Project Leadership Programme

Brochure

Contents

Introduction to the PLP

The PLP is designed to help build the skills of project leaders and develop their capabilities, providing demonstrable improvements in the way that projects are led across the public service. It has been commissioned by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) as a sister programme to the Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA). The programme design is based on three key leadership competencies: leadership of self - 40%, commercial leadership - 30% and technical project leadership - 30%. The programme is designed to combine expert academic theory (40%) with practical hands-on learning (60%). Project leaders are selected to attend by their departments and they must have a sponsor and the endorsement of the Head of their Project Profession.

Introduction to the IPA

The IPA is the government's centre of expertise for infrastructure and major projects. It leads the government project delivery function and sits at the heart of government. The IPA supports the successful delivery of all types of projects; ranging from railways, schools, hospitals and housing, to defence, IT and major transformation programmes.

The IPA holds a broad sector knowledge, skills and expertise in all these areas. It leads the project delivery and project finance professions across government. Projects are delivered by people, and building professional capability is a core priority for the IPA. It aims to build high performing, professional, flexible and diverse teams to deliver world class projects now and in the future.

Programme Overview

The core programme is delivered over a 12 month period with an emphasis on practical, group and application work. The delivery team will be working closely with participants to really understand the challenges that they face, identifying their development needs and helping them to enhance their project leadership skills. Flexibility is built into the programme to allow participants to achieve their individual learning requirements. Participation in the programme will enable participants to develop working relationships and strong internal networks, with both public sector and external experts, and the wider PLP and Major Project Leadership Academy (MPLA) communities.

In more detail the programme offers:

- Entry and exit assessments including a behavioural leadership review, a psychometric and a technical knowledge review
- Four face to face residential modules at Cranfield University School of Management delivered over the first 7 months:
- Module 1 – one day with arrival the evening before and overnight stay
- Module 2 – two days (one overnight)
- Module 3 – three days (two overnights)
- Module 4 – two days (one overnight)
- Pre-work for each module with appropriate theory or background reading
- Assignments – three written assessed assignments. Two requiring use of the tools, techniques and approaches from the programme to critically assess the participants

Project
Leadership
Programme

project or organisation and the third, towards the end of the programme, reflecting on the learning throughout the PLP journey

- Coaching - Initial group session followed by between 4 – 6 hours individual coaching
- Self-study online learning. A choice of e-learn modules to be completed out of seven available. Two of these modules are compulsory and assessed through the assignments
- Optional Technical Knowledge e-learns covering the base knowledge required for project management based on the APM's BoK7
- Optional further learning through, for example, further reading and individual research, e-learning etc
- A documented final assessment review meeting with Head of Project Profession/sponsor

Topics typically will include: Project leadership, mindfulness and mindful decision making, commercial aspects of projects, sustainability, project delivery and risk management, transformation, organisational resilience, networking, project performance.

Programme Eligibility

The programme is not an open programme. To be eligible, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Senior Responsible Owners (SRO) or Project Directors (PD) of a non-GMPP projects that:

- Are critical to one or more departmental objectives
- Provide a critical dependency for another project or programme within the portfolio
- Are commercially challenging
- Involve significant resources
- Are complex
- Have a high value
- Are politically sensitive
- Are innovative or have ambiguity around approach or goal

2. Imminent appointment (within 3 months) or due to be appointed (within 3 – 6 months as SRO or PD of a non-GMPP project

3. Work-stream lead on a GMPP Project accountable for a crucial element of project delivery (e.g. Finance Director, Policy Lead, Finance Responsible Officer, Commercial Lead etc.)

4. Senior leader in the departmental centre of excellence/portfolio team

5. Other project delivery professionals with a compelling reason to be considered for admission (requires supporting statement by sponsor / Head of Profession (no more than 10% of each cohort from this category)

NB: GMPP SROs and PDs are not eligible for PLP

Project
Leadership
Programme

Time Commitment

The programme is delivered over a 12 month period. The participant is required to attend four modules in Cranfield requiring eight full days out of the office plus travel and five overnight stays during the first seven months of the programme. The programme also requires attendance at two online half day sessions. In addition to these specified nine days, participants will need a further 11 days of dedicated time to complete the e-learns, online tests, assignments, coaching sessions and final assessment review meeting. Participants need to be aware of this commitment before they embark on the programme as this work is mandatory for successful completion of PLP.

Programme Benefits

PLP is designed to develop participants so that they are better able to lead their extended team to deliver successful projects. This is achieved through the teaching of many of the latest practical tools, techniques and ideas in project and programme delivery from around the world. They will join a network of elite leaders from across the public sector who share the same concepts of project leadership, and access their support to discuss problems and identify solutions. They will enjoy a challenging and demanding programme, which will develop their knowledge and hopefully advance their career in the project delivery profession.

Programme Assessment

Participants are expected to complete and pass all formal elements of the programme. The pass mark for the three assignments is 50% in each case, although the emphasis is on practical application and critical assessment of real-life projects, not on academic principles or referencing published work. In addition, participants must successfully complete their final assessment to the satisfaction of their Head of Profession or Sponsor.

Programme Accreditation

The programme has achieved accreditation from the Association for Project Management (APM), Europe's leading professional body for project, programme and portfolio management. The APM is the UK's main membership and qualifications body for project professionals, setting profession-wide standards, qualifications and best practice. It has around 30,000 members and over 500 corporate members.

Delivery Location

The programme is offered six times a year with a new Cohort starting every 2 months. All modules take place at Cranfield Management Development Centre located at the Cranfield University campus near Milton Keynes in Bedfordshire. Coaching to take place either face to face (often in London) or virtually.

Project
Leadership
Programme

Programme Cost

The programme will cost a maximum of £8,332.31 + VAT (£9,998.77 incl VAT) per participant. Specific terms and conditions apply. The cost includes required accommodation at the residential modules. Each department must raise a purchase order for the cost within the enrolment period for each cohort.

Who Delivers the Programme?

The programme is delivered by a consortium of three partners. These are:

Cranfield School of Management is one of the oldest business schools in Europe. As part of Cranfield University, the UK's only wholly postgraduate university, we are uniquely placed to connect technology and leadership. Our contribution to global innovation is world-leading, changing the way society thinks, works and learns. We are globally recognised for our excellence in leadership development and for our powerful industry links and real-world focus. www.cranfield.ac.uk/som

PA Consulting Group (PA) is an international management consulting firm. We operate globally from offices across the U.S., Europe and the Nordics, working in both private and public sectors. We have won independent awards and recognition for our client work in government and public services, life sciences and healthcare, defence, energy, manufacturing, financial services and telecommunications. PA's ambition is to help clients deliver complex programs and major business transformations, design strategies for growth, achieve effective IT that improves business performance, mobilise human resources, and develop breakthrough products and processes. The latter are created at our dedicated applied technology facilities at Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, UK. www.paconsulting.com

The Project Academy (TPA) is a niche consultancy that supports clients to improve their project and programme management capability. With a focus on the development of senior project leaders, the team's expertise drives project performance through defining critical skills, assessing the current skill levels and delivering targeted development. In doing this, the Academy works with organisations to mitigate the corporate risk around poor project delivery to ensure it has the right people with the right skills working on the right projects. http://www.project-academy.co.uk

Contact Information

Potential participants should speak with their Heads of Project Profession who control the nomination process for departments or directly with Cranfield School of Management, contact as follows:

Sherry Davison, PLP Executive Manager

Email: sherry.davison@cranfield.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 1234 754391

Project
Leadership
Programme

Frequently Asked Questions

How are the applications processed and cohort make-up decided?

Feedback from both MPLA and the PLP has underlined that participants feel that one of the most positive aspects of the programme is the networking and exchange of ideas and experience which happens within the cohort. We therefore ensure the application process enables departments to nominate the project leaders they feel will benefit most from the programme – and whose resulting enhanced capability will bring most benefit to the department's portfolio. However, it is also important that we maintain a good mix of delegates (in terms of project type, experience, department etc.) so that we continue to add value to the participant's experience. We will therefore consider the make-up of each cohort very carefully before making applicants an offer of a place. This may mean that we are not always able to offer all applicants a place on their first choice of cohort – but we are confident that they will be offered a place on a subsequent cohort.

Is there a qualification?

The PLP is accredited and successful participants will be passing an APM accredited programme that is recognised within Government. The programme is designed to be at masters level although it doesn't have an academic or post-graduate type qualification as this would require a lot more content and assessments beyond what is currently within scope.

All participants on PLP will have the opportunity to consider an application to the APM to become a Chartered Project Professional (ChPP). The core PLP programme includes e-learning support on how to produce a high quality submission and a suite of APM technical knowledge e-learns. Additionally, an online system enables participants to build up their ChPP supporting evidence during and up to 12 months after PLP. Participants may wish to opt for a higher level of support, through our APM specialist PLP Delivery Partner (TPA) and the cost of this would be in addition to the PLP fee. The recommendation is that the pursuit of the ChPP qualification is made after the first 7 months of the PLP due to the time commitment required during this phase of PLP.

Who are the tutors?

The core module delivery tutors are drawn from Cranfield's academic faculty, visiting faculty and guest speakers. Cranfield takes an 'applied' view of theory and research. Many of the faculty have experience from previous roles outside academia as well as working actively with organisations and students from all sectors and regions of the world. The programme coaches are all experienced in projects and drawn from PA Consulting and TPA.

Project
Leadership
Programme