

NovaTech Solutions -- Leadership Team Meeting Notes

Document Classification: Internal -- Confidential **Distribution:** Leadership Team Only **Note-taker:** Aisha Patel, Head of HR

Meeting 1: Q1 Planning & Strategic Initiatives

Date: January 15, 2026 **Time:** 10:00 -- 12:15 CET **Location:** Conference Room A (Munich HQ) / Teams hybrid **Attendees:** - Sarah Chen (CEO) -- in person - Marcus Weber (CTO) -- in person - Elena Rossi (VP Engineering) -- remote (Milan) - James Park (VP Sales) -- remote (London) - Aisha Patel (Head of HR) -- in person

1. Q1 Hiring Targets

Sarah opened with an overview of headcount planning for Q1. Current employee count stands at 396 as of January 1, with approved budget for 28 new hires across departments.

Engineering (Elena): Requested 14 new hires -- 8 backend engineers, 4 frontend, and 2 ML/AI specialists. Elena emphasized that the ProjectHub v3.2 release timeline is tight and we are already stretched thin after losing three senior engineers in Q4 2025. Marcus supported the request and noted that the AI specialists are critical for the NovaTech Copilot initiative he wants to kick off in Q2.

Sales (James): Requested 8 new hires -- 5 account executives for the DACH region and 3 for the new UK expansion. James reported that the current pipeline is 2.3x quota but the team is struggling to cover it. He mentioned that win rates dropped from 34% to 28% last quarter partly due to capacity issues.

HR & Operations (Aisha): Requested 4 hires -- 2 recruiters (to support the hiring surge), 1 office manager for Lisbon (see below), and 1 additional L&D specialist.

Decision: All 28 hires approved. Sarah asked Aisha to present a revised recruiting timeline by January 22. Elena to prioritize the AI specialist roles and have job descriptions finalized by end of week.

Marcus noted that we should consider whether some of the AI roles could be based in Lisbon to take advantage of the lower cost base. Elena agreed to evaluate this.

2. Lisbon Office Expansion

Sarah presented the business case for opening a second European engineering hub in Lisbon. Key points:

- Lease signed for a 2,000 sqm space in Parque das Nacoes, occupancy starting April 1
- Initial capacity for 45 people, expandable to 80
- Average engineering salary in Lisbon is roughly 35-40% lower than Munich
- Strong local talent pool from IST and University of Lisbon
- Portugal's favorable tax regime for tech companies

James asked whether there would be a sales presence in Lisbon. Sarah said not initially -- the focus is engineering and potentially some customer support roles in H2.

Elena raised concerns about timezone fragmentation. Munich, Milan, London, and now Lisbon -- she wants to make sure core collaboration hours remain intact. After discussion, the team agreed on a **core hours policy of 10:00--15:00 CET** for all cross-office meetings.

Decision: Lisbon office expansion approved. Budget of EUR 850K for buildout and first-year operations.

Action Items: | # | Action | Owner | Deadline | |---|-----|-----|-----| | 1.1 | Finalize Lisbon office manager job description | Aisha | Jan 20 | | 1.2 | Identify 3-5 roles suitable for Lisbon placement | Elena + Marcus | Jan 31 | | 1.3 | Draft Lisbon compensation bands | Aisha | Feb 5 | | 1.4 | Revised Q1 recruiting timeline | Aisha | Jan 22 | | 1.5 | AI specialist job descriptions finalized | Elena | Jan 19 |

3. CRM Vendor Selection

James presented the shortlist for replacing our current CRM (Pipedrive). Three vendors evaluated: Salesforce, HubSpot Enterprise, and Freshsales.

James's recommendation: Salesforce. Reasoning -- better enterprise reporting, stronger integration ecosystem, and most of our larger prospects expect us to be on Salesforce. Estimated cost: EUR 180K/year.

Marcus pushed back on Salesforce, arguing it is over-engineered for our current size and the implementation timeline (4-6 months) would disrupt Q2 selling. He suggested HubSpot Enterprise as a middle ground -- faster implementation (6-8 weeks), lower cost (EUR 95K/year), and good enough reporting.

Sarah asked for a more detailed TCO comparison including implementation consulting fees. She is leaning toward HubSpot but wants data before committing.

Decision: Deferred to February meeting. James to prepare a full TCO analysis including implementation costs, training time, and data migration effort.

Action Items: | # | Action | Owner | Deadline | |---|-----|-----|-----| | 1.6 | Full CRM TCO comparison (3-year) | James | Feb 5 | | 1.7 | Reference calls with 2 HubSpot customers in B2B SaaS | James | Feb 10 |

Meeting 2: Product Launch Review & Policy Updates

Date: February 12, 2026 **Time:** 10:00 -- 12:30 CET **Location:** Conference Room A (Munich HQ) / Teams hybrid **Attendees:** - Sarah Chen (CEO) -- in person - Marcus Weber (CTO) -- in person - Elena Rossi (VP Engineering) -- in person (visiting Munich) - James Park (VP Sales) -- remote (London) - Aisha Patel (Head of HR) -- in person

1. ProjectHub v3.2 Launch Results

Elena presented the results from the v3.2 launch (shipped January 28, two weeks behind original schedule).

Key metrics (first 2 weeks post-launch): - 89% of existing customers upgraded within the first week (target was 75%) - New signups up 22% week-over-week vs. pre-launch baseline - 3 critical bugs reported, all patched within 48 hours - Customer satisfaction survey: 4.2/5.0 (up from 3.8 on v3.1) - The new real-time collaboration feature is the most-used new capability, with 67% of active workspaces enabling it

Notable issues: The advanced reporting module had performance problems for customers with >50,000 tasks. Elena said the team has a fix in progress targeting February 20 release. Marcus added that this affected roughly 12% of Enterprise tier customers and several had opened support tickets.

James reported that the launch has positively impacted the sales pipeline. Two enterprise prospects (combined ARR of EUR 340K) specifically cited v3.2 features as the reason they moved to final evaluation. He is cautiously optimistic about closing both by end of Q1.

Sarah congratulated the team but stressed that the two-week delay cost us the January press window. She asked Elena to implement a launch readiness checklist for future releases.

2. Pricing Strategy Discussion

James raised the topic of pricing adjustments. Current pricing: - **Starter:** EUR 29/user/month - **Professional:** EUR 59/user/month - **Enterprise:** EUR 99/user/month (custom pricing available above 200 seats)

James's proposal: Increase the Starter tier from EUR 29 to EUR 39/user/month for new customers only, effective Q3 2026. Existing customers would be grandfathered at the current rate for 12 months before transitioning. Rationale: our Starter tier is underpriced relative to competitors (Asana at EUR 35, Monday.com at EUR 36) and we are leaving significant revenue on the table. James estimated this would add approximately EUR 1.8M in ARR over the next 12 months based on current new-customer acquisition rates.

Marcus expressed concern that the 34% price increase might hurt conversion rates, especially in the SMB segment where Starter is the entry point. He suggested EUR 35 as a more conservative step.

Elena pointed out that the Starter tier has grown significantly in functionality since the last pricing change (18 months ago) and the increase is justified by the value delivered.

Sarah agreed with the direction but asked James to model three scenarios (EUR 35, EUR 37, EUR 39) with projected impact on conversion rates and churn. She also wants to see how this aligns with the planned Professional tier feature additions in H2.

Decision: Direction approved in principle. James to return with detailed modeling before a final price point is set. Target implementation date remains Q3 2026.

3. Security Training Mandate

Aisha presented a proposal for mandatory security awareness training for all employees, prompted by two phishing incidents in January (neither resulted in a

breach, but one was a close call -- an employee in Sales clicked a credential harvesting link but MFA prevented access).

Proposal details: - Annual 4-hour security awareness training (online, self-paced) - Quarterly phishing simulations with department-level reporting - Mandatory completion within 30 days of onboarding for new hires - Non-completion escalated to department heads after 2 reminders

Marcus strongly supported this and added that the engineering team should have an additional module covering secure coding practices and dependency management. He mentioned that the current IT security policy already requires password rotation every 90 days and MFA on all systems, but training has been ad hoc until now.

Decision: Security training mandate approved. Aisha to select a vendor and have the program ready to launch by April 1. Engineering-specific module to be developed internally by Marcus's team.

4. CRM Decision (follow-up)

James presented the TCO analysis as requested. After thorough evaluation: - Salesforce 3-year TCO: EUR 780K (including EUR 120K implementation) - HubSpot 3-year TCO: EUR 385K (including EUR 40K implementation) - Freshsales 3-year TCO: EUR 240K (including EUR 25K implementation)

After discussion, the team agreed that Freshsales lacks the enterprise capabilities needed as we scale. The real choice is between Salesforce and HubSpot.

Decision: HubSpot Enterprise selected. James to begin implementation planning with a target go-live of April 15. Marcus to assign a backend engineer part-time to support API integrations with ProjectHub.

Action Items: | # | Action | Owner | Deadline | |---|-----|-----|-----| | 2.1 | Launch readiness checklist for future releases | Elena | Feb 28 | | 2.2 | Pricing scenario modeling (EUR 35/37/39) | James | Mar 1 | | 2.3 | Security training vendor selection (shortlist of 3) | Aisha | Feb 28 | | 2.4 | Secure coding training module outline | Marcus | Mar 15 | | 2.5 | HubSpot implementation kickoff meeting | James | Feb 19 | | 2.6 | Assign integration engineer for HubSpot project | Marcus | Feb 17 | | 2.7 | v3.2 reporting performance fix deployment | Elena | Feb 20 |

Meeting 3: Remote Work Policy, Security Updates & AI Investment

Date: March 5, 2026 **Time:** 10:00 -- 13:00 CET **Location:** Conference Room A (Munich HQ) / Teams hybrid **Attendees:** - Sarah Chen (CEO) -- in person - Marcus Weber (CTO) -- in person - Elena Rossi (VP Engineering) -- remote (Lisbon -- scouting the new office) - James Park (VP Sales) -- in person (visiting Munich) - Aisha Patel (Head of HR) -- in person

1. Remote Work Policy Update

Aisha opened with a review of the current remote work policy and employee satisfaction data. Current policy allows up to 3 days remote per week, with Tuesday and Thursday as mandatory in-office days.

Key data points from the February employee survey (82% response rate): - 71% of employees want more remote flexibility - 18% said the current policy is fine - 11% actually want more in-office time - Voluntary attrition in H2 2025 was 14%, with "flexibility" cited as the #2 reason for leaving (after compensation) - Competitor analysis shows 60% of comparable companies in DACH offer 4+ remote days

Aisha recommended expanding remote work from 3 days to 4 days per week, with only **Tuesday as the mandatory in-office day** (dropping Thursday). This would take effect Q3 2026 to align with the Lisbon office opening, since Lisbon employees will be fully remote relative to Munich anyway.

Elena strongly supported the change, noting that her engineering teams already struggle with the Thursday requirement since many of their collaboration sessions happen asynchronously. She also pointed out that recruiting for the Lisbon office will be much easier with a flexible policy.

James had reservations about the Sales team specifically. He feels that in-person collaboration is important for deal strategy sessions and onboarding new AEs. He asked whether departments could set their own minimum in-office days on top of the company baseline.

Sarah liked the idea of a company-wide baseline with departmental flexibility. She proposed: **company policy moves to 4 days remote / 1 day in-office (Tuesday) as the default, but department heads can require up to 2 in-office days if justified by role requirements.** James said that works for him -- he would keep Sales at 2 days in-office (Tuesday and Thursday).

Marcus supported the change and noted that the IT infrastructure already supports full remote -- VPN capacity was expanded in 2024 and all employees have company laptops. No additional investment needed.

Decision: Remote work policy updated to allow up to 4 days remote per week, effective Q3 2026. Tuesday remains the mandatory in-office day company-wide. Department heads may set additional in-office requirements with HR approval. Aisha to update the employee handbook and communicate the change by March 20.

2. Password Rotation Policy Review

Marcus raised the topic of password rotation frequency. The current IT security policy mandates password changes every 90 days for all systems. He argued this is outdated and counterproductive:

- NIST SP 800-63B (2024 revision) explicitly recommends against periodic password rotation when MFA is in place
- Frequent rotation leads to weaker passwords (employees use predictable patterns like "Summer2026!" then "Autumn2026!")
- Our MFA adoption is now at 100% across all systems following the mandate last year
- The IT help desk spends roughly 15 hours per month on password reset requests, mostly right after rotation deadlines

Marcus's proposal: Extend password rotation from 90 days to 180 days, and invest the saved IT support time into improving our identity management tooling. Passwords would still need to meet complexity requirements (16+ characters, no reuse of last 10 passwords) and any suspected compromise would trigger an immediate forced reset.

Aisha noted this might seem like a reduction in security to employees and we need to communicate the reasoning clearly. Sarah agreed and asked Marcus to prepare a brief company-wide communication explaining the change.

Elena mentioned that the engineering team's infrastructure credentials (SSH keys, service accounts) should remain on a stricter rotation schedule regardless. Marcus confirmed -- this change applies only to employee user accounts, not infrastructure credentials.

Decision: Password rotation extended from 90 days to 180 days for employee user accounts, effective immediately. Infrastructure credentials remain on 90-day

rotation. Marcus to update the IT security policy document and send a company-wide communication by March 12.

3. NovaTech Copilot -- Budget Approval

Marcus presented the business case for NovaTech Copilot, an AI-powered assistant integrated into the ProjectHub platform. This has been in conceptual discussions since Q4 2025 and Marcus is now seeking formal budget approval.

Concept overview: - AI assistant embedded in ProjectHub that helps users with task prioritization, status summarization, risk identification, and natural-language querying of project data - Built on a combination of open-source LLMs (locally hosted for data privacy) and fine-tuned models for ProjectHub-specific tasks - Differentiation from competitors: runs on-premises/in-customer-VPC for enterprise clients with strict data residency requirements - Target: beta release by Q4 2026, GA in Q1 2027

Budget request: **EUR 1.2M** broken down as: - Personnel (4 ML engineers, 1 PM for 12 months): EUR 780K - Infrastructure (GPU compute for training and hosting): EUR 280K - External consulting and dataset licensing: EUR 90K - Contingency (5%): EUR 50K

James was enthusiastic -- he said the AI angle is coming up in almost every enterprise sales conversation and having an on-prem AI story would be a major differentiator. He estimated it could drive EUR 3-4M in incremental ARR in the first year after GA.

Elena cautioned that the timeline is aggressive, especially given the current engineering workload. She suggested starting with 2 ML engineers in Q2 and ramping to 4 in Q3 once the v3.2 stabilization work is complete. Marcus accepted this as a reasonable compromise.

Sarah asked about competitive risk -- what happens if Asana or Monday.com ships a similar feature first? Marcus responded that most competitors are building on OpenAI/Anthropic APIs, which means they cannot offer on-prem deployment. Our local-model approach is slower to build but creates a defensible moat for regulated industries (finance, healthcare, government).

Decision: NovaTech Copilot approved with a total budget of EUR 1.2M. Phased staffing: 2 ML engineers starting April, ramping to 4 by July. Marcus owns the initiative with monthly progress updates to the leadership team.

4. Miscellaneous Updates

Lisbon office update (Elena): Buildout is on track. Furniture ordered, IT infrastructure being installed week of March 10. First employees expected to start on-site April 14 (two weeks behind original April 1 target due to permit delays). Elena has been interviewing locally and has 3 offers out for senior backend roles.

HubSpot migration (James): Implementation started on schedule. Data migration from Pipedrive is 60% complete. On track for April 15 go-live. One issue: historical pipeline data from before 2024 may not migrate cleanly. James decided to archive pre-2024 data separately rather than delay the migration.

Q1 revenue tracking (James): Tracking at 94% of plan as of March 1. Two large enterprise deals expected to close this month which would put us at 103% of Q1 target. The v3.2 launch has definitely helped.

Headcount update (Aisha): 19 of 28 Q1 hires completed. 6 more in offer stage. 3 roles still in active sourcing (the 2 AI/ML specialists and 1 Lisbon office manager). The AI roles have been challenging -- strong candidates are getting 3-4 competing offers. Aisha suggested increasing the compensation band for these roles by 10-15%. Sarah approved on the spot.

Action Items: | # | Action | Owner | Deadline | |---|-----|-----|-----| | 3.1 | Update employee handbook with new remote work policy | Aisha | Mar 20 | | 3.2 | Company-wide communication on remote policy change | Aisha + Sarah | Mar 20 | | 3.3 | Update IT security policy (password rotation) | Marcus | Mar 12 | | 3.4 | Company-wide communication on password policy change | Marcus | Mar 12 | | 3.5 | NovaTech Copilot project plan and staffing timeline | Marcus | Mar 19 | | 3.6 | Post AI/ML specialist roles with updated comp bands | Aisha | Mar 7 | | 3.7 | Lisbon office readiness report | Elena | Mar 28 | | 3.8 | Monthly Copilot progress report (first) | Marcus | Apr 10 | | 3.9 | Pricing scenario analysis presentation to leadership | James | Mar 15 |

Next leadership team meeting scheduled for April 2, 2026.

These notes were reviewed and approved by Sarah Chen on the respective dates.