

Research Programme “Capabilities for delivering projects in the context of societal development (CaProSoc)” initiated by AME ¹

Reinhard Wagner

In 2019, an international research programme was initiated by Prof. Dr. Mladen Radujkovic and Reinhard Wagner through the Alma Mater Europaea (AME), an international university based in Salzburg (Austria), with campuses in several European cities. AME was founded as an initiative by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 2017, a Doctoral Study Programme »Project Management« was started at the campus in Maribor (Slovenia). The study programme prepares students to think and act strategically, making positive contributions to the society through project management.

In recent years, both the number and importance of projects for the development of our society have increased significantly. In the project management research this trend is called “projectification” and many researchers already foresee a “project society”. Projects are a means of resolving complex challenges, and as our society is faced with many challenges, such as the climate change, global risks, poverty, urbanization and migration, capabilities for delivering projects on all levels of society seems to be in need for the good of society. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations are setting the bar high for all parties involved in decision making and execution of projects. Even the smallest projects help to further develop communities, which in turn has an effect on society as a whole. Beyond that, the society in whose context projects are implemented has an effect on the way projects are implemented. These interactions are still largely unexplored. But what’s serious, far too many projects are still failing, are running out of time and budget, or are clearly missing their original development goals. Project management was developed in the business world and has achieved amazing results there, now it’s necessary to achieve the same results in the context of societal development.

Through this programme it is aspired that all actors involved in societal development are aware of the important role projects have, the capabilities needed to implement projects sustainably and how they can be used effectively in their respective contexts for the benefit of society. CaProSoc aims at forming a global collaboration network of researchers, practitioners, professional associations, NGOs, governmental agencies and other institutions which share similar responsibilities for delivering projects in the context

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of societal development. The activities of the research programme include but are not limited to the following: 1) exploring, analysing, researching - the situation, requirements and potential solutions; 2) sharing, discussing, recognising - experiences, cases and international best practices; 3) co-creating, developing, innovating - concepts, knowledge and practical applications; 4) applying, utilizing, sustaining - pilot applications, concepts and customized solutions; 5) informing, lobbying, publishing – research findings, solutions and information services.

A preparatory meeting is planned for early 2020, where the priorities of the activities will be formulated and proposed to the general assembly, which approves the goals and the governance structure for the period of the programme (2020-2030).

The following workstreams are proposed for CaProSoc:

- Projectification and its impact on societal development
- Project Citizenship Behaviour for the good of society
- Contributions of education for delivering projects in the context of societal development
- Governmental arrangements, policies, standards and regulations for performing projects
- Supporting societal development through start-up acceleration and innovative projects
- Governing and managing projects in the context of smart cities and urban planning
- Governing and managing projects in the context of smart rural and rural development
- Governing and managing projects for community development and humanitarian aid
- Performance measures, transparency and benefits realization in public projects
- International organisations and financial institutions and management for delivering projects for the good of society

It is expected to achieve the following results:

- Mutually beneficial networking and cooperation between researchers and practitioners, who share similar responsibilities and take care for the development of society

- Scientific papers, White Papers, articles in periodicals, social media and magazines
- Case studies, survey reports, insights into specific practices and best practice sharing
- Internet platform with open access to results of the research network and beyond
- Recognition of research results through international research awards, so as other awards tied to societal development
- Publications in the context of working on a Ph.D., Master (and Bachelor) thesis
- Communication with international and global institutions in order to raise awareness and capabilities for delivering projects in the context of societal development
- Networking with partners of this research programme in order to apply for international research tenders and calls for proposals

The Call for Participation (CfP) in 2019 resulted in more than sixty interested parties from about forty countries. It is expected that in 2020 more individuals or institutions will join the programme. After forming the international network and organizing the activities in a rather self-organized way, the first publications are expected in 2020.

A website is work in process, on Facebook you can stay connected via [@CaProSoc](#).

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About the Author



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Reinhard Wagner has been active for more than 30 years in the field of project- related leadership, in various sectors of Industry and not-for-profit organizations. Since 2002 he has been actively involved in the development of national as well as international project, programme and portfolio management standards, for example as Convenor of ISO 21503 “Guidance on Programme Management” and ISO 21500 “Guidance on Project Management”, as Project Manager for the IPMA Organisational Competence Baseline and IPMA Delta as well as a Subject Matter Expert for several other standards. Reinhard is Chairman of IPMA’s Council of Delegates, an Honorary Chairman of GPM (German Project Management Association) as well as Managing Director of Tiba Managementberatung GmbH, one of the leading PM Consultancies in Germany. Since 2006 Reinhard has been participating and supporting scientific projects and research in the field of project management. So far he has edited and published more than 35 textbooks and hundreds of articles and blog posts. He is currently writing his doctoral thesis on the topic of Project Society. He can be contacted at reinhard.wagner@almamater.si