Use Cases	Use Cases



HOW

This is where the rubber meets the road so to speak. It is the technical details for "How" the expectations become manifest. This part of the project may be considered the most creative and therefore the most challenging from the standpoint of maintaining the schedule. In many ways the quality and efficacy of this work is directly proportional to the amount of detail and preciseness of the answers to Why-When-What.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

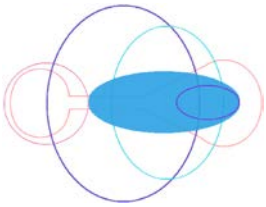
- Which technologies will be used to develop this deliverable?
- On which OS platform(s) will this deliverable be developed and supported?
- Are there any constraints on choices of how to implement this deliverable (time, cost, available man-hours, available skill sets, etc.)?
- What is the data model for this deliverable?
- What is the workflow for this deliverable?
- What is the object model for this deliverable?
- What are the assumptions/requirements regarding server & client side computing capability?
- What is the system architecture for this deliverable?
- What sample inputs/environments are needed to prototype/develop this deliverable?
- What version control strategy is in place to track builds?
- What are the algorithmic details of the logic in this deliverable?
- What is the proposed GUI?
- What are the proposed outputs of this deliverable?
- What are the strategies for system integration?
- What (if any) pre-existing code exists in the current product that might need to be re-worked to implement this deliverable and what would be the impact to existing functionality?

RESPONDERS: IT (Implementation Team)

DOC SET:

Task	SCRM	Production Roll
Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper	Spark Reservoir Concept Paper
	Requirements Traceability Matrix	Requirements Traceability Matrix
	Project Plan	Project Plan
	Specification	Specification
	Quality Assurance Plan*	Quality Assurance Plan*
	Use Cases	Use Cases

* The Global QA Plan applies to all work. When necessary additions/modifications are documented.
Bolded documents are required. Templates for each appear in the Appendices.



WHO

The personnel resources to design and implement the deliverable are usually a set team of individuals. Sometimes external resources are engaged to complete specialized or one-off tasks, or to boost available man-hours. The best-managed projects amplify the strengths of each team member in a coordinated plan to meet or exceed expectations while also enhancing the experience, contributions and recognition of each team member.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

- Do internal team members possess all the required skills to implement the design?
- If the skills required are not available on the team what is needed to locate and engage the required skills?
- Does the schedule require additional resources to augment the team?
- Are there domino tasks that double-book or leave resources idle in the schedule?
- Are there tasks that will challenge the assigned team member to the point where mentoring (internal or external) would benefit the team member and the project?
- Is training needed to implement or maintain this deliverable?
- How will the ancillary skills/tasks (i.e. technical writing, marketing, help desk) be staffed?

RESPONDERS: IT

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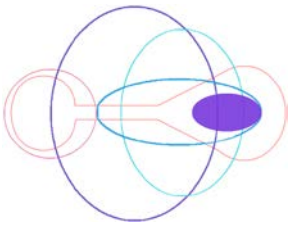

WHERE

In the old days of shrink-wrapped software there was no such thing as "Where" from the perspective of an IT project. Everything got burned onto a CD and the end-user was responsible for installing their software. However, today (and especially in the case of the Aurora Earth website) "Where" is a key element to project success and continuity. "Where" is the answer to who will host the deliverable ... the Internet Service Provider (ISP) as well as an Escrow Service for proprietary source code.

(IMPORTANT NOTE: for the initial launch of the Aurora Project site the "Where" should begin earlier and be more comprehensive. In the unique situation of initial launch there are a

greater number of details that need to be considered. The VENN diagram in Fig 2 depicts the effort and timing of "Where" for all subsequent projects).

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS:

- What are the global reliability metrics (including Load/Stress)?
- What is the Cost?
- What types of SLAs are offered?
- What kinds of training and support is available?
- Are all the technologies selected for the deliverable supported?
- What type of archiving functionality is available?
- What Visitor Statistics are provided?
- What type of marketing services are provided?
- What limitations are there on FTP, if any?
- What are the space limitations, if any?
- What Website extensions and scripting add-ons are available?
- What kind of email support is offered?
- What are the Domain Management offerings?
- Is Fault Tolerance (to include multiple physical locations) available either directly or through a partner?

RESPONDERS: IT

DOC SET:

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SPARK TRACKING

Sparks can come from a variety of sources for a variety of reasons. The Spark Reservoir exists to pool all the ideas and needs of the Aurora Earth Community in one place where they can be reviewed by all involved. The Spark Reservoir is therefore really a Change Tracking tool for the Aurora Earth Community.

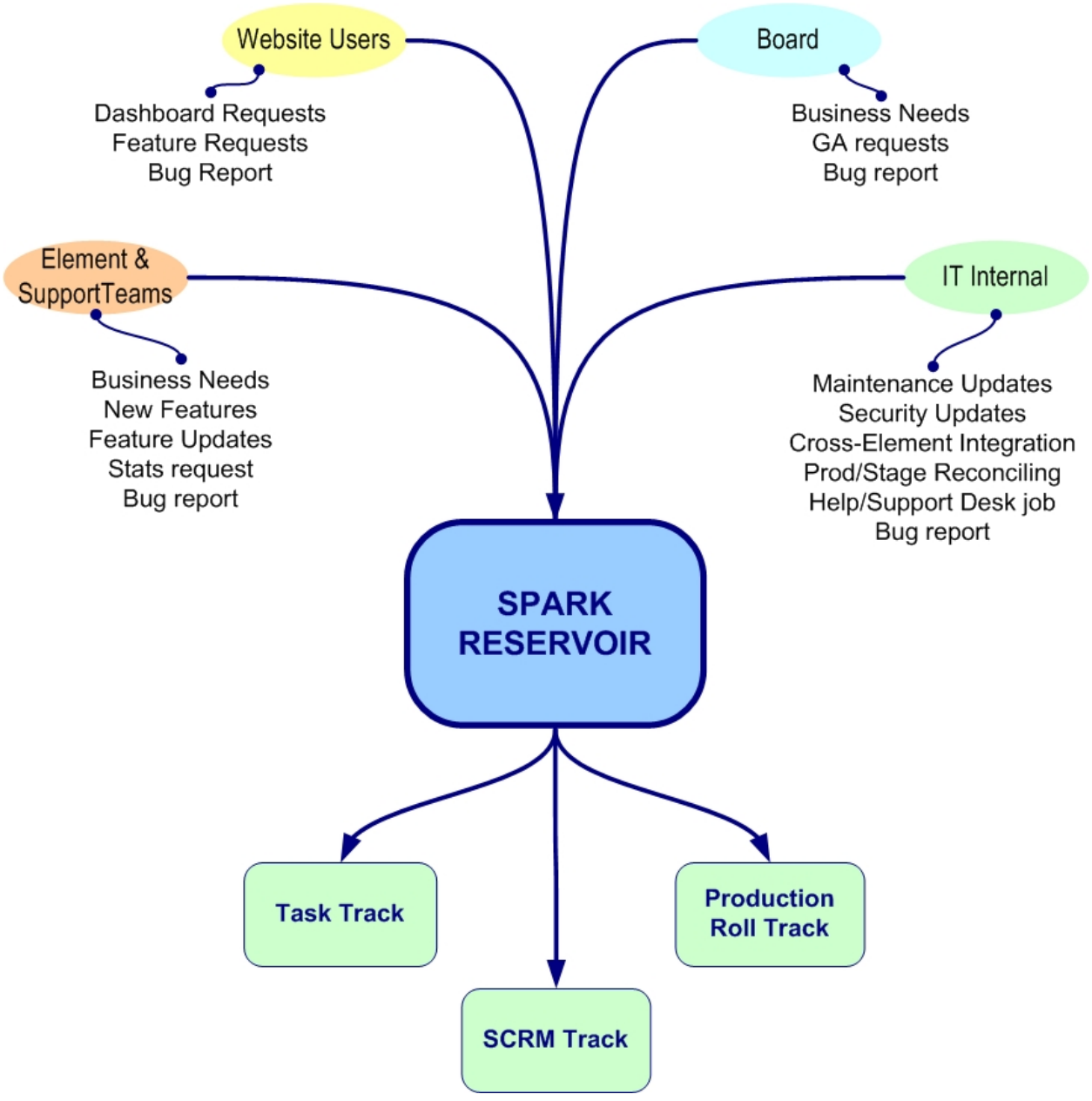


Fig 3 -- Workflow diagram for Change Intake and Disposition

Doc Set Definitions

The set of documents for each project contains the following:

A. Spark Reservoir Concept Paper – The initial idea as documented and presented to the Element Lead for approval. The concept paper contains the answers to the "Why" & "What" questions, which are used to answer the "When" question.
B. Project Plan – The Project plan has several sections including the Marketing plan and IT Implementation plan. The document combined document is the result of collaborative work by several different teams/individuals.
C. Requirement Traceability Matrix – This document itemizes each requirement for the project in spreadsheet form and functions as a checklist throughout the development life cycle.
D. Specification – This document is the design details for the Concept Paper. It documents the technical strategy for how the project will be implemented.
E. Quality Assurance Plan – This documents the plan for how the project will be verified and validated as acceptable for release.
F. Use Case – These are step-by-step instructions on how the project will be used once implemented (used for system testing).

The documents originate in the overall process as depicted here:

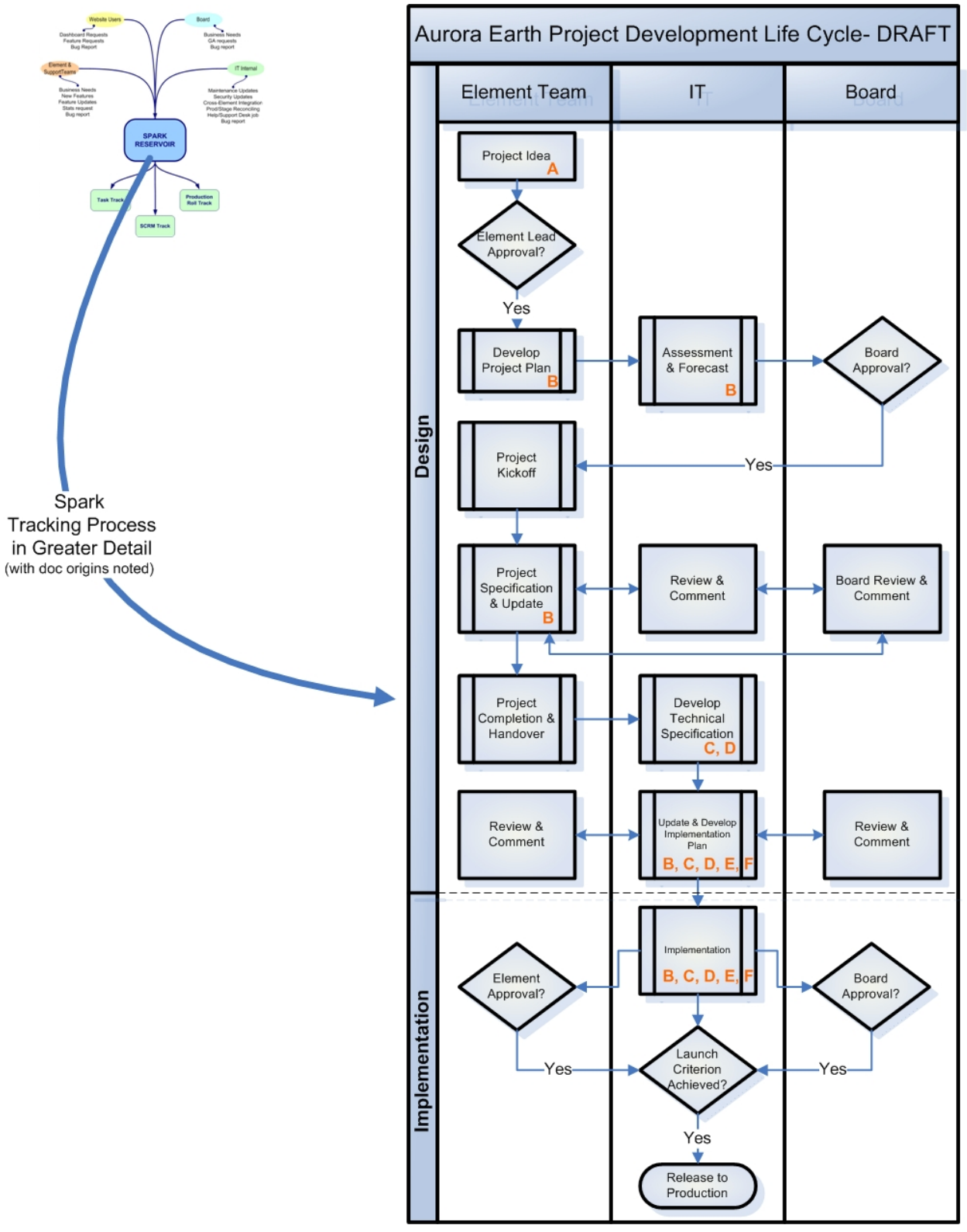
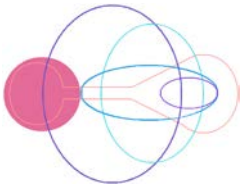


Fig 4 -- The cross-functional Process Workflow. Document creation points are noted in orange.

Appendix A – The Spark Reservoir Concept Paper

Spark Reservoir Concept Paper

To document the Why's & What's please precede each item with one of the following category types:
Must Have: Something that is completely necessary for the idea to work.
Desired: Something that would be great to have but not absolutely required.
Would be Nice: Exactly what it says.



WHY

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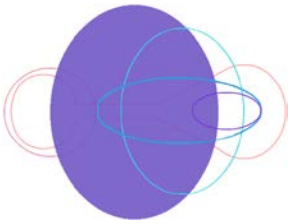
Conscious relationship & partnering

Imbue the relationship process with A&R frequencies.
Develop a KRYSTic-style relationship questionnaire
Use the Withness quiz to facilitate the matching process & possibly relationship advice.
Share KRYSTic frequencies into the relationship thoughts in this reality.



WHAT

The "What" question captures expectations for the scope and functionality of the idea. This is the part of the project where all of the "Whys" get fleshed-out and are translated into solutions.

- Members can sign up by subscriptions that can be a separate subscription from the global subscription to the web site. Can also be an add-on option for existing members.
- Might be intro or trial period/limited access with no fees.
- There must be a profile (withness quiz answers).
- Subscriptions start when they want to match.

- Could cross-pollinate with Family Sub-Element for relationship advice within existing relationships. So, a single person might meet someone and then move to that element to facilitate their continued path in the relationship with KRYSTic input.

- Ring 4 Veil-buster feed-in.

- Can also receive subscribers from other elements.

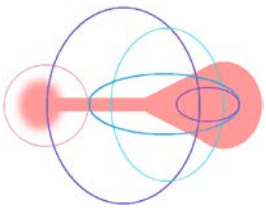
- The system will filter for the "Me-too" syndrome and get to the more real/authentic aspects of human relations.

- The system will use Dr. Johnson known compatibility & personality info and give it a give it a boost with KRYSTic frequencies (down-stepped) to facilitate matching and relationship management.

- The system will allow storing of demographic info for the match they seek:
    - Age
    - Ethnicity
    - Height
    - Children… etc.

- <INSERT SCREEN SHOT>

- The system will avoid KRYSTic conflicts with regard to subscription maintenance within this tool, but will encourage cross-pollinized connections to the other elements in order to assist the community member's long term evolution along their path.



WHEN

Ultimately the answers to "When" are set and handled by the Project Management processes. However, please describe when you would desire to see this idea live and related information.

- Ring 3.