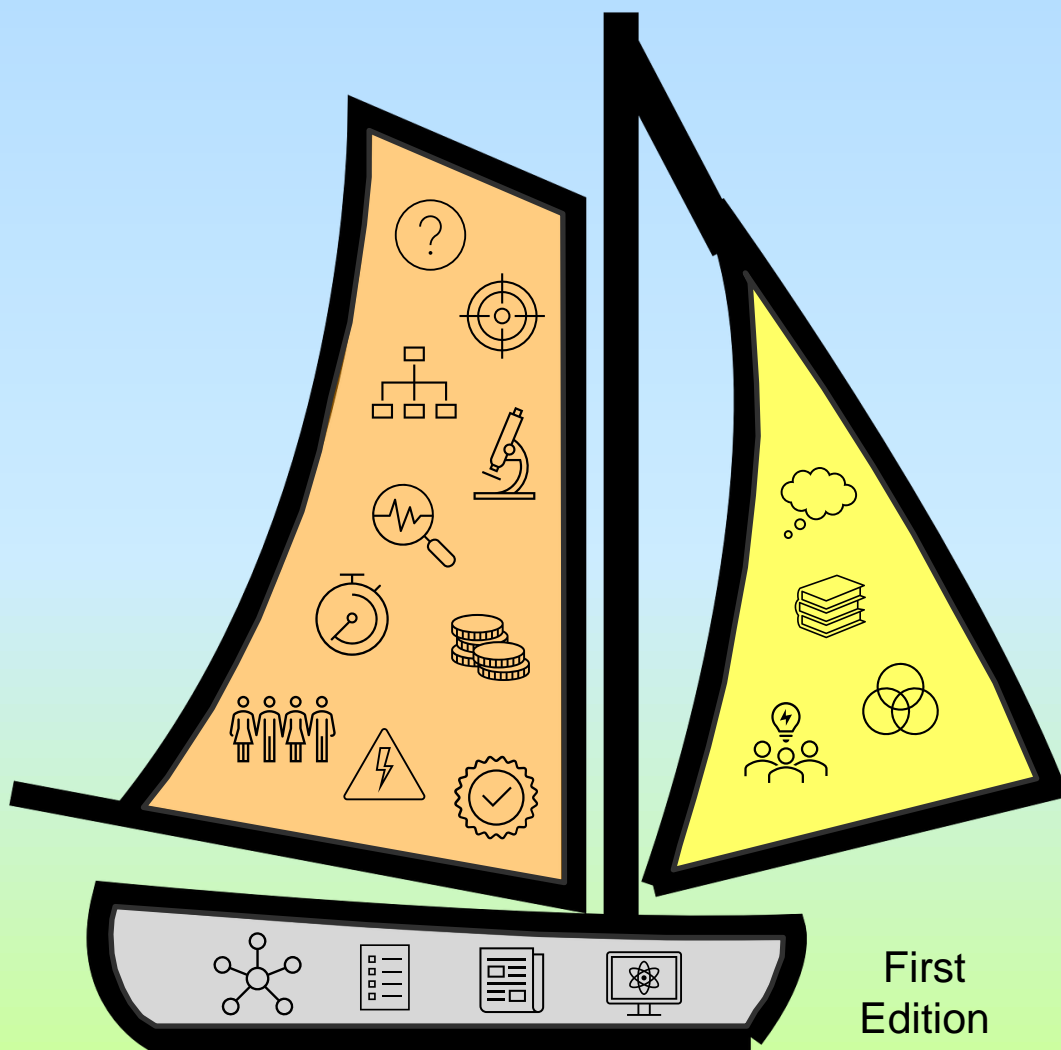


COMPASS GUIDE: How to Plan Your Research Project



First
Edition

Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP
AGILE Research Ltd.



**Compass Guide
Research Training**
By AGILE Research Ltd.

*To my wonderful family
– husband Philip McKague and children Adriana and Oliver McKague –
for being my Dream Team!*

AGILE Research Ltd., 3/43 Cooper Street, Karori, Wellington, 6012, New Zealand

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No artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in creation of the content of this publication.

About the Author

Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP is a researcher with over twenty years of research experience in the health and transport sectors. Sandra's personal and professional experience spans nine cities across five countries and three continents - including Europe, Canada, United States and New Zealand. She has experience of working in academia, government and business sectors. She also holds a Project Management Professional (PMP)[®] certification from the Project Management Institute.

Sandra is passionate about research, innovation, mentoring, project and programme management, and building bridges between people, sectors and cultures. She is the founder and the director of the research consultancy [AGILE Research Ltd.](#) This consultancy specialises in providing research and evaluation, research project management training and research consultancy services to government departments, businesses and academic institutions.

As a researcher, Sandra initiated and managed a wide range of research programmes and projects, including the award-winning and internationally recognised [BEATS Research Programme](#), published over 90 scientific journal articles to date and supervised over 40 research students.



Sandra created the [Compass Guide Research Training Resources](#) to help teams and individuals plan and manage their research projects and deliver planned research outputs.

Sandra speaks four languages, is happily married to a Canadian husband and has two children. She loves travelling and learning about different cultures and has many friends and professional connections around the globe.

Compass Guide Research Training Resources

Created by Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP



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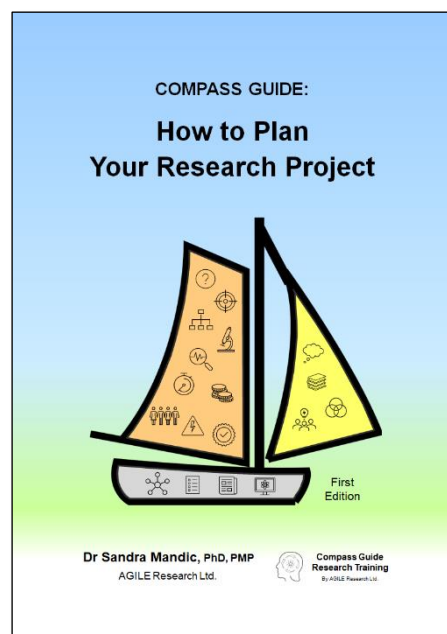
Designed to help individuals and teams navigate the research process and successfully complete their research projects

How to Navigate the Research Process		How to Plan and Manage Research Projects	
<p>Compass Guide for Beginners</p> <p>COMPASS GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS: From Research Questions to Research Reports and Presentations Second Edition Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP AGILE Research Ltd.</p>	<p>Compass Guide for Postgraduate Students (and Their Supervisors)</p> <p>COMPASS GUIDE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS (AND THEIR SUPERVISORS): How to Navigate Your Research Journey Second Edition Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP AGILE Research Ltd.</p>	<p>Compass Guide: How to Plan Your Research Project</p> <p>COMPASS GUIDE: How to Plan Your Research Project First Edition Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP AGILE Research Ltd.</p>	<p>Compass Guide for Research Project Management</p> <p>COMPASS GUIDE for Research Project Management First Edition Dr Sandra Mandic, PhD, PMP AGILE Research Ltd.</p>

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Check out short research training videos at the **AGILE Research YouTube Channel**

<https://www.youtube.com/@agileresearch>

Acknowledgements

This book evolved through 20+ years of experience in research, designing and managing a range of research projects, learning, reflections, discussions, mentoring and being mentored, and interactions with a wide range of individuals along my intercontinental and cross-cultural professional and personal journey.

A special thank you goes to all members of the BEATS Research Team for the unique world-class research experience and the epic 10-year research journey which taught me so much about research project planning and management – and about the power of shared vision, excellent teamwork and perseverance.

Special thanks goes to my colleagues Professor Erica Hinckson, Associate Professor Ricardo Brandao de Oliveira, Associate Professor Maria Paula Maia dos Santos, Assistant Professor Svetlana Bačkalić, Assistant Professor Emilio Villa González, Dr Tessa Pocock and Dr Michal Vorliček, who provided valuable feedback on the earlier drafts of this book. Many thanks also to [Pixabay](#) for images and [Microsoft](#) for icons used in infographics created for this book.

Last but not least, a massive thank-you to my Dream Team – my husband Philip McKague and children Adriana and Oliver McKague – for their love, support and positive energy and for being my Dream Team!

This book contains some of the content covered in Dr Sandra Mandic's book [Compass Guide for Research Project Management](#) (First Edition).

Setting the Sails for Your Research Journey

Imagine you are working as a member of a research team in the city council. As part of a road safety campaign, you are being asked to help your colleagues from the transport team find out what city residents think about road safety. You will need to report your findings to the city Councillors within a year.

How would you plan such a project?

Research projects are a specific type of project – often with an unclear scope at the beginning but with specific timelines and frequently with limited (if any) budget. Research projects are also unpredictable by their nature and face many uncertainties. Nevertheless, the fundamentals of project management are as relevant to research projects as they are to other projects.

This Compass Guide book will take you through the fundamentals of research project management and provide step-by-step guidance and templates for planning your project and developing a project plan.

This book will show you how to set up and operate an invisible scaffold (project planning) around the building site (your research project). Once your building (research project) is complete, that invisible scaffold that was essential for successful project completion will disappear. However, the lessons learned about the role and importance of that invisible scaffold (project planning) will remain with you – ready to be used in your future professional endeavours.

Your journey through this book will start with defining your project scope through shaping research objectives, selecting research methods and planning research procedures.

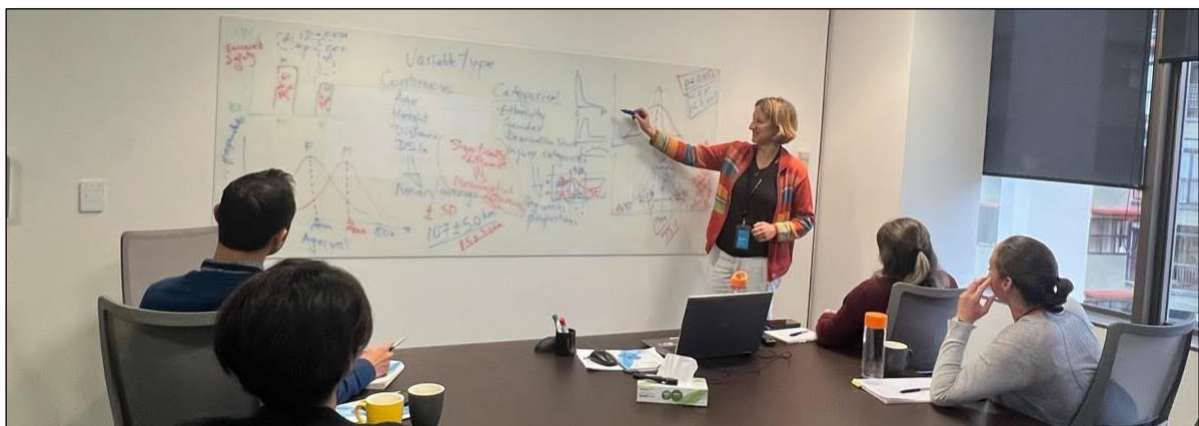
You will learn about developing the project timeline, assessing research project resources and preparing the project budget, identifying risks and risk management strategies, putting together a research team and planning project deliverables.

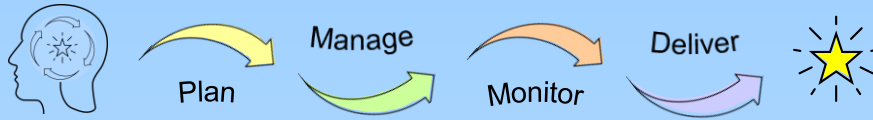
You will also learn about writing a research proposal, obtaining necessary approvals, securing research funding and ultimately putting together your detailed project plan.

Finally, you will find out about common issues in planning research projects, get tips for keeping your project on track and see examples of a real-world research proposal and a corresponding detailed project plan.

This book has been designed for those who are new to research (such as current and future research students and research staff) as well as for professionals involved in research projects outside academia. This book is also a valuable resource for experienced researchers and research student supervisors to help teach others how to plan their research projects.

Fortunately, it is never too late to learn and improve how you and your team plan – and ultimately deliver – on your research projects. But the sooner, the better. Happy learning and enjoy your research journey!





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