INVITATION TO THE 23rd INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FESTIVAL – KM FEST'26

The Future of the Project Management Profession

https://exarca.io/KMFEST26

November 19, 2026 | 11:00–17:00 | Virtual Event

20 Years of LENS Living Lab®
– Two Decades of International Collaboration, Innovation, and Knowledge Integration -

Dear Sir/Madam,

We invite you to a one-day virtual workshop, co-organized with our international partners, as part of the 23rd International Knowledge Management Festival – KM FEST'26. This year's event is dedicated to the future of the project management profession and the challenges faced by project managers, engineers, development experts, and organizations within a rapidly changing business and technological landscape.

This year's festival holds special significance, marked by two major milestones: the 20th anniversary of the LENS Living Lab®—an international virtual innovation ecosystem—and a tribute to our late, long-standing German development partner and friend, Klaus Pannenbaecker, an internationally recognized engineer and project management expert.

These milestones have prompted us to reflect on the profession's current state, future role, and necessary evolution.

20 Years of LENS Living Lab® – Connecting Knowledge, Technologies, and People

LENS Living Lab® is an international, private, non-profit-oriented virtual living lab, managed, developed, and technologically supported by the ICT company INTESO. Its mission is to create and develop a virtual innovation environment that facilitates collaborative research, development, and the pilot implementation of new technologies—along with the necessary business models—while fostering a culture of interpersonal, inter-organizational, and international cooperation.

Key areas of activity include digitalization, technological innovation and Industry 4.0 solutions, information systems for virtual organizations, digital platforms for techno-organizational innovation ecosystems, and knowledge management.

A key component of this ecosystem is KM FEST—an international platform for exchanging knowledge, experience, innovative approaches, and best practices among experts and development partners worldwide.

Since the first partner festival, held in Denmark in 2008, KM FEST events have taken place worldwide in physical, virtual, and hybrid formats. This year's event—the 23rd edition—will be held as a one-day virtual professional gathering.

Learn more about LENS Living Lab®: https://3-lab.eu/

Project Management at a Crossroads – Time for Reflection and Change

Today, project management is no longer merely an auxiliary skill for engineers and development professionals; it has become a core competency for successfully integrating technology, people, organizations, and business objectives.

Engineering expertise enables the development of technically feasible products, services, and solutions. Project management must ensure that technical potential is transformed into tangible business, societal, and sustainable value for clients, organizations, and other stakeholders.

Technical excellence alone is no longer sufficient. Project success increasingly depends on the ability to align diverse disciplines, interests, organizational cultures, and expectations, as well as on the effective collaboration of individuals striving toward common goals.

Despite advances in methodologies, standards, digital tools, and professional competencies, many projects still face delays, cost overruns, unmet expectations, and failure to deliver the planned value.

In particular, in developing business information systems, people often attribute failure to technology. However, practical experience suggests the key challenges often relate to management, leadership, communication, organizational culture, and a failure to align the needs and interests of various stakeholders.

The central challenge, therefore, is not merely to develop better technology, but—more importantly—to enhance the capacity of organizations and individuals to leverage new technologies to deliver value and benefits for all stakeholders, through projects that are appropriately structured, managed, and led. Given the rapid development of artificial intelligence, digitalization, new organizational forms, and shifting stakeholder expectations, a fundamental question arises:

Is the project management profession prepared for new challenges and the future?

Core Themes of KM FEST'26

At this year's festival, we aim to work with participants to critically examine the profession's current state, identify key challenges, and explore its future development.

The discussion will focus on ten interconnected questions:

1. **The State of the Profession and the Market:** What is the current standing of project management, and how are market needs evolving?

2. **Key challenges:** What professional, organizational, and business challenges do project managers face?
3. **Business Environment Demands:** What competencies, abilities, and ways of working do modern organizations require?
4. **New Drivers of Development:** How will artificial intelligence, digital transformation, new business models, and organizational structures impact the profession?
5. **Organizational Culture:** How do cultures of leadership, collaboration, trust, and accountability influence project success?
6. **Education and Competency Development:** Do existing educational programs adequately prepare current and future generations of project managers?
7. **The Role of Professional Associations:** Do regional and international professional associations provide sufficient support for the development of the profession and the needs of their members?
8. **Future-Readiness:** What changes are necessary for project management to meet future challenges?
9. **Responsible Project Management:** How can we develop a more strategic, human-centric, ethical, and sustainable approach to project management?
10. **Value Creation:** How can we move beyond the traditional understanding of project success to deliver long-term value for all key stakeholders?

Co-creating the Future of Project Management

KM FEST'26 is not merely a platform for presenting professional perspectives; it is, above all, a space for open, international exchange of knowledge, experience, critical thinking, and proposals for the profession's future development. We invite project managers, engineers, researchers, development experts, leaders from companies and other organizations, representatives of educational institutions and professional associations, and anyone interested in the future of project management to join us.

We believe that the future of the profession will be shaped not merely by new methodologies, standards, and technologies, but primarily by people—their knowledge, values, capacity for collaboration, and readiness for change.

Join us in a discussion on how project management can become an even stronger driver of innovation, successful organizational development, and sustainable value.

Event Information and Registration

Event: 23rd International Knowledge Management Festival – KM FEST'26

Theme: The Future of the Project Management Profession

Date: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Time: 11:00–17:00 (Central European Time, CET)

Format: Virtual international professional workshop

Event Language: English

Registration Fee: Participation is free of charge

Program and Registration: https://exarca.io/KMFEST26

You are cordially invited to contribute your knowledge, experience, and perspectives to the discussion on the future of the project management profession!

LENS Living Lab® | INTESO | KM FEST International Partner Network

