APM Scottish Project Management Challenge 2015–2016

Participant Information Pack
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Introduction to APM

Our Mission

APM’s mission statement is "...to develop and promote the professional disciplines of project and programme management for the public benefit..."

APM is the largest independent professional body of its kind in Europe. We have over 21,000 individual and [over 500 corporate members] throughout the UK and abroad. Our aim is to develop and promote project management across all sectors of industry and beyond.

Five Dimensions of Professionalism

Project professionals make a direct contribution to the economy, environment and society by managing effective change. They are capable, accountable and committed to their profession working in all sectors and all types of projects and programmes. They experience unprecedented variety and a track-record of achievement; this provides project professionals with the benefits of exceptional job satisfaction, professional status and other rewards.

Project professionals are able to demonstrate the APM five dimensions of professionalism:

1. **Breadth** of understanding as defined by the APM Body of Knowledge
2. **Depth** of ability in line with the APM Competence Framework
3. **Achievement** through professional qualifications and a portfolio of evidence
4. **Commitment** through Continuing Professional Development
5. **Accountability** through APM membership and the code of professional conduct

Those directly dependent on project and programme management belong to all sectors of the economy, whether defence or IT, construction or transport, pharmaceutical or engineering. They benefit from the increasing professionalism and skill levels which APM promotes across project and programme management.

The Association for Project Management has 40 years of experience in combining its members’ extensive knowledge and experience in developing the science and art of project management. This is encapsulated in the APM Body of Knowledge, qualifications and other research activities and disseminated through its members, and more widely via print, electronic media and events.

APM Qualifications

Qualifications are an essential part of the APM FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism and are designed to meet your needs throughout your career.

The APM offer a number of qualifications that incorporate a mix of tools, techniques, processes and skills that provide a progressive structure enabling you to demonstrate your project management achievement. In addition to your personal professional development APM qualifications demonstrate to your employer, clients and suppliers that you are a skilled and committed project professional.

For further information on APM and the qualifications it offers please visit the [visit the APM website](www.apm.org.uk)
Objective of the APM Scottish PM Challenge 2015–16

The objective of the APM PM Challenge is to provide entrants with:

- An excellent opportunity to develop and practice project management theory in a ‘real’ environment by delivering a project from concept to completion
- Opportunity to be mentored and work alongside experienced project professionals
- Gain real-life project experience and practice hard and soft skills
- Gain experience of utilising project management to deliver a solution and/or benefit
- Develop knowledge of success criteria required to deliver a winning project
- Develop the qualities to become an effective project manager
- Opportunity to compete against other project professionals across Scotland
- Obtain a realistic judgement of success and project management skills via the expertise of APM mentorship
- A great way to raise money and awareness for your preferred charity
- Continuing professional development for individuals within your organisation
- To be able to develop networks across a wider APM community

This is an excellent way to develop and practice your project management skills in a ‘real’ environment. A unique addition to your CV!
Previous Winners of the APM Scottish PM Challenge

The winners of PM Challenge 2014–2015 team consisted of Laura Duckworth (Project Manager), Andrew Wallace (I.T. & Communications), Jack McCracken (Risk Manager), Terri Davidson (Planner) and Sean MacKintosh (Cost Controller) and £6,902.22 was raised for their chosen charity the Vine Trust.

“The APM challenge was run from November to March where the team had to decide on a project and present their ideas to move on to the next stage. We came up with ‘The house that Wood Group built’ (the virtual sale of bricks and mortar to build the online equivalent of a house in Tanzania), and we were successful in securing a place in the finals. I think that it was a lot more difficult than we all originally thought, as our concept changed a few times before we actually rolled it out to the company, but the support that we had from within the company was overwhelming. Personally, I found it to be an extremely worthwhile challenge that expanded my knowledge of project management and helped me to work better within a team of people who I had never previously met. Most importantly it is a massive sense of accomplishment to know that our hard work has led to improving the life of someone else.”

The winners of PM Challenge 2013–2014 were a team of three from RGU: Janina Schild, Kim Applegate and Kathryn Cumming.

"Participating in the APM challenge was incredible and gave us invaluable project management experience. It gave us an opportunity to apply our theoretical knowledge which we gained from our in MSc Project Management course at Robert Gordons University. We are thrilled with the response to our project and especially its outcome which inspired us to do future fundraising work. The main advice we can give future participants is to have fun and enjoy the experience. The key importance for us was, to have taken a holistic approach, to incorporate the challenge theme, and to link it back to our chosen charity, the British Heart Foundation.”
APM Scottish PM Challenge 2015–16 Theme

The theme for this year’s PM Challenge is ‘Innovation while Raising Money for Charity’

Participating teams are expected to define, plan and deliver a project that demonstrates creativity and ingenuity while raising money for their selected charity. The project must show adherence to project management best practices in line with APM project management principles. The four teams that make it to the final will be invited to present their experiences to fellow project professionals at a fun and enjoyable night in Aberdeen.

**Competition Rules**

- Each team must consist of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 members
- Each team is to prepare and execute a project of their choice to raise money for a charity of their choice (based on this year’s challenge theme).
- Each team will present their project proposal at either the Aberdeen or Central Belt Proposal Evening
- Organisation may submit a maximum of 2 teams.
- Participating members should have a maximum of 3 years of project/planning experience. It is the responsibility of the lead member of each entry team to check.
- The top 2 scoring submissions from each proposal event will then progress to the delivery stage to implement their project.
- Each of the 4 finalist teams will be appointed a Mentor by the project board for the project duration. Each finalist team also has the opportunity to have an additional mentor from within their own organisation but this must be arranged by the team.
- Reporting will be required throughout the project lifecycle to the Project Board including the submission of an interim and final report.
- The 4 finalists will present a 3 minute video at the final event that will be focused on “Communication and how it is managed through the project”.
- The 4 finalists will present their project outcomes at the finals event, in Glasgow on Thursday 24th March 2016, where the winning team and runner-up will be awarded their prizes.
- APM will provide each of the four finalist teams up to £100 to deliver their project. However, if the team decides to produce any tangible item as part of its project it may apply to the Project Board for further funding of up to £100 for materials by way of a full funding application.
- The budget must be fully accounted for and receipted back to the Project Board.
- All Start-up funds should come from APM however sponsorship deals or benefits in kinds from external organisation are allowable.
- Since APM is a charity it cannot donate money to another charity. Each team will donate the money they raise directly to their chosen charity.
- Additional budgetary information will be forthcoming through the lifecycle, if and when appropriate.

Any further clarification on the rules please contact Colin.baker@apm.org.uk
Programme

The PM Challenge will consist of three key phases;

1. **Phase 1: Proposal Phase** – During this time each team will complete a project proposal form and submit this to the project board. In addition each team will be required to present their project proposal at a closed proposal event in both Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Four finalists will be selected during these events, two from each event, to continue to Phase 2 and 3.

2. **Phase 2: Project Delivery** – Projects managed from initiation through to close-out. Mentoring and regular reporting will take place. The interim report is to be submitted to both the project board and teams mentor during this phase.

3. **Phase 3: Finals Night** – Finalist teams will give a presentation lasting up to 15 minutes, including a 3 minute video presentation (strictly timed) plus 5 minutes questions & answers from the audience made up of corporate bodies and project professionals. This presentation will be marked by the judges made of industry representatives. The winning team will be selected by the judges taking all submitted reports into account.

**Timeline**

Further information on events will be included in event flyers and published on the APM website.
Project Proposals

Prior to the proposal event each team will be required to submit a completed entry proposal form to Colin.baker@apm.org.uk. Please note there is a strict 4 A4 page single sided on this proposal and anything over this limit will not be marked by the project board.

For the project proposal night each team will be required to present for 15 minute presentation and 10 minute question and answer. The teams are encouraged to be creative in the way they present their proposal and may bring along any other supporting material they feel is appropriate.

Both the proposal form and the proposal evening presentation will be marked by the judges against an assessment criteria based on its relation to theme, project feasibility and proposed execution. This mark will also contribute to the team’s final score.

Selection of Semi-Finalists

The project board will select the 4 finalists (2 from the central belt and 2 from Aberdeen) based on the proposal form and the team’s performance at the proposal event. The selection of the top 4 teams is at the discretion of the Selection Panel. The panel’s decision is final and will be announced at the proposal event evening.

Project Delivery

The finalists will have approximately 8 weeks to complete their project delivery. During this period each project team will have a dedicated mentor. The interface with your mentor is described within the roles and responsibilities section.

- The A3 interim project template provided should be completed and submitted to Colin.baker@apm.org.uk by 22nd January 2016.
- Please note that although feedback will not be provided by the project board during the competition the interim will form part of the team’s final score.
- In addition to the interim report the project board will accept an additional sheet containing the team’s project plan.
- Any further sheets submitted will not be marked. It is strongly recommended by the project board that the team arrange to discuss the interim report with their mentor to obtain their feedback.
- The final project report should be no more than 25 A4 pages, single sided and anything over this limit will not be marked by the project board.

Projects and final presentation are to be completed by 11th March 2015 and submitted to Colin.baker@apm.org.uk.
Finals Night

Each of the 4 finalist teams will be expected to make a presentation using their own style which must include 3 minutes of video footage. (Presentations and video must be submitted in advance and a copy taken on a memory stick to the event).

On the night, each team will be given 15 minutes (including video) to present their project plus a 5 minute question and answer session. The audience will be invited to mark the presentations which will go towards to the final mark (team supporters may not vote for their own team). Following all presentations the judging panel will decide on the winning team and runners up, shortly followed by the presentation of awards.

Assessment Criteria & Weighting

The PM Challenge elements will be weighted as follows:

- Project Proposal – 15%
- Interim Report – 10%
- Final Report – 30%
- Finals Night Audience Vote – 10%
- Finals Night Judging Panel– 35%

Please note the assessment criteria will focus on the following topics:

1. The level of innovation applied to the project both in the concept and execution.
2. The adherence to the theme and its overall execution
3. The application of the principles of the APM body of knowledge.

The initial phases of the competition will be judged by the project board with the Finals Night being judged by a select panel of established project professionals. Please note that all judging decisions are final.
Roles and Responsibilities

Mentors

The role of the mentor is to provide both a source of information/knowledge and a sounding board. The mentor’s role is one of facilitation. Project teams are not obliged to accept the advice provided. The mentor should also strategically assess and monitor progress and give advice for effectiveness and efficiency. Mentors should not provide solutions, but ask questions to stimulate the project team’s own thinking and development of their own solutions. Mentors are responsible for ensuring that each team runs a unique style of project.

The project team should choose the interface with the mentor; how often to meet, format of meeting and communications and focus. The mentor should agree this interface programme at the semi-finals stage, or soon after.

Mentors should be the single point of contact between the project team and the Project Board.

Mentors should be realistic as to how much time they can devote to the team.
Project Board

The Project Board’s main role is to supervise the running of the competition. They should provide levelling control on the input of mentors to ensure that they offer similar times to mentees, although the offer may not be taken up.

The Project Board will receive one interim report and one final report. These are the only reports that will be marked by the project board.

The Project Board is to provide governance for the competition and the project teams and ensure that all parties deliver their own component parts. This should include but is not limited to:

- Access to a suitable mentor
- Timely provision of funding
- Maximise publicity
- Provide clarification to mentors regarding their role
Project Teams

Project teams are to deliver a project with SMART objectives (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely) and of sufficient complexity in line with this year’s challenge theme.

In addition Project teams will be expected to:

- Abide by the competition rules at all times
- Provide a robust business case

Projects teams are also expected to engage with their mentors and as a guide the following would be a suggested engagement milestones:

- Initial meeting – face to face
- One interim report – electronic
- Final project summary report – should include all close out information including financial/budget analysis and a detailed risk plan.

Where there are concerns about the project, the team’s first point of contact should be with the mentor.

Where there are concerns about your mentor the first point of contact should be with the mentor to raise your concern and jointly come to a resolution. If this is unsuccessful then the concerns should be raised to the Project Board Chairman: varghese.mathew@selex-es.com. Please precede your subject header with ‘2015/2016 Scotland PM challenge’.