

Overview of ORBP Implementation Process

Key Roles in the Research and Implementation Process

1) Tiered structure of committees to oversee, advise and manage the research process.

Research Executive Committee (REC)

- Top tier committee responsible for setting the strategic direction, defining research goals, and giving final approval for the implementation plan.
- Composed of the chief operations officer, chief administrative officer, bureau directors, a region representative and the engineer of ORBP.

Research Advisory Committees (RACs)

- Receive direction from the REC to prioritize research needs and make sure that research projects are aligned with MDOT's strategic direction.
- Convened in four functional areas:
 - Programs/Project Development.
 - Delivery and Operations.
 - Multimodal.
 - Planning and Finance.

Research Advisory Panels (RAPs)

- Formed for each project and chaired by a project manager.
- Ensure that the projects run smoothly, meet the needs identified by the RACs and the REC and produce results that MDOT can consider for implementation.

2) Individuals assigned to support and guide the implementation process.

Focus Area Managers (FAMs)

- MDOT staff designated by appropriate bureaus for their subject area expertise.
- Sit in an advisory capacity on RACs.
- Select the project manager and other MDOT staff who serve on each project's RAP.

Research Managers (RMs)

- ORBP staff who manage the administrative tasks of each research project.
- Support the implementation coordinator and project manager with facilitating, evaluating and documenting research implementation activities.

Implementation Coordinators (ICs)

- Facilitate research to meet needs and communicate intended uses of research results.
- Recommended by the FAM and supported by the RM; responsible for working with the RAP to develop an implementation plan.

Technical Monitors (TMs)

- MDOT users/experts in the project topic area.
- Focuses project team on user needs.

Project Managers (PMs)

- Assess the implementation plan throughout the project's life cycle.

Principal Investigators (PIs)

- Encouraged to understand how the research results will be used.
- Include an implementation plan their project proposals.

3) ORBP facilitates the entire research and implementation process through the following key functions:

- Approves new projects and revisions to projects.
- Reviews research activities.
- Implements REC's strategic priorities for research.
- Tracks implementation.
- Supports the implementation coordinator and project manager.

Steps for Implementing Research Results

Step 1: Initial implementation plan included in research proposal.

- How research results will be used.
- Cost/benefit analysis of implementing.
- Barriers to implementation and possible solutions.
- Methods of implementation (training, specifications, demonstration project, revised standards).

Step 2: Implementation action plan developed as project nears completion.

- PM, RM and IC concur that research results are ready for implementation.
- Recommend implementation level.
 - Could be implemented at division, Transportation Service Center, region or office level.
 - Trial project / test sections.
 - Region wide or statewide use.
- Establish a work plan with tasks and deliverables (reports, guides, specifications, training materials, etc.).
- Develop budget and funding sources.
- Determine if PI involvement is needed.
- With approval signatures from PM, RM and IC, the IC obtains approval from the following:
 - Division, office, Transportation Service Center and/or region if implementation will occur in jurisdiction.
 - Engineer of ORBP, who will forward to deputy director.
 - The REC provides final implementation approval.
- With final approval, implementation of results in the field or a pilot study can begin.

Step 3: Implementing research results.

Either small-scale or large-scale implementation is pursued. Costs and relevant data are gathered and submitted to the REC to make the final decision on how to proceed.

Small-scale implementation effort:

- Changes in practice can be immediately implemented.
- MDOT formally announces these changes.

Large-scale implementation effort (more examination or pilot study needed):

- *STEP 1: Strategic assessment.* RAC considers implementation recommendations and makes recommendation to REC.
 - Not implement.
 - Implement limited-scale pilot.
 - Implement change on a large-scale basis.
- *STEP 2: Limited-scale pilot.* If recommended by REC, IC formulates pilot implementation plan.
 - When pilot concludes, REC considers results to determine whether to implement change on a large-scale basis.
- *STEP 3: Adoption of practice.* REC determines if strategic assessment or pilot project warrants adoption of change in practice.
 - If yes, MDOT adopts and formally announces change.
 - If no, based on results, another pilot may be recommended or further research may be required to identify another solution.