The world is changing and project management is changing with it. IPMA is adapting:

- to the demands of its customers
- to improvements in technology and
- to innovations in ways of working.

We are improving the depth and breadth of our offerings – whilst driving closer harmonization and standardisation across the globe. Our certification system builds on our progressive 4-level model that starts with the core project manager role and builds out from there. This means that no matter what kind of role you are currently working in (Project Manager, Programme Manager, Portfolio Manager, Risk Manager, Agile Leader, Sponsor, Project Management Consultant, etc.), you are able to certify based on your experience (years and complexity) aligned with our competence model.

IPMA offers:

- a progressive, internationally recognised, competence based certification scheme
- in your own country, in your own language, at your own competence level, to an international standard
- and run by your local professional body.

Professionalism in a changing world
Individual Professional

➤ Do you want to be recognised as a professional in Project Management?
➤ Do you want to be assessed on your current competence level evidenced by the full range of your recent experiences?
➤ Do you want to be assessed in your own country?
➤ Do you want a system that allows you to demonstrate progression as your competences improve?
➤ Do you want to know how you can improve in your chosen profession?
➤ Do you want a certification scheme that allows you to have the flexibility to work in different sectors and/or in different countries and/or for different employers?

You need a role based certification system that is run locally and commands global recognition. You certify based on your experience and maturity in your current role.

Organisations

➤ Do you want to employ or hire a Project Management professional who has demonstrated their competence to internationally recognised standards?
➤ Do you want to be able to compare the quality of your project professionals across the globe against a global standard?
➤ Do you want to show the proven quality and maturity of your Project Management professionals to your clients?
➤ Do you want to be sure that your Project Management professionals have the right competences to manage your next challenging project?
➤ Do you want the support offered by a local professional body, and local training organisations, who understand that standard and can interpret it for you?
➤ Do you want to be able to access the widest possible field of candidates who have been assessed against that common standard wherever in the world and from whatever sector of business they come from?
The IPMA Certification System is the only system that offers global, competence-based certificates supported by local, national associations.

IPMA level D is IPMA’s starting level, aimed at starting professionals who want to demonstrate their knowledge to employers and clients. Level C is aimed at people who have gained 3-5 years of experience and want to demonstrate their competences in the race for high quality jobs and roles. Levels B and finally A are the levels for the very experienced and competent project, programme and portfolio managers. When you reach one of these levels, you have proved yourself as an all-round, experienced professional capable of running complex initiatives.

If you are looking for project, programme and portfolio managers who have proven competence, look for IPMA certified professionals. You can find out if someone is certified by looking at our database of certified professionals.

The benefits of IPMA Certification
- A broad orientation that looks across different business sectors
- A good broad business and theoretical foundation
- A competence approach makes professionals widely employable
- Competences proven by the candidate; independently assessed
- An emphasis on the leader who takes responsibility
- Many decades of experience that IPMA has with the assessment of competences
- Self-reflection during the process makes the candidate aware of their own strengths and weaknesses
- Recertification encourages up-to-date knowledge and experience
- IPMA checks whether the candidate has been able to make a difference and has left an impact
- IPMA is a not for profit organisation

Recertification
A certificate needs to be current. Every five years, the certified professionals need to be recertified, showing they have maintained their competences at the right level.

IPMA’s vision is “Promoting competence throughout society to enable a world in which all projects succeed”. In support of this vision, IPMA has defined the IPMA Individual Competence Baseline® (ICB) version 4. Based on the ICB4, we have also defined the competence baseline for Consultants, Coaches and Trainers in the field of projects, programmes and portfolios, the ICB4CCT. Based on these standards, we are able to recognise and certify professionals working in different roles within the field of Project Management.

The ICB4 is the international standard for competence for Project, Programme and Portfolio Managers.

The competence needed in each of these domains is defined in the following competence areas:
- Perspective: the initiatives you’re running
- People: how do you interact?
- Practice: of our work.

ICB4 does not prescribe a method, methodology or specific process. You can use the competence model in any organisational context. The model is not related to a specific field (like ICT or investment or government or research). ICB4 gives a clear language, a basis for development and learning, suitable for all in the project management community.

ICB4 is downloadable from the IPMA website at products.ipma.world.

Individual Competence Baseline (ICB)

What is the value of a certificate?
Entry Criteria for Project Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex project environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a project manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex projects of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Portfolio Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex portfolio environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex portfolios of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Programme Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex programme environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Note: You don’t need to have an IPMA Level B certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level A.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level A

Entry Criteria for Project Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex project environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a project manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex projects of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Portfolio Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex portfolio environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex portfolios of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Programme Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex programme environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes of which at least three years were at a strategic level.
Assessment Path for IPMA Level B®

Entry Criteria for Senior Project Manager
This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a complex project environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last eight years: the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a project manager or which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex projects.

Entry Criteria for Senior Portfolio Manager
This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a complex portfolio environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria within the last eight years: the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years’ experience as a portfolio manager or which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex programmes.

Note: You don’t need to have an IPMA Level C certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level B and Level B is the first time that IPMA Certificates differentiate between Project, Programme and Portfolio domains.

Note: You don’t need to have an IPMA Level C certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level B.
Entry Criteria for Project Manager

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a project management role within a moderately complex project environment within an organization. Eligibility criteria within the last six years the candidate needs to have a minimum of three years’ experience as a project manager within projects of moderate complexity, or a minimum of three years’ experience in a responsible project management role assisting the project manager in complex projects.

Note: You don’t need to have an IPMA Level D certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level C.

Entry Criteria for Project Management associate

An IPMA certificate at Level D requires that the candidate has knowledge in the Competence Elements (CEs) related to project management. As such, they usually have broad project management knowledge and may work in a project team. Eligibility criteria: there is no previous experience required and only knowledge regarding CEs related to project management are assessed.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level C®

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>CV for initial certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>summary report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full self assessment</td>
<td>Referees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback: Not yet eligible

Eligibility check: Pass

Exam [1]: Pass

Extended interview [2]: Pass 2

Simulation / Role based scenarios [1]: Pass

(Regular) Interview [1]: Pass

Final evaluation

Decision:

Certificate

[i]-[i]: If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level D®

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Knowledge self assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Feedback: Not yet eligible

Eligibility check: Pass

Exam [1]: Pass

Final evaluation

Decision:

Certificate

[i]-[i]: If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.
Complexity in projects, programmes and portfolios

The more competent you are as a project, programme or portfolio professional, the more complex your initiatives and environment will probably become. Complexity is also of value when you want to assess your current competence level. So, how do we measure complexity of projects, programmes and portfolios?

We see 10 factors that define complexity of initiatives. These 10 are listed below and described in the International Certification Regulations (ICR).

Every Certification Body has a table for assessing the complexity of the candidate’s initiatives. Self-assessment is part of the application.

Complexity of initiatives is defined through 10 factors:

**Capability perspectives:**
- input related complexity
- process related complexity
- output related complexity
- risk related complexity

**Context perspectives:**
- strategy related complexity
- organisation related complexity
- socio-cultural related complexity

**Management/Leadership perspectives**
- team related complexity
- innovation related complexity
- autonomy related complexity

Maintain your level of professionalism

People change and take different career paths. Certificate only has value when it is current, accurate and descriptive of the individual’s competences. Therefore, the validity of an IPMA certificate is 5 years.

A professional could attain further competences, gather more experience and knowledge and operate in more complex environments. This might be rewarded with a higher level of certification, so we would assume the candidate will try to go for a higher level.

Some professionals might have maintained the experience level but have not yet attained enough competences for the next level. The recertification process requires validation of the certificate level after 5 years without having to go through a full assessment. It is a check-up for the professional and it shows their clients that their professionalism is maintained.

For a full description of the processes and requirements, please refer to the International Certification Regulations (ICR). If you want to embark on recertification, please contact your local Certification Body, they can provide you with all the details.

Recertification

**Re-certification for all IPMA Levels**

Application
- CV for re-certification
- Full self assessment
- Structured evidence

**Eligibility check**
- Not yet eligible
- In case of doubt
- Not yet competent

**Interview**
- Pass

**Final evaluation**
- Not competent
- Competent

**Decision**
- Pass

**Certificate**
- Archive

Feedback

- Not yet eligible
- In case of doubt
- Not yet competent

Feedback

- Not competent
- Competent
Requirements for recertification

The table below indicates the requirements for recertification at the same level. More details can be found in the ICR. As can be seen from this table, the professional has to spend enough time, at the applicable level, in a responsible role, and has to keep their professional competence current.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Domain-related experience required by the applicant</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Leadership of others</th>
<th>Minimum of 30 hours' evidence of CPD per annum (175 hours total) since the last (re-)certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level A</td>
<td>Evidence of minimum 30 months of practical experience over five-year period</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level B</td>
<td>Evidence of minimum 30 months of practical experience over five-year period</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Management of others</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level C</td>
<td>Evidence of minimum 30 months of practical experience over five-year period</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Leadership of others</td>
<td>Minimum of 30 hours' evidence of CPD per annum (175 hours total) since the last (re-)certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>Evidence of minimum 30 months of practical experience over five-year period</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Leadership of others</td>
<td>Minimum of 30 hours' evidence of CPD per annum (175 hours total) since the last (re-)certification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recertification process

The flowchart below describes the recertification process. As can be seen, this is a much easier process than for initial certification.

Project management roles

The maturity of professionals within projects, programmes and portfolios is recognised in the four level certification (4LC) scheme. Other professionals are working in the field of projects, programmes and portfolios, in different roles (e.g. Project Planner, Agile Leader, Project Risk Manager, etc.). In most countries we provide certification for these roles as well as the core leadership roles. Please contact your local Certification Body or Membership Association for information. If your country doesn’t support the qualification, these can be obtained in other countries.

IPMA Level A® certified programme director
IPMA Level B® certified senior project planner
IPMA Level C® certified Scrum master
IPMA Level D® certified PM assistant
While IPMA manages the 4-L-C certification system for individuals, the Certification Bodies of our Member Associations perform the actual assessments and certification.