



Benelux Summit Series presents

PMI Belgium PM Fair 2026

From Executor to Strategic Leader:

The Evolving Role of the Project Manager

Call for Speakers

Friday 2nd October, The EGG, Brussels



Introduction

On behalf of the PMI Belgium Chapter, I warmly invite you to the **PM Fair 2026**. Our flagship event brings together project management (PM) professionals from across Belgium and Europe. This year's edition promises an inspiring day of learning, exchange, and face-to-face connection, and a unique opportunity to engage with our vibrant and diverse PM community.

Our 2026 theme explores the **evolving role of the Project Manager**, reflecting the shift from operational execution toward strategic leadership. As organisations face increasing complexity, rapid technological change, and rising expectations for sustainable value, project professionals are being called to lead with greater foresight, influence, and accountability.

The PM Fair 2026 program is designed to empower attendees with **practical insights, tools, and strategies** needed to navigate this transition. Through a carefully curated program of seminars, workshops, and keynote sessions, we aim to explore how project managers can strengthen their strategic capabilities, elevate their leadership, and deliver meaningful, long-term value.

With over **300+ attendees**, including PMI members, sponsors, and project management enthusiasts, the PM Fair offers a dynamic environment for networking, learning, and professional growth. Our speaker sessions are thoughtfully prepared to provide valuable insights for both novice participants seeking foundational knowledge and seasoned professionals looking for advanced perspectives. Breaktime sessions, interactive workshops, and informal exchanges throughout the day ensure that participants gain both knowledge and valuable connections.

We invite you to join us as a speaker and contribute to this exceptional event!

Anja Vandenberg

President, PMI Belgium

Our theme

From Executor to Strategic Leader: The Evolving Role of the Project Manager

Last year's Benelux Summit focused on the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence. While AI continues to reshape the project landscape, one of the Summit's strongest messages was the enduring importance of human judgement, creativity, and empathy. Technology enhances our capabilities, but it does not replace the uniquely human qualities that drive project success.

This year, we look beyond AI and ask: *What does the future require from the contemporary project professional? How can PMs combine their expertise, leadership, and new tools to work smarter and deliver greater value?*

The six Project Management Principles help answer these questions by providing guidance on how project managers exercise leadership to deliver outcomes and enable sustainable value¹.

Project Management Principles (taken from PMBOK 8th Ed)

Principle	Description	Principle	Description
Adopt a holistic view	Adopt a holistic view throughout the project life cycle, ensuring seamless integration & alignment.	Be an accountable leader	Demonstrate leadership behaviours & be an accountable leader by guiding your team with integrity, making responsible decisions, and fostering a culture of trust & responsibility.
Focus on value	Continually evaluate & adjust project alignment to business objectives and intended benefits & value.	Integrate sustainability	Consistently integrate sustainability practices across all project areas, through all phases, as project managers, teams and sponsors are all jointly accountable ensuring this integration.
Embed quality	Embed quality into processes & deliverables to maintain a consistent focus on achieving target quality thresholds. An emphasis on quality ensures outcomes that meet project objectives & align with needs, requirements & acceptance criteria.	Build an empowered culture	Build an empowered culture that fosters proactive collaboration & promotes unity in shared objectives efficiently & effectively through stakeholders & diverse teams.

Our conclusion:

Project managers must increasingly operate as strategic leaders, not just executors. They must interpret data, anticipate change, influence stakeholders, and guide teams through uncertainty all while ensuring sustainable, responsible, and value-driven outcomes. The PMI's MORE framework underpins the development of the six PM Principles above.

The MORE Framework

This evolution is strongly supported by PMI's MORE framework:

- Manage Perceptions
- Own Success
- Relentlessly Reassess
- Expand Perspective

PMI's latest research shows that when project professionals fully embrace these practices, project success nearly quadruples. MORE strengthens strategic awareness, enhances leadership capability, and enables PMs to deliver outcomes that matter technically, socially, and economically.

The Four Pillars of PM Fair 2026

To explore this evolution in depth, the PM Fair 2026 is built on four interconnected pillars:

- Sustainability
- PM Methodology (Agile, Hybrid, Ways of Working)
- PMO, Governance & Controls
- Megaprojects & Complex Delivery

Each pillar represents a key dimension of pioneering project leadership. Together, they support project manager's transition from execution to strategy. Below are descriptions of each pillar to guide your abstract submission. It's important to note that pillars are not fixed. You are actively encouraged to introduce your own ideas and interpretations that align with the overarching theme of the PM Fair.

1. Sustainability

Strategically critical, sustainability is no longer an optional consideration. Project managers play a crucial role in shaping outcomes that are environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically viable. As we strive to build a holistic view that integrates environmental, social, and economic aspects, our projects continue to apply and adapt to embrace adaptability and optimise risk responses. We welcome submissions that explore:

- Integration of sustainability within PM processes, from initiating to closing
- Sustainability in the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of projects
- Integrating ESG principles into project planning and delivery
- Sustainable procurement, circularity, and resource optimisation
- Balancing short-term delivery pressures with long-term societal value
- Building sustainability into PMO frameworks and governance

- Case studies demonstrating measurable sustainable impact

Speakers may also address how sustainability influences stakeholder expectations, risk management, and strategic decision-making.

2. PM Methodology: Agile, Hybrid & Modern Ways of Working

As organisations evolve, so must the methodologies that support them. Today's project managers must be fluent in Predictive, Adaptive, and Hybrid approaches, selecting and tailoring methods that best serve strategic objectives. They must be proficient in Ways of Working from tactical operations to strategic leadership.

We invite topics such as:

- Project alignment to business objectives and intended benefits and value
- The traditional Executor Role
- The Strategic Project Manager of the future, now
- Accountable Leader: guiding your team with integrity, making responsible decisions, and fostering a culture of trust and responsibility
- The rise of Agile & Hybrid Approaches
- Embed quality into processes and deliverables
- Hybrid governance models that balance flexibility and control
- Scaling Agile in complex or regulated environments
- Value-driven planning and prioritisation
- Integrating AI-enhanced tools into delivery frameworks
- Methodology selection as a strategic leadership skill

Submissions may include case studies, frameworks, or practical tools that help PMs navigate methodological complexity with confidence.

3. PMO, Governance & Controls

The Project Management Office (PMO) has evolved over the last few decades, moving from a process-focused entity to a customer-oriented partner focused on delivering value¹. Activities provided by a PMO, whether related to portfolios, programs, or projects, are increasingly tailored to the unique needs and strategic direction of the organization.

We welcome contributions on:

- PMO transformation and maturity

¹ Project Management Institute, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, 8th edn (Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute, 2026), Appendix X2, p. 233.

- Aligning PMO services with the strategic goals of the organization
- Benefits realisation and value measurement
- Portfolio governance and strategic prioritisation
- Data-driven decision-making and predictive analytics
- AI-enabled PMO capabilities
- Building a culture of accountability and transparency

Speakers may also explore how governance frameworks support strategic leadership and organisational resilience.

4. Megaprojects & Complex Delivery

Megaprojects, such as the redevelopment of the Antwerp Ring, offer powerful lessons in scale, complexity, and stakeholder orchestration. They demand strategic thinking, systems awareness, and exceptional leadership.

We invite submissions that address:

- Governance models for large and complex programs
- Multi-stakeholder alignment and public-private collaboration
- Integrate sustainability in complex projects
- Risk, resilience, and scenario planning
- Systems thinking and long-term value creation
- Lessons learned from major infrastructure, digital, or societal projects

Case studies are especially encouraged, as they provide rich insights transferable to projects of all sizes.

The Strategic Leader

The true opportunity for project managers lies in balancing core PM principles (see section on Theme, p3) to create strategic direction for their teams and organisations. We therefore welcome submissions on the following strategic PM topics:

- Management of complex interdependencies by taking a **holistic** view and seeing the project as part of a larger organizational system.
- Prioritising outcomes over deliverables to focus on **value**.
- Integration of **quality** into the entire project lifecycle, rather than as an inspection step.
- Leading with empathy, clarity, and purpose. Modeling integrity, **accountability**, and transparency, and taking full ownership of both project results and the team's ethical governance.
- Examples of how environmental, social, and economic impacts are considered in decision-making and planning.

- **Fostering an empowered culture** rooted in trust, autonomy, and psychological safety to drive innovation.

What was once a domain driven largely by schedules, budgets, and Gantt charts is now evolving into a dynamic discipline where data-driven precision merges with human-driven solutions. In this, we surmised an increasing demand for leadership and accountability in light of an ever-shifting world where data and precision become central. There is a driving need to move beyond execution towards strategic vision with accountability and leadership. Ultimately, strategic PMs lead teams through change and deliver value that endures.

The Format

Innovative Workshops, Masterclasses, Seminars and Keynote sessions:






Amidst the dynamic exchange of ideas, our event offers a unique opportunity for speakers to conduct workshops and master classes, adding a hands-on dimension to the learning experience. The final program, including presentation formats, will be curated once our distinguished speakers have been selected.

Main Sessions: Keynotes and Classic Seminars and Workshops:

Throughout the day, the main stage will be the focal point for our theme, providing a cohesive thread to tie together the diverse discussions on the *evolving role of the project manager*.

- The **Keynote Seminar** (Up to an hour) will not only delve into the changes in project management but also establish an exceptional standard for the congress. Speakers are tasked with captivating the audience, emphasising both the challenges of using AI in Project Management whilst inspiring our community with forward-thinking ideas.
- Similarly, our **Classic Seminar** Presentations (Approximately 45 minutes) promise an engaging exploration of key aspects of project management, ensuring audience members are captivated and enlightened.
- Conversely, our **Workshops** (Around 30 minutes*) provide an opportunity for individuals or groups to actively learn new skills or concepts.
- **Masterclasses** (45 minutes or longer) are extended workshops that may be longer with the intention of allowing skill development in greater depth.

Proposed workshop topics


-  Designing Your Future PMO
-  Hands-on with AI Tools for PMs
-  Leading Cross-Cultural Teams
-  The future Skillset: what the next Generation PM need
-  Interactive Case study

The versatility of our event caters to varying learning styles, ensuring a rich and comprehensive experience for all participants.

* Longer workshops may be possible. When submitting your application, please indicate the timing, maximum capacity, and any other requirements.

Program outline

Note the following is a proposal for visualization purposes as the program is not yet defined. The program will be finalized after the selection of, and confirmation by, the presenters.

Time	Session	Type	Pillar	Description
08:30 – 09:00	Registration & Welcome Coffee	Networking		Check-in and networking with light breakfast.
09:00 – 09:20	Opening Ceremony	Plenary	M.O.R.E. & PM Methodology	Host welcome + overview of summit theme & objectives.
09:20 – 10:00	Keynote 1: From Project Manager to Strategy Enabler	Keynote	All	Inspirational opening keynote about the PM's evolving role in driving organizational strategy.
10:00 – 10:45	Panel Discussion: What CEOs Expect from Project Managers in 2030	Panel Discussion	PM Methodology PMO	Senior executives discuss the strategic alignment between projects and corporate vision.
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee Break	Networking		Exhibitor area and networking zone open.
11:15 – 12:00	Session 1: AI & Automation in PM: The Co-Pilot Era	Breakout Sessions / Workshops	PM Methodology	Attendees choose between AI tools and PMO evolution topics.
	Session 2: Redefining PMO: From Governance to Growth		PMO	
	Session 3: Building Psychological Safety in Teams		Sustainability & PM Methodology	Hands-on leadership, agility, and
	Session 4: Hybrid PM in Complex Environments		Megaprojects	
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	Networking		Buffet lunch and sponsor showcase.
13:00 – 13:45	Keynote 2: Predictive Analytics & Decision-Making for Project Leaders	Keynote	PM Methodology PMO	Insights on leveraging data for proactive project management.
13:45 – 14:30	Session 5: Agile at Scale: When Transformation Meets Reality	Breakout session / workshop	PM Methodology	Real-world lessons from organizations that scaled agile or hybrid approaches.
	Session 6: Leading People Through Disruption		PMO	Diverse leaders share experiences managing teams through uncertainty.
	Session 7: Sustainability		Sustainability	Hands-on sustainability labs.
	Session 8: Human-Centric Transformation: Culture, Collaboration & Creativity		Megaprojects PM Methodology	
14:30 – 15:00	Coffee Break	Networking		Refreshments + tech demos (Grand Hall).
15:00 – 16:00	Interactive Workshop (choose one):  <i>Designing Your Future PMO</i>  <i>Hands-on with AI Tools for PMs</i>  <i>Leading Cross-Cultural Teams</i>  <i>The future Skillset: what the next Gen PM needs</i>	Workshops	All	60-minute applied sessions led by facilitators.
16:00 – 16:30	Fireside Chat: AI, Ethics & the Human Side of Automation	Conversations	All	An intimate discussion between an AI expert and senior PM leader.
16:30 – 17:30	Closing Keynote: The Future of Work and the PM's Strategic Place in It	Keynote	All	Visionary wrap-up connecting PM to organizational purpose and global trends.
17:30 – 18:00	Wrap-up	Closing	All	Key takeaways (Auditorium).
18:00 – 19:30	Networking Reception	Social		Informal mixer with drinks and light bites.

Submission process

Option 1: Submission via presenter form (word doc provided)

In order to streamline the submission process, please submit the speaker submission form to diego.costafernandes@pmi-belgium.be and shirley.pullan@pmi-belgium.be.

Option 2: Online submission

If you wish to submit online, please submit on our website at <https://pmi-belgium.be/call-for-speakers>. Please also note that the online form cannot be saved once started, so we recommend preparing your answers beforehand and submitting them in one session.

Both submission routes require the following information:

- Presenter's name, telephone number, email address, and a professional photograph, ideally showing head and shoulders.
- Proposed topic or subject, with a clear explanation of how it connects to the theme (and if possible, the Strategic value of the presentation in relation to the 6 PM principles, see p3).
- Preference for the speaker role (Keynote, Seminar, Master Class, workshop).
- Presenter's bio/profile written in the third person (75-100 words).
- Presentation abstract (100-125 words).
- Summary of learning goals (1-3 simple bullet sentences).
- Brief outline of presentation experience.
- Any special requirements for your presentation.
- Optional: Willingness to prepare a short video introduction (less than 2 minutes) about yourself and the topic. The video should not feature commercial logos and may be used in the promotional campaign for the congress.

Timing:

Submission **Deadline: 31st May, 2026**

Application responses will be communicated **early June**.

Receipt of final presentations for quality review **end August/early September**.

We are hugely grateful for the generosity of those who propose their topic to speak at this event. Outside of the PM Fair, we actively encourage webinars, speaker events and hosted-company events throughout the year. If you wish to propose an event outside of the PM Fair, don't hesitate to speak to one of our board members, or contact us at [Call for Speakers | PMI Belgium](#).


We look forward to receiving your submission and collaborating with you to make our PM Fair 2026 a resounding success!

Cost coverage information:

Hotel accommodation is covered for one night
 Travel costs are not reimbursed

PM Belgium is a non-profit organisation that serves the community of PMs in Belgium and beyond. We are extremely grateful to our members and supporters for their generous time in making the PM Fair *the* PM congress of the year.

Workflow

Timing & Phase	May Submission	June Review	July Publish	August Logistics	September Quality & completion	October Perform
PMI Benelux Review Team	1 May: Release <i>Call for Speakers</i> Speaker selection starts	15 June: Review & selection process completed Speakers announced Prepare draft program	Publish speaker bio and program	1 Aug: Request for logistics (Dinner, Hotel, speaker requirements)	Early Sept: Perform quality review Publish final program	
Speaker	31 May: Complete & submit Presenter form	15 June: If selected, prepare presentation	Support marketing through reposts	22 Aug: Submit requested information	Early Sept: Submit presentation for quality review	2 Oct: * PM Fair * Your time to shine! 

Workflow of the speaker submission, review, selection and logistical management. Timings are approximate at time of publication.

Speaker Selection Process

The selection process comprises the following steps:

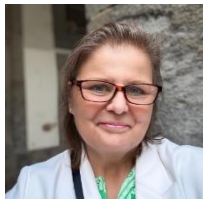
1. **Submission Phase:** Submission opens **Friday 1st May, 2026**. Please submit your request by forwarding your abstract and other necessary details using the enclosed form before the deadline, which is midnight on **Sunday, 31st May, 2026**.
2. **Review Criteria:** Submissions will undergo thorough review by the PMI Belgium review team. Submissions that are aligned with the PM Fair 2026 theme, demonstrate relevance to the profession, show feasibility of the proposed activity, and showcasing the speaker's experience, will be considered favorably.
3. **Selection Announcement:** A list of selected presenters for the event will be finalized and communicated no later than **Monday, 15th June, 2026**.
4. **Confirmation and Guidance:** Selected presenters will receive confirmation along with specific guidance, logistics. Additionally, a deadline for the submission of their full presentation will be provided after the selection announcement and anticipated for **early September**. The purpose of the draft is for quality review and should be the final or near final presentation.
5. **Communication:** There will be additional communication relating to the speaker's dinner and accommodation. We encourage you to provide a valid email address for all correspondence. Look out for those emails and support our team by answering promptly. Don't hesitate to raise questions or share information regarding your needs. Nearer the date of the PM Fair, a WhatsApp group will be opened for quick communication.

We look forward to your valuable submissions and the possibility of having you as a distinguished presenter at PMI Belgium PM Fair 2026 in Antwerp on the **2nd October!**

Warm regards,

Program and Speakers coordination team, PM Fair 2026:

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