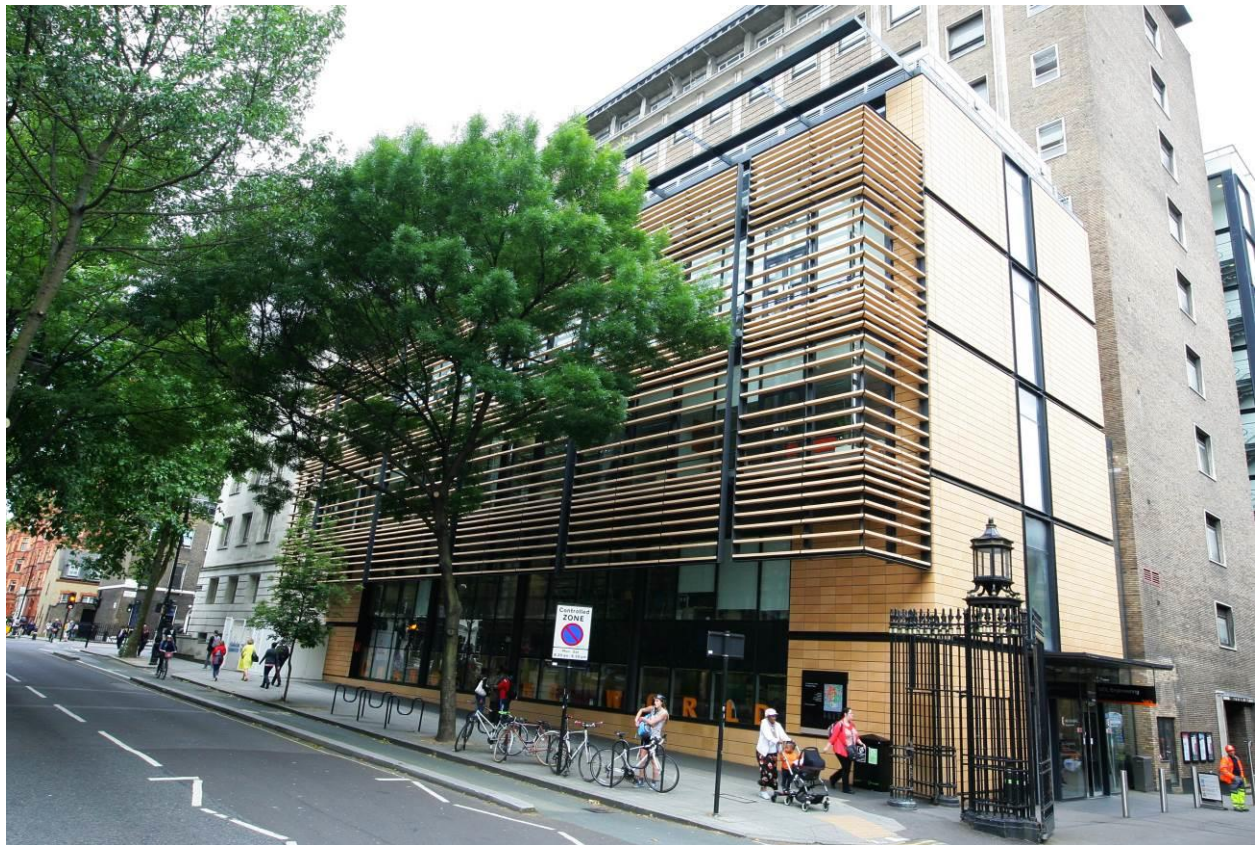


## IRNOP XII conference in London, UK

By Jouko Vaskimo

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**IRNOP (The International Research Network on Organizing by Projects) XII** conference was held in London, UK, on June 21-24, 2015. The conference, a biennial series started in Sweden in 1994, took place at the **School of Construction and Project Management**, a part of the **Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, University College London**, and was organized by **Dr Andy Davies**, Professor in the Management of Projects, and **Dr Hedley Smyth**, Director of Research. The conference theme was *The Power of Projects*. The Bartlett School of Construction provided an excellent venue for the event, which the participants found appropriately informal and collegial, encouraging active exchange and networking.



*University College London Roberts Building (photos courtesy Jouko Vaskimo)*

The conference program included plenary sessions and several simultaneous parallel tracks with a total of over 80 keynote and paper presentations. The conference was attended by over 130 participants from more than 35 countries, and by some of the most renowned scholars in the field of project management research. The three-day conference was organized for faculty and students from universities from all over the

world having an interest in projects, temporary organizations, project organizing and project-based organizations. In addition to the official program, the conference offered an excellent social program of several receptions, and a doctoral workshop for PhD students.

The conference was sponsored by **Association for Project Management**, **Project Management Institute**, and **International Project Management Association**.

In his opening presentation Professor Davies welcomed everyone sincerely to the Bartlett School of Construction and Project Management, and to University College London Bloomsbury Campus. Professor Davies pointed out that the theme of each IRNOP conference reflects the interests of the host institution, and that this conference is no different: The organizers selected *The Power of Projects* theme to emphasize the role of projects in the far-reaching transformation of London's built environment such as the development of an entirely new urban area in the Olympic Park, Crossrail suburban rail system (largest megaproject in Europe) and The Shard (tallest building in Europe).

Subsequent to the three-day event Professor Davies very happy, thanked UCL's organizing committee and drew attention to the pivotal role played by **Donna Gage**, and commented: "We started early – as any good project manager should – by creating a small team to plan and deliver IRNOP. Hedley and I were very lucky to have Donna on our side. She was a source of creative ideas and worked tirelessly to make the IRNOP conference a success. We now pass the baton over to next team and look forward to attending the IRNOP 2017 in Boston". Professor Davies can be contacted at [a.c.davies@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.c.davies@ucl.ac.uk).



*Professor Andy Davies presenting in the IRNOP XII conference opening plenary*

The second **IRNOP Doctoral Workshop**, in which doctoral candidates presented selected aspects of their research to an audience of peers and senior international scholars in a friendly and constructive atmosphere, was organized the day before the main conference. A welcome reception was organized at the University College London Main Quad Pavilion to welcome the conference participants.

The first conference day was opened, subsequent to a welcome by Professor Davies and Dr Smyth, with a keynote presentation by Professor **Aaron Shenhar** on *The Integration of Innovation and Project Management*. Professor Shenhar presented a framework which integrates business, innovation, and project leadership. Professor Shenhar asserted this approach, which is based on a foundation of traditional project management and concepts common in innovation research community, is likely to help researchers and organizations deal with the innovations in their projects in a flexible and adaptive way, focus their projects on strategic business results, and build the right leadership spirit for each project.



*Professor Aaron Shenhar keynoting in the IRNOP XII conference opening session*

The first conference day proceeded with five tracks: *Project-based organizations* chaired by Professor **Jonas Söderlund**, Dr **Satu Teerikangas**, and Professor **Ralf Müller**, *Innovation* chaired by Professor **Hans-Georg Gemünden**, *Strategic management of portfolios, programmes + projects* chaired by Dr **Stefano Miraglia**, *Megaprojects* chaired by Professor **Tim Brady** and Professor **Alfons Van Marrewijk**, and *Knowledge, routines + learning* chaired by Dr **Stefano Miraglia** and Dr **Natalya Sergeeva**.

The first congress day way concluded with a keynote presentation by CBE **Andy Mitchell** on *Innovation in Megaprojects*. Mr Mitchell described the context and complexities of major infrastructure projects in London, demonstrating why innovation is becoming vital to achieve world class design, construction delivery and asset performance while securing a positive legacy for the construction industry. A drinks reception and conference dinner at **Royal Institute of British Architects** concluded the first conference day.



*CBE Andy Mitchell keynoting in the IRNOP XII conference*

The second conference day proceeded with six tracks: *Leadership, Governance + Decision-making* chaired by Associate Professor **Anna Kedefors** and Professor **Monique Aubry**, *Networks* chaired by Dr **Stephen Pryke** and Professor **Jeff Pinto**, *People + Professionalism* chaired by Dr **Efrosyni Konstantinou** and Dr **Beverley Lloyd-Walker**, *Collaboration* chaired by Professor **Derek Walker** and Associate Professor **Tuomas Ahola**, *Processes + Performance* chaired by Professor **Brian Hobbs** and Professor **Lynn Crawford**, and *Value* chaired by Associate Professor **Joana Geraldi** and Dr **Grant Mills**.



A panel on *Climate Change and the Management of Projects in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, with Professor **Peter Morris** (left) and Professor **Peter Head** (right) participating in the panel, and Dr **Satu Teerikangas** chairing the event took place in the afternoon of the second conference day. A Thames river cruise concluded the second conference day.



The third conference day proceeded with four tracks: *Trends* chaired by Professor **Niles Noorderhaven**, *Tools, tasks + conduct* chaired by Professor **Alexander Kock**, *Processes + Performance* chaired by Professor **Jennifer Whyte**, and *Processes + Performance* chaired by Professor **Darren Dalcher**.

A *meet the editors* session, with Professor **Derek Walker** representing the *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, Professor **Hans-Georg Gemünden** representing the *Project Management Journal*, and Professor **Rodney Turner** representing the *International Journal of Project Management* took place in the afternoon of the final conference day. The three Editors-in-Chief introduced their journals, and allowed conference participants to present questions.



*Professor Derek Walker, Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Managing projects in Business (left), Professor Hans-Georg Gemünden, Editor-in-Chief of the Project Management Journal, and Professor Rodney Turner, Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Project Management (right)*

During the congress closing plenary several awards and recognitions were presented:

Professor **Hans-Georg Gemünden** presented, as the Project Management Journal Editor-in-Chief, the **PMJ Paper of the Year 2014** award to Professor **Bent Flyvbjerg** of Oxford University Saïd Business School for his paper *What you should know about megaprojects and why: An overview*.

Professor **Rolf Lundin** presented, as the PMI Research Achievement Award 2014 winner, the **PMI Research Achievement Award 2015** to Professor **Ralf Müller** of BI Norwegian Business School.

Professor **Andy Davies** and Dr **Hedley Smyth** presented the **IPMA – PMI Best Paper Prize** to Professor **Jennifer Whyte** and Dr **Sunila Lobo** of University of Reading for their paper *How firms build project capabilities to deliver complex projects: The case of digital delivery*. Professor **Andy Davies** and Dr **Hedley Smyth** also presented the **IPMA – PMI Best Student Paper Prize** to Mrs **Anna-Maija Hietajärvi** (co-author Assistant Professor **Kirsi Aaltonen**) of University of Oulu for their paper *Reaching harmony over who we are and how we cooperate: The formation of a collaborative identity in an infrastructure alliance project*.

Finally, the organizers of IRNOP XII handed the responsibility for organizing IRNOP XIII in 2017 to Boston University.



*Dr Carla Messikomer, Manager, PMI Academic Resources, and Professor Ralf Müller*



*Dr Sunila Lobo and Dr Hedley Smyth*



**IRNOP, The International Research Network on Organizing by Projects**, was founded in 1993 as a

loosely coupled network of researchers and has developed from there, adding researchers in countries all over the world. The IRNOP network connects scholars with a background in business, economics, engineering and other fields, with a common interest in projects, project organizations and temporary systems. The IRNOP Project Research Conference gathers scholars who have a research interest in projects from all over the world to a conference every second year (in 2006 a decision was made to schedule the IRNOP Project Research Conferences to odd years). IRNOP Project Research Conference has been organized twelve times:

- IRNOP I in Lycksele, Sweden in 1994: *Temporary organizations and project management*
- IRNOP II in Paris, France in 1996: *Aspects of society and business organized as projects*
- IRNOP III in Calgary, Canada in 1998: *The nature and role of projects in the next 20 years: Research issues and problems*
- IRNOP IV in Sydney, Australia in 2000: *Paradoxes of Project Collaboration in the Global Economy: Interdependence, Complexity and Ambiguity*
- IRNOP V in Rotterdam, The Netherlands in 2002
- IRNOP VI in Turku, Finland in 2004: *Project business*
- IRNOP VII in Xi'an, China in 2006
- IRNOP VIII in Brighton, UK in 2007: *Projects in Innovation, Innovation in Projects*
- IRNOP IX in Berlin, Germany in 2009: *Organizing by Projects*
- IRNOP X in Montreal, Canada in 2011: *The Expanding Domain of Project Research*
- IRNOP XI in Oslo, Norway in 2013: *Innovative approaches in project management research*
- IRNOP XII in London, UK in 2015: *The Power of Projects*

For further information please navigate to [www.irnop.org](http://www.irnop.org) .



**University College London (UCL)** is a public research university in London, England, and part of the federal **University of London**. UCL is considered one of the most prestigious universities in the world, and ranks highly in

both national and international comparisons. Founded in 1826 as London University, UCL was the first university institution established in London and the first in England to be entirely secular, to admit students regardless of their religion, and to admit women on equal terms with men. UCL main campus is located in the Bloomsbury in central London, with a number of institutes and teaching hospitals elsewhere in central London, and satellite campuses in Adelaide, Australia and Doha, Qatar. UCL Faculty of the Built Environment – The Bartlett – is one of the UCL 11 constituent faculties. University College London created the first chair of architecture in 1841, making The Bartlett the first architecture and built environment school established in the UK. The school is named after the original benefactor, Sir Herbert Bartlett. Dr Andrew Edkins is currently the Director of the School of Construction & Project Management. For further information please navigate to [www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk) or to [www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk) .

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## About the Author



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*Author*



**Jouko Vaskimo** works as Development Manager in charge of project management training portfolio 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 past chairman of the Finnish IPMA Certification Body operating IPMA certification in Finland. He is a member of the Project Management Association Finland 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/TC 258. Jouko resides in Espoo, Finland and can be best contacted at [jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi](mailto:jouko.vaskimo@aalto.fi)

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