



Professional PLM International Panel

A Profession for PLM

The concept of creating a recognised PLM Profession has generated a lot of support since it was first raised in 2017, but nothing has crystallised. It really needs a fresh look.



The benefits in terms of recognition of PLM skills, higher standards, faster adoption and industry focus are generally accepted, but the method of getting there still needs discussion.

The PLM Interest Group is therefore hosting an International Panel of practitioners and organisations who will review the aims and practicalities, and who may provide an agreed basis for moving forward.

Global Interest

Over the course of the Initiative, discussions on LinkedIn about forming a profession have been liked by practitioners from over 30 countries, and participants from both sides of the Atlantic have participated in the workshops.

This has implications for the PLM Body of Knowledge. The principles, guidelines, standards and methods to produce Professional PLM are universal - they will apply to every professional practitioner, and to every implementation that is run in a professional way. PLM is a global activity, and PLM specialists will be able to apply their skills in whichever country has the need, irrespective of where those skills were learned.

Global Vision

The PLM industry as a whole should have a Vision of where it is heading, and where it will be in 10 or 20 years' time.

The Professional PLM Initiative supports this, by raising PLM onto the same level as existing professions, so that:-

"The discipline of PLM is recognised as a profession throughout the business world. It is championed by a proactive Professional Body that acts on behalf of its members and of the industry as a whole; and supports and accredits a global education infrastructure that provides a career path from leaving school to the top of a company."

The Need

What we don't have today is a clear career path for PLM practitioners. There is no industry-wide agreement about:-

- ❖ what a PLM Professional should know
- ❖ the specific skills and experience that a PLM Professional should have
- ❖ the tools a PLM Professional should be able to use
- ❖ the different PLM Professional roles and job titles
- ❖ what constitutes a senior PLM Professional
- ❖ how to evaluate a candidate for a PLM position
- ❖ how to demonstrate PLM expertise

This creates a tremendous overhead for user companies, who have to train and develop their PLM staff from scratch without any defined syllabus or certified external training providers. For large corporations planning for the future, it is a continual challenge to ensure that in 5 years' time there will be enough skilled people to run PLM properly.

The Benefits

A profession will enhance the profile of PLM amongst other business disciplines; define standardised levels of expertise; and provide a worldwide voice for PLM development. It will also raise the overall standard of PLM implementation by creating a neutral model of best practice.

User companies get access to a professionally-skilled, globally-mobile workforce. Their HR departments can plan for future projects, knowing the headcount they will need and drawing on a wide range of consistent education and training options to develop their own staff up to speed. Projects become more successful, and as their staff advance through their career paths they expand the horizons of the business in leadership roles.

Vendors, integrators and consultancies can demonstrate the calibre of their staff in absolute terms, freeing them from the perception of 'learning on the job'. There becomes a fluid and constructive career path out of and back into the client sector; and by supporting professional norms and practices they can lead their clients much faster along the implementation path.

Education

Establishing the criteria for a Profession will also harmonise the worlds of industry and education. By exploring the full extent of "what a PLM practitioner should know", across the wide range of different PLM roles, training providers and academia can reshape and extend their provision to meet the whole spectrum of industry need.

White Paper

There is a clear starting point in the form of the [Professional PLM White Paper](#), published by the PLMIG in August 2023 after an intensive period of industry-wide discussion.

There are arguments for and against a profession, and these have been voiced extensively in the past. The White Paper eliminates this 'noise', summarises the aims and the reasoning, and provides a Position Statement that everyone can work from.

This means that when we form the International Panel, it will hit the ground running from the outset.

Join the International Panel

The PLMIG is hosting an International Panel of PLM practitioners and organisations that held its inaugural meeting on 28 January 2025. The second meeting is scheduled for 04 March 2025 at 15:00 [UK].

The aim of the Panel is to define a common view of the way forward on the path to a profession, and to provide input and guidance on its parameters and structure. The issues need to be considered carefully, thoughtfully and from many perspectives, and the Panel is the platform for this to happen.

Participants from anywhere and everywhere in the world are encouraged to enrol. PLM is a global subject, and so input from as many countries as possible is desirable.

The meetings work in a Round Table format, and are free, confidential, and without obligation.

The PLMIG will summarise each meeting, and publish the findings to the wider PLM community. The PLMIG will then run 'drop-in' open-forum sessions to incorporate wider feedback and ensure that every practitioner in the world has a chance to add their input.

How to Enrol

Enrolment is necessary to plan for and to manage the meetings. Up to 3 people from any organisation may take part.

Please complete the Enrolment Form overleaf and return it to Roger Tempest at internationalpanel@plmig.com.

Enrolment Form

Delegate #1 (primary contact)	
Name	
Company	
Job Title	
Country	
Email	

Delegate #2, if required:-

Name	
Job Title	
Country	
Email	

Delegate #3 if required:-

Name	
Job Title	
Country	
Email	