

# **A Governance Framework for Managing and Engaging Project Stakeholders<sup>1</sup>**

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This paper is the result of a collaborative effort between the University of Maryland's Project Management Center for Excellence and the Department of Management Sciences at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology in Islamabad, Pakistan. It constitutes the first in a series of research articles by the authors which will examine diverse themes relating to the important and evolving subject area of project stakeholder management and engagement.

## **Abstract**

Stakeholders have emerged as a major force to be reckoned with on projects. Organizations have become increasingly aware over time that careful management and engagement of project stakeholders goes hand in hand with a higher likelihood of project success. However, neither academics nor practitioners of project management have developed a comprehensive all-inclusive and dynamic source of reference for managing and engaging stakeholders on projects undertaken in and by organizations.

Based on decades of project experience, and their theoretical and empirical research on project stakeholders, the authors unveil in this paper their governance framework designed to help organizations address all salient aspects and considerations relating to the management and engagement of all stakeholders on their projects. Encompassing four component levels, the framework's fundamental objective is to ensure that projects stand a higher chance of success and deliver multi-dimensional and sustainable benefits to as many stakeholders as much as possible.

## **Introduction**

Stakeholders are central to all projects in all categories and levels of complexity. They exist across space and time: No project in history has been "stakeholder-less". All projects are

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<sup>1</sup> *Second Editions are previously published papers that have continued relevance in today's project management world, or which were originally published in conference proceedings or in a language other than English. Original publication acknowledged; authors retain copyright. This paper was originally presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual University of Maryland Project Management Symposium in College Park, Maryland, USA and included in the conference Proceedings in June 2014. It is republished here with permission of the author and the [Project Management Center for Excellence at the University of Maryland](http://www.pmc.edu).*

conceived, initiated, planned, executed, controlled, monitored and evaluated by stakeholders for stakeholders. In fact, all projects revolve primarily around their stakeholders, more so than they do around the “iron triangle” conventional parameters of goal/scope, cost and schedule.

Interest in project stakeholders by academics and practitioners has witnessed an enormous growth in the past twenty or so years. This is aptly reflected in the number of publications on the subject, collectively numbering now in the thousands, most of which have been written since the advent of the new millennium. Stakeholders also figure prominently in the bodies of knowledge of large international professional project management associations (such as the PMI’s Project Management Body of Knowledge PMBOK where stakeholder management is included as a separate knowledge area in its current edition, the IPMA’s Competence Baseline ICB, and the APM’s Body of Knowledge APMBOK), as well as in the standards of several national project management associations.

Despite this growing awareness of the role and importance of stakeholders, and the fact that the term *stakeholder* has become a buzzword in the project management community, numerous project performance surveys and analyses conducted from time to time across the globe, especially in the United States, Canada and western Europe, in the IT, construction, social development and other sectors indicate that stakeholder-related issues continue to rank preeminent among the list of causes of project “failures”, usually far outranking technical causes. Considering that countless billions of Dollars are invested by organizations in projects every year, failure to effectively handle stakeholders can easily result in crippling mega losses. Long is the list of mega-projects in the construction, energy, mining and other infrastructure sectors which were scrapped or delayed for years because of unyielding stakeholder resistance which, in hindsight, was avoidable had the stakeholders been handled tactfully and prudently.

Most of the key entities involved on projects – project owners, sponsors, planners, managers and so forth - are cognizant of the criticality and importance of carefully managing and engaging both the internal and the external stakeholders on their projects. However, in practice more often than not they still simply take them for granted and fail to invest the time, resources, creativity and effort needed to ensure attainment of the requisite level of sustained stakeholder support and goodwill which is crucial for the success of their projects. There are several possible reasons for this, most important of which is ignorance about what to do and how to go about it. The governance framework provides answers to these questions.

Through their research the authors have attempted to bridge a glaring void evident in the project management literature. The result is a practical and universally implementable project stakeholder governance framework which any organization can apply on its projects regardless of category, size, complexity level, duration, location and context, and which over time can deliver substantial benefits, tangible and intangible, both to the organization and their stakeholders. Many organizations already have well developed project management governance frameworks though few, if any, appear to have taken the initiative to develop sophisticated governance frameworks specifically for their project stakeholders. Conceptually, the stakeholder governance framework exhibits parallels to project management maturity models such as the much discussed CMMI whose prime objective is to steer organizations towards attainment of the

optimal project management system. In content it overlaps partially with other stakeholder frameworks developed in recent years, such as the think tank and advisory service AccountAbility's open source AA1000SES (AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard) which appeared in 2011.

The stakeholder governance framework can be applied in any type of organization – commercial, public, not-for-profit - seeking to incorporate cutting edge stakeholder management and engagement practices into their project management systems. Some of the more substantive practical benefits which may result from its application include:

- More effectiveness and efficiency of projects brought about by improved motivation and performance of the (internal) project stakeholders.
- More stakeholder goodwill towards, and support for, the organization's projects.
- Reduction of existential risk and other severe threats to projects caused by failure to recognize, acknowledge and adequately address and manage legitimate stakeholder concerns and conflicts which may arise before, during and after projects.
- Identification of "win-win solutions" for all or for as many stakeholders as possible.
- Fairness in sharing of project benefits and costs.
- Consistency with the highest ethical and professional standards.

Adherence to this framework can ensure a higher likelihood of project success, but it cannot guarantee success per se. Project environments are characterized by multiple layers and dimensions of complexity of which stakeholders constitute just one.

### **The Term Governance**

Governance is a theme which has been extensively debated in recent decades, notably in the contexts of public administration, public policy and international development schemes. Little attention has been accorded to it in project management where the focus of knowledge generation and dissemination traditionally has been centered on a project's technical areas with a discernible shift from the 1980s onwards increasingly towards project management's human dimension, in particular, with a focus on project teams. Comparatively few publications have been written on project governance and often it is equated too narrowly with project portfolio management.

In this paper the authors take a broad multi-dimensional view of the concept of project governance which they perceive as the collective embodiment, inter alia, of all policies, principles, guidelines, standards, strategies, rules and regulations, institutional mechanisms, processes, procedures, tools and techniques, methods, physical and knowledge infrastructure, and the organization's culture, which find application, directly and indirectly, on every project an organization undertakes from project conception to initiation to completion and beyond. As a subarea of project governance, stakeholder governance spans all above mentioned elements which concern the project stakeholders, who basically fall into two categories: those entities which have contractual obligations to the project and which are entrusted with project planning,

designing, executing, monitoring, evaluating and other responsibilities (internal stakeholders), and those entities which have no contractual or legal obligations to the project but are affected in the positive or negative sense by it in some way over time (external stakeholders). Typical internal stakeholders include the project owner, sponsor, consultants, project management office, the project manager and team, contractors and subcontractors, vendors, and public agencies providing services to the project. Examples of external stakeholders are local residents and communities, the general public, media and academia, environmentalists, social activists and public interest litigators.

The stakeholder governance framework proposed in this paper comprises four distinct component levels topped by the *institutional level* under which three levels exist: *instrumental, information & communication system, and education & research*. All four levels closely interface with and reinforce each other. The framework is inherently dynamic; it can and should be improved over time by the implementing organization to reflect the lessons it learns over time in the course of managing and engaging its project stakeholders.

### **The Institutional Component**

In any organization it is top management which ultimately bears responsibility for its performance over time. Because stakeholders are so important for projects, and because projects are critical for the attainment of the organization's strategic goals and objectives, and ultimately its mission, the onus consequently lies with top management to create, consolidate and sustain a facilitating environment for projects in which the interests of all stakeholders, internal and external, are given adequate consideration. By doing so, top management sends a clear and strong signal throughout the organization that it accords high importance to all the stakeholders of its projects and is willing over the long term to invest the requisite time, effort and organizational resources for professionally managing and engaging them. This goes much further than the social responsibility programs many (commercial) organizations have introduced in recent decades.

Given the holistic character of project stakeholder governance, it is apparent that creating, consolidating and sustaining a framework for it entails considerable planning and operational efforts necessitating input from, and close collaboration between, different areas and levels of the organization. A coordinating and control mechanism is needed to ensure that the inputs are provided and collaboration takes place and which also assumes responsibility for the framework's creation and performance. As ultimate overseers of all projects an organization undertakes, top management is the best place for placement of this institutional mechanism for which any appropriate term can be used – standing committee, working group, task force and so forth.

Of the numerous elements which collectively comprise the governance framework, some are normative or directional in character (for e.g., the policies, principles, standards, guidelines), some are operational (for e.g., stakeholder identification, analysis and management and engagement processes and tools), some technical (for e.g., databases), some knowledge-centered

(for e.g., in-house training programs) while the rest fall under the miscellaneous category (for e.g., the “culture” of the organization). Devising a stakeholder governance framework which integrates all elements in a manner in which they are mutually consistent and reinforce each other continuously over time, and improving the framework in periodic intervals can, depending on organization, constitute a complex and challenging undertaking. Top management, lacking both the time, expertise and insights to perform this work alone, can delegate much of the responsibility to experts within the organization, for instance, from the organization’s PMO, and outside it, such as, subject academics, consultants, and experienced project practitioners with a track record in successfully managing and engaging stakeholders, while itself focusing more, for instance, on the framework’s normative and directional dimensions. Top management’s gamut of responsibilities would include providing leadership, encouragement and guidance, deciding how far the organization is prepared to go, ensuring provision of the requisite resources, endeavoring to influence the organization’s culture to make it more amenable to its project stakeholders, ensuring and monitoring strict compliance of the governance framework as well as seeing to it that the framework is continuously improved over time in response to lessons learned by the organization in its dealing with its project stakeholders.

Top level commitment is crucial for ensuring that both the organization and its project stakeholders, internal and external, derive mutual benefits through their interaction. The challenge is to ensure that the commitment intensity is sustained and does not diminish with time.

### **The Instrumental Component**

The governance framework’s instrumental component encompasses the whole spectrum of processes, procedures, tools and techniques, methods and approaches etc. which find application in managing and engaging a project’s internal and external stakeholders. Exciting and challenging, this is where the operational activities mainly take place and where the success or failure of stakeholder management and engagement is ultimately decided. The instrumental component encompasses four basic steps performed in the following sequence:

**Contextualisation:** Every project is unique and this uniqueness is also reflected in the context in which the project exists and in which it is undertaken from initiation to completion. Context is profoundly important for projects. The term “context” signifies the environmental parameters, which are both internal and external to the project. A project’s external context comprises the economic, political, social, cultural, technological, institutional, legal, public administration and other systems which interface with it; the project’s internal context includes, inter alia, the competence, skills, experience and professionalism of the internal stakeholders, cultural and ethical considerations, management styles and the implementing organizations project governance frameworks. As a general rule, larger more complex and cost-intensive projects, which are typical in construction and infrastructure development, have contexts which tend to be relatively more complex than those of their smaller, simpler counterparts. Differences in context may be significant - even on projects with identical goal and technical specifications but undertaken in different locations, for e.g., in different countries (and often different regions

within the same country). Such location-specific differences in project contexts inevitably lead to different challenges and opportunities for managing and engaging internal and external stakeholders. For instance, public attitude would be highly supportive towards the construction of nuclear power plant facilities in Pakistan (an energy-starved developing country experiencing enduring chronic power outages) whereas the reverse would hold true in Germany where nuclear power is largely frowned upon by the majority of Germans and renewable energy is the preferred alternative. Singaporean civil administrators overseeing urban development schemes would behave in a manner which is probably markedly different from some of their counterparts in Nigeria or Cameroon. Work habits, social etiquette and ethics in Peruvian project teams may differ from Japanese project teams. And so on. Because of such contextual differences, it is conceivable that stakeholder management and engagement may be resoundingly successful on one project, but may turn out to be an abject failure when applied on a similar project undertaken elsewhere. Hence, a thorough evaluation of the project context must take place very early on in the stakeholder management and engagement cycle.

**Identification:** Project stakeholders obviously have to be identified before they are managed or engaged. Identification follows from definition and defining stakeholders has emerged as a major topic of debate in project stakeholder management and engagement literature and practice with the spectrum of definitional perceptions ranging from very narrow (for e.g., limited to internal key stakeholders) to very inclusive (extending to the natural environment, fauna and flora, and even the spirits of the deceased!). A limited number of stakeholders means that more attention and resources can be devoted to managing and engaging them than would be possible with a larger number of entities. Good ethical conduct, however, dictates that the project must without exception fairly and promptly compensate all stakeholders who incur losses, tangible or otherwise, in consequence of it. As much of the losses are usually incurred by entities external to the project, particularly in projects affecting large spaces, which is typical in construction and physical infrastructure development schemes, the definition of stakeholders must be sufficiently broad in order to include such entities.

Identification of internal stakeholders is normally a simple task and can be performed quickly but the identification of external stakeholders can pose a serious challenge, especially if these are numerous, diverse and dispersed over a large area - as is often the case with the above-mentioned construction and infrastructure development projects. Several methods exist for identifying stakeholders. The authors are aware of sixteen at this current point in time. Some are simple, quick and cost-effective to apply (for e.g., reviewing project documentation or asking the project manager and team members), others are quite complex and their application requires more time, effort and skill (for e.g., identifying stakeholders by analyzing every project activity or work package). Each identification method has its respective advantages and limitations and the choice of which method is appropriate or not depends on the project's nature, context and definition of stakeholders. As the number of stakeholders is not static throughout the project but usually rises with the project's progression from initiation through execution it is imperative to renew the identification exercise and update the stakeholder register periodically.

**Analysis:** This is probably the most challenging of the four steps. It is per se a highly complex process. The analysis is performed based on information collected on the project's identified

internal and external stakeholders. Information may come from many sources of varying quality whereby “quality” is a collective term encompassing, inter alia, the information’s factual accuracy, specificity, relevance, completeness, currentness, reliability, verifiability, comprehensibility, legality and action-orientation. Collecting quality information on internal project stakeholders would normally be comparatively easier and cheaper than for external stakeholders, especially if the latter are diverse and spatially dispersed, for some of whom information may not be available or accessible at all or too costly to acquire.

By carefully examining each stakeholder’s eight key attributes – i.e. its expectations, perceptions, motivations, concerns, attitudes, behaviors, power, and options – analysis can determine which stakeholders support and oppose the project, to what extent they will or may go either way and what possible favorable or unfavorable consequences their actions may have on the project. With the insights gained, a set of strategies can then be developed which aim to reduce or eliminate stakeholder opposition to the project and at the same time to expand and consolidate stakeholder support and favor for it. Analysis is an excellent means of helping curtail project risk and making use of opportunities presenting themselves.

Various sophisticated tools can be applied for analyzing project stakeholders. Especially useful is the SWOT-Analysis which examines strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, separately from the perspective of the project as well as from its stakeholders. A scenario analysis wherein the range of possible consequences resulting from the exercise of supportive and adversarial stakeholder options on the project’s success dimensions (cost, schedule, goal, image, stakeholder satisfaction etc.) are simulated and individually assessed constitutes another potent analytical tool. Given the dynamic nature of the stakeholder attributes, which can change over time, and because new entities become project stakeholders (as indicated in the previous subsection (identification)) and existing ones exit the project, it is imperative to periodically renew the analysis if and when deemed necessary.

***Strategy Design & Implementation:*** This is the instrumental component’s final phase. In the practice of project stakeholder management and engagement five basic strategy categories are employed: Communication, Consultation, Incentives, Participation and Partnership. Communication is the most common strategy; every project uses it. It involves providing internal and external stakeholders with information about the project. Consultation is based on formal dialogue and active listening to stakeholder views and feedback – especially from external ones - about the project. It signals that the project values inputs from its stakeholders and this in turn can promote stakeholder support for and good will towards the project provided the stakeholders perceive the consultations as being pursued in good faith and their suggestions are incorporated into the project’s planning, design and/or execution phases. Incentives involves the provision of benefits to stakeholders in exchange for benefits for the project, for e.g., by promising performance-based bonuses to internal stakeholders and reducing or eliminating external stakeholder opposition to the project by offering stipends to students in the project area or donating diagnostic equipment to a local hospital. Participation entails, within specified limits, permitting external stakeholders to have an active role in project design, planning, monitoring and evaluation. Partnership constitutes the highest rung of the management and engagement ladder. Rarely applied it, like participation, is directed mainly at the project’s external

stakeholders and involves according them privileges which, for e.g., can range from granting them a limited share of the project's revenue to making them co-owners of the project with management and control rights.

Several of the above categories may find simultaneous application on projects. The categories offer enormous room for creativity in designing and executing both group-specific as well as individual-specific management and engagement strategies allowing the project to focus its efforts and resources, for instance, on keeping influential supportive stakeholders content or trying to persuade actively hostile stakeholders that both their and the project's interests are convergent. A substantive body of literature on stakeholder engagement has emerged in the meantime as evidenced by the many engagement handbooks, toolkits etc. currently available.

Stakeholder management and engagement strategies are not cast in stone; their effectiveness and efficiency must be routinely monitored and periodically evaluated, and all observed shortcomings must be promptly rectified through appropriate modifications to, or redesign of, strategies exhibiting deficiencies.

Many of the common problems and issues encountered in practice with project stakeholders can be avoided by properly adhering to the instrumental component's processes, methods and tools. At the same time its limitations must be kept in mind. Accessing "quality" information on all stakeholders can be at best challenging and costly, at worst impossible (depending on factors such as the number, level of diversity and spatial dispersion of the stakeholders). Moreover, the quality of stakeholder analysis and strategy design depends on the skills, experience and creativity of the persons entrusted with the task. Stakeholder key attributes may change significantly and swiftly, and discerning, documenting and appropriately responding to these changes may be difficult. Finally, there is no guarantee that all serious conflicts and issues with stakeholders can be satisfactorily and permanently resolved.

### **The Information & Communication System Component**

Information and communication constitute the basis of all managerial processes and activities on a project. In fact, their overriding importance is such that the authors feel that information and communication merit consideration as a separate structural component of the stakeholder governance framework.

Even on small projects the management and engagement of stakeholders necessitates the accumulation of a large, sometimes enormous pool of information. This information must be properly catalogued, processed, periodically updated and, throughout the project, frequently and promptly disseminated amongst stakeholders entrusted with stakeholder management and engagement responsibilities who often are not physically co-located. The manual paper file-based systems used on projects before the advent of the digital age would have rendered the task tedious at best, making critical stakeholder management and engagement processes and activities such as identification, analysis and strategy design impractical and inefficient, conceivably even impossible on large complex projects.



The advanced technologies spawned by the digital age have enabled project practitioners to derive utility from information at a level never witnessed before in history. As a vastly efficient alternative to pre-digital systems, information and communication technologies are finding extensive application in projects for years, for e.g., the sophisticated software programs used in project administration, planning and monitoring, in architectural building and engineering systems design, modelling and visualization, and for enabling project team communication and collaboration in a virtual environment. Much attention in recent years has centered on Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) which are finding increasing use on projects as information hubs where project data can be centrally stored in practically any digital file format and accessed simultaneously by internal project stakeholders everywhere via local area networks or the internet. The efficiency-inducing effect of PMIS increases with increasing project size and complexity and any organization has at any point in time a large portfolio of projects in different categories, of varying sizes and complexity levels and in different stages of completion. Information contained in a PMIS can be archived after the project completion.

Project Stakeholder Information Systems (PSIS) constitute a technical subsystem of the PMIS. The PSIS serves as the project's main repository of information collected on all its identified stakeholders, internal and external. Analogous to PMIS, PSIS allow quick and convenient retrieval of information needed, for instance, for the purpose of stakeholder analysis and profiling. PSIS thus perform a critical operational role in project stakeholder management and engagement, interfacing closely with the governance framework's instrumental component where the information is utilized for analysis, strategy design and other purposes. In the education and research perspective, which is also a governance framework component (see section below), PSIS are very useful, especially for comparative studies of on-going and completed projects because such studies may yield insights - innovative ideas, processes, strategies and so forth - which could help improve the quality of stakeholder management and engagement on future projects and alert top management to the need for modifying specific elements of the stakeholder governance framework.

PSIS also have limitations. First, all information contained in a PSIS must consistently be of very high "quality" (see previous section). Information which exhibits qualitative deficiencies actually can be counter-productive as detrimental actions may stem from it. Second, the information gathering exercise must be confined to collecting only that information which is actually *needed* for managing and engaging stakeholders. Information collected over and above this and stored in the PSIS brings no value to the project, rather it causes inefficiency by consuming time, effort, and resources which could be productively utilized elsewhere. Third, all users must use the system consistently. Fourth, the risk of system crashes and data corruption is always there.

Fifth, given the sensitive nature of information, especially on individuals and organizations, and given the adverse tangible and intangible consequences resulting from data theft, leaks and unintended disclosures so common in the digital age, access to the PSIS needs to be very clearly defined and controlled so that only those stakeholders needing the information for their stakeholder-focused responsibilities can access it. Finally, information in a PSIS will bring no value for the project unless and until the internal stakeholders utilizing for it analysis, strategy

design and other management and engagement tasks are sufficiently competent, skilled, motivated and creative to derive maximum benefit out of it.

### **The Education & Research Component**

In order to systematically and consequentially apply stakeholder management and engagement it is crucial to first be aware of, comprehend and appreciate it. Awareness, comprehension and appreciation result from field experience - and from knowledge acquired through education and research.

Many project stakeholder-related problems, issues and conflicts which occur and linger on in practice do so because good intentioned project practitioners lack the requisite competence and skills to prevent these before they occur, or to resolve them promptly and effectively once they do. This knowledge gap has many causes and a comprehensive examination and comparative evaluation of these would go beyond the scope of this paper. However, it can be asserted that much of the blame lies with the project management education system which traditionally has focused primarily on the “hard” or technical aspects of managing projects and largely ignored the subject of stakeholder management and engagement. It has only been in recent years that “soft” themes such as project teams (which constitute one of the many types of stakeholders encountered on projects) and, in rare instances, stakeholders in the broad sense have found inclusion. Even today a handful of courses on the subject are being taught in project management graduate degree programs across the globe and it was only in the PMI’s PMBOK’s current fifth edition that stakeholder management was adopted as a separate knowledge area.

Education specifically about managing and engaging project stakeholders can be imparted informally as well as through formal mechanisms where the content focus can range from broad (i.e. covering multiple thematic areas) to narrow (i.e. confined to just one or a few specific topics), and where the time spent may last less from an hour or less to months and even a year or two of dedicated study. Formal mechanisms normally are more structured and require more planning and preparation than their informal counterparts. These include public talks and lectures by subject academics and practitioners, conferences, seminars and symposia with local to international expert participation, subject-specific trainings which may last just one day or several days and which are conducted in-house by, for instance, the organization’s PMO or outsourced to some external entity, certificate courses of varying durations on stakeholder management conducted by universities, management training institutions and consultants, and semester-long courses - albeit the handful in existence - which are offered in the context of project management degree programs. The Rotterdam School of Management in the Netherlands even offers a two-year master of stakeholder management degree program.

Knowledge about project stakeholders can also be imparted through the vast pool of published material now easily available on the subject. This material includes books, book chapters, research articles, case studies, master and doctoral theses, reports, magazine and newspaper articles, anecdotes, blogs etc. available in printed form or accessible on the internet and much of it free of cost.

An organization's project documentation constitutes a highly relevant source of knowledge about stakeholders. Relevant high value documents would typically include the project communication and stakeholder management and engagement strategies and plans (and their periodic revisions), which are increasingly finding inclusion in project master plans, as well as project completion reports and project audits which in hindsight may provide information on how stakeholders were managed and engaged, what issues and opportunities surfaced, and what lessons can be drawn which can benefit future projects.

Also useful from the education standpoint is the system of coaching and mentoring in which experienced project practitioners share insights with less experienced colleagues and provide guidance on how best to deal with current challenges and avoid pitfalls which may crop up in future. Much experiential insight into good and bad stakeholder management and engagement practices, incidentally, does not find its way into print or verbal communication but is locked away in the minds of practitioners and is eventually forgotten over time as the knowledge holders retire, die or resign from the organization. Tapping into this rich tacit knowledge base is equally - if not more important - than the other knowledge sources mentioned above and mechanisms must be developed for this.

As indicated above, organizations have a range of options at their disposal to spread knowledge about project stakeholders and the ins and outs of managing and engaging them. In recognition of the criticality of knowledge, the stakeholder governance framework advocates that organizations actively encourage and systematically develop their internal mechanisms for generating (through research) and delivering (through education) knowledge as well as identify and make best use of opportunities for acquiring knowledge outside the organization. At the very least, organizations should require all internal key stakeholders to jointly participate in a training course on stakeholder management and engagement prior to initiation of more their important (especially mission-critical) projects. Consideration should also be given to developing a comprehensive reference document – a project stakeholder manual or handbook - available to all internal stakeholders which provides detailed subject insight, including juxtaposition of case studies of highly successful, moderately successful and poor stakeholder management and engagement.

## **Conclusion**

This paper advocates and examines a governance framework which is conceptually sound, practical and ethical, for managing and engaging stakeholders on projects undertaken by organizations. Based on their broad concept of governance, the authors have identified several substantive benefits the framework can bring to its implementing organizations, and have discussed how it can be structured and what its major limitations are. Multiple practical hurdles can and probably will be encountered along the way but the framework's expected long-term benefits absolutely justify the risks and the substantial investment needed for its introduction. The authors hope their work will stimulate interest among academics and encourage them to improve this framework in future as well as encourage project practitioners to give serious

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thought to creating in their organizations governance frameworks for managing and engaging stakeholders.

### **Recommended Reading**

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**John Cable** is Director of the Project Management Center for Excellence in the A.J. Clark School of Engineering at the University of Maryland, where he is also a professor and teacher of several graduate courses in project management. His program at the University of Maryland offers masters and PhD level programs focused on project management. With more than 1,300 seats filled annually with students from many countries, including more than 40 PhD students, the program is the largest graduate program in project management at a major university in the United States.

John Cable served in the newly formed U.S. Department of Energy in 1980, where he was involved with developing energy standards for buildings, methods for measuring energy consumption, and managing primary research in energy conservation. As an architect and builder, Mr. Cable founded and led John Cable Associates in 1984, a design build firm. In 1999 he was recruited by the University of Maryland's Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering to create and manage a graduate program in project management. In his role as founder and director of the Project Management Center for Excellence at Maryland, the program has grown to offer an undergraduate minor, master's degrees, and a doctoral program. Information about the Project Management Center for Project Management at the University of Maryland can be found at [www.pm.umd.edu](http://www.pm.umd.edu).

In 2002, PMI formed the Global Accreditation Center for Project Management Educational Programs (GAC). Mr. Cable was appointed to that inaugural board where he served as vice chair. In 2006, he was elected as chairman, a role he held through 2012. As Chair of the PMI GAC, John led the accreditation of 86 project management educational programs at 40 institutions in 15 countries in North America, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and the Asia Pacific Region. John was awarded PMI's 2012 Distinguished Contribution Award for his leadership at the GAC. He can be contacted at [jcable@umd.edu](mailto:jcable@umd.edu).