

## PMI® Research and Education Conference 2012

By Jouko Vaskimo

[jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi](mailto:jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi)

**Project Management Institute Research and Education Conference 2012** took place in Limerick, Ireland, on July 16 - 18, 2012. The conference, a biennial event which was first held in Paris in 2000, took place at the University of Limerick, and was organized by the PMI Research and Education Conference 2012 Program Committee under the supervision of Dr **Carla Messikomer**, the Manager of Academic Resources at Project Management Institute.

The conference included plenary sessions, and five simultaneous parallel tracks with a total of over 70 papers, posters, symposia and discussion sessions. The conference was attended by over 250 participants from more than 35 countries, and by some of the most renowned speakers in the field of project management research and education. The three-day conference was organized for scholars and practitioners from universities and practice organizations to share the findings of their latest research, innovative teaching practices, and practical issues in the field of project management. In addition to the official program, the conference included a comprehensive social program of several receptions.

This was the first time the PMI Research and Education Conference took place on a university campus. The University of Limerick provided an excellent stage for the proceedings, which the participants found appropriately informal and collegial, encouraging active exchange. This was also the first time the conference was preceded by two day-long pre-conference events – a Doctoral Colloquium for PhD students, and a workshop for faculty on writing teaching cases based on empirical research or publicly available information.

Dr Messikomer was pleased to see both academics and practitioners among the participants. In her welcoming remarks she noted: “As an applied, interdisciplinary field, academic project management has a wealth of knowledge, theories and methods on which to draw. It also has the advantage of an enormous community of practice that can both inform academic research and benefit from it. The field is rich in human, theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary resources, and we should take advantage of these assets.” She encouraged participants to “take the opportunity during the conference to connect with each other, share ideas, and perhaps, to make plans to collaborate in research, in the classroom, or in the field.” Dr Messikomer can be contacted at [Carla.Messikomer@pmi.org](mailto:Carla.Messikomer@pmi.org).



*Dr Messikomer welcoming the conference participants (photos courtesy Jouko Vaskimo)*

A Doctoral Colloquium took place on Saturday, 14 July, in which doctoral candidates presented selected aspects of their research to an audience of peers and international scholars in a friendly and constructive atmosphere intended to provide valuable feedback. Dr Messikomer explained that the aim of the Doctoral Colloquium was to provide students an opportunity to:

- present their research work in a relaxed and supportive environment
- receive feedback and suggestions from peers and experienced faculty
- gain an overview of the breadth and depth of research in the broad PM area
- obtain insight into research directions taken by other doctoral candidates
- discuss concerns about research, supervision, the job market, and other issues
- build international networks with peers and academics

A case writing workshop titled *Leveraging Your Research into Teaching Cases*, in which faculty were trained to write teaching cases based on empirical research or publicly available information, took place on Sunday, 15 July. Both the Doctoral Colloquium and the Teaching Case Workshop, which were organized for the first time in connection with the PMI Research and Education Conference, were received very well by the participants. Dr **Mark Jenkins** from Cranfield University was the facilitator for the teaching case workshop.

Then Opening Ceremony began with a welcome by Dr Messikomer and Mr **Peter Monkhouse**, the Chair of the 2012 PMI Board of Directors. The keynote presentation

*Toward Project Management 2.0* was delivered by **Raymond Levitt**, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Director of the Collaboratory of Research on Global Projects at Stanford University. He presented the path project management has taken since its inception in the defence industry in the post - World War II era, and noted many of the tools and techniques he referred to as *Project Management 1.0* had proven burdensome and unresponsive. He proceeded to describe *Project Management 2.0* which would provide the tools, techniques, methods as well as governance arrangements appropriate for the modern world. The first conference day proceeded with five parallel tracks titled *Research – Incubator (1)*; *Research – Incubator (2)*; *Research – Student (1)*; *Research – Student (2)* and *Special Sessions / Education* up until lunch. The afternoon session were organized into five parallel tracks titled *Research – Governance*; *Research – Teams*; *Research – Methods*; *Research – Paradigms* and *Special Sessions / Education*.



*Professor Levitt keynoting at the Opening Ceremony*

The second conference day started with a keynote presentation *Becoming an evidence-based project manager* by Professor **Denise Rousseau**, the H.J. Heinz II University Professor of Organizational Behavior and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University. She described how project managers can improve their professional practice over the course of their careers by employing the emerging practice of Evidence-Based Management (EBMgt) to help even the most knowledgeable project managers work more effectively.

The day proceeded with five parallel tracks titled *Research – Governance; Research – Teams; Research – Social Networks; Research – SMEs; Special Sessions / Education* and three symposia up until lunch.



*Professor Rousseau keynoting in the second plenary session*

The afternoon commenced with a Featured Symposium (SYMINC) *Aligning PM Research to Meet the Critical Needs of the Practitioner* with **Ed Hoffman, Rüdiger Süß, Roger Forsgren, Miles Shepherd** and **Dave Gunner** participating in the panel, and continued with five parallel tracks titled *Research – Leadership; Research – Performance; Education; Research – Methods* and *Special Sessions / Education*.



*Featured Symposium (SYMINC) participants (from left to right): Ed Hoffman, Rüdiger Süß, Roger Forsgren, Miles Shepherd and Dave Gunner*

The final conference day started with two symposia, and continued again with five parallel tracks titled *Research – Performance*; *Research – Complexity*; *Research – PM Paradigms*; *Research – Methods* and *Special Sessions / Education* up until lunch. The afternoon featured the final plenary presentation, *Ensuring Strategic Guidance for Projects*, by Professor **Christoph Loch**, Director of the Judge Business School at Cambridge University. Professor Loch addressed the challenges facing senior executives who supervise strategic organizational initiatives, including those related to biased and incomplete status reporting, bridging multiple areas of expertise, and conflicting interests. He offered recommendations for steering committee oversight based on in-depth interviews with senior executives, focus group discussions and surveys with executives, middle managers and project managers.



*Professor Loch keynoting in the third plenary session*

The last conference day concluded with five parallel tracks titled *Research – HR*; *Research – International Development / Risk*; *Research – Quantitative PPM*; *Research – PPM* and *Special Sessions / Education*, and a short session for closing announcements in which Dr Messikomer and Mr Peter Monkhouse expressed their gratitude to the participants, the organizers, and the volunteers who made the conference possible.

For further information on the conference, including session summaries throughout the event, please navigate to <http://congresses.pmi.org/ResearchConf2012/> .



Established in 1972, University of Limerick (in Irish: *Ollscoil Luimnigh*) offers a range of courses and programmes up to doctorate and post-doctorate levels in the disciplines of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Business, Education, Health Sciences, Science and Engineering.

Started as the National Institute for Higher Education, Limerick, it became a university by statute in 1989 in accordance with the University of Limerick Act of 1989. The University of Limerick was the first university established since the foundation of the Irish State in 1922, followed later the same day by the establishment of Dublin City University.

The university is located on the Shannon River on an 80 hectare site 5 km from downtown Limerick in the National Technological Park at Castletroy. The university has over 11000 full-time undergraduate students, 1500 part-time students, as well as some 800 research postgraduates and 1300 taught postgraduate students. For further information please navigate to [www.ul.ie](http://www.ul.ie) .



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## About the Author



### **Jouko Vaskimo**

*Author*



**Jouko Vaskimo** works as Development Manager at Aalto PRO, the Professional Development unit of Aalto University in Espoo, Finland. He is also an International Correspondent and Editorial Advisor for **PM World** in Finland. Jouko graduated from Helsinki University of Technology in 1992. Since then he has held project management related assignments with increasing levels for responsibility at Sinebrychoff Ltd, the oldest brewery in Scandinavia; Kemira Engineering Ltd, the leading chemicals manufacturer Finland; DNA Finland Ltd, a large Finnish mobile phone operator; Nokia Business Infrastructure; and Ixonos PLC, one of the leading Finnish ICT consultancies. Jouko holds the IPMA Level C (Project Manager) and Level B (Senior Project Manager) certificates and is the chairman of the Finnish IPMA Certification Body operating IPMA certification in Finland. He is a member of the Project Management Association Finland Board of Directors and a founding member of PMI Finland Chapter. He received the PMP certificate in 2003. Since October 2007, Jouko has been heading the Finnish delegation to ISO/PC 236 and ISO/TC 258. Jouko resides in Espoo, Finland and can be best contacted at [jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi](mailto:jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi) .