

International Project Management (IPM)

BACKGROUND

The International Project Management course is organized by the NASA Academy with the support of NASA's partners in the International Project Management Committee (IPMC)¹ who contribute instructors for and who nominate project team members to participate in the course. The IPM course is held in February and July each year at the Academy Center for Excellence at Kennedy Space Center.

AUDIENCE

This course is designed for program and project managers and project team members as well as others involved in or planning to work on international projects.

GOAL

The goal of this five-day course is to provide participants with an understanding of cultural challenges, ethical and legal concerns, and teaming issues likely to be encountered working on international projects. In addition, participants gain a first-hand appreciation of the approaches of several key NASA partners to managing joint projects and the challenges faced by project managers in other countries.

LEARNING METHODS

Course materials and discussions provide insights into the characteristics of International teaming that have the potential to make or break a project. The course format features lectures, selected readings, small group discussions, hands-on practical exercises, and case studies. Instructors include experts on international cultural and ethical issues as well as experienced project managers from NASA, ESA, JAXA, and other agencies who discuss their experiences with participants. In addition, the participants have opportunities during the course for informal discussions with counterparts from other space agencies and organizations involved in the execution of collaborative projects.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:
- Gain familiarity with critical elements used in effectively managing projects with International partners.
- Describe significant issues that support or detract from team effectiveness when working with international partners.
- Gain an appreciation of the project management approaches of the European Space Agency

¹ The IPMC is a group of more than 20 space agencies, companies, and research organizations from around the world that share experiences and best practices involving space project management.

(ESA), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and NASA as well as several other space agencies and companies who support them.

- Appreciate some of the differences that project managers in NASA, ESA, JAXA, and other space agencies face in the conduct of their projects.
- Demonstrate behaviors associated with the “softer” side of cross-cultural relations needed to be effective in the International Project Management arena.
- Explain the experiential and theoretical knowledge base that discriminates one culture from another.
- Discuss perceptual differences of “ethics” and how such differences can impact international team effectiveness.
- Gain greater awareness of the legal, regulatory, and other management constraints that project teams must take into account in pursuing international projects.

COMPETENCIES AND TECHNICAL AREAS ADDRESSED

Interpersonal competencies associated with effectiveness in international negotiations and collaboration; major space agency budget processes, programs, and plans; project management approaches, differences, and challenges in NASA, ESA, JAXA, and other space agencies; international legal and ethical differences; legal and management restrictions; several research bases for examining cultural differences.

NOTES

The American Council on Education (ACE) has recommended that 3 transferrable graduate-level credits be awarded for the successful completion of this course.