

## **Project Management Update from Italy<sup>1</sup>**

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### **PMexpo 2025: The Evolving Landscape of Project Management in Italy**

#### **Introduction**

The PMexpo 2025, held in Rome, once again represented Italy's most prominent annual gathering for project management professionals. The event brought together project managers, consultants, academics, and organizations to exchange experiences, explore innovation, and strengthen the culture of project management across industries. The program offered multiple parallel sessions and workshops divided by thematic areas:

- PM Culture,
- Governance & Large Projects,
- AI & Project Thinking, Leadership & Soft Skills,
- PM Tools, Sustainability & Healthcare, and Mult Project Environments.

In this last 2025 Italy Report there are a brief recap of most relevant event's sessions.

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### **The Project Management Expo 2025<sup>2</sup> (PM Expo® 2025)**

This time, in a special and more restricted edition for the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the ISIPM foundation, more than 800 attendees participated in person, engaging with speeches and workshops held across six dedicated rooms. The conference opened with welcoming remarks and framing of the day's themes—culture, governance, AI, sustainability, and the people side of projects—setting expectations for a dense, multi-track program that spanned talks and workshops.



The event introduction: ISIPM President (Graziano Trasarti<sup>3</sup>)



PM Expo® 2025 Project Manager (Emanuele Remediani<sup>4</sup>) introducing the speeches of the day

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pmexpo.it>

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## The Culture of Project Management

**“OvviEtà di PM | Unconventional Talk”:** The opening keynote by Enzo Memoli set a reflective and unconventional tone. Through humor and insight, he explored how the role of the modern project manager evolves with time and experience — how “obviousness” can become awareness. Memoli invited participants to question professional habits and rediscover the meaning of leadership and communication in complex environments.



The opening keynote: Enzo Memoli<sup>5</sup> talking in an unconventional session

## ISIPM Qualifications Update (effective January 1, 2026)

During this update session, the ISIPM president Graziano Trasarti, the ISIPM Professioni president Enrico Mastrofini<sup>6</sup> and Pierluigi Guida<sup>7</sup>, member of ISIPM Scientific Committee, announced two changes effective 1 January 2026: a preparation requirement to access the ISIPM-Base exam and a 5-year validity for ISIPM-Av, renewable via continuing education. It also presented the new UNI “Prassi di riferimento” initiative toward certifying organizational PM systems, with ISIPM-Prado maturity evaluation as a support.

The ISIPM-Base and ISIPM-Av qualifications are recognized by Accredia as equivalent to the two written exams required to access the oral examination for Project Manager Certification according to the UNI 11648 Standard.

Starting January 1, 2026, two important changes will come into effect to align these qualifications with industry standards and, in the case of ISIPM-Av, with Accredia’s requirements for maintaining qualification and certification under UNI 11648.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/pier-luigi-guida-69aa7310/>

To be eligible for the ISIPM-Base exam, candidates will be required to demonstrate that they have attended a three-day preparation course, or alternatively a university-level project management course, or hold a project management qualification issued by PMI, IPMA, or PRINCE2.

From January 1, 2026, the ISIPM-Av qualification will no longer have unlimited validity. It will instead be valid for five years from the date shown on the certificate.

The ISIPM-Av qualification certifies knowledge and skills in the application of project management methodologies and enables holders to:

- be listed in the register of professional project managers maintained by ISIPM Professioni (the professional association of Italian project managers, registered with the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy pursuant to Law 4/2013);
- access the UNI 11648 Certification by taking only the oral exam, since ISIPM-Av is officially recognized as equivalent to the two written tests, according to Accredia Circular No. 9/2023.

At the end of the five-year period, to renew the validity of the qualification, candidates must demonstrate that they have obtained at least 60 continuing education credits over the previous five years, through participation in training and/or professional development activities. These credits are also valid for maintaining registration with the professional association. Furthermore, the associations ISIPM, ISIPM Professioni, and AICQ (Associazione Italiana Cultura della Qualità) have jointly promoted the creation of a new UNI Reference Practice (UNI-PdR)—recently published—which may subsequently be developed into a full UNI Standard for the certification of project management within organizations.

Such organizations may effectively support certification through the adoption of a project maturity assessment model, such as the ISIPM Prado model.



Pierluigi Guida talking about ISIPM Qualifications Update



## **The Rules of Flow:**

### **from chaos to effective management in multiproject environments**

Through Theory of Constraints, the keynote dissected everyday behaviors that throttle flow in crowded portfolios. Rather than “more schedules,” the remedy centered on surfacing bottlenecks, changing local habits, and re-synchronizing work to restore project throughput. Every day, the same struggle repeats itself: projects running late, budgets slipping away, objectives drifting further out of reach. In the effort to hold everything together, a vicious cycle often begins—more projects, more urgency, more compromises—feeding the very chaos we are trying to manage. Many professionals have come to accept this as the natural state of project work.

But does it really have to be this way? Restoring harmony and effectiveness in multi-project environments doesn't require overly complex solutions. Delays and inefficiencies often stem from ordinary habits—small, seemingly harmless behaviors that, when combined, silently block the flow of projects. During this session, Dr. Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag<sup>8</sup> and Dr. Gianluca Davico<sup>9</sup> guided participants in discovering the Rules of Flow—an innovative application of the Theory of Constraints designed to bring order, focus, and tangible results back to multi-project management.



Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag and Dr. Gianluca Davico talking about “The Rules of Flow”

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-efrat-goldratt-ashlag-44046212a/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gianluca-davico-apics-cpim/>

### **Me, Project Manager of a (truly) Virtual Team**

In one of the most original and experimental sessions of PMexpo 2025, Marco Caressa presented a provocative case study that began as a real project and evolved into a conceptual experiment. What happens when a Project Manager leads an entire project with a team composed not of humans, but of artificial intelligences—each configured to perform a distinct professional role? The project focused on developing a software application to support project management, with a particular emphasis on risk management. Caressa acted as the Project Manager, coordinating a completely virtual team made up of multiple AI systems, each assigned to a specific function:

- Functional Analyst: ChatGPT (OpenAI)
- Technical Designer: Claude (Anthropic)
- UI/UX Expert: Claude with targeted design-system prompts
- Developers: ChatGPT, Claude Code, and DeepSeek, working collaboratively

Each AI agent was configured to simulate the competencies of a real professional role, producing outputs subsequently used by another “AI colleague.” The functional-analysis AI drafted the user requirements; the technical designer AI generated the implementation specifications; the UI/UX AI created wireframes and style definitions; finally, the developer AIs coded and integrated the modules—completing a full machine-to-machine production cycle. Throughout the process, Caressa served as the human orchestrator and validator, overseeing the interplay between artificial and human intelligence.

His talk invited participants to reflect on the evolution of the Project Manager’s role: how leadership transforms when the team is no longer human, and what the notion of “virtual” truly means in the contemporary practice of project management.



Marco Caressa<sup>10</sup> talking about Human Leadership in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marcocaressa/>

## The Future of Project Management: From Agile to Project-Driven Organizations

For more than two decades, **Agile** methodologies have helped organizations become faster and more adaptive. Yet, in a world reshaped by **Artificial Intelligence**, **sustainability imperatives**, and **continuous disruption**, agility alone is no longer enough. A new paradigm is emerging — the **Project-Driven Organization (PDO)**, an enterprise that runs on projects as its primary operating model.

In his keynote at **PMexpo 2025**, global thought leader and author **Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez** — whose forthcoming *Harvard Business Review* book *Powered by Projects* expands on this vision — explored how leading companies are moving beyond matrix and agile structures to embrace a fully project-based way of working.

Nieto-Rodriguez illustrated how PDOs integrate **AI and digital tools** to enhance decision-making, empower autonomous teams, and connect every initiative to strategic purpose and measurable impact. He emphasized that project management is evolving from an operational discipline into a **strategic core capability** that unites **technology, people, and purpose**.

Attendees left with a clear picture of how project management is becoming the **operating system of modern organizations**, and how today's leaders can drive the transformation toward truly **project-powered, future-ready enterprises**.



Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez disserting about the evolution of project-based organizations

## The RUP between Procedure and Project

From **1990 to 2023**, the role of the *Responsabile Unico del Progetto* (**RUP**, or *Single Project Responsible Officer*) has undergone a profound transformation — evolving from a primarily technical-administrative function into the true **director of public projects**. The introduction of Italy's new **Public Procurement Code (Legislative Decree 36/2023)** marked this turning point, redefining the RUP as the figure responsible for the **entire project life cycle** — from planning and execution to monitoring and impact assessment. This shift calls for a renewed reflection on the **competencies required** to perform the role effectively. The modern RUP can no longer be seen merely as an expert in rules and procedures. Instead, they must manage complexity, coordinate diverse stakeholders, plan resources and schedules, communicate transparently, and stay focused on measurable results. In this evolving framework, the idea of introducing a **competency certification system** — a kind of “*RUP license*” — is gaining traction. Such a modular and progressive qualification would help assess an individual's ability to operate in projects of varying **scale, risk, and impact**, while ensuring consistency and accountability across public administrations. However, as **Daniele Ricciardi**<sup>11</sup> highlighted during his session, not every RUP must necessarily hold a **formal Project Manager certification**. Such qualification becomes essential only for **complex or strategic projects**. Still, all public employees involved in project-related work — even in support or operational roles — need to acquire **project management tools and mindsets** to collaborate effectively and deliver results. Ricciardi's talk offered a **critical yet constructive perspective** on this transition, underlining both opportunities and challenges for Italy's public administrations. He called for a competency-development model that values experience, promotes continuous learning, and fosters a genuine **project culture within the public sector**.



Daniele Ricciardi talking about *Single Project Responsible Officer*

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/daniele-ricciardi-857b8a66/>



## AI Tools as Facilitators of Design Thinking

**Design Thinking** has become one of the most widely adopted approaches for addressing complex challenges and driving innovation through a **human-centered mindset**. Originally developed as a creative design methodology, it has since evolved into a versatile framework applied across diverse contexts — from startups to global corporations, from product design to digital services.

In her lecture, **Viviane Arazi**<sup>12</sup> explored how **Artificial Intelligence** can act as a powerful ally in this creative process, helping to both **accelerate and enrich** the Design Thinking cycle. She demonstrated how accessible AI tools — many of them free and easy to use — can effectively support each stage of the process, from research and ideation to prototyping and testing.

The goal, she emphasized, is **not to replace human creativity**, but to **augment it** — showing how AI can amplify empathy, expand insight, and enhance innovation potential. Through practical examples and live demonstrations, participants discovered how the integration of **empathy and technology** can lead to more meaningful and relevant solutions.



Viviane Arazi talking about AI Tools as Design Thinking Facilitators

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/viviane-arazi-pmp-pgmp-acp-dassm-prince2-psm-ii/>

## **Leadership and Soft Skills: Recognizing and Embedding Them as the Core of Managerial Tailoring**

In a session that resonated strongly with both emerging and experienced project professionals, **Elisabetta Roviglioni**<sup>13</sup> focused on the critical role of **soft skills and leadership behaviors** as foundational elements of effective project management.

Roviglioni began by challenging a long-standing assumption: that success in project delivery depends primarily on methodologies, tools, and governance frameworks. Instead, she argued that today's organizations increasingly require **tailored managerial approaches**, built upon a deep understanding of people, context, and culture.

Drawing on real-world experience, she illustrated how **recognizing and cultivating soft skills**—such as active listening, adaptability, emotional intelligence, and constructive feedback—enables project managers to personalize their leadership style without compromising structure or discipline. These competencies, she noted, are not “nice-to-have” qualities but **core enablers** of agility, collaboration, and stakeholder alignment.

The presentation closed with a practical message: **methodologies provide order, but people generate momentum**. Integrating human factors into managerial tailoring ensures that project governance remains dynamic, resilient, and genuinely fit for purpose in an ever-changing environment.



Elisabetta Roviglioni disserting about Leadership and Soft Skills

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/elisabetta-roviglioni-66690342/>

### Check-Up Your PM System!

In one of the most practical and engaging sessions of the day, **Roberto Meli**<sup>14</sup>, **Sandra Vaudagna**<sup>15</sup>, and **Viviana D’Arcangelo**<sup>16</sup> guided participants through a structured “health check” of their own **project management systems**.

The workshop-style presentation invited organizations to look beyond methodology labels and assess whether their PM frameworks actually deliver value. Using a mix of diagnostic tools, maturity-assessment criteria, and real-world case examples, the speakers demonstrated how to evaluate a system’s strengths and weaknesses across areas such as governance, resource allocation, performance indicators, and lessons-learned processes.

Attendees learned how to interpret maturity results not as scores but as **decision levers** — evidence for continuous improvement plans, training priorities, and tool optimization. The session emphasized that maturity is not about bureaucracy or compliance; it is about **organizational learning** and the ability to adapt processes to context and scale.

By the end of the talk, participants walked away with a clear roadmap for performing their own “PM tune-up,” ensuring that their systems evolve with the organization’s strategy rather than lag behind it.



Sandra Vaudagna and Viviana D’Arcangelo

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### “C.A.P.O. – Managing People and Teams Within an Inclusive Model”

In one of the most captivating leadership-focused sessions of PMexpo 2025, **Gianfranco Bacchi**<sup>17</sup> delivered a compelling talk on how inclusive leadership can strengthen cohesion, discipline, and performance within project teams. Drawing from his unique experience in high-stakes command roles and organizational leadership, Bacchi presented the **C.A.P.O. model** as a practical and human-centered framework for guiding people through complexity. His approach emphasized four pillars: *clarity*, *accountability*, *participation*, and *orientation toward results*. Bacchi argued that project environments often fail not because of technical shortcomings, but because teams lack shared direction, psychological safety, or consistent behavioral standards. Through vivid examples and personal stories, he showed how leaders can cultivate trust, foster initiative, and create a climate where individuals feel both supported and responsible.

Bacchi also highlighted the importance of **inclusive decision-making**, demonstrating how the act of involving people early—listening actively, distributing ownership, and empowering contribution—generates alignment and accelerates execution. The audience responded strongly to his message that leadership is not a position but a **daily practice of presence, integrity, and intentional communication**.

The session concluded with an inspiring reflection: in increasingly hybrid and unpredictable contexts, successful project leadership depends not on heroic individual effort but on the ability to build **teams that think, act, and succeed together**.



Gianfranco Bacchi talking about his leadership approach

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gianfranco-bacchi-30077691/>



## The Silent Failure of Tools

In a thought-provoking and candid session, **Silvia Chelazzi**<sup>18</sup> and **Roberto Bicchierai**<sup>19</sup> addressed a paradox familiar to many project professionals: despite the proliferation of advanced project management tools, **many organizations still fail to achieve real performance improvement**.

The speakers explored the underlying reasons behind this “silent failure.” They argued that technology itself is rarely the issue — rather, the problem lies in **organizational culture, leadership behavior, and data discipline**. Too often, new tools are adopted as symbolic solutions, introduced without clear governance, shared accountability, or proper understanding of the workflows they are meant to support.

Through case examples and interactive discussion, Chelazzi and Bicchierai demonstrated how successful tool adoption depends on establishing **collective ownership** of information, fostering user engagement, and ensuring that digital solutions are integrated into the project ecosystem, not layered on top of it.

The session concluded with a practical message: tools do not create project success — **people and processes do**. When technology is aligned with culture and purpose, it becomes a powerful enabler of visibility, learning, and continuous improvement. But when it replaces critical thinking, it inevitably fails — quietly, yet pervasively.



Andrea Bellucci<sup>20</sup> introducing session of Silvia Chelazzi and Roberto Bicchierai

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/silviachelazzi/>

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrea-bellucci-31929122/>

### **Sustainable Management as a PM Competence**

Closing the sustainability track, **Lorenzo Orlandi**<sup>21</sup> offered a compelling reflection on the need to view **sustainability as a core professional competence** within project management, rather than as a peripheral topic or compliance requirement.

Drawing on both international standards and real organizational experiences, Orlandi presented a structured model for embedding sustainability principles into everyday project practice. He discussed how environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions can be translated into **project objectives, decision criteria, and success indicators**, ensuring that sustainability becomes an integral part of planning and execution rather than an afterthought.

The presentation highlighted that sustainable management is fundamentally about **responsible decision-making** — choosing approaches, technologies, and partnerships that create long-term value while minimizing negative impact. Orlandi linked this approach to the evolution of professional certifications and training, arguing that the next generation of project managers must be evaluated not only on delivery performance but also on their ability to **lead responsibly and ethically**.

The session concluded with an inspiring call to action: project managers should become **agents of sustainability**, capable of aligning purpose, performance, and progress in every initiative they lead.



Lorenzo Orlandi talking about Sustainable Management

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lorenzoorlandi/>

## Lessons Learned as a Success Factor — A Pharma Transformation Case

In a session rich with practical insight, **Teresa Iorfida**<sup>22</sup> and **Isabella Di Luozzo**<sup>23</sup> shared a real-life case study from a major **pharmaceutical transformation program**, highlighting how the systematic management of lessons learned can become a decisive factor for success in complex change initiatives.

The presentation began with a familiar observation: while most organizations acknowledge the importance of capturing lessons, few manage to **translate them into actionable improvement**. Iorfida and Di Luozzo described how their company built a structured process that treated lessons not as a retrospective formality but as a **continuous learning mechanism** embedded throughout the project lifecycle.

By institutionalizing knowledge capture across waves of transformation, the organization was able to identify recurring issues early, reduce rework, and increase adoption speed for new systems and processes. The speakers emphasized that the real power of lessons learned lies in their **reuse** — turning insights into new standards, templates, and behavioral norms that strengthen project resilience.

The case demonstrated that in industries characterized by regulation and innovation pressures, like pharmaceuticals, a disciplined learning culture can transform experience into a strategic asset. As the speakers concluded: *every project leaves a legacy — the challenge is to make that legacy usable*.



Teresa Iorfida and Isabella Di Luozzo talking about Lessons Learned in a Pharma Case

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## Strategy Is Not Structure: Redesigning Delivery for Real Sustainability

In his thought-provoking session, **Thomas Mensah** challenged one of the most persistent myths of the sustainability era: that ambitious strategies are enough to drive meaningful climate action. As he noted, in the global race toward **net zero**, bold commitments are plentiful — yet **execution remains the true Achilles' heel**.

Drawing on real-world examples and insights from the emerging model of the **Carbon Management Office (CMO)**, Mensah argued that traditional delivery structures are fundamentally ill-suited to the complexity, scale, and interdependence of modern decarbonization efforts. What organizations need is not better rhetoric, but **structural reform**: new governance models, clearer accountability, and delivery mechanisms designed specifically for sustainability outcomes.

Mensah highlighted that sectors with **high asset intensity** — such as energy, infrastructure, and heavy industry — face the greatest challenge, as their operational and investment decisions have long-term environmental implications. He outlined how CMOs can act as strategic engines for decarbonization, bridging the gap between intent and implementation by integrating carbon metrics directly into planning, procurement, and portfolio governance.

The key message was clear: achieving credible, large-scale decarbonization requires **rebuilding the delivery system**, not simply refining the strategy. Sustainability must be structurally embedded into how projects are prioritized, executed, monitored, and measured — only then can organizations shift from aspirational goals to tangible climate impact.



Thomas Mensah talking about Redesigning Delivery for Real Sustainability



## Planning the Sustainable Transition: Between Risks and Business Opportunities

In his insightful presentation, **Enzo Rocca**<sup>24</sup> addressed the dual nature of sustainability as both a **risk factor and a strategic opportunity** for modern organizations. He framed the sustainable transition not as a moral imperative alone, but as a **business transformation** that demands foresight, structured planning, and sound governance.

Rocca examined how sustainability initiatives often begin under the pressure of regulatory compliance or reputational concerns, yet quickly reveal hidden value when treated as **innovation and competitiveness levers**. Drawing from corporate case studies, he illustrated how integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria into project portfolios helps organizations anticipate disruptions, manage stakeholder expectations, and capture new market potential.

The session underscored that effective planning for sustainability requires the same rigor as traditional project management — clear objectives, quantified risks, accountable ownership, and measurable outcomes. Rocca encouraged project leaders to expand their perspective from short-term deliverables to **long-term resilience**, arguing that the sustainable transition succeeds only when sustainability becomes embedded in every decision, investment, and performance metric.

He closed with a pragmatic message: sustainability should not be seen as a constraint, but as **the next frontier of strategic value creation**, where responsible governance and competitive advantage finally converge.



Enzo Rocca talking about Sustainable Transition

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/enzo-rocca/>

## Between Optimization and Reality: The Challenge of Sustainability in Project Management

In a reflective and experience-based session, **Francesco Passerini**<sup>25</sup> explored the complex relationship between **optimization and sustainability** in the practice of project management. He opened with a paradox familiar to many professionals: while methodologies strive for efficiency and minimal waste, real-world conditions — shifting priorities, resource constraints, and human dynamics — inevitably introduce friction and imperfection.

Passerini argued that the pursuit of sustainable performance requires **accepting and managing this tension**, rather than denying it. True optimization, he noted, is not about perfection but about finding the equilibrium between what is *theoretically ideal* and what is *organizationally possible*. Through concrete examples, he illustrated how iterative planning, adaptive risk management, and structured feedback loops allow project teams to remain both disciplined and flexible in the face of uncertainty.

The presentation emphasized that sustainability is not achieved through rigid control, but through **intentional collaboration** — fostering an environment where continuous learning, transparency, and trust replace reactive firefighting. Passerini's pragmatic message resonated with many in the audience: sustainable project management is less about tools or metrics and more about **mindset** — the ability to stay balanced amid complexity, aligning people, processes, and purpose.



Francesco Passerini talking about The Challenge of Sustainability in PM

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## Maturity as a Lever for Project Management and Organizational Governance

In a session that connected theory with actionable practice, **D’Orazi<sup>26</sup>**, **Fraticelli<sup>27</sup>**, and **Giannico<sup>28</sup>** explored how **maturity models** can serve as a strategic lever for improving both **project management performance and organizational governance**.

The speakers began by addressing a recurring paradox: many organizations run projects, but far fewer manage them systematically. They argued that the difference lies in **maturity** — the ability to apply consistent processes, make evidence-based decisions, and align governance structures with strategic objectives.

Through a comparative analysis of public and private sector experiences, the panel demonstrated how maturity assessment frameworks can be used not only for certification or benchmarking, but as a **dynamic management tool** for continuous improvement. They showcased how maturity evaluation enables organizations to identify capability gaps, prioritize interventions, and monitor progress over time.

A key insight that emerged from the discussion was that organizational maturity is not static — it must evolve alongside context, leadership, and technology. The speakers encouraged participants to see maturity not as bureaucracy or compliance, but as a **culture of intentional improvement**.

The presentation concluded with a practical message: by investing in maturity development, organizations build a governance ecosystem where **transparency, accountability, and learning** reinforce one another — ultimately transforming project management from a functional activity into a strategic competency.



Antonio Giannico and Maria Luisa D’Orazi talking about Organizational Maturity Model

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## Project Management & Sustainability: Insights from the Healthcare Context

In their joint session, **Giulio Iachetti**<sup>29</sup> and **Teresa Iorfida** highlighted how the global economic environment is forcing organizations to rethink value creation through the balanced pursuit of **social equity**, **economic prosperity**, and **environmental protection**. This shift expands the traditional project management triangle, requiring practitioners to integrate sustainability principles across the full project lifecycle.

Supported by UN initiatives since 2013, several organizations have begun adopting **sustainability-oriented project management frameworks**, using emerging standards to drive the cultural and operational changes needed to meet global objectives.

The speakers focused particularly on the **healthcare sector**, whose environmental footprint is among the highest globally. They showed how sustainability considerations can be applied both on the **demand side**—such as hospital operations and service delivery—and on the **supply side**, including industrial production processes and the lifecycle of medical devices. Energy consumption of medical technologies, one of the earliest areas of concrete analysis, already shows clear opportunities for improvement.

Iachetti and Iorfida emphasized that achieving meaningful impact requires **increased awareness and engagement across all actors** in the healthcare ecosystem. Only through this shared commitment can sustainability flow effectively from project design into day-to-day operations, creating a continuous cycle of responsible innovation.



Giulio Iachetti & Teresa Iorfida talking about PM & Sustainability

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### National Schools Contest 2025 — Young Project Managers in Action

One of the most inspiring moments of PMexpo 2025 came from the **National Schools Contest**, where student teams from across Italy took the stage to present their project ideas and management approaches. The initiative, promoted by **ISIPM** in collaboration with partner schools and regional education networks, aims to bring **project management culture into the classroom** — encouraging students to develop planning, teamwork, and problem-solving skills through real or simulated projects.

During the session, the young participants showcased their initiatives where each team illustrated how they applied **fundamental project management principles** — defining scope, organizing roles, managing timelines, and assessing risks — often with surprising creativity and rigor.

Judged by a panel of professionals and educators, the contest not only rewarded the best projects but also celebrated the students' enthusiasm and their ability to translate ideas into structured, deliverable outcomes.

The presentation served as a reminder that **project thinking is not limited to professionals**, but can become a formative experience that shapes future citizens and leaders. As several speakers noted, investing in early project management education means **investing in a generation capable of turning vision into value**. All winning projects are published on the ISIPM Young webpage<sup>30</sup>.



One of the three Winner Schools applying their project “ARIANNA il filo dell'automazione”

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.isipm.org/progetti/isipm-young>

## Workshop Sessions - AI for Project Thinking

Among the most engaging and forward-looking workshop sessions of PMexpo 2025 was the hands-on workshop conducted by **Massimo Pirozzi**<sup>31</sup> & **Annalisa Santolamazza**<sup>32</sup> together a team of AI-Tutor<sup>33</sup> (Francesca Apponi, Martina Andreozzi, Antonella Chirichiello, Marina Pirone, Karla Klaser, Marco Pirozzi, Giuseppe Bazzarell, Flavio De Angelis, Michela Servi, Fabio Tranquilli, Claudia Spagnuolo, Alessandro Quagliarini), dedicated to exploring how **Artificial Intelligence** can reshape the way project managers think, plan, and decide.

The session introduced participants to the concept of “**Project Thinking**” — an evolved approach that merges analytical reasoning with creative problem-solving. Through a series of practical exercises, attendees learned how AI tools can act as **cognitive partners**, supporting activities such as scenario design, stakeholder analysis, and decision optimization.

Pirozzi guided each group through the creation of project blueprints enriched by AI-generated insights, encouraging participants to experiment with prompt-engineering techniques and interpretive reasoning rather than relying on automation alone. The experience emphasized that AI can enhance—not replace—the project manager’s analytical and relational capabilities.



Massimo Pirozzi and Annalisa Santolamazza introducing the rules of the AI Design Thinking workshop

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/massimo-pirozzi-the-stakeholder-perspective/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/annalisa-santolamazza/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/antonellachirichiello/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marina-pirone-20853555/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marco-pirozzi-7849a0205/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/claudia-spagnuolo-85184133/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/karla-klaser-a146a930/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/martina-andreozzi-00023896/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/giuseppe-mirko-bazzarelli-pmp-%C2%AE-09331b87/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/flavio-de-angelis-b1403bb2/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/fabio-tranquilli-6205a4b7/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michela-servi-48997859/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/francesca-apponi/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aquagliarini/>

By the end of the workshop, participants had experienced first-hand how **AI can serve as an enabler of collective intelligence**, providing faster access to knowledge, surfacing hidden correlations, and improving team creativity. The atmosphere of curiosity and experimentation reflected a shared realization: the project manager of the future will not merely *use* AI, but will **co-think with it**.

### **From Chaos to Flow: Unlock Your Team's Potential with Kanban**

Among the most interactive sessions of the day, **Marco Re<sup>34</sup>**'s workshop offered participants an immersive opportunity to experience the **principles of Kanban** firsthand — moving beyond theory to tangible understanding through simulation and group practice.

The session opened with a simple premise: many teams confuse being busy with being productive. Re illustrated how unmanaged workloads, multitasking, and unclear priorities generate friction and delay. By introducing the **six foundational practices of Kanban** — *visualize the workflow, limit work in progress, manage flow, make policies explicit, implement feedback loops, and evolve collaboratively* — he showed how teams can transform scattered activity into structured momentum.

Participants worked in small groups, running a simulated Kanban system that allowed them to observe how small changes — such as defining WIP limits or introducing visible policies — can dramatically improve throughput and reduce stress. The simulation created vivid “aha” moments as teams saw productivity increase the moment bottlenecks became visible and flow replaced urgency.

Re concluded that Kanban is not merely a board or a methodology; it is a **way of thinking about work** that balances focus, adaptability, and continuous improvement. In environments dominated by complexity and change, these principles can unlock a team's collective potential — restoring clarity where chaos once ruled.



Marco Re explaining Kanban practices

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marcoreadviser/>

## Strategic Communication in Projects: Beyond Information, Towards Engagement

In her dynamic and interactive workshop, **Cynthia Raffaelli**<sup>35</sup> invited participants to reconsider one of the most underestimated dimensions of project management — **communication**. Far from being a mere exchange of information, Raffaelli framed communication as a **strategic and relational process**, capable of transforming stakeholders from passive recipients into active contributors to project success.

The workshop blended theory and practice, guiding attendees through exercises on message design, stakeholder analysis, and emotional resonance. Raffaelli demonstrated how effective communication requires not only clarity and accuracy but also **intentionality** — the ability to shape conversations that align people, purpose, and outcomes.

Participants practiced reframing project updates as **engagement moments**, learning to leverage storytelling, empathy, and feedback loops to sustain commitment throughout the project lifecycle. The result was a tangible realization: in complex and fast-moving environments, **communication is not an accessory to project management — it is its connective tissue**.

Raffaelli concluded by emphasizing that developing communication intelligence is among the most strategic investments a project leader can make, enabling transparency, trust, and lasting alignment across teams and stakeholders.



Cynthia Raffaelli engaging participants in her communication project

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cynthiaraffaelli/>



### ISIPM Founder's Celebration

The Institute was born in October 2005<sup>36</sup> from the initiative of a group of Italian experts of Project Management with the aim of spreading the culture of project management in the various fields of application and with a particular attention to Public Administration and Industries. For this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, all ISIPM founder fellows participated in celebration.



The 20th year ISIPM's celebration with the Founder Fellows

<sup>36</sup> <https://pmworldlibrary.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/pmwj110-Oct2021-Quagliarini-project-management-Report-from-Italy-English.pdf>

## Beyond the Stage of PMExpo2025



As we know PMEXPO® is an ISIPM event involving all its hard-working teams and volunteers, specially the secretary teams (Debora Compagnone, Francesca Foschi<sup>37</sup> and Silvia Moretti), all the others Board Members (Patrizia Monacelli<sup>38</sup> Cinzia De Amicis<sup>39</sup>, Carmine Russo<sup>40</sup>, Antonella Chirichiello<sup>41</sup> Giulia D'Eusano<sup>42</sup>, Alice Corvo<sup>43</sup>, Karla Klaser<sup>44</sup>, Claudia Spagnuolo<sup>45</sup>, Luca Guidetti<sup>46</sup>, Aldo Sottocornola<sup>47</sup>) and the ISIPM young team (Francesca Apponi<sup>48</sup>, Emanuela Liburdi<sup>49</sup>, Davide Raguso<sup>50</sup>, Matteo Ragnelli<sup>51</sup>, Umberto Bisogno<sup>52</sup>, Paolo Nardelli<sup>53</sup>).

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/anna-francesca-foschi-1a780a167/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/patrizia-monacelli-a89ba965/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cinzia-de-amicis-15aa557b/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/carmine-russo-%E2%99%AB-%E2%99%AC-%E2%99%A9-68386a12/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/antonellachirichiello/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/giuliadeusano/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/alice-corvo-5b49295a/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/karla-klaser-a146a930/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/claudia-spagnuolo-85184133/>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lucaguidettimp/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aldosottocornola/>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/francesca-apponi/>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/emanuela-liburdi-17a968255/>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/davideraguso/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/matteo-ragnelli-90aa29207/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/umberto-bisogno-662a99140/>

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### **Conclusions:**

A very exiting 2025 edition<sup>54</sup> renovates and enhances the great enthusiasm of Project Management professionals for the next 2026 season (all presentations are available on the PMEXPO® website<sup>55</sup>), where ISIPM provides attendees with opportunities to share knowledge, engage in hands-on activities, and expand their professional network.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.pmexpo.it/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.pmexpo.it/evento/presentazioni.html>



## About the Author



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Rome, Italy



**Alessandro Quagliarini**, MScEng, PMP, MBA, is an experienced Program Manager, with more than 18 years of experience in the ICT sector. He holds a Master's Degree in Telecommunication Engineering from the University of Rome "Tor Vergata" and a Doctor's degree in Business Administration from the Bologna University Business School. He got both PMP® and ISIPM-Av® advanced certifications in Project Management, and he is also certified as an Information Management Systems Lead Auditor. He is a Member of the Board of the "Italian Institute of Project Management" (ISIPM) for ten years, and he is an Accredited Teacher in Project Management.

Alessandro is currently engaged in the "Digital Transformation" engineering and industrialization programs of the new Italian "Open Fiber" telecommunications network, with particular focus on the engineering of delivery and assurance processes for the provision of retail, business and industries customers, on the operational management and procurement support for the definition of specifications and contracts, on the definition of operating rules/ instructions for maintenance and of requirements for systems development, on the support to the commercial and regulatory lines for the definition of services and processes for customers (Other Licensed Operators and Industries), and on the definition and management of operations compliance with ISO Standards and International Best Practices.

As a Member of the ISIPM Board, he focuses his volunteer activities mainly on the cultural diffusion of the project management to young people – specifically to high school students and also staff, including teachers. As an ISIPM accredited teacher, he has taught project management in public and private institutions, in schools and in universities. He has experience in the organization of events and as a speaker in conferences, and also in proposing and managing EU-funded projects.

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