

**Project  
Management  
Institute®**  
Sydney, Australia

# The Critical Path

April 2024



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## April 2024

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# Editor's Note

## Himadri Sekhar Chowdhury

As I sit here writing the editorial, I keep remembering T. S. Eliot's immortal lines in *The Waste Land*, "April is the cruellest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land..."

Though taken out of context, they somehow resonate with how this April has been one of the most emotionally charged months in recent times. Starting with the horrific events at Bondi and Wakeley, and continuing through the month in the form of protests, violence, demonstrations and ending with a budget airline going into administration leaving thousands stranded, there has not been a moment of calm. I sincerely hope the next months of the year won't be as dramatic.

April is also a month to remember the bravery and sacrifice of our fallen heroes. On 25 April, we marked 109 years since Gallipoli with Dawn Services and parades across the country, and celebrated what has been an enduring symbol of military sacrifice. Lest we forget.

Something else happened in April in the Australian Defence sector. The much awaited 2024 National Defence Strategy, an evolution of the 2023 Defence Strategic Review (DSR), was released mid-month. The 2024 Integrated Investment Program, which is the first version of Defence's ten-year procurement plan since the DSR, was also released at the same time. The next few months would see a lot of difficult discussions and negotiations at the project offices and defence contractors, since almost everyone has been impacted by the decisions made and the strategic shift in focus.

In the world of project management, we saw PMI release the Global Project Management Job Trends 2024. In a rapidly changing world where AI is the chief disruptor, it would be key to understand where the new jobs are and how project management can still make an incredible impact. For a free copy of the report, visit the [PMI website](#).



PMI Sydney Chapter would be conducting our AGM in May and we request everyone to attend. The meeting would be open to non-members as well, though only members would have the voting rights. Join this meeting on 14 May at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel to know about the work your Chapter did in 2024, our financial reports, and our plans for 2025.

We have also lined up a great speaker and an interesting topic right after the AGM. More details in the Chapter News section of the newsletter.



In this month's The Critical Path, we have Quinn Dodsworth talk about the Scaled Agile Framework, Steve Tompkins discuss the job market, and My Tran Le celebrate the volunteer orientation sessions. Apart from that we have news from the Chapter and partners and some beautiful shots by Sydney Mudau. Enjoy reading!

If you have any bright ideas on how to make the newsletter better, we are all ears. Please reach out to the marketing team at [newsletter@pmisydney.org](mailto:newsletter@pmisydney.org) or [marketing@pmisydney.org](mailto:marketing@pmisydney.org).

We are also looking for volunteers for the newsletter and the Marketing portfolio. Check the [Volunteer Engagement Platform \(VEP\)](#) or register your interest [here](#).

Best,

Himadri Sekhar Chowdhury

Editor, The Critical Path

# What is SAFe®? A comprehensive guide to the Scaled Agile Framework®

## Quinn Dodsworth

Unlike traditional agile approaches, the Scaled Agile Framework® (SAFe®) is for implementing lean-agile practices at an enterprise level. In this article, PM-Partners Agile Learning Consultant and Facilitator **Quinn Dodsworth** explains what it entails, who it's for, and how training and certification can benefit your organisation.

Agile as a methodology, framework and mindset, has proven to be an asset for organisations operating in a dynamic environment where the ability to adapt to changing circumstances is a key benefit. While agile approaches are well embedded at the team and project management level, the real challenge is extending agile across multiple teams, particularly in large more complex organisations. Businesses increasingly need to be able to adapt at enterprise scale to maintain their competitive edge – and in response, frameworks to scale agile have grown in popularity.

### What is the Scaled Agile Framework® (SAFe®)?

Developed in 2011, SAFe® was the first of the formal offerings for scaling agile, and according to the [2022 State of Agile report](#), is currently the most popular. It was designed as a 'big picture' framework for implementing lean-agile practices at an enterprise-wide level considering the different layers of an organisation, from team and project level to the executive segment, and their interdependencies.



Quinn Dodsworth  
Agile Learning  
Consultant and  
Facilitator at PM-  
Partners



While IT and software development teams were among the first to use agile, SAFe brings lean-agile to the rest of the business and to other industries. It recognises that agile works differently across various departments of an organisation and identifies how each can adopt agile practices and work with other agile teams. Scrum masters, for example, can use it to formalise agile at scale.

As with other agile practices, SAFe is customer-centric and uses the role of the product owner within the team to represent the voice of the customer.

## Introducing SAFe® for teams

Three bodies of knowledge form the foundation of SAFe – systems thinking, agile software development and lean product development – which is then structured in a framework so that these intersecting methodologies can scale to an enterprise level. This enables different teams to select their operations around the framework that best suits their functionality while still retaining a reference point for other teams to support alignment. The aim is to ensure all teams are able to use agile and communicate with one another with agility as a forethought.

While smaller organisations can benefit from SAFe, it is designed for medium-to-large enterprises looking to become more agile. The structured nature of SAFe makes it ideal for organisations with low maturity in agile, or those looking for a more standardised approach.

## SAFe® values and principles

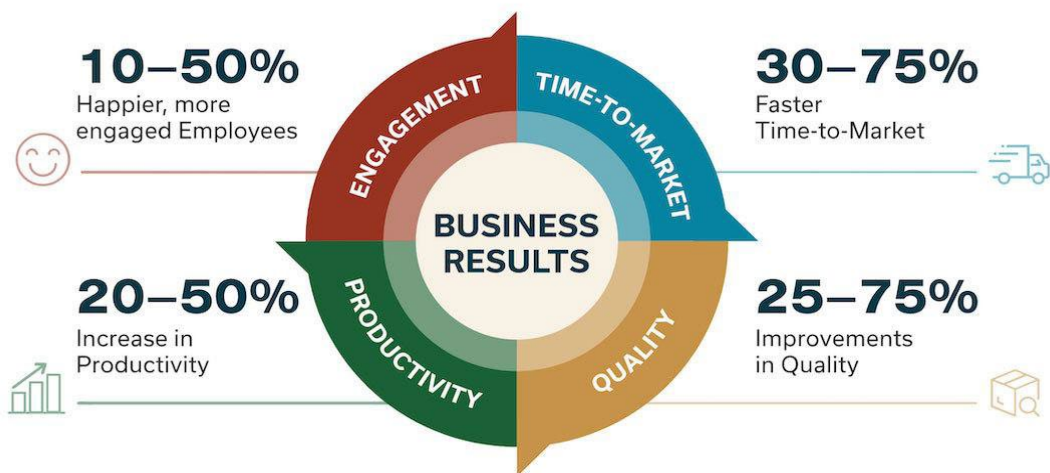
SAFe's four core values embody the underlying beliefs that are key to the framework's effectiveness:

- **Alignment**, which supports coherence across teams as they work to achieve shared goals and is key to achieving speed and quality in value delivery.
- **Transparency**, which removes uncertainty and facilitates decision-making while also strengthening trust across teams. A transparency-led process reduces waste and the need for rework.
- **Respect for people** is paramount because value is created for and by people. This helps guide behaviours and actions and leads to personal development in the process of creating value.
- **Relentless improvement**, which motivates team members to learn as they strive for better outcomes. This tenet of lean leads to the development of better, more profitable products, produced efficiently and resulting in the greater satisfaction of customers.

SAFe also comprises [10 core principles](#) aligned with the lean-agile mindset. Once the framework is implemented properly, this should become standard workplace practice.

## Why use the Scaled Agile Framework®?

SAFe enables large organisations to ensure their teams are adopting a lean-agile mindset and have the tools and capabilities to attain the benefits from an agile approach. These benefits include an increase in [speed-to-market](#), better team engagement (largely through [increased collaboration](#) and communication), a boost to productivity, and improvements to quality (driven by customer centricity).



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## Implementing the Scaled Agile Framework®

There are [three levels of SAFe implementation](#) to cater for various levels of scale: Essential, Large Solution, and Portfolio – and implementation is centred on [seven main functions](#) within the organisation, based on the core competencies of business agility

An [implementation roadmap](#) describes the ‘critical moves’ that an organisation should take to ensure their SAFe adoption efforts are a success. While all organisations are different, this provides a safety net of tried-and-tested techniques to facilitate adoption at all levels.

## Training and certification

For best alignment of goals, values and practices, SAFe training and certification is key. Scaled Agile offers a number of options but [Leading SAFe](#) is the nearest to an introductory course and a good choice for anyone new to the framework. Typically run across two days, followed by the [SAFe Agilist certification exam](#), it provides participants with the knowledge and confidence to lead lean-agile transformations. As more organisations look to adopt and benefit from agile at scale, it gives attendees an invaluable skillset to help boost their careers and empower their organisations to succeed.

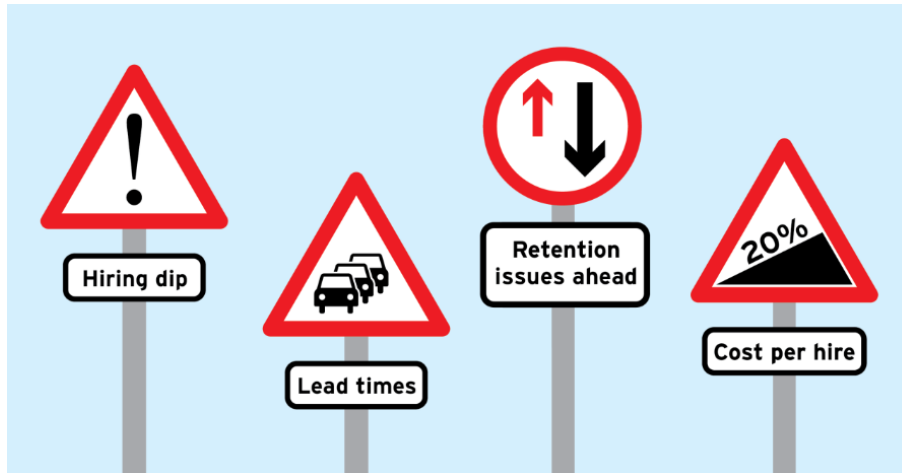
*SAFe and Scaled Agile Framework are registered trademarks of Scaled Agile, Inc.*

Want to implement the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) in your organisation? Check out PM-Partners’ SAFe courses or SAFe consultation services. [Contact us](#) or call 1300 70 13 14 to find out if a scaled agile approach is right for you.

This article is an abridged version of the original – [read the complete text here](#).

# What's in store for project services in the remainder of 2024?

Steve Tompkins



Steve Tompkins has over 20 years' experience in the Recruitment Industry in Sydney and the UK, nearly a decade of which was spent in leadership positions. He is the NSW Government Client Relationship Manager for Talent International in Sydney and has enjoyed working closely with the PMI for the last decade, specialising in sourcing, delivery and support of Project resources.

The project landscape is shifting. This is something we have seen very clearly in the recruitment space. In our current economy, there is greater conservatism in the market, and with many companies pressing pause on their projects, the appetite for hiring project professionals has seen a dip.

However, as we all know, projects are essential to business growth and evolution, and as such, demand will pick back up – this isn't a matter of if, but when.

So, what are we currently experiencing and what can we expect for the next few months in the project services hiring space?

1. We're seeing a reduction of project practitioners, especially in local government, as part of an overarching strategy of reducing contract labour spend.
2. Project job applications are increasing tenfold from 18 months ago, with candidates only receiving a response to less than 10% of the roles they have applied for.
3. Data, cybersecurity, AI & automation skills are in high demand amongst project talent. Project managers are increasingly leveraging data insights to make informed decisions, handle projects in a better way, and increase business growth.
4. AI is increasingly being leveraged in project management to generate greater efficiencies and provide better project risk management.
5. The key projects that companies are investing in are currently centered around AI & automation, cybersecurity, cloud migration/uplift, and data management.





6. Employers are pulling back on contract rates for project talent following the boom of the past few years. Generally speaking, now is not the time to be asking for a rate increase at contract extension time. As different companies review the cost of their contingent workforce, especially in government, the contractors on higher rates are finding it harder to gain extensions for long periods of time.
7. For senior or strategic Project Managers, those who look to align organisational change management capability with project delivery capability will be in demand.

While the market has currently slowed when it comes to hiring, this won't be permanent. We anticipate that across 2024, we will see the market start to pick up – the government's investment in cybersecurity through its REDSPICE program will drive significant demand for top project talent, while the implementation of Workday systems across higher education will continue to drive project activity. Projects are an essential component of company growth, and with projects needed across every department – from marketing, to finance to IT – the right people are needed at the forefront to guide companies to success.

PMI data highlights that 2.3 million candidates are needed each year to fill the project management positions expected to be created by 2030, so it will be interesting to see how the market continues to shift over the coming years.

You can uncover more of our exclusive market insights and forecasts in our Talent Project Services Hiring Market Snapshot – coming soon. We've looked at the supply and demand of top project talent, key skills in demand, top projects companies are investing in, trends and predictions for the project space, takeaways on how you can best navigate the market as either a hiring manager or jobseeker, and more. Keep an eye on [talentinternational.com](https://www.talentinternational.com) for your copy from May 7th.

# Welcoming New Volunteers to the PMI Sydney Chapter

## My Tran Lee

At the Project Management Institute (PMI) Sydney Chapter, we believe that every volunteer brings a unique spark to our Chapter. Their dedication, skills, and passion drive our mission forward. As we progress into 2024, we are thrilled to welcome new volunteers who have chosen to be part of our vibrant community.

### The New Volunteers Orientation Event

Our New Volunteers Orientation session is more than just an introduction; it's a gateway to understanding the heart of our organisation. Whether you're an experienced volunteer who has volunteered with the PMI Sydney Chapter for years or you have just started volunteering for the Chapter, this session equips you with the knowledge and tools you need to succeed with PMI Sydney Chapter. At the same time, you'll be able to meet and network with other volunteers across the Chapter.

John Yap and I had the pleasure of taking our new volunteers through the orientation on Wednesday, 20th March and Wednesday, 24th April:

- Olufemi Tolulope Ogunsiji, Pauline O Keeffe, Sara Moosavi, Selina Wang and Sithila Tennakoon
- Aimee Green, Gaurav Sarin, Kiu Yeung, Mohammed Alsadeq, Mukesh Gupta, Nicholas Ridis, Ravindra Palavalli, Shaun Cunningham and Shikha Vaidh

A great big thank you to our special guests: Sydney Mudau (PMI Sydney Chapter President), Ye Yoon (Regional Head of Community, Asia Pacific) and Xing Ying (Chapter Engagement Specialist – Australia & New Zealand) for dropping in and welcoming our new volunteers to the PMI Sydney Chapter community

### Upcoming Volunteers Orientation Sessions

If you have joined as a volunteer recently and missed our March and April sessions, don't worry! We have additional new volunteers orientations lined up for later this year:

- Wednesday, 26th June 2024, 18:00-19:00
- Wednesday, 28th August 2024, 18:00-19:00



My Tran Le is PMI Sydney Chapter's Volunteering Director and a passionate advocate for Women in Project Management.

- Wednesday, 30th October 2024, 18:00-19:00

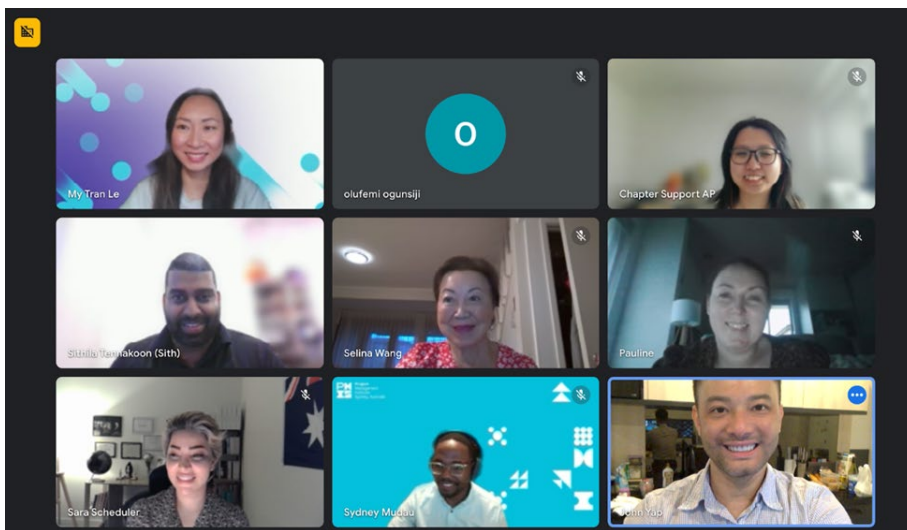
Please register on the PMI Sydney Chapter website.

### Upcoming Volunteers event ‘Something for Everyone’ – Tuesday, 21st May 2024

As part of the National Volunteers Week celebration, we would like to invite all our volunteers in the PMI Sydney Chapter community to this special event scheduled for Tuesday, 21st May. During this event, we will honour the power of volunteerism with this year’s theme ‘Something for Everyone’.

Please register via the website: <https://pmisidney.org/calendar?eventId=37041>

To all our volunteers, thank you for choosing to be part of our journey. Your commitment and enthusiasm inspire us every day. Let’s continue to create a positive change together and be the Change Makers of tomorrow!



*Volunteer Orientation 20th March 2024*



*Volunteer Orientation 24th April 2024*

# Chapter News – April 2024

## Event Alert: Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2024

Please join us for PMISC's Annual General Meeting on the 14th May 2024 📅

This is a fantastic opportunity to meet other members, gain insight to the Chapter's achievements in the 2023 FY, and have your say in the chapter's future 🗣️.

After the meeting, we will be featuring an incredible guest speaker Jürgen Oschadleus who will discuss "Building Influence Equity". This session will cover the three foundations of sustainable influence, the interrelationships between them, and six techniques for increasing influence equity with a range of stakeholders.

✍️ Register now to secure your spot! Given the success of last year's AGM, we will be keeping this event open to everyone.

📅 Date: 14 May 2024.

🕒 Time: 5:30 pm doors open, 6:30 pm AGM start

📍 Where: Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney CBD

🌟 Cost: Free for Members and Students, \$35 for non-members

Register [HERE](#)

## Event Alert: PMISC Volunteers - 'Something for Everyone'



Join us for a special PMI Sydney Chapter evening on Tuesday, 21st of May, coinciding with the start of the **National Volunteer Week**, and be part of an extraordinary team of Change Makers!

Please join us to celebrate National Volunteer Week as we honour the incredible power of volunteerism with the theme 'Something for Everyone'. It's a celebration of diverse passions and talents, emphasising that there's a perfect role for each person in the world of volunteering. There's a place where everyone's unique skills shine at PMI Sydney Chapter.

📅 Date: Tuesday, 21st May 2024

🕒 Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

📍 Where: Talent International, Level 12/2 Park Street, Sydney NSW 2000

🌟 Cost: FREE for PMI Sydney Chapter volunteers (please enter the promo code provided in your email).

Register [HERE](#)



# Chapter News – April 2024

## Successful Launch of 2024 PMISC Mentoring Program – Round 1

We are delighted to share that the first round of the 2024 PMISC Mentoring Program successfully kicked off on April 19th, 2024. This marks the beginning of an enriching journey for a successful group of 18 participants who have embarked on this exclusive mentoring opportunity.

We are fortunate to welcome back several experienced mentors from previous rounds, whose presence added invaluable continuity and expertise to the program. Their commitment to nurturing new talent is a cornerstone of the Sydney Chapter's ongoing success.



The kick-off event is a meaningful encounter for new connections and re-engagement with ongoing mentors. It's a chance to meet the incoming cohort and to catch up with familiar faces from past programs.

As members of the PMI Sydney Chapter, your ongoing support and participation in these events are the driver to make our mentoring program a success. We look forward to seeing how this new group progresses and contributes to our community's strength and knowledge base.

# Chapter News – April 2024

## PM-Partners: PM Perspectives

It's nearly time for the most anticipated event on the PM-Partners calendar: PM-Perspectives. This year it's all about 'Future-focused leadership' with a roster of expert speakers discussing how you can get in front of the pivotal trends shaping the delivery sector.

Join us to hear insights on everything from Generative AI and Cyber security to integrating ESG principles, as well as first-hand experiences of scaling Agile. It's a great opportunity to learn how to tackle emerging challenges and become a more confident, future-focused leader.

Held at Establishment, Sydney, the event also provides the ideal venue for networking with peers. Don't miss out. Spots are limited so register your interest today <https://hubs.la/Q02tfw510>

pm-partners

## PM-Perspectives

Future-focused leadership: Navigating tomorrow's challenges today

Generative AI | Cyber | Agile at scale | Sustainability

Thursday, 23rd May, 5:30pm  
Establishment (Rooms II & III)  
Level 3, 252 George Street, Sydney

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST →

# Chapter News – April 2024



## Event on Difficult Stakeholders

It was a privilege listening to Ruchi Motial-Suri on the topic “Managing Difficult Stakeholders”. Ruchi is the founder of Success Culture, a consulting firm focusing on creating impactful and influential everyday leaders.

She has vast Project Management experience across Asia, Australia & UK, leading projects as Program Manager and Project Director. Thank you Ruchi for your time & sharing knowledge among the project management community!!!

It was an evening filled with enriching discussions and sharing knowledge among the community. On top of that, participants had the chance to network with Sydney's best professionals, paving the way for potential collaborations and career developments.



# Membership Updates

## Ibtihal Albashneh

Following is the list of members who celebrated their 10 and 15 years association with the PMI Sydney Chapter recently.

### 15 Years

Selina Wang  
Nigel Parker  
Odette Patrick  
Minh Hoang  
Julia Fung  
Catherine Graham  
Harpreet Singh  
Adam Hosking  
Vanessa Barton  
Stephen Chase  
Henrik Wandel  
Jenny Evans  
Jayne Casterton  
Erna Garcia  
Paramjit Multani  
Renati Barel  
Keith Johnston  
Tze Au  
Khai Dang  
Robert Devitt  
Mark Curzon

### 10 Years

Nicole Machet  
Syed Rizvi  
Claudia Kassis  
Long Nguyen  
Andrew McDonald  
Towhid Khan  
Andrew Piccione  
Clara Mendoza  
Ian Kolotas  
Vishwanath Rao  
Sylvain Mengin  
Homa Fathi  
John Madden  
Johnny Quintana  
Harpreet Kaur



Ibtihal Albashneh is PMI Sydney Chapter's Membership Director and a keen project champion.



# Photo of the Month

## Sydney Mudau



### About the images

The summer treks in the Snowy Mountains beckon with their blue sky, clear air, and endless empty roads to nowhere!

