



Project
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Sydney, Australia

The Critical Path

October 2024



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Editor's Note

Himadri Sekhar Chowdhury

In my third year as the Editor of The Critical Path, I have found Octobers to be always interesting. First, the events organised by us reach a crescendo around this time, second, the expectation starts building for the end of the year and a well-deserved rest, and third, social events and festivals start kicking in, zum Beispiel Oktoberfest. However, this October was marked by something different – the Royal visit. King Charles and Queen Camilla's trip to Australia and the Pacific Islands was unique in many ways, key being the fact that this, his 17th visit, was his first as a ruling sovereign. Not getting into the controversies surrounding the visit, there was a showcase of some uniquely Australian themes, including a barbie at Parra, and the rich cultural heritage in the country and the Pacific nations.



The October weather has been unpredictable, with rains, cold mornings, and bright and sunny days following each other in quick succession. Thankfully, the weekends this month have been pleasant. The cricket season has started in full blast, with the Sydney Thunders and Sixers gearing up for the Big Bash League. Another notable event coming up this October is the final shutdown of the 3G network, with the switch-off on 28 October planned across the country. If you have devices that use the 3G network, now is the time to replace them or contact your service provider for options.

In global news, by this time next month, when I would be endeavouring to write my editorial, we might have the US Election results published and anointed the next President. The race between the candidates has never been tighter, with celebrities from both camps jumping into the fray, propping their candidates and appealing to voters in the massive election rallies. However, the end might also be dragged out if the results are not convincing and provide grounds for an appeal. Closer home, we have just seen a reversal of fortunes as the LNP claimed a narrow victory in Queensland, though the new Premier would have strong opposition to deal with during his term.

We have officially entered the end-of-the-year holiday shopping season, with the online retailers like Amazon leading from the front with their Prime Days. The festival season has also started with several communities across the country celebrating their own unique festivals, like the Hindu festival Diwali (festival of lights) on 31 October / 1 November. Halloween is another very important event on 31 October. One in five Aussies are planning to celebrate Halloween this year, with spending projected to reach \$450Mn. It is, however, less than the \$490 Mn total for last year. Clearly, the witching hour has captivated our hearts, but the cost-of-living is pulling us back from extravagance.

October has been a month of events. The PMI Sydney Events team has been on an overdrive and, with support from other portfolios, managed to conduct some very interesting events, starting with the PM Day of Knowledge, in association with University of Sydney Project Management School. The event was very well-received, and laid the

foundation for a deeper and more meaningful integration of the profession with the academia. I had the pleasure of representing PMI for an event in Newcastle with the Change Management Institute, led by the amazing Tanya Hocking, and Hays Recruitment, spearheaded by Jenny Raad. This was our first regional PM event and judging by the interest, we would love to host similar events at our regional hotspots in the next years. Stay tuned for more!

The result of the PMI Sydney Chapter Elections 2024 has been published. Congratulations to the three individuals who would be joining the Board for the next two years. There were eight great candidates in the fray this year and the selection is in no way a reflection of the quality and calibre of the candidates who were not elected. We thank the members who voted as we prepare to welcome the new Board members to an exciting year ahead.

In this month's **The Critical Path**, we have an interesting article by Ibrahim Dani on the dangers of the culture of conformity and how it can lead to mediocre, and sometimes dangerous decisions. Jourdan Clark from PM-Partners provides some great guidance on improving our conflict management skills, and Amireh Amirmazaheri from PMO Solutions explains why gaining C-Suite support is important for a PMO executive or manager, and how to get that. Steve Tompkins discusses something new and helpful – Adaptability Quotient – a critical skill for our rapidly changing times.

Laetitia Callegari and My Tran Le discuss their experience from the PMI Global Summit 2024 in LA, and Luc Legeret captures some notes from the R10 meeting in Auckland. There are several events planned for November, and you get a glimpse of them in the Chapter News Section, along with photos and information from the events in October.

I am looking for **enthusiastic Volunteers** to run digital marketing campaigns and work on the newsletter. The work is rewarding and would be a great learning experience for a project manager or a project controller. If you think you have what we need, reach out to me at marketing@pmisydney.org or our Associate Director Malong Dong at marcom_ad@pmisydney.org.

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 or marketing@pmisydney.org.

Best,

[Himadri Sekhar Chowdhury](#)

Editor, The Critical Path

The Hidden Dangers of the 'Façade of Conformity'

Ibrahim Dani

In 2015, the **Volkswagen emissions scandal** shocked the world when it was revealed that the company had deliberately installed software in millions of cars to cheat emissions tests. Engineers and employees knew about the illegal software but stayed silent, bowing to the pressure of achieving unrealistic goals.

Similarly, in the early 2000s, **Enron**, one of America's largest energy companies, collapsed after years of corporate fraud that went unchecked because employees and executives conformed to a toxic culture of high-risk, unethical decision-making. Even decades earlier, in the 1970s, **Ford** faced backlash over the Pinto, a car prone to exploding in rear-end collisions.

Despite internal concerns over safety, the company prioritised profit over lives, with employees remaining silent in the face of management's decisions.



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These real-life examples underscore a common and often dangerous organisational issue: the **façade of conformity**. In environments where employees feel pressured to agree with leadership or peers, valuable ideas and warnings are often suppressed. This behaviour can have disastrous effects, from ethical violations to business collapses, and even the loss of life.



Ibrahim Dani is an accomplished business leader with extensive experience in managing programs and leading people. Ibrahim had a colourful career journey including speaking at PMI EMEA Congress and training aspiring Project Managers. He is an advocate for excellence, a trusted adviser, and a thought leader in project delivery and related human capital management.



The impact of the façade of conformity

When employees feel compelled to conform to the dominant view in an organisation, they may suppress their true thoughts, ideas, and concerns, leading to several harmful consequences:

1. Stifled Innovation and Problem-Solving: Conformity can suffocate creativity. When people feel unsafe to speak up, they are less likely to offer innovative solutions or challenge flawed assumptions. In Volkswagen's case, employees could have proposed more sustainable solutions, but instead, they complied with an unethical decision to meet management's demands.

2. Unethical Decision-Making: A culture of conformity can lead to unethical actions, as seen in Enron, where fraud became normalised. Employees who might have objected to fraudulent accounting practices felt pressured to align with the company's deceptive actions.

3. Decreased Employee Well-Being: The pressure to conform can lead to stress, dissatisfaction, and disengagement. Employees who feel unable to be themselves at work often experience decreased job satisfaction and higher burnout rates.

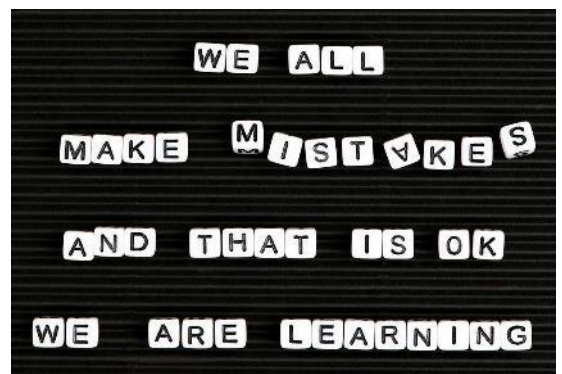
4. Organisational Collapse: In extreme cases, the facade of conformity can result in an organisation's downfall, as it did with Enron and Ford Pinto. When dissent is silenced, mistakes go uncorrected, and poor decisions compound over time, leading to irreversible damage.

How leaders can eradicate the façade of conformity

Leaders are the key to changing this damaging behaviour. By fostering a culture of openness, trust, and psychological safety, they can ensure employees feel empowered to express their true opinions. Here are strategies for leaders to prevent conformity from taking root in their teams:

1. Foster Psychological Safety

Creating an environment where employees feel safe to share dissenting opinions is critical. Leaders must actively **encourage open dialogue** and ensure that all voices are heard, particularly those that might challenge the status quo. In meetings, leaders can ask for opposing viewpoints or play devil's advocate themselves to signal that different perspectives are welcome. Moreover, how leaders **respond to feedback** is essential. If a leader reacts defensively or dismissively to dissent, it can discourage others from speaking up. Constructive responses to feedback, even when it's critical, demonstrate that openness is valued.



2. Model Authenticity and Vulnerability

Leaders set the tone for their teams. By demonstrating **authenticity**, leaders can show employees that it's acceptable to be open and honest. Admitting mistakes or uncertainties is a powerful way for leaders to model vulnerability, which in turn encourages others to do the same. At Volkswagen, for example, if leaders had acknowledged the challenges of meeting emissions standards early on, employees might have felt safer suggesting alternative solutions rather than resorting to unethical practices.

3. Reward Diverse Opinions and Constructive Dissent

To reduce conformity, leaders should publicly recognise and reward employees who bring forward **diverse opinions or constructive dissent**. Even when dissenting ideas aren't implemented, acknowledging the courage to speak up reinforces that non-conformity is valued in the organisation.

Leaders can also set up systems that reward **creative risk-taking**. This shifts the focus from avoiding mistakes to learning and growing from them, which can break the pressure to conform in the face of uncertainty or failure.

4. Promote Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leaders actively seek out and welcome different viewpoints, ensuring that marginalised voices aren't left out. **Diversity of thought** is essential for tackling complex challenges, and leaders should go out of their way to invite input from those who might feel pressured to stay silent.

Cross-functional teams and anonymous feedback platforms can also help bring different perspectives to light, making it easier to surface new ideas and prevent groupthink.

5. Establish Anonymous Feedback Channels

In some cases, employees may fear speaking up directly. Anonymous feedback channels, such as surveys or suggestion boxes, provide an avenue for those reluctant to share their thoughts openly. Leaders can use this feedback to understand the concerns and ideas of their workforce without putting anyone at risk of reprisal.

6. Train and Empower Middle Managers

Middle managers are often the gatekeepers of corporate culture on the front lines. Leaders must train and empower managers to promote **psychological safety** within their teams, encouraging openness and honesty at all levels of the organisation. By ensuring that middle managers are aligned with the broader goals of openness and authenticity, organisations can avoid the disconnect that sometimes exists between leadership and employee experience.

Breaking the Silence for a Healthier Future

The facade of conformity is a silent but powerful force that can erode the integrity, innovation, and health of an organisation. Whether it's Volkswagen's emissions scandal, Enron's fraudulent collapse, or Ford's Pinto disaster, the consequences of conformity are clear: organisations that stifle dissent or encourage blind agreement ultimately suffer, often irreparably.



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For leaders, the solution lies in creating environments where authenticity, openness, and psychological safety are not just encouraged but actively celebrated. By fostering cultures that reward diverse thinking and constructive debate, leaders can unlock their teams' full potential, drive ethical decision-making, and create organisations that are more resilient and innovative.

In today's fast-changing world, the organisations that will thrive are those where employees feel empowered to speak up and contribute without fear. The facade of conformity must be dismantled for organisations to reach new heights of success—ethically, creatively, and sustainably

Improve Conflict Management Skills

Jourdan Clark

When racing to deliver a complex project or agile initiative on time, the last thing you need to worry about is conflict in the workplace. In this article, Jourdan Clark shares key ways to boost your conflict management skills so you can reach a resolution swiftly and calmly.



Jourdan Clark is a Professional Development Manager at PM-Partners.

pm-partners

Unresolved workplace conflict can impact team morale, reduce productivity and disrupt timelines. Whether you need to navigate a misunderstanding between colleagues, identify what's delaying a project, or address a potentially sensitive issue with team members, it's important to approach each conversation with confidence.

And yet, according to a recent AIPM and KPMG Project Management Survey, difficult conversations and conflict management was identified by nearly one third of respondents as the primary area where organisations need to do more to improve project management skills and capability. This need is particularly pressing in agile environments, where collaborative problem-solving and decision-making are key to success.

To help close this conflict management skills gap, here are 7 actionable tips project managers and agile practitioners can use to handle difficult conversations more effectively:

1. Address the issue head-on

Conflict is often evident to both parties, so it's best to address it as soon as you see it happening. Delaying can make matters worse. Even if you don't reach a resolution immediately, starting the conversation shows willingness to communicate. Be proactive and direct; getting to the point quickly sets the tone.

2. Get to the heart of the problem

People naturally avoid confrontation, so vague questions like “Are you okay?” can result in superficial answers. Dig deeper with more specific questions to uncover the real issue. Avoid skirting around the problem; aim for meaningful dialogue that allows others to express how they’re really feeling.

3. Give clear, factual examples

When delivering feedback, being clear and upfront is essential. Use concrete examples to help the other person better understand the issue and why you’re addressing it. Stick to the facts, take responsibility where needed and explain how the situation affects the team and organisation as a whole.

4. Listen as much as you talk

Encourage a two-way conversation, allowing others to share their perspectives. This helps confirm they understand your message and provides an opportunity for them to address their needs and expectations too. An open dialogue fosters mutual understanding and can lead to unexpected solutions.

5. Demonstrate your understanding

Empathy is a powerful tool. It’s not about agreeing, but showing you understand the other person’s feelings. Reflect what’s being said to signal that you’re truly present in the conversation. Phrases like “So you’re saying xxx made you feel xxx” show you’re actively listening. Be patient, allowing them time to process and respond.

6. Prepare in advance

Just as you prepare for interview questions, anticipate the possible directions your conversation could take. If possible, practice with a mentor to gain more self-awareness and refine your approach. Planning ahead gives you confidence and a clearer goal for the discussion.

7. Agree on next steps together

It’s crucial to have the other person’s commitment to the agreed solution. Summarise what’s been discussed and ask, “Have I captured everything we need to do in order to move this project forward or resolve this situation?” This ensures everyone feels their interests are represented and helps solidify the action plan with a realistic timeline.

Developing your power skills

Conflict resolution draws on many skills you already use in other areas of your job – speaking concisely, asking questions, listening carefully, showing empathy, and being proactive. However, enhancing these skills with training can be a game-changer.

[PM-Partners’ Advanced Facilitator: Conflict & Collaboration](#) course, for example, is ideal for those working in agile and/or SAFe environments or anyone looking to manage conflict more effectively. Using practical exercises and real-world scenarios, this live half-day session will equip you with proven strategies to navigate conflict and foster collaboration. Find out how to navigate conflict and promote collaborative decision making with [PM Partners Advanced Facilitator: Conflict & Collaboration](#) course. [Contact us via our website](#), or call our professional development team on 1300 70 13 14 today.

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

Understanding Adaptability Quotient (AQ)

Steve Tompkins

This week I had the pleasure to attend a Talent Leadership event where the hot topic was AQ, “Understanding Adaptability Quotient – the new competitive advantage in the future of work”. The presenter was entertaining, engaging and the content really thought provoking.

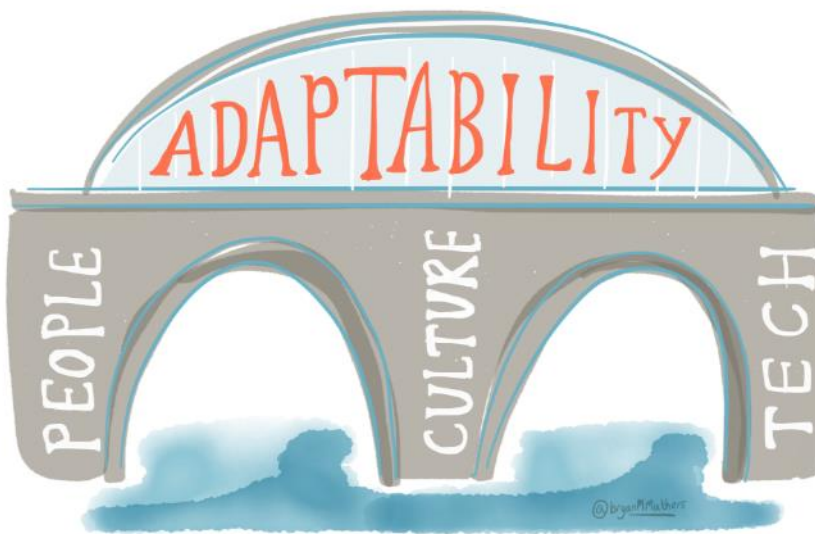
So, what is AQ?

The concept of the Adaptability Quotient refers to someone’s ability to adjust to change, learn from experiences, and effectively respond to new challenges.

Our ability to adapt, on an individual or organisational level can be intrinsically linked to success or failure (remember Blockbuster or Kodak anyone?) It got me thinking not only about AQ, from a recruitment perspective of course (how does one assess candidates for AQ?) but also its importance to today’s Project practitioner. Once I got thinking about it, some of the most successful Project Managers I’ve known over the last 2 decades all had this in common: A strong ability to adapt, pivot and overcome.



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.



While IQ (Intelligence Quotient) measures “intelligence” or cognitive abilities and we’ve heard of EQ (Emotional Quotient) assesses emotional intelligence, AQ in short – it’s how good a person is at coping with change and working in uncertainty – so a good PM I hear you cry!



In our seminar there were several examples of companies valuing an employee's ability to adapt. One of the most interesting was where the US Navy were designing ships to be manned by less crew. The implications of this to lessen any loss of life and reduce casualty risk are obvious – but it has meant that rather than a ship full of specialists in their own arenas, they now require generalists – a team of “Jacks of all trades, Masters of none” mentality. Sailors that have the broader set of skills but the mental agility and high AQ to work on computers then serve in the mess hall.

In today's modern world, I see this trait of being adaptable becoming more and more valued and sought out. As such it will become more common to assess this in selection practices. As companies hiring remain cost sensitive, those candidates that can adapt and encompass a broader range of tasks and are more resilient to change will be required.

Now that's not to say PMs should again become BA's and Change managers. But those that can do their own scheduling, talk tech and do admin tasks might find themselves in higher demand! These resources will also shape the company's culture to one of resilience. It's easy to see the attraction of this in the modern world where change is bigger and more frequent, largely due to our leaps and bounds in technology.

It does seem AQ however is harder to measure. There are no scores to put against it like IQ for example. You can get an idea of your own AQ through some self-reflection. It's worth asking yourself how do you deal with challenges (do you call them “setbacks?”)

Are you eager to learn – anything? This can be outside of work – as a keen martial artist, I have always found fellow jiu jitsu practitioners very adaptable and at a guess they have high AQ. Jiu Jitsu practitioners are taught early on to solve problems under pressure and to get “comfortable with being uncomfortable”.

So why is this important in Project Management?

Project Managers deal with change constantly. A high AQ will enable a project manager to navigate complexities, pivot strategies, and embrace innovation. It reflects an individual's capability to remain open to feedback, learn from failures, and foster collaboration within diverse teams. The best PMs I know have always done this on reflection. In my career, when I am bought in to source a replacement PM – a high percentage of the time it was the incumbent PMs failure to adapt, pivot and blindly stick to a plan heavily contributed to their downfall.

The Project practitioner will use AQ to **Navigate Change well**. Projects often encounter unforeseen challenges—be it changes in stakeholder expectations, team members leaving or evolving tech. A project manager with a high AQ can quickly reassess the situation, adapt plans, and implement new strategies. This agility not only keeps projects on track but also enhances team morale by demonstrating leadership in the face of adversity.

A Project manager with a high AQ will also create an environment where team members feel empowered to voice concerns, propose new ideas, and collaboratively solve problems. This adaptability nurtures a culture of trust and openness, crucial for successful teamwork and innovation.

I would also suggest that strong Stakeholder engagement skills have some correlation with high AQ. Those with a high AQ are adept at understanding and anticipating stakeholder needs, even when they evolve. This ability to pivot and re-align project goals according to feedback ensures that projects remain relevant and valuable, thereby enhancing stakeholder satisfaction and project success

In closing I think this trait will be more and more sought after and those seeking their next role should be well versed in showcasing this in future interviews.

Demonstrating a high adaptability quotient (AQ) in an interview involves showcasing your ability to adjust to new situations, learn quickly, and thrive in changing environments.

Here are some strategies:

Share Specific Examples: Prepare stories that illustrate times you successfully adapted to change. Highlight challenges, your response, and the positive outcomes.

Highlight Learning Experiences: Talk about how you've embraced new skills or knowledge. This could be through taking on new projects, learning new software, or shifting responsibilities.

Discuss Problem-Solving: Explain situations where you faced unexpected challenges. Emphasize your thought process, how you remained calm, and the solutions you implemented.

Emphasise Flexibility: Convey your openness to new ideas, feedback, and ways of working. Mention how you've collaborated with diverse teams or adapted to various work styles.

Show Enthusiasm for Change: Express a positive attitude toward change. Discuss how you view challenges as opportunities for growth.

Ask Insightful Questions: Inquire about the company's adaptability strategies or how they handle change. This shows your proactive interest in their adaptability culture.

By weaving these elements into your responses, you'll effectively convey your high adaptability quotient. The best interview question for this – and I believe to showcase your high AQ is to be asked “what are your strengths?” This question will give you licence to highlight this.

Conclusion

Change seems more rapid, and our world, cities and lives are riddled with more unpredictability. By embracing adaptability, project managers can not only enhance their personal performance but also drive their teams and delivery to better outcomes. Cultivating a high AQ within project teams will ultimately lead to more resilient organizations and as the landscape of project management continues to evolve, and if you want to get good at being adaptable quickly... there's always Jiu Jitsu 😊

Inspiring PMO Leadership: How to define the value and gain C-Suite Support

Amireh Amirmazaheri

In today's fast-paced business world, agility and adaptability are key factors for success. As a PMO Executive or Manager, you are vital in driving organizational change and ensuring project success. However, gaining support from the C-suite can often be a challenge. In this note, we will explore strategies to define the value of the PMO and inspire leadership within the organization.



Amireh Amirmazaheri is the Member of Board - PMO Global Alliance, and the Founder and Director of PMO Solutions.

Understand the Human Side of C-Suits

When it comes to engaging with C-suite executives, it's important to remember that they are human too. They have their own challenges, priorities, and perspectives. To define the value of the PMO, you need to understand their language and their dramas. Take the time to learn about their goals and concerns, and tailor your approach accordingly.

Show Value through Actions

Defining the value of the PMO is not just about making promises – it's about delivering tangible results. Focus on improving your sales techniques by highlighting the positive impact the PMO has had on previous projects. Showcase how you've helped streamline processes, optimize resource allocation, and enhance project outcomes. By demonstrating the value you bring, you can build trust and gain support from the C-suite.

Go Back to Basics and Build Trust

Trust is the foundation of any successful relationship. To gain the support of the C-suite, go back to basics and focus on building trust. Communicate openly and transparently, keeping

stakeholders informed based on their interests. Establish a feedback mechanism to address any concerns or suggestions. By consistently delivering on commitments and showing respect for others' opinions, you can foster a culture of trust within the organization.

Identify Champions at the C-Suite Level

Having a champion at the C-suite level can significantly influence the perception of the PMO. Identify executives who are receptive to change and have a vested interest in the success of the organization. Engage them in continuous improvement initiatives and seek their guidance on where the PMO's energy should be spent to deliver maximum value. By aligning your goals with theirs, you can secure their support and advocacy.

Seat at Strategic Planning & Influence

To truly inspire PMO leadership, it's essential to have a seat at strategic planning sessions. By actively participating in these discussions, you can understand the organization's vision, goals, and aspirations. Take the opportunity to contribute your insights and demonstrate how the PMO can align with strategic objectives. As you become an integral part of the planning process, you solidify your position as a key driver of organizational success.

Harness the Power of Communication

Effective communication is crucial for inspiring PMO leadership. Identify individuals within the organization who are natural communicators and empower them to enhance communication channels. Encourage open dialogue, share information, and collaborate across all levels of the business. By fostering a culture of communication, you create an environment where ideas flow freely, and innovation thrives.

Q&A:

1. How do you gain support from the C-suite for the PMO?

- Understand their challenges and priorities.
- Demonstrate value through tangible results.
- Build trust through open communication and respect.
- Identify champions at the C-suite level.
- Secure a seat at strategic planning sessions.
- Enhance communication channels within the organization.

2. What is the role of a champion in gaining support for the PMO?

A champion at the C-suite level acts as an advocate for the PMO, supporting its initiatives and driving change within the organization. They have a vested interest in the PMO's success and can influence the perception of its value among other executives.

3. How can effective communication impact PMO leadership?

Effective communication fosters collaboration, innovation, and idea-sharing within the organization. It ensures that stakeholders are informed and engaged, aligning

everyone towards common goals. By enhancing communication channels, the PMO can inspire leadership and drive organizational success.

As a PMO Executive or Manager, it is your responsibility to define the value of the PMO and gain support from the C-suite. By understanding their perspective, delivering tangible results, building trust, identifying champions, securing a seat at strategic planning sessions, and fostering effective communication, you can inspire PMO leadership and drive the organization towards success. Remember, the PMO is not just an enabler or integrator – it's the engine that transforms dreams into reality and connects different parts of the business.

Reflections on PMI Global Summit 2024

Laetitia Callegari

The complexity of the Summit

The PMI Global Summit 2024 in Los Angeles was brilliant in scope and organisation. With over 4,000 participants from across the globe, hundreds of sessions covering diverse topics, and a packed three-day agenda, the complexity of managing this event was remarkable. Each session – from governance to AI integration in project management – was carefully curated to appeal to different professional niches. However, navigating this vast array of sessions required planning, and those unfamiliar with the PMI Summit structure might have felt overwhelmed by the number of options.

The heart of the Summit: the people and volunteers

The PMI Global Summit was very successful. The contributions of the volunteers were essential in keeping the event on track. Whether it was running the registration desks, providing logistical support, or assisting with the flow of sessions, the volunteers were instrumental in ensuring the summit ran smoothly. It's important to acknowledge the countless hours they dedicated.

The community spirit fostered at the summit was another standout element. Meeting like-minded professionals from around the world, many of whom shared experiences, challenges, and successes, was one of the highlights of the event. The networking opportunities provided amazing ground for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and inspiration.

Key learnings from the event

One of the most significant takeaways from this year's summit was the continued evolution of project management in an AI-driven world. Sessions like the ones focused on PMI's Infinity 2.0 and the AI Practice Guide offered deep insights into how AI is reshaping the role of project managers, moving towards augmented project management capabilities. The acquisition of Cognilytica was a focal point, with many discussions centred on the integration of AI-driven insights into project success metrics.

Attendees also learned the importance of reframing project success. The traditional markers of time, cost, and scope are increasingly giving way to measures of long-term value,



Laetitia Callegari is an academic, project management practitioner and the Director of Academic Outreach, PMI Sydney Chapter.

sustainability, and adaptability, reflecting broader trends in global project management.

What was good, what was not so good, and what could be improved

The Good

The summit offered a wide array of high-quality content. The keynote speakers, including experts in AI, sustainability, and governance, brought cutting-edge perspectives that sparked thoughtful discussions. Networking events were also well-organised, providing ample opportunity to forge new connections.

The Not So Good

Navigating this vast array of sessions required planning, and those unfamiliar with the PMI Summit structure might have felt overwhelmed by the number of options. While the summit was rich in content, keen attendees (like myself) raised concerns about the conflicting session times, missing out on key topics that clashed. I just wished I had more time on the ground to capture all the learnings while at the Summit!

What Could be Improved

Perhaps extend the Summit to an additional day! It would be also beneficial to implement a stronger emphasis on interactive workshops to provide a more diverse learning experience?

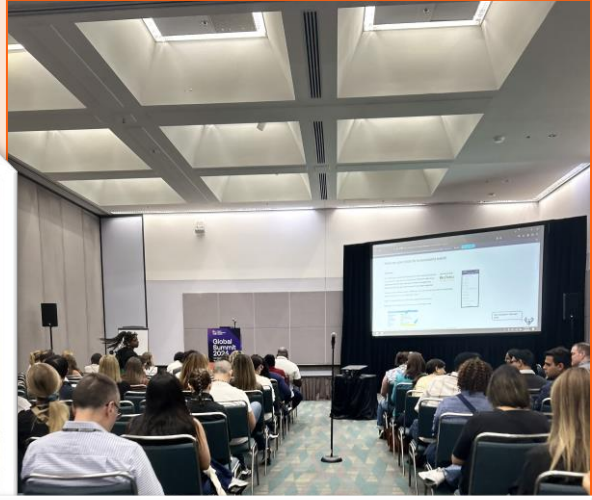
What would we like to see in 2025?

Looking ahead, I would love to see PMI introduce more collaborative spaces where attendees can not only learn from the speakers but from each other. Interactive sessions that simulate real-world project scenarios, more robust tools for virtual participation, and more diverse topics around emerging technologies such as quantum computing and ethical AI could set the tone for next year's event.

Thank you, PMI!

The PMI Global Summit was a powerful reminder of the importance of collaboration in advancing the profession.

Snapshots from the PMI Global Summit 2024



- 20 Chapter student clubs
- Latin America
- Middle East and North Africa
- North America
- Sub-Saharan Africa



Reflections on PMI Global Summit 2024

My Tran Le

Gather Together. Grow Together. Guide the Future

Reflecting on my recent experience at this year's PMI Global Summit is a monumental event in the project management world; bringing together professionals from across the globe to share knowledge, network, and celebrate advancements in the field. This year's PMI Global Summit, held in Los Angeles (LA) in September 2024, was no exception, showcasing the massive complexity and coordination required to pull off such a large-scale event. The theme for this year was encapsulated in: "Gather Together. Grow Together. Guide the Future."

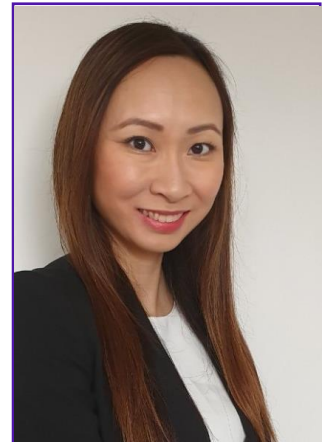
The Massive Complexity of the PMI Global Summit

Organising the PMI Global Summit is no small feat. The event spans across three days (with a Volunteer session on day zero) and includes a wide array of activities such as keynote speeches, workshops, panel discussions, and networking sessions. Each of these components requires meticulous planning and coordination. The logistics of accommodating over 4,000 participants, ensuring smooth transitions between sessions, and managing the technological infrastructure add layers of complexity. The Summit's success is a testament to the detailed planning and execution by the organising committee.

The Heart of the Summit: the Participants, Speakers and the Volunteers

The heart of the PMI Global Summit lies in its people. This year, the event saw participation from project management professionals, industry leaders, and thought leaders from various sectors. A special mention goes to the volunteers who played a crucial role in the event's success. From guiding attendees to managing the session timing and assisting with all the setups, the volunteers' dedication and hard work were evident throughout the summit. Their contributions ensured that the event ran smoothly and efficiently.

Equally important were the amazing speakers who shared their insights and experiences. Their engaging presentations and thought-provoking discussions enriched the Summit, providing attendees with valuable knowledge and inspiration.



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

Key Call Outs and Updates from PMI Global Summit

During the Summit, PMI Global Summit made several significant announcements:

- PMI Infinity™ 2.0: PMI unveiled the optimized version of its AI assistant, PMI Infinity™ 2.0, powered by GPT-4o (omni).
- Cognilytica: PMI announced its acquisition of Cognilytica, a leading firm in AI best practices research, training, and certification.
- Reframing Project Success: A highlight of the summit was the call out by Pierre Le Manh, who introduced a fresh perspective on project success.

What was good, what was not so good, and what could be improved

The Good

I am still in awe of the diverse content and exceptional speakers the Summit offered. The topics catered to various interests and expertise levels, and the keynote speakers and panelists were truly captivating, with a wealth of knowledge and experience.

With so many attendees from diverse backgrounds, the summit facilitated meaningful connections among professionals, fostering a strong sense of community. I made many new friends and created beautiful new connections during the Summit sessions, while walking around the exhibition halls, at the volunteers' get-together, the reception, and even while waiting in the coffee line. Additionally, I had the opportunity to meet many welcoming members and volunteers of the PMI team. These interactions provided invaluable insights and a deeper connection with the organisation.

The Not So Good

With so many sessions to choose from, I found it difficult to attend all the sessions I was interested in due to scheduling conflicts. This becomes overwhelming at times.

Some sessions experienced technical difficulties, affecting the overall experience for attendees.

What Could be Improved

Implementing a more streamlined schedule to minimise overlapping sessions and allow attendees to participate in more activities and collaborate.

Improving the technical infrastructure to ensure a seamless experience.

Looking ahead to next year's PMI Global Summit, I would love to see an enhanced digital collaboration platform, which would facilitate connections and collaborations beyond the event itself.

What would we like to see in 2025?

This year was the second time I attended the PMI Global Summit, and once again, it was an incredible experience. It continues to be a cornerstone event for the project management community. I love how the Summit continues to evolve, making it a richer and more engaging experience each year. Attending the Summit is undoubtedly a worthwhile investment. The knowledge gained, the connections made, and the sense of community fostered were invaluable. I look forward to continuing these friendships and making new memories at future Summits. The PMI Global Summit promises to deliver even greater value in the years to come.

Snapshots from the PMI Global Summit 2024



Reflections on PMI R10 Meeting 2024

Luc Legeret

Attending the PMI Region 10 Meeting in Auckland for the first time was definitely a valuable experience. Auckland's natural surroundings set a beautiful stage for us all to connect with chapter leaders from across Australia, New Zealand, and beyond, reinforcing the depth of our global PMI network. This year's event coincided with PMI New Zealand's 30th Anniversary celebration, adding an extra layer of celebration and as we recognised their contributions to the profession.

The PMI Region 10 strategy sessions, facilitated by PMI Asia Pacific's YeYoon Kim, Xing Ying Lee, and Hoang Linh P., offered valuable insights into emerging trends and challenges in project management. Discussions highlighted PMI Region 10's commitment to collaboration, uniting chapters around shared goals and reinforcing our network's resilience. Conversations around professional development were especially insightful, providing new ideas and best practices that I can bring back into the runnings of our chapter.

Near the end of the weekend, we said goodbye to our outgoing Region Mentor, James Dobson, while warmly welcoming Vikki Kapoor as our new mentor. James' dedication has left a lasting impact, and we eagerly anticipate Vikki's leadership as we move into this exciting new phase.

The Region 10 Meeting in Auckland was inspiring and motivating, bringing fresh perspectives, a stronger sense of community, and a shared celebration of PMI New Zealand's milestone. It reinforced our commitment to growth and collaboration within our vibrant PMI community, and I look forward to the next gathering!



Luc Legeret is PMI Sydney Chapter's Professional Development Director and a passionate Project Management champion.



2024 PMISC Election Results

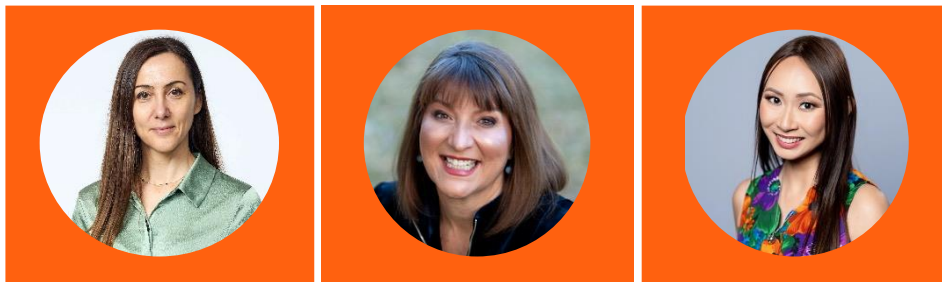
Your incoming board members for 2025

The Complexity of the Summit

The PMI Sydney Chapter Board would like to acknowledge and thank all candidates in the 2024 election – there was an exceptional slate of high-calibre individuals who were prepared and ready to stand for the chapter in the capacity of a Board member.

The PMI Sydney Chapter Board is pleased to announce the three candidates who will join the board in 2025 are:

- **Demi Stefanova**
- **Julia Checchia**
- **My Tran Le (continuation of tenure as a Board Member)**



Demi Stefanova

Julia Checchia

My Tran Le

We would also like to thank our outgoing board members – **David Barros** and **Eric Liaw** for their service and support of the Chapter.

The new incoming board members (and the allocation of all 2025 Board roles) will commence and be determined at a Chapter Board meeting in **January 2025**.

Our thanks to our Nominating Committee – Cath, Tim, and Leo for their professionalism and dedication to facilitating our election.

Members who are interested in volunteering with the Nominating Committee in 2025 (or any other voluntary opportunities) are encouraged to register their interest with the chapter – find out more about volunteering here – <https://pmisidney.org/volunteers>

Chapter News – October 2024

PMISC Mentoring Applications for Round 2 2024 are Open!

We're thrilled to announce that applications for Round 2 of the PMISC Mentoring Program are now open! This is a fantastic opportunity for both mentees and mentors to connect, grow, and learn from each other.

As a mentee, you'll gain valuable insights and guidance from experienced professionals, enhance your skills, and build meaningful connections within your industry. If you choose to be a mentor, you'll have the chance to share your knowledge, strengthen your coaching and leadership skills, and gain fresh perspectives from emerging talents.



Program Details:

- Cost for Mentees:** \$55
- Cost for Mentors:** Free
- Application Deadline:** Sunday, 24 November 2024
- Successful Applicants Announced:** Within 2 weeks after the deadline
- Kick-Off Date:** Friday, 6 December 2024


Ready to make an impact? If you'd like to be part of the Mentoring Program, submit your application through the links below:


- [Mentee Application Form](#)
- [Mentor Application Form](#)

Don't miss out on this chance to connect and grow. We look forward to an inspiring mentoring journey ahead!

Event Alert: WiP Australia Meetup: 6th Anniversary

Join **Women in Projects Australia** to celebrate their 6th anniversary! Women in Projects Australia is a social group that connects women who work in project roles across all industries.

 **Date:** Tuesday, 19th November 2024

 **Time:** 6 pm – 8 pm

 **Where:** Sydney Opera Bar House lower concourse level · Sydney

 **Cost:** Free

 Click [here](#) to register.

Chapter News – October 2024

Event Alert: Why We Must Take Climate Change Seriously, Climate Crossroads

The PMI Sydney Chapter is bringing together thought leaders for a critical discussion: "Why We Must Take Climate Change Seriously: Climate Crossroads."

Led by Sashi Sivam and Dr. Parisa Amouzgar, this event will dive deep into the alarming findings of the 2021 IPCC report and explore the long-term, irreversible impacts of climate change.

Key Points:

Irreversible Changes: We'll examine how certain climate shifts, including the melting of glaciers and rising sea levels, are set to continue for centuries, emphasizing the long-term impact on our planet.

Narrowing Window: We'll discuss the urgent need for global cooperation to reduce emissions significantly. This is crucial to stabilize global temperatures in the latter half of the century, highlighting the importance of immediate action.

Extreme Weather: Our talk will also cover the improved understanding of the link between climate change and extreme weather events. We'll discuss the increasing frequency and intensity of heatwaves, heavy precipitation, and droughts. Join us for this comprehensive talk as we explore these vital issues and discuss potential solutions. We look forward to engaging with you and working together towards meaningful climate action.

Key Learning Aspects:

- Climate Change and global impacts
- Time critical action requirements



Date: 14th November 2024



Time: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM



Where: Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney



Cost: Free for PMI Members and \$35 for Non-Members

Don't miss your chance to be part of the solution!







Click [here](#) to register.

Chapter News – October 2024

Event Alert: Upcoming PMI Sydney Chapter Volunteer Orientation Session





The Project Management Institute (PMI) Sydney Chapter is thrilled to invite all our new & existing volunteers to our next Volunteers Orientation & Onboarding Session!

-  **Date:** Wednesday, 30th October 2024
-  **Time:** 6 pm– 7 pm
-  **Where:** Atlassian Corporate Office, Level 6, 341 George Street, Sydney CBD
-  **Cost:** Free for PMI Members and students and \$100 for Non-Members and Guests

 Click [here](#) to register.

Event Alert: 2024 Project Management Day of Service (PMDoS)

The PMI Sydney Chapter is excited to invite all project management professionals, PMI members, and volunteers to the 2024 PMDoS – a special event dedicated to positively impacting our community.

-  **Date:** Thursday, 7th November 2024
-  **Time:** 9 am – 5 pm
-  **Where:** Atlassian Corporate Office, Level 6, 341 George Street, Sydney CBD
-  **Cost:** Free to attendees (Registrations are limited)

This is your chance to use your project management expertise to support Not-for-Profit Organisations and Charities, helping them achieve their missions and solve real-world challenges. It's a full day of giving back while gaining valuable networking opportunities with fellow professionals and earning up to 8 PDUs! Let's unite to make a difference! Join us to collaborate, connect, and contribute to meaningful causes

 Click [here](#) to register.

Chapter News: October 2024

PMI Sydney Chapter Celebrates International Volunteer Day My Tran Le

PMI Sydney Chapter proudly supports International Volunteer Day (IVD). To celebrate, we kicked off early with a special fireside chat on the evening of Wednesday, 16th October 2024.



I had the honour of hosting this fireside chat with **Franco Guarrella**, a Senior Project Leader and the current President of PMI U.K. Chapter. Franco is an accomplished engineer whose career in the Oil and Gas sector has evolved from design engineering to various leadership roles, including Project Engineer, Project Manager, Program and Portfolio Manager, and ultimately Managing Director of Snamprogetti Limited.

Franco also has a long history with PMI. He has been an active volunteer of the PMI, founding the PMI Rome Italy Chapter in 1997. He is a certified PMP #265!

During this evening, Franco captivated us with his extraordinary journey, sharing:

- Lessons from managing large-scale projects across continents
- Insights on global project leadership
- The transformative power of volunteerism
- His historical perspective on the evolution of project management over the past five decades

Franco's stories of navigating diverse environments and cultures left us inspired.

Thank you to:

- **Talent International** for their generous sponsorship and for creating a warm, inviting atmosphere – pizzas and bean bags, it couldn't be more relaxing
- **All the members and volunteers** who attended and contributed to the vibrant discussion – great questions from the audience
- **Svetlana Nevskaya and the PMI Sydney Chapter Volunteering team** for organising this wonderful event – this wouldn't be possible without you all

And of course, our deepest gratitude to Franco for taking time out of his vacation in Australia to spend the evening with our Sydney community, sharing his wisdom and infectious passion for project management and volunteerism. I hope you're enjoying your first time in Sydney!

Thank you everyone for being part of our celebration!



Chapter News – October 2024

PMI Sydney Chapter with Change Management Institute at Newcastle

The PMI Sydney Chapter was thrilled to be part of an impactful networking evening and panel discussion in Newcastle on 17 October, hosted by the Change Management Institute in collaboration with Hays Recruitment Newcastle. The event brought together change and project management practitioners to explore key trends across both professions. We had an impressive panel of experts - **Victoria Aspden, Lenore Miller, Rob Saxton, Jenny Raad, and Matt Yates** - discussing the interactions of projects and change, moderated by Tanya Hocking, NSW Chapter Lead of CMI.

Highlights included discussions on:

- Portfolio Management and Transformational Change: Delivering outcomes at scale
- Game Changers: AI, Neuroscience, Psychological Safety
- The Next Evolution: How the roles of change and project managers are likely to change

A massive thank you to the Change Management Institute, Hays Recruitment Newcastle, and all who attended and contributed to the vibrant discussions. We're already looking forward to the next one!



Chapter News – October 2024

PMISC - Breakfast Networking Event

A big thank you to all the incredible Project Managers and Project Professionals who joined us for the PMI Sydney Chapter's first post-pandemic Breakfast Networking Event on 15th October at the Amora Hotel Jameson.

It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces and meet new ones as we came together to network, share insights, and celebrate the power of connection and collaboration. From energizing conversations to great food, it was a fantastic way to kick-start the day!

We hope everyone walked away feeling empowered and ready to apply new ideas to their projects. Your participation made the event a huge success, and we look forward to many more opportunities to connect in the future.

Stay tuned for upcoming events, and thank you for being part of the PMI Sydney Chapter community!



Chapter News – October 2024

Sustainable Practices and ESG in Project Management

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us on 22nd October for an engaging session on Sustainable Practices and ESG in Project Management. Your enthusiasm and participation made this event a true success!

A special thanks to [Fatima Afzal](#) for sharing her invaluable insights on integrating sustainability into project management and inspiring us with practical, forward-thinking strategies. We're also deeply grateful to [PM-Partners](#) for co-hosting and providing a fantastic venue to connect and learn.

Events like these remind us of the power of collaboration and the importance of sustainability in driving impactful change. Let's keep the momentum going and bring these learnings into our projects!



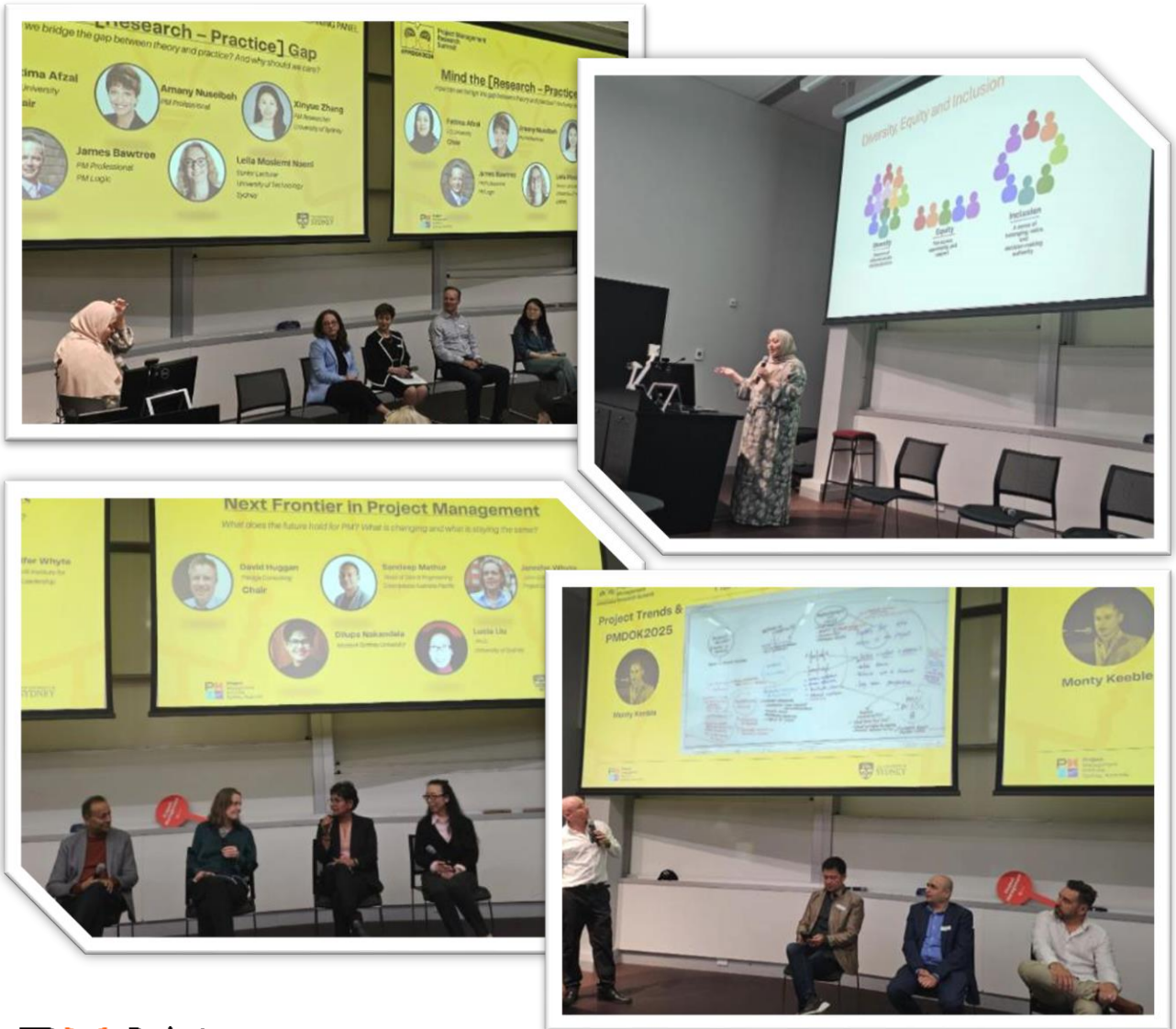
Chapter News – October 2024

PMDoK 2024

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all attendees, speakers, and sponsors who contributed to the success of the PMDoK 2024 - Project Management Research Summit! This hybrid event, co-hosted by PMI Sydney Chapter and the University of Sydney, brought together a dynamic mix of practitioners, academics, and project leaders across Australia and beyond.

We engaged in interactive discussions, masterclasses, and knowledge exchanges aimed at shaping the future of project management. The theme of "Develop Our Knowledge" created a unique environment for collaboration between professionals and researchers.

Special thanks to Dr. [Louis Taborda](#), our incredible convenor, for driving this event forward. We look forward to seeing the insights gained here implemented in future projects and research!



Membership Updates

Ibtihal Albashneh

These are our members who celebrated 5, 10, and 15 years of association with the **PMI Sydney Chapter**

15 years

Vanessa Barton

10 years

Sam Htut

5 years

Adrien Morris

Ahmedi Azra

Arturo Norbury

George Mathew

Maisara Al Rais

Nimin James

Peter Meyer

Peter Taylor

Tarek Zaman



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

Photo of the Month

Himadri S. Chowdhury



About the image

Christ Church Cathedral in Newcastle