

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION



IN THIS GUIDE, YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT PROJECT
MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS, WHY YOU NEED ONE TO
GET AHEAD AND HOW TO PICK THE RIGHT CAREER PATH.

INTRODUCTION



THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT FIELD is quickly becoming one of the most competitive.

- As more companies look to streamline processes, increase efficiency, maximize profits and appease clients, the need for individuals who can squeeze every last drop of performance out of project teams is growing. Thus, **obtaining a project management certification is essential.**

- In the coming chapters, we'll explain **why you need a project management certification and how it can boost your career.** You'll learn about popular project management certifications and what it takes to obtain them.
- We'll even cover **how to choose** the best certification for you based on your career goals and steer you towards trustworthy project management academies.

YOU'LL LEARN ALL OF THIS...

...through dedicated chapters with bulleted lists, descriptions and images that help dissect the information. By the end of this guide, you'll know what project management certifications are, which ones will help you reach your goals and where to obtain them.

BENEFITS



Learn how to determine the best project management certification for you.



Understand how to identify project management trends and make a sound certification decision.



Discover how to become a project manager without obtaining a certification.



Learn how to find accredited and trustworthy project management academies.

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In this chapter, you'll learn how to choose the right project management certification for you, why you should consider project management trends before picking a certification and how you can become a project manager without a certification.

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMIES

Choosing the right project management academy is crucial. In this chapter, we'll teach you how to evaluate learning institutions and list the ones that offer globally recognized certifications.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS



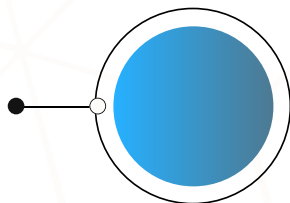
Congratulations on deciding to further your career by obtaining a certification. This is a huge and often costly step, but it will serve you well in the long run. In this chapter, we'll explain why holding a certification in today's job market is vital; **we'll break down the types of certifications available and how to choose the right one for you.** Let's jump in.

WHY YOU NEED A PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION IN TODAY'S MARKET?

With the increasing number of project management jobs on the market, **why would you need a project management certification?** In short, it's to prove you have the knowledge and skills to drive traditional, Agile and hybrid project teams to success. **With a certification,** you can prove that you can walk the talk and deliver consistent results at the highest levels.

You should consider acquiring a certification for personal reasons as well. It's no secret that continuing education comes with many benefits, **such as the ones listed below.**

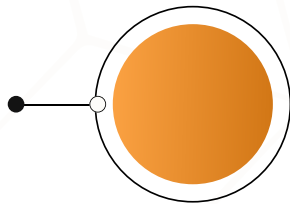
01



Recognition

Certifications show that you have the expertise to lead projects and the specialized knowledge necessary to manage diverse teams on various projects.

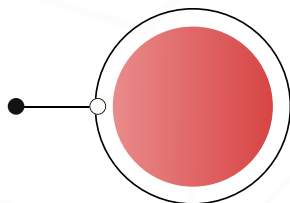
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Increased Confidence

Holding a certification can boost your confidence. With a certification in hand, you will know that you can successfully manage any project, whether in its entirety or in part

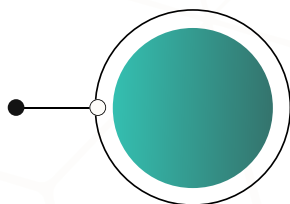
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Higher Earning Potential

One of the biggest benefits of holding a certification is the potential to command a higher salary

04



Better Opportunities

Project management certification holders can apply for more jobs than non-holders. According to the PMI, 25 million project management specialists will be needed to meet the demand by 2030 as 13 million professionals retire, and 12 million more certified project managers will be required to meet demands for expansion.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Whether you're experienced in project management or just starting out, we've rounded up certification options that can help you earn more and command more respect. In the coming sections, we'll take a closer look at the certifications that can put you ahead of the rest.

WHICH PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

Like many other fields, there are many certifications available for those wishing to work in project management. Project management certifications are generally broken down by methodology (traditional, Agile and hybrid) and then by position. Below, you'll find a few of the most common project management certification categories.

Traditional and Agile Project Management Certifications

Many of the best project management certifications cover **traditional** and **Agile** project management methodologies. Many consider **the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification** by the Project Management Institute (PMI) to be the best.

PMI's Certified Associate in Project Manager (CAPM) certification is also highly regarded and is ideal for aspiring project managers. Those who wish to specialize in a traditional methodology will appreciate the PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner certifications, while those who want to manage Lean teams and projects should look no further than Six Sigma.

Agile Certifications

- If you're a **project manager**, an Agile coach or an individual involved with an Agile team who wants to further their career and become an expert in the field, you owe it to yourself to take a closer look at Agile certifications like the PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP) or the ICAgile Certified Professional (ICP).
- Agile certifications will help you show prospective employers that **you have a firm grasp of Agile principles and values**. They'll also show that you can successfully manage an Agile team, are comfortable working in a fast-paced environment where rapid change occurs and can communicate with stakeholders, team members and clients

Top Agile Project Management Tool:



[Read The Best Agile PM Guide](#)

Try [monday.com's free plan](#)

Scrum Certifications

- **Scrum certifications are one of the best ways** to show current and prospective employers that you understand the Scrum framework well.
- Scrum certifications, including the Certified Scrum Master (CSM), Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO) and Professional Scrum Master (PSM), will show that you can motivate and lead scrum teams, create product visions, refine backlogs, appease clients and stakeholders, are highly flexible and more

Top Scrum Project Management Tool:



[Read The Best Scrum PM Guide](#)

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

There are a **few factors** to consider when it comes to choosing **the right project management certification**.

- ? What do you want to achieve in your career?
- ? Do you prefer traditional project management methodologies and their strict, predictive planning schemes, or do you like the flexibility of the Agile way of life?



These are all important questions to ask!

Of course, there are many other factors to consider. Examine your education history and skill level, and assess your project management experience. You must also **consider your personal finances** and the **amount of time** you can dedicate to continuing education before acquiring a certification.

In addition, reflect on **where you want your career to go**. Do you want to jump in the deep end and become a project manager immediately, or do you wish to hold a different position within a project management team? Take a hard **look at how you see your career progressing** and make a decision about a certification based on that vision.

QUICK COMPARISON: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Before we dive into a much more detailed analysis of the top project management certifications, the table below will break down who each certification is for, how much it will cost to obtain each one and roughly how much money you can earn in the U.S. with each certification.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

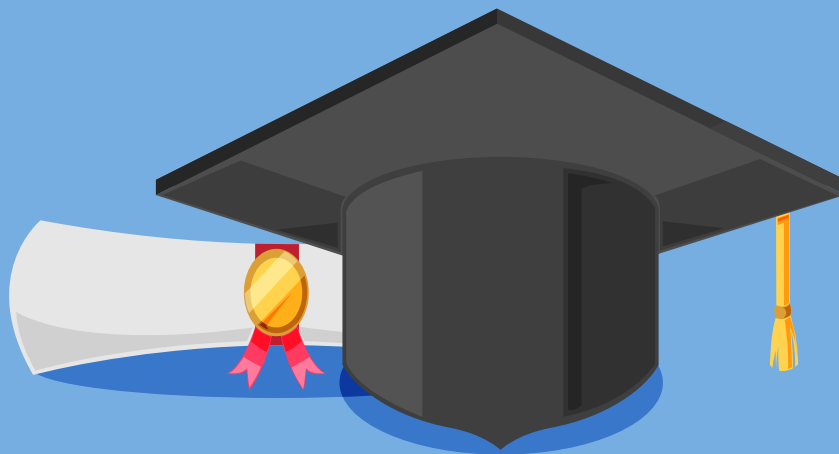
CERTIFICATION	APPROXIMATE COST	AVERAGE SALARY (U.S.)	FOR WHOM
Project Management Professional (PMP)	\$405-\$575	\$120,000	Project managers who wish to prove that they can lead traditional and Agile teams.
Certified Scrum Master (CSM)	\$300-\$1,500	\$116,000	Ideal for those who wish to lead Agile scrum teams
Professional Scrum Master (PSM)	\$995-\$1,495	\$102,000	For individuals who want to lead scrum teams to success.
SAFe Scrum Master Certification	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$145,466	For scrum masters who wish to lead scaled Agile projects
Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)	\$300-\$900	\$115,000	For those who want to create product visions and lead a team of developers within the Scrum framework.
PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)	\$435-\$495	\$133,000	For experienced project managers wishing to prove their skills in leading Agile
ICAgile Agile Fundamentals	\$599-\$1,100	Entry-level assistant project manager role average salary: \$47,831	A great certification for those just starting their project management career.
Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)	\$225-\$300	\$92,091	For project managers wanting to showcase their fundamental project management knowledge

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

CERTIFICATION	APPROXIMATE COST	AVERAGE SALARY (U.S.)	FOR WHOM
PRINCE2 Foundation/ PRINCE2 Practitioner	\$680 for the Foundation exam and \$755 for the Practitioner exam	\$107,000	For project managers wanting to show that they can implement one of the most highly structured project management methodologies.
Six Sigma	\$99-\$665	Salary range of \$71,000-\$163,600 depending on Six Sigma belt	The ideal certification for project managers wishing to prove they can eliminate waste, cut costs and lead projects efficiently.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

In this section, you'll find some of the **BEST PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS**. The certifications aren't listed in any particular order, as they all offer something different for various scenarios, career stages and industries.



Take a look at the list, make notes and see which certifications match your current standing and skill level. Then, consider the project management career path you want to pursue and determine whether any of the certifications meet your needs.

POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Below, we'll examine **the most popular** project management training offerings, revealing what they cover, how much they cost and what you can expect if you pursue a certification.

While searching for project management certifications, we looked for the most widely recognized options that are accepted both nationally and internationally, offer great value for the money, and enhance a participant's career and earning prospects.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

1. Project Management Professional (PMP)

Certifications

Project Management Professional (PMP)[®]

Supercharge Your Skills. Work Smarter.

Designed by project managers for project managers, PMP[®] certification is a globally-recognized project management certification. It proves you have the ability to lead projects for any organization and in any industry.

Apply for PMP Certification

Login or Create Your Account

Continue

What is PMP Certification?

As the world's leading authority on project management, PMI created PMP Certification to recognize project managers who have proven they have the skills to successfully manage projects. Project Management Professional (PMP)[®] certification represents an elite group of project managers. It proves project leadership experience and expertise in any way of working.

To obtain PMP certification, a project manager must meet certain requirements and then pass a 180-question exam. The PMP exam was created by project leaders for project leaders, so each test question can be related to real-life project management experiences.

PMP certification validates that you are highly skilled in:

- **People:** Recognizing you have the skills to effectively lead and motivate a project team throughout a project.
- **Process:** Using predictive, agile and hybrid approaches to determine which way of working is best for each project.
- **Business Environment:** Highlighting the success of a project and its impact on overall strategic organizational goals.

What can PMP certification do for you?

↑ **32% higher**

The median salary for PMP holders is 32% higher in the U.S. (and 16% higher globally) than those without certification, according to *Earning Power: Project Management Salary Survey - Twelfth Edition*.

1,200,000

There are more than 1,200,000 PMP certification holders worldwide. They've earned universally recognized knowledge.

Questions about the PMP? Available 24 hours

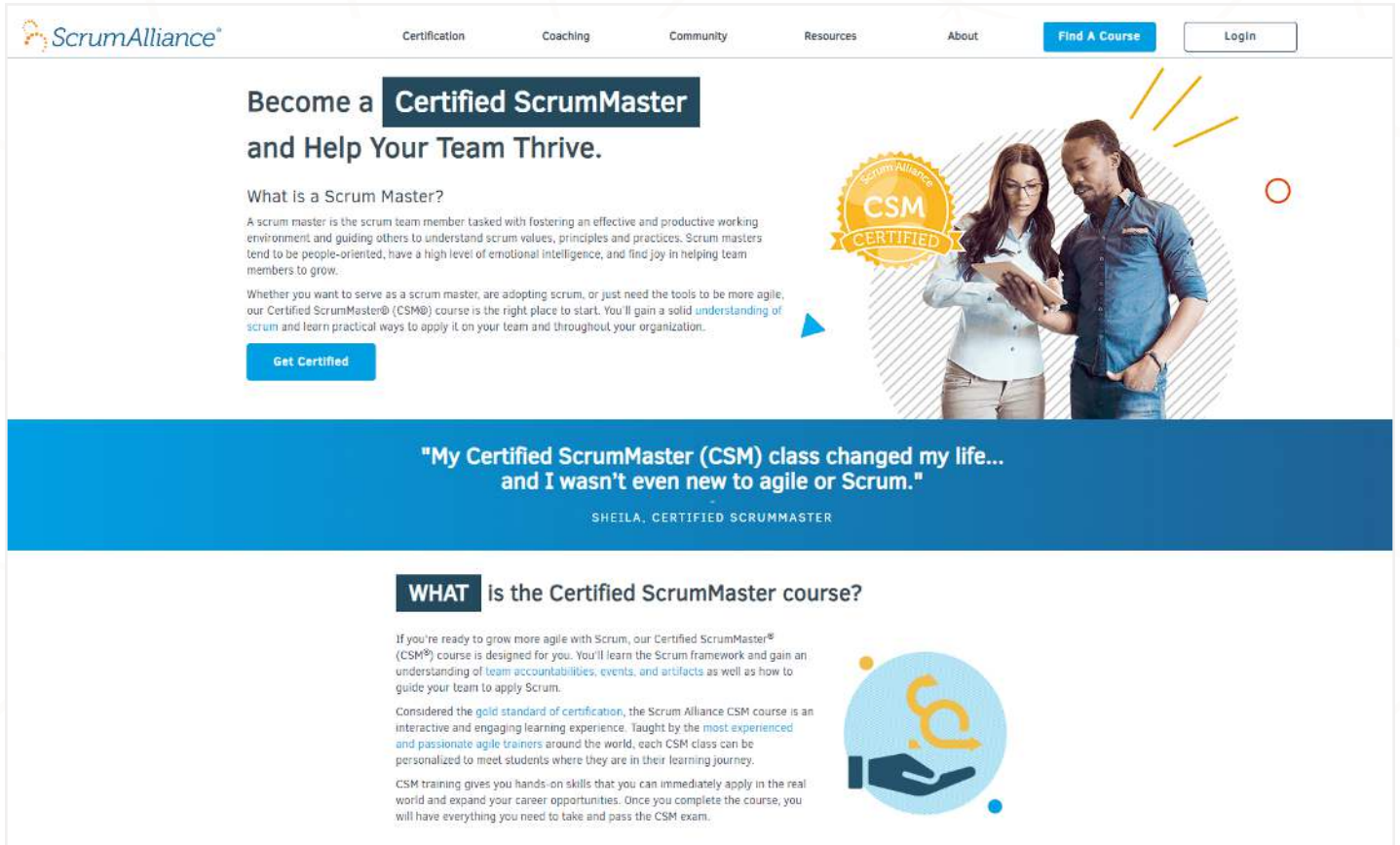
Many consider **the Project Management Institute's Project Management Professional certification** the best for project managers. It covers managing conflict, collaborating with project stakeholders, managing and assessing risk, planning and project compliance, and more.

Obtaining the PMP will prove to current or potential employers that **you can manage traditional and Agile projects** and that you have the ability and knowledge to lead project teams to success. No matter which industry you work in, you'll easily be able to apply what you learn.

Obtaining the PMP certification comes at a price. The cost varies for PMI members and non-PMI members. Members pay **\$405** to sit for the exam, while non-members pay **\$575**.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

2. Certified Scrum Master (CSM)



The screenshot shows the ScrumAlliance website. The header includes the ScrumAlliance logo and navigation links: Certification, Coaching, Community, Resources, About, Find A Course, and Login. The main content area features a large heading: "Become a Certified ScrumMaster and Help Your Team Thrive." Below this, there is a section titled "What is a Scrum Master?" which explains the role of a Scrum Master and mentions the Certified ScrumMaster® (CSM®) course. A "Get Certified" button is visible. To the right, there is an image of a man and a woman looking at a tablet, with a "ScrumAlliance CSM CERTIFIED" badge overlaid. Below this, a quote from Sheila, a Certified ScrumMaster, is displayed: "My Certified ScrumMaster (CSM) class changed my life... and I wasn't even new to agile or Scrum." The bottom section is titled "WHAT is the Certified ScrumMaster course?" and provides more details about the course, including its duration (14-hour) and the skills it covers. A "WHAT" button is also present.

Considered by many to be the de facto standard of training for those who want to become scrum masters, the Scrum Alliance's 14-hour **Certified Scrum Master (CSM) course** could be for you. You'll gain a thorough understanding of the Scrum framework and techniques, scrum events and artifacts, and how to lead a scrum team.

Before you can sit for the exam, you must attend a 14-hour course. Prices vary by provider, but you can expect to pay **between \$300 and \$1,500**. This course will serve you well if you plan on working in IT, manufacturing, marketing and more.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

3. Professional Scrum Master (PSM)



The screenshot shows the Scrum.org website's 'Professional Scrum Master™ Training' page. The header includes the Scrum.org logo, navigation links (About, Training, Certification, Resources, Community, Innovations), and login/register buttons. The main heading is 'Professional Scrum Master™ Training'. Below it, a breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Professional Scrum™ Training > Professional Scrum Master™ Training'. A circular PSM logo is displayed next to the title 'Learn Professional Scrum and How to be a Better Scrum Master'. The text describes the course as an interactive, activity-based program for understanding Scrum and Agile principles. It mentions a free attempt at the 'Professional Scrum Master I (PSM I) certification exam'. A 'Course Overview' section follows, detailing the two-day class structure, the role of Professional Scrum Trainers (PSTs), and the focus on Scrum theory and agile mindset. A footnote at the bottom states: '* When offered in person, this course is generally delivered over two consecutive days. When offered as a Live Virtual Class, the course may be broken up into more, shorter days.'

Scrum co-founder Ken Schwaber designed **the Professional Scrum Master course**, which is run by Scrum.org. This is another highly regarded course and certification. Individuals holding this certification should be able to find work leading scrum teams in various industries, such as IT, public services, advertising, marketing, production and more.

The course teaches Scrum theory and application, Scrum principles and values, communication skills, the importance of self-managing teams and the complexities of product delivery. The course cost varies by provider, but you'll typically pay **between \$995 and \$1,495**. The cost of the exam is included in the course fee.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

4. SAFe Scrum Master Certification



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 [Train & Certify](#) ▾
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[SAFe Studio Login](#)

SAFe® Scrum Master

Applying the Scrum Master Role within a SAFe Enterprise

The SAFe® Scrum Master course equips attendees to coach Agile teams to deliver business value at scale. The course teaches you the tactical skills needed to be an effective Scrum Master in a SAFe organization. It also gives you the guidance and tools necessary for working in remote environments with distributed teams.

If you want to become a certified scrum master with the skills to help leading companies succeed with Agile and scrum, the [SAFe® Scrum Master](#) course is for you. Learn how scrum masters empower and lead Agile teams. Understand how to facilitate Agile events like iteration planning, team sync, and iteration retrospectives. And discover how to help teams plan and complete their work using SAFe Scrum and SAFe Kanban. You'll also learn the principles of servant leadership, so you can help develop high-performing, engaged, continuously improving teams in your own organization.

After taking the course, you'll know how to:

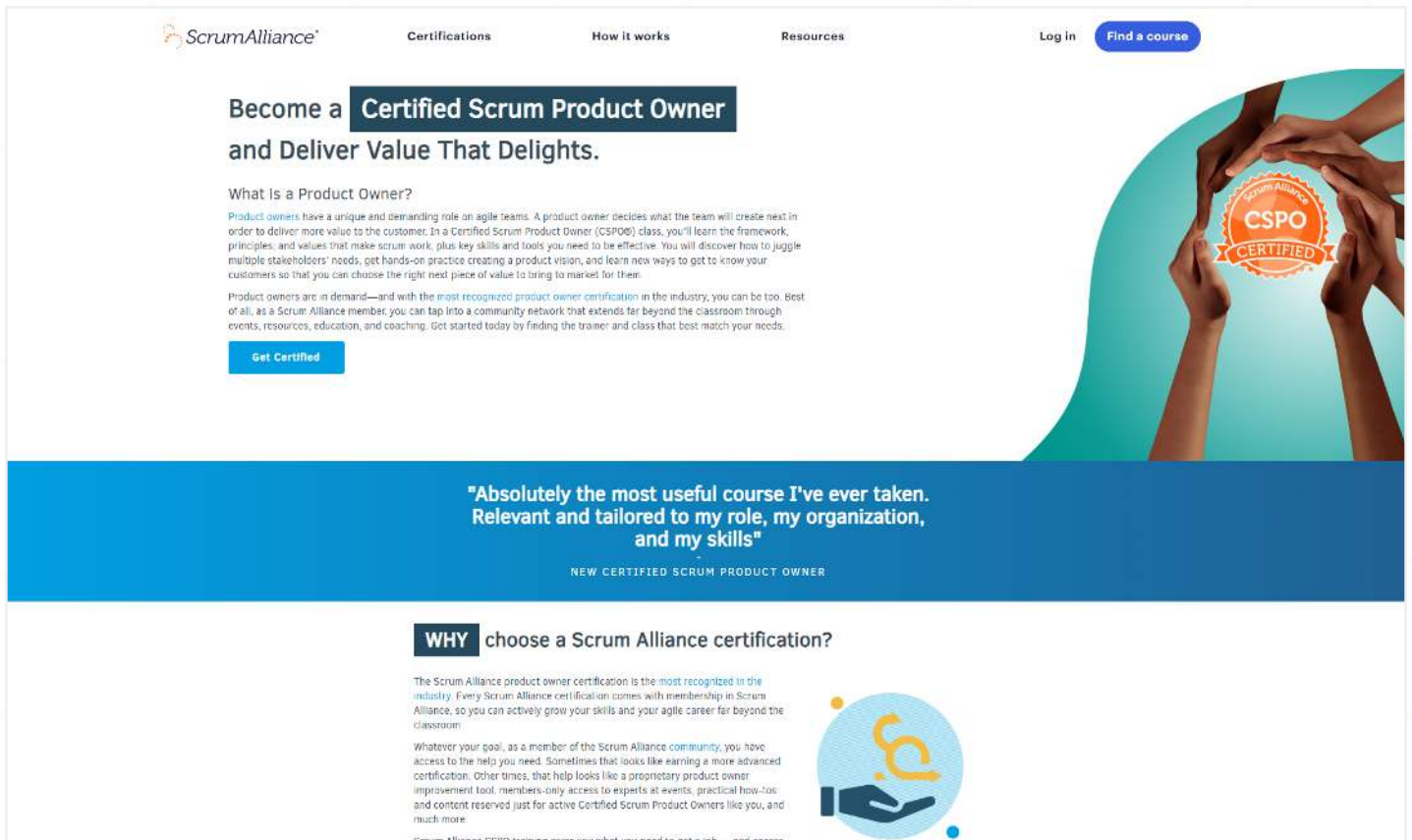
- Empower and lead an Agile team
- Facilitate Agile events like iteration planning, team sync, and iteration retrospectives
- Help teams plan and complete their work
- You'll also learn the principles of servant leadership, which are crucial for key SAFe team roles. These skills will enable you to develop high-performing, engaged, and continuously improving teams in your own organization.

The **SAFe Scrum Master certification** is ideal for existing scrum masters who want to manage multiple Agile teams at an enterprise level.

The two-day, 14-hour course, which costs **between \$1,000 and \$1,500**, will prepare you to facilitate scaled Agile events, plan work with SAFe Scrum and SAFe Kanban techniques, support project increment execution, coach Agile teams, implement continuous flow and teach servant leadership principles that will help you develop continuously improving teams.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

5. Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)



The screenshot shows the Scrum Alliance website for the Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO) certification. The header includes the Scrum Alliance logo, navigation links for Certifications, How it works, Resources, Log in, and a Find a course button. The main heading reads "Become a Certified Scrum Product Owner and Deliver Value That Delights." Below this, a section titled "What is a Product Owner?" explains the role and the benefits of the certification. A "Get Certified" button is present. A testimonial from a "NEW CERTIFIED SCRUM PRODUCT OWNER" states: "Absolutely the most useful course I've ever taken. Relevant and tailored to my role, my organization, and my skills". The "WHY choose a Scrum Alliance certification?" section highlights the value of the certification, including access to a community, resources, and a proprietary improvement tool. An illustration of hands holding a CSPO badge is also shown.

Become a Certified Scrum Product Owner and Deliver Value That Delights.

What is a Product Owner?

Product owners have a unique and demanding role on agile teams. A product owner decides what the team will create next in order to deliver more value to the customer. In a Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO®) class, you'll learn the framework, principles, and values that make scrum work, plus key skills and tools you need to be effective. You will discover how to juggle multiple stakeholders' needs, get hands-on practice creating a product vision, and learn new ways to get to know your customers so that you can choose the right next piece of value to bring to market for them.

Product owners are in demand—and with the most recognized product owner certification in the industry, you can be too. Best of all, as a Scrum Alliance member, you can tap into a community network that extends far beyond the classroom through events, resources, education, and coaching. Get started today by finding the trainer and class that best match your needs.

[Get Certified](#)

"Absolutely the most useful course I've ever taken. Relevant and tailored to my role, my organization, and my skills"

NEW CERTIFIED SCRUM PRODUCT OWNER

WHY choose a Scrum Alliance certification?

The Scrum Alliance product owner certification is the most recognized in the industry. Every Scrum Alliance certification comes with membership in Scrum Alliance, so you can actively grow your skills and your agile career far beyond the classroom.

Whatever your goal, as a member of the Scrum Alliance community, you have access to the help you need. Sometimes that looks like earning a more advanced certification. Other times, that help looks like a proprietary product owner improvement tool, members-only access to experts at events, practical how-to's, and content reserved just for active Certified Scrum Product Owners like you, and much more.

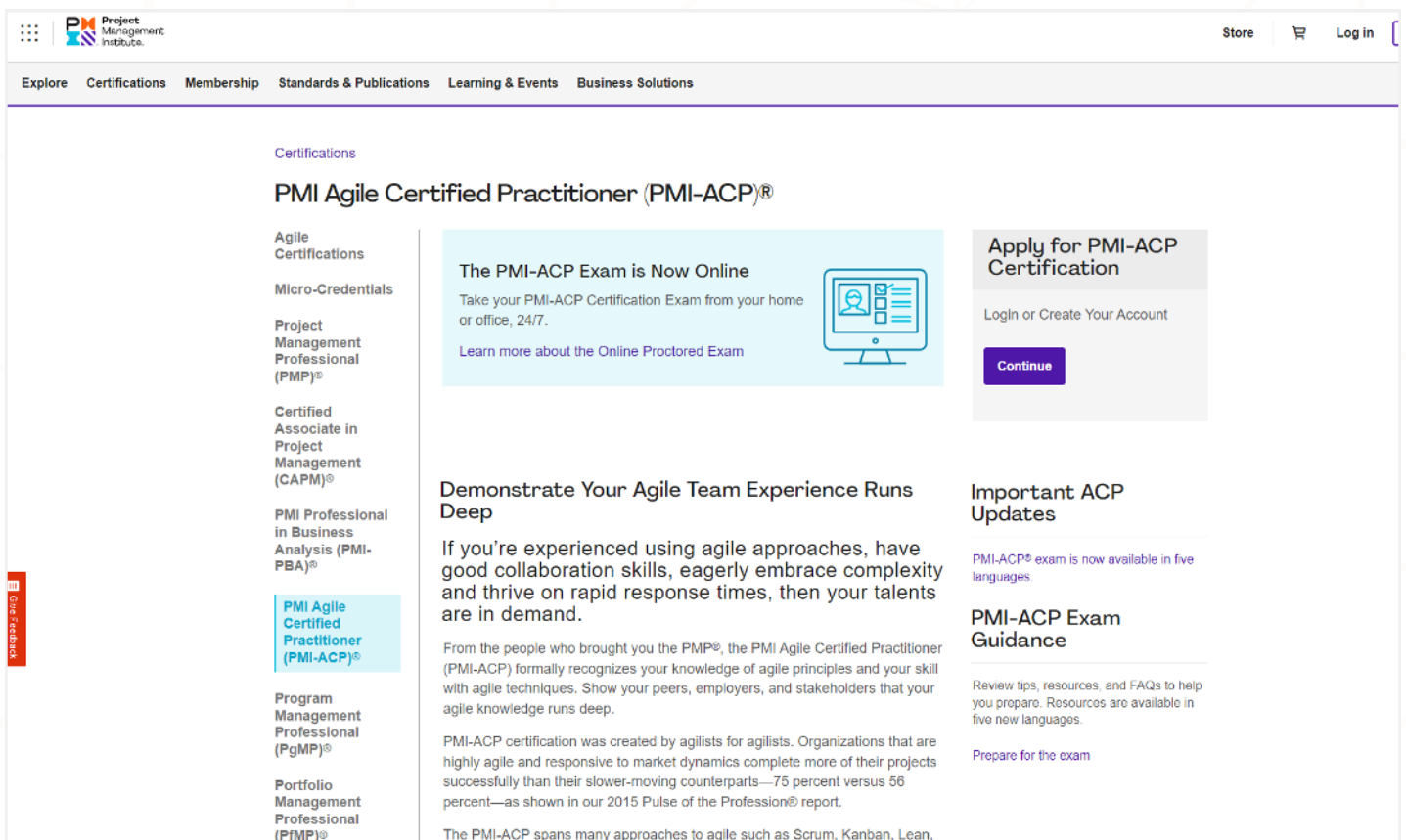
Scrum Alliance CSPO training gives you what you need to get a job — and access

The **Certified Scrum Product Owner course** is a 14-hour introductory offering for those who wish to become product owners or learn what this scrum team member does. It's suitable **for current POs** who want a refresher, scrum masters, data analysts, business analysts, project managers and other team members.

The required course – available online or in person – features 14 hours of certified instructor-led training. **You'll pay \$300 to \$900.** During the course, you'll learn about the basics of Scrum and team roles, customer satisfaction, managing releases and product backlogs, creating sprints, and communicating the product vision and overall goal with the scrum team.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

6. PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)



The screenshot shows the PMI website's certification page for the PMI-ACP. The header includes the PMI logo and navigation links: Explore, Certifications, Membership, Standards & Publications, Learning & Events, and Business Solutions. The main content area is titled 'PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)®'. On the left, a sidebar lists various PMI certifications, with 'PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)®' highlighted. The main content area features a large blue box announcing 'The PMI-ACP Exam is Now Online', stating that the exam can be taken from home or office, 24/7, and includes a link to 'Learn more about the Online Proctored Exam'. To the right of this box is a button to 'Apply for PMI-ACP Certification' and a link to 'Login or Create Your Account'. Below the blue box, there is a section titled 'Demonstrate Your Agile Team Experience Runs Deep' which explains the value of the certification and includes a link to 'Important ACP Updates'. At the bottom, there is a section for 'PMI-ACP Exam Guidance' with links to 'Review tips, resources, and FAQs' and 'Prepare for the exam'.

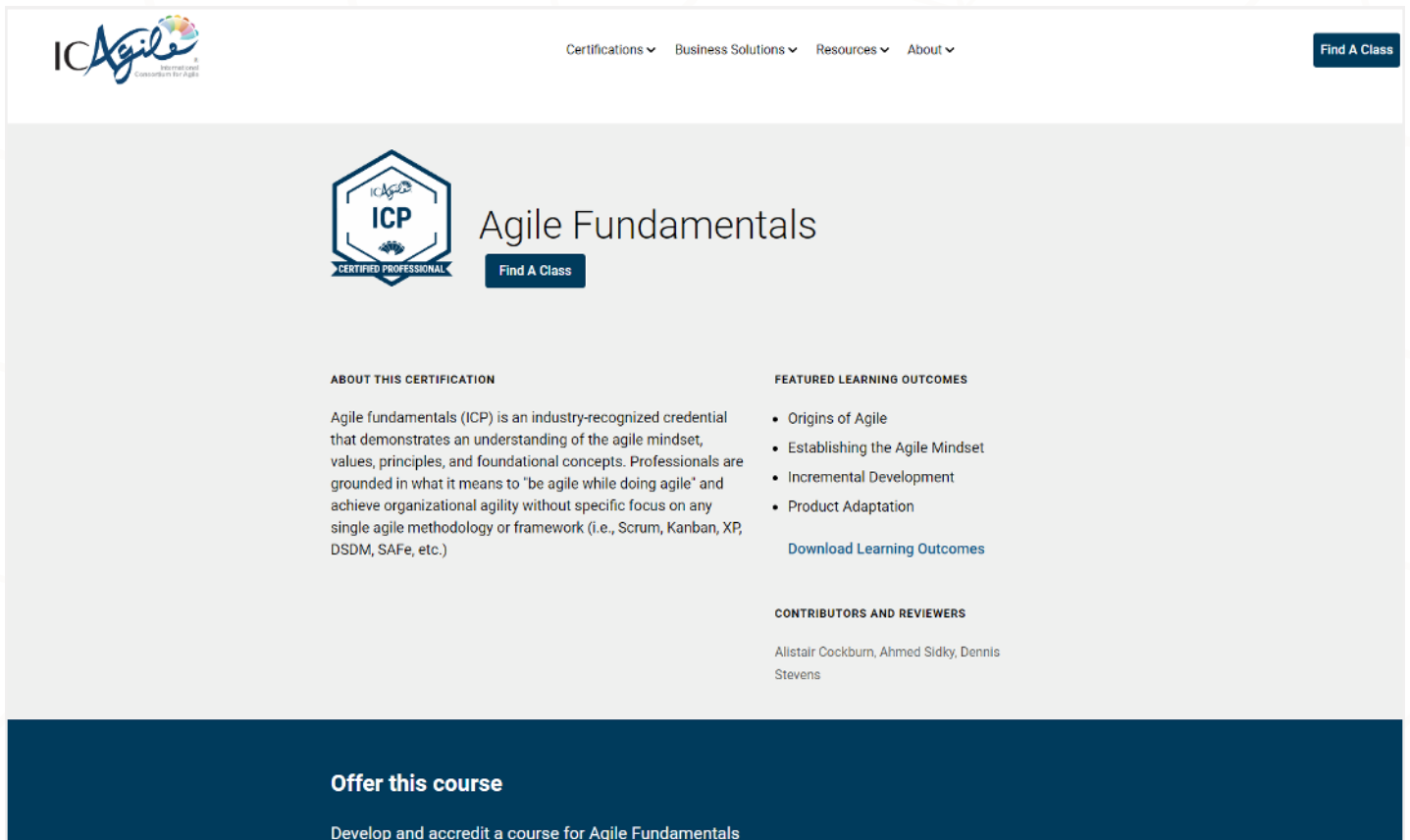
The Project Management Institute (PMI) offers the PMI Agile Certified Practitioner course to anyone who wants to prove their Agile abilities. **This certification covers** methods such as Scrum, Lean, Kanban and test-driven development (TDD), and shows that you can manage teams, thrive in highly demanding situations and collaborate efficiently.

Becoming certified isn't easy, but it can be lucrative. According to the Master of Project Academy, individuals with this certification **can earn up to \$120,000 annually**. If you want to showcase your Agile skills and prove that your Agile knowledge runs deep, the PMI-ACP could be for you.

It's worth noting that this is a secondary certification suited for those with expansive Agile knowledge and experience. The price to sit for the exam differs for PMI members and non-members. **Members will pay \$435, while non-members will pay \$495.**

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

7. ICAgile Agile Fundamentals (ICP)



The screenshot shows the ICAgile website for the Agile Fundamentals (ICP) certification. The page features the ICAgile logo, navigation links for Certifications, Business Solutions, Resources, and About, and a 'Find A Class' button. The main content area includes the ICP logo, the title 'Agile Fundamentals', and a 'Find A Class' button. Below this, there are sections for 'ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION', 'FEATURED LEARNING OUTCOMES', and 'CONTRIBUTORS AND REVIEWERS'. The 'ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION' section describes the ICP as an industry-recognized credential that demonstrates an understanding of the agile mindset, values, principles, and foundational concepts. The 'FEATURED LEARNING OUTCOMES' section lists four outcomes: Origins of Agile, Establishing the Agile Mindset, Incremental Development, and Product Adaptation. The 'CONTRIBUTORS AND REVIEWERS' section lists Alistair Cockburn, Ahmed Sidky, Dennis Stevens, and a 'Download Learning Outcomes' link. At the bottom, there is a dark blue banner with the text 'Offer this course' and 'Develop and accredit a course for Agile Fundamentals'.

ICAgile
International Consortium for Agile

Certifications ▾ Business Solutions ▾ Resources ▾ About ▾ [Find A Class](#)

 **Agile Fundamentals**
[Find A Class](#)

ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION

Agile fundamentals (ICP) is an industry-recognized credential that demonstrates an understanding of the agile mindset, values, principles, and foundational concepts. Professionals are grounded in what it means to "be agile while doing agile" and achieve organizational agility without specific focus on any single agile methodology or framework (i.e., Scrum, Kanban, XP, DSDM, SAFe, etc.)

FEATURED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Origins of Agile
- Establishing the Agile Mindset
- Incremental Development
- Product Adaptation

[Download Learning Outcomes](#)

CONTRIBUTORS AND REVIEWERS

Alistair Cockburn, Ahmed Sidky, Dennis Stevens

Offer this course
Develop and accredit a course for Agile Fundamentals

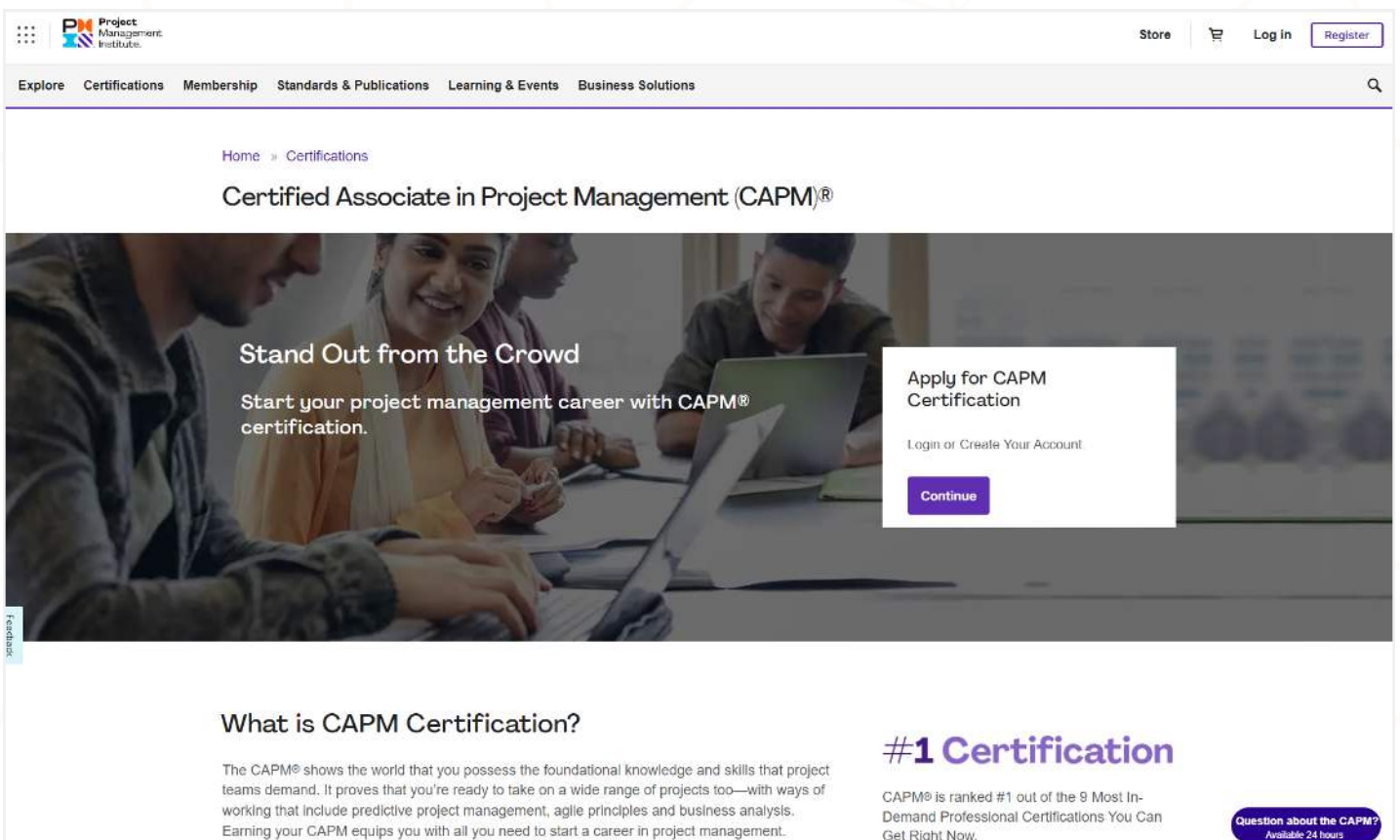
If you're just **starting out** in project management and want to specialize in Agile, the **ICAgile Certified Professional in Agile Fundamentals (ICP) certification** could be for you. Sixteen hours of training will introduce you to Agile values, principles and foundational concepts.

Topics covered include the origins of Agile, how to establish an Agile mindset, incremental development and product adaptation. By the end of the course, you **will know what it means** to "be agile while doing Agile." The course does not focus on any particular Agile methodology. Instead, it teaches you how to achieve organizational agility with any Agile method.

Course prices for this certification range **between \$599 and \$1,100**, depending on the provider. It's a small price to pay considering this certification could help you launch a career in project management.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

8. Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)



The screenshot shows the PMI website's page for the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification. The page features a navigation bar with links to Explore, Certifications, Membership, Standards & Publications, Learning & Events, and Business Solutions. A search icon is also present. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Home » Certifications'. The main heading is 'Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)®'. A large image of a diverse group of professionals working together is displayed. Overlaid on this image is a white box with the text 'Stand Out from the Crowd' and 'Start your project management career with CAPM® certification.' To the right of this box is a 'Continue' button. Below the image, the text 'What is CAPM Certification?' is followed by a description of the certification. To the right, a '#1 Certification' badge is shown, along with text stating 'CAPM® is ranked #1 out of the 9 Most In-Demand Professional Certifications You Can Get Right Now.' A small button labeled 'Question about the CAPM?' is also visible.

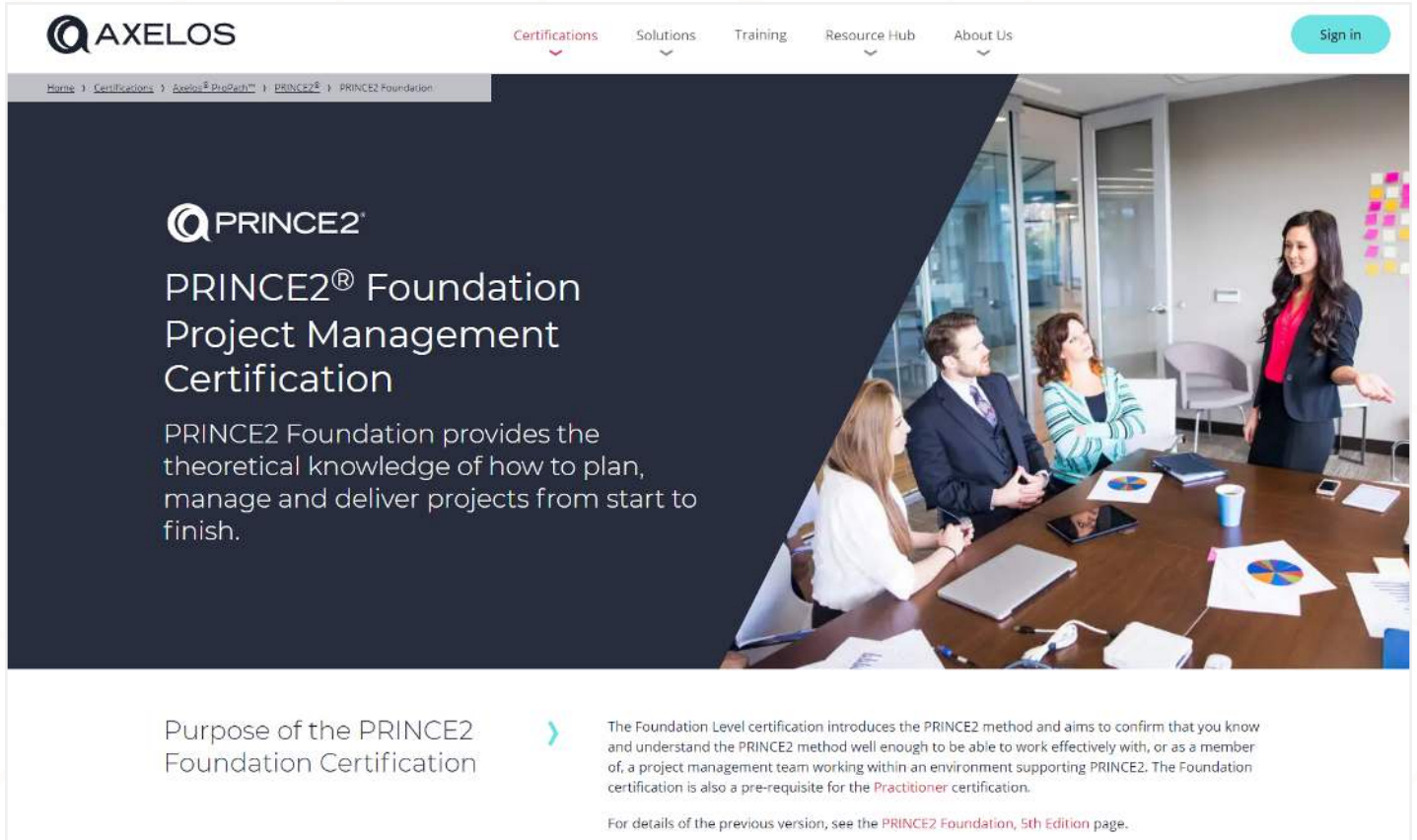
If you're just getting started in project management, the **Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)**, offered by the Project Management Institute (PMI), is for you. This entry-level certification is the precursor to the more advanced PMP course and is ideal for junior project managers.

Obtaining the CAPM will show employers that **you can lead** Agile teams, have solid collaboration skills and can communicate with peers and stakeholders. It also verifies that you understand Scrum, Lean, Kanban and test-driven development and can deliver value to customers.

Participants who sit for the exam will be tested on Agile frameworks and methodologies, business analysis frameworks and predictive plan-based methodologies. The exam varies in price for PMI members and non-members. **PMI members will pay \$225, while non-members will pay \$300.**

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

9. PRINCE2 Foundation/PRINCE2 Practitioner



AXELOS

Certifications Solutions Training Resource Hub About Us

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PRINCE2®

PRINCE2® Foundation Project Management Certification

PRINCE2 Foundation provides the theoretical knowledge of how to plan, manage and deliver projects from start to finish.

Purpose of the PRINCE2 Foundation Certification

The Foundation Level certification introduces the PRINCE2 method and aims to confirm that you know and understand the PRINCE2 method well enough to be able to work effectively with, or as a member of, a project management team working within an environment supporting PRINCE2. The Foundation certification is also a pre-requisite for the **Practitioner** certification.

For details of the previous version, see the **PRINCE2 Foundation, 5th Edition** page.

Projects in Controlled Environments 2 (PRINCE2 for short) is a project management methodology that government agencies (and private companies) use when they need to justify every aspect of a project. This highly structured method, which asks the who, what, when, where, why and how of every task, is complex and not for the faint of heart.

PRINCE2 certifications are divided into two categories: **Foundation** and **Practitioner**. The Foundation certification shows that you've learned the theoretical knowledge of planning, managing and delivering projects using PRINCE2.

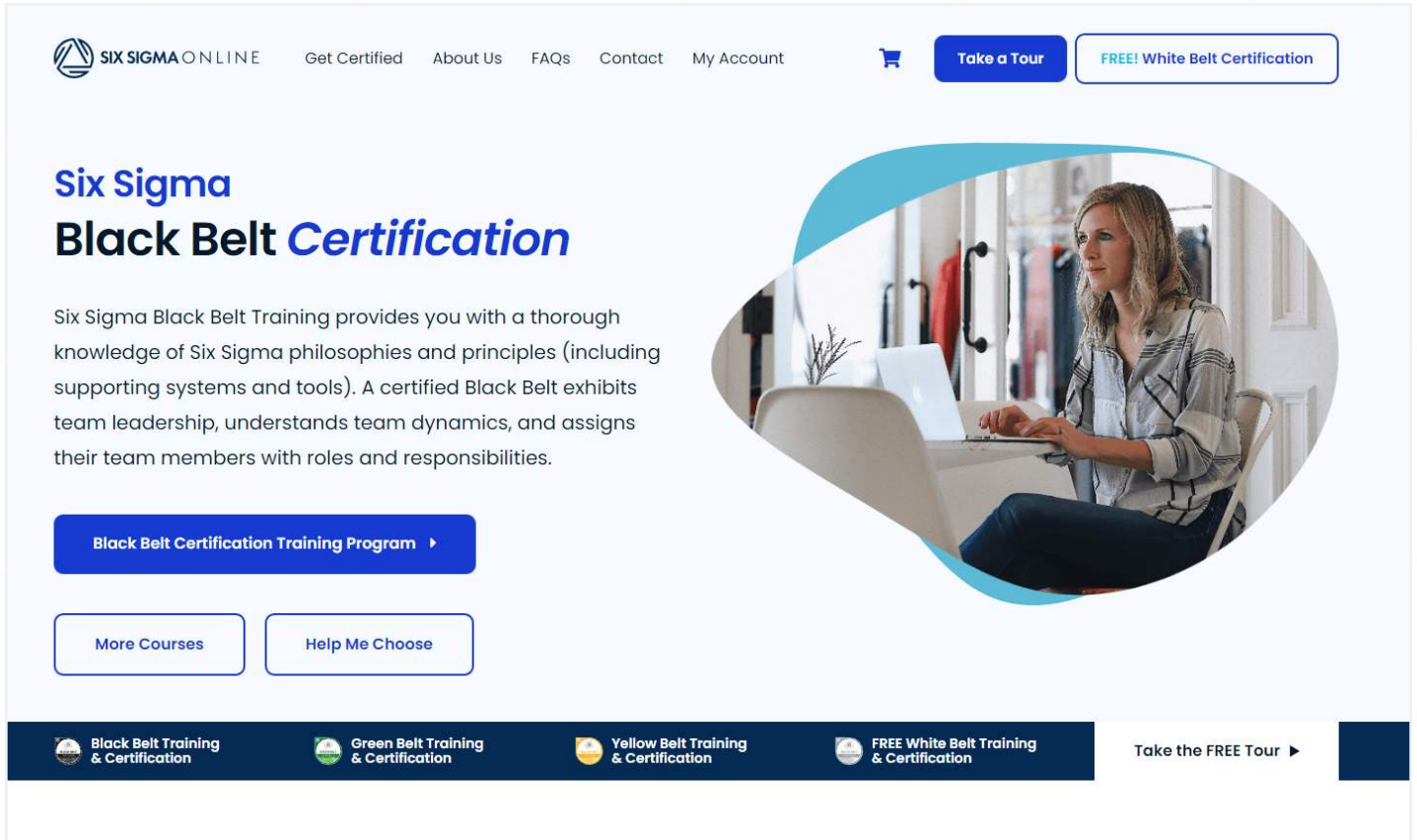
The Foundation exam covers people management, enhanced project flexibility, digital data management and project performance, and is designed for project managers and aspiring project managers.

You can either take a course to help you prepare or self-study for the exam. The Practitioner certification tests your readiness to apply PRINCE2 knowledge in real-world scenarios and is designed for project managers with experience in the field.

The PRINCE2 7th Edition Foundation exam costs \$680, while the PRINCE2 7th Edition Practitioner Exam costs \$755.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

10. Six Sigma



The screenshot shows the Six Sigma Online website. The header includes the Six Sigma Online logo, navigation links (Get Certified, About Us, FAQs, Contact, My Account), a shopping cart icon, and buttons for 'Take a Tour' and 'FREE! White Belt Certification'. The main content area features the title 'Six Sigma Black Belt Certification' and a description: 'Six Sigma Black Belt Training provides you with a thorough knowledge of Six Sigma philosophies and principles (including supporting systems and tools). A certified Black Belt exhibits team leadership, understands team dynamics, and assigns their team members with roles and responsibilities.' Below this is a large image of a woman working on a laptop. There are buttons for 'Black Belt Certification Training Program', 'More Courses', and 'Help Me Choose'. The footer displays four certification levels: Black Belt Training & Certification, Green Belt Training & Certification, Yellow Belt Training & Certification, and FREE White Belt Training & Certification, along with a 'Take the FREE Tour' button.

Project managers can learn invaluable analytical skills through **Six Sigma courses**. Six Sigma certifications show potential employers that you have thorough knowledge of project planning, resource management and cost analysis.

If you obtain a Six Sigma certification, **you'll be highly sought** after for your ability to lead teams, control quality, solve problems, mitigate risks, eliminate waste and increase profits. The idea behind Six Sigma is to earn various certifications, including Yellow, Green, Black and Master belts. Each belt represents the depth of your knowledge of Six Sigma principles

Prices vary for each certification. **The Yellow Belt certification exam costs \$99, the Green Belt exam costs \$159, the Black Belt exam costs \$229 and the Master Black Belt exam costs \$665.** You must hold the preceding belt before sitting for each subsequent exam.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Now that we have looked at some of the most popular project management certifications, it's time to take a closer look at what's required to obtain them. As you can imagine, the requirements for each certification vary wildly. Ensure you meet the requirements before choosing one.

Project Management Professional (PMP)

The PMP certification has many prerequisites. The Project Management Institute offers a **challenging 230-minute exam** that tests applicants with 180 questions (175 scored and five unscored) in three categories: people, process and business environment. The prerequisites are listed below.

Required Educational Experience

- **Education:** A four-year college (bachelor's degree) or university degree, or a high school diploma or secondary education certificate
- **Project management education:** You need 35 hours of project management education or to hold the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification

Required Professional Experience

- **With a college or university degree:** You must have 36 months of experience leading projects during the last eight years if you have a four-year degree or university degree.
- **With a high school or secondary education certificate:** You must have 60 months of experience in project management from the previous eight years if you have a high school diploma or secondary education certificate.

You'll also **need to renew** your PMP certification every three years, which requires you to obtain 60 professional development units (PDUs) and pay a member fee of \$60 or a non-member fee of \$150.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)

- **The Certified Scrum Master** certification is fairly lenient when it comes to prerequisites. After completing the mandatory 14-hour course, participants sit for a 60-minute exam. You must correctly answer 37 of 50 questions to pass. There are no other prerequisites, such as work experience or prior educational requirements.
- You must renew the certification **every two years for \$100 and earn 20 SEU** (scrum educational unit) points.

Professional Scrum Master (PSM)

- There are no educational or work prerequisites for the **Professional Scrum Master certification**. Anyone who wants to complete the roughly 16-hour course and sit for the 60-minute exam can do so.
- To pass the exam, you need to **score 85% or higher**. If you fail on the first attempt, don't worry – you can sit for the exam one more time at no extra cost. As a bonus, you won't need to renew this certification.

SAFe Scrum Master Certification

- To become **SAFe Scrum Master certified**, you must score **73% or higher** on the 90-minute, 45-question, multiple-choice, closed-book exam. There are no formal requirements, but an understanding of Scrum and how it works is recommended. You must renew the certification annually for \$100.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)

- Though a grasp of Scrum will help, you **do not need** any work-related or educational experience to qualify for **this Scrum certification course**. Still, the course is best suited for scrum masters, product owners, project managers, development team members and those with Scrum experience. There is no examination, but you must renew the certification every two years.

PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)

- **The PMI-ACP has several requirements**, including 21 contact hours of training in Agile practices, 12 months of general project experience in the previous five years or PMP/PgMP certification, and eight months of Agile project experience in the previous three years.
- The exam features 120 multiple-choice questions and lasts three hours. Once certified, you **must earn 30 professional development units** (PDUs) each year to keep the certification current.

ICAgile Agile Fundamentals (ICP)

- You can take this course in person or remotely. As a general rule, no final exam is required to pass, but not every provider is the same. Some teachers may require an exam, while others could use alternative means to determine that you have learned enough. Reach out to your chosen provider to see how they grade the course.
- **The only hard-and-fast requirement** is that you attend a 16-hour training class. There are no other educational or work-related requirements.

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)

- To obtain the **CAPM certification**, you must pass a 150-question, multiple-choice test covering the fundamentals of project management and project management roles. You must meet some prerequisites before you can sit for the exam.
- You'll **need a high school diploma** or the global equivalent and **23 contact hours of project management education**. The PMI recommends that individuals take the Project Management Basics course (\$350) to satisfy the contact hour requirement and learn about the exam topics.

PRINCE2 Foundation/PRINCE2 Practitioner

The PRINCE2 7th Edition Foundation exam consists of 60 multiple-choice questions, lasts 60 minutes and is closed book. You must score 60% or higher to pass the test, and you'll have to renew the certification every three years. There are no prerequisites for the exam.

To sit for the Practitioner exam, **you must show proof** of having passed one of the following certifications:

PRINCE2® 7 (Foundation)

PRINCE2® 6th Edition (Foundation or Practitioner)

Project Management Qualification (PMQ)

Project Professional Qualification (PPQ)

Project Management Professional (PMP)

Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)

IPMA Level A® (Certified Projects Director)

IPMA Level B® (Certified Senior Project Manager)

IPMA Level C® (Certified Project Manager)

IPMA Level D® (Certified Project Management Associate)

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

The Practitioner exam features 70 questions. To pass, you **must answer 42 correctly (60%)**. The exam lasts two and a half hours and is open book. The certification must be renewed every three years.

Six Sigma

- Each **Six Sigma certification** has its own requirements and numerous tests. The Yellow Belt certification has no prerequisites and involves 11 tests. The Green Belt certification requires three years of full-time work experience in approved fields and features 24 tests.
- The Six Sigma Black Belt requires** three years of full-time employment in approved fields or two completed Six Sigma projects. It involves 33 exams, each with 10 to 15 questions. The Master Black Belt exam features 150 questions and lasts four hours. Six Sigma certifications do not expire.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

If you want to continue your professional development and better influence project outcomes, consider pursuing one or more of the certifications listed above.



Enhance your
career prospects



Increase
your income



Be coveted by
leading companies



Earn the respect
of your peers



Open the door to job
opportunities both nationally
and internationally

CHAPTER 2: POPULAR PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

At the end of the day, **INVESTING IN BETTERING YOURSELF IS ALWAYS MONEY WELL SPENT**. By obtaining any certifications listed in this section, you can significantly enhance your career, increase your knowledge, fatten your wallet, and find and hold prestigious jobs. Investing in yourself is a win-win situation.



CHAPTER 3: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CERTIFICATION FOR YOUR CAREER

You may now be thinking that obtaining a certification will really help launch your career. How do you know which certification is right for you, though? How can you be sure you're sinking your time and money into a course that will truly benefit you? We'll answer all of these questions and more in the following sections.

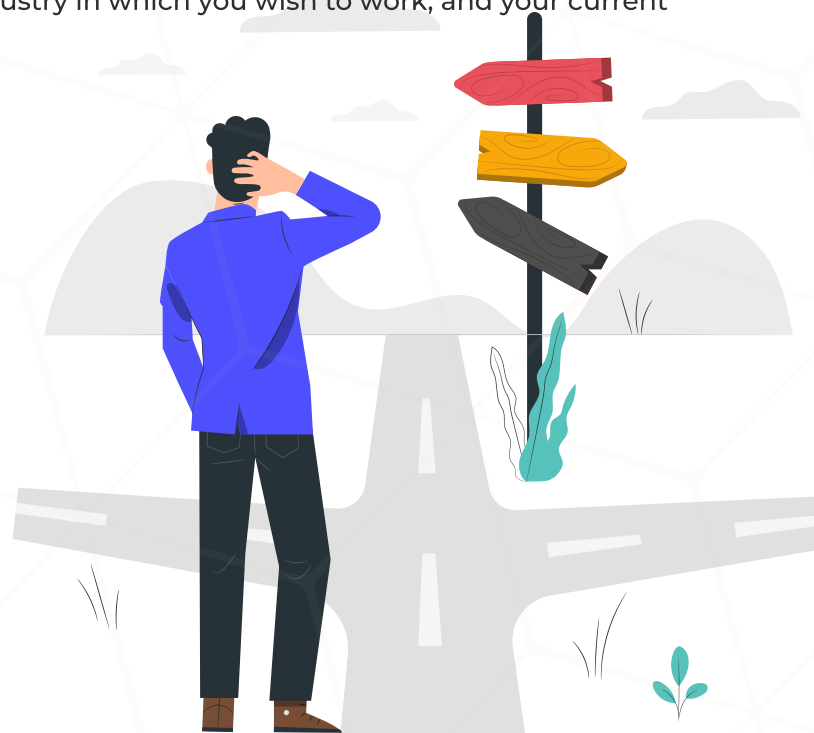
CHOOSING THE MOST SUITABLE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION FOR YOU

As you have seen, there are many project management certifications to choose from. It is important to choose one that matches your career goals, the industry in which you wish to work, and your current educational and work-related experience.

THE LAST THING YOU WANT

is to try to obtain a certification that is beyond your current skill level, which could lead you down the wrong career path or financially ruin you.

How can you be sure you're making the right choice? All it takes is a **little self-reflection.**



Sit down and think about your career goals. What does your current project management experience look like? Do you want to be a project manager, a product owner or a scrum master? Do you want to work with Agile teams, scrum teams or organizations that prefer more traditional project management methods? How much money do you want to make?

Do your due diligence and take the time to research each certification. Determine what the requirements are, what you'll learn, how long it will take to obtain the certification and how much it will cost. In addition, dig around on project management academy websites; you'll find some self-assessments that can help you better understand your current abilities.

Once you complete these steps and answer the above questions, you can narrow down the certification options and choose one that matches your goals.

CHAPTER 3: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CERTIFICATION FOR YOUR CAREER

At the end of the day, it's crucial to look at the current project management market, technologies and preferred working styles.



Still, **PLENTY OF INDUSTRIES** use highly structured, traditional project management methodologies such as Waterfall and the Critical Path Method to complete projects.

Modern organizations are increasingly adopting highly adaptable and flexible Agile work methods, especially in manufacturing, human resources, marketing, and creative and software development. If these areas interest you, strongly consider a certification that will show that you can lead Agile or scrum teams.

IF YOU PLAN ON WORKING IN THE



consider looking into Six Sigma and PRINCE2 certifications. That said, even these fields are starting to adopt hybrid work approaches that incorporate both traditional and Agile methods and principles.

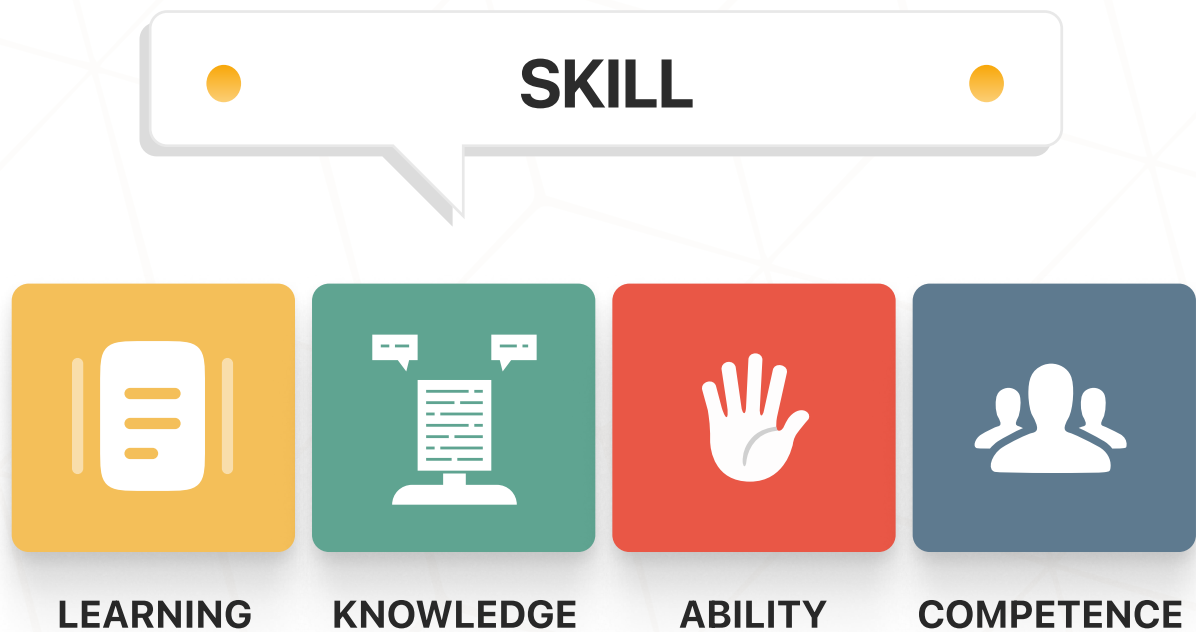


In summary, **do** your research, **think** about the industry you want to work in and then **decide** on the kind of certification you wish to obtain.

CHAPTER 3: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CERTIFICATION FOR YOUR CAREER

ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO BECOME A PROJECT MANAGER

Now that we have covered how to choose a project management certification, it's time to look at how to pursue a successful career in project management without a certification. Attending a course to gain a certification may not be the best option for everyone.



Fortunately, you can still have a great project management career without committing to a learning institution. Though obtaining a certification will likely lead to better-paying jobs later in life, you could just as easily rise to the rank of project manager by volunteering, gaining on-the-job experience, working on small freelance projects and networking.

IF YOU'RE ALREADY PART OF A PROJECT TEAM, TAKE THE TIME TO:



Shadow your leaders



Watch how they work



Apply what they teach

Spend time learning **how to use project management software and collaboration tools** that help bring teams together, ask for extra work in areas you wish to learn about and network with those around you to learn from them.

Though obtaining a project management certification should still be your objective, it's **not something you must have from the outset**. Work hard, learn on the job and climb the ladder. Then, when the time is right, you'll know enough about project management to quickly and easily obtain a certification and continue growing your career.

CHAPTER 4: PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMIES

Researching project management certifications is key, but choosing a trustworthy project management academy is just as important. How do you determine which institutions to trust? Do certifications from certain learning institutions carry more weight? Though this is sometimes the case, it often doesn't matter.

IN THIS SECTION, we'll help steer you towards trusted project management learning institutions. You can rest easy knowing that your time, money and effort in learning the project management trade won't go to waste.

REPUTABLE PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMIES

A quick Google search for project management courses will bombard you with links to institutions with impressive-sounding names and fancy websites, all of which can make an institution seem legitimate and trustworthy.

Still, though most academies are probably legitimate, we **encourage** sticking with specific academies that are industry leaders.

The project management academies in the list below are ones you **CAN TRUST WITH YOUR MONEY AND CAREER.**



- ✓ **Project Management Institute (PMI)** - A leader in project management offering globally recognized certifications.
- ✓ **KnowledgeHut** - An authorized Project Management Institute training partner that holds several accreditations for additional training courses.
- ✓ **The Scrum Alliance** - Founded by Scrum framework co-creator Mike Cohn.
- ✓ **Scrum.org** - Founded by Scrum framework co-creator Ken Schwaber.
- ✓ **Master of Project Academy** - Another PMI-accredited, -approved and -recognized institution.
- ✓ **PeopleCert** - The official training partner of Axelos, owner of the PRINCE2 method.
- ✓ **The Council for Six Sigma Certification** - Founded in 2005, the Council for Six Sigma Certification is now one of the largest industry accreditation providers.

CHAPTER 4: PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMIES

Though there are many other legitimate learning academies, **we explicitly trust the ones listed above.**

You may come across independent teachers while researching courses. Many Scrum Alliance and Scrum.org courses, as well as courses with other institutions, are taught by verified experts in their fields and are accredited by the school that owns the certification. To be sure you're picking a 100% verified instructor, use the official certification website to search for online and in-person trainers.

HOW TO EVALUATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMIES

PICKING A PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACADEMY CAN BE CHALLENGING. YOU NEED TO CONSIDER THE...

Reputation



Teaching Methods



Cost



Course Length



Fortunately, you can usually find all of this information with just a few mouse clicks.

Before parting with your money, take the time to research the learning institution you're considering. Check the institution's websites, read the "about us" pages and look for business information such as annual income and details about the founders.

You can also explore business pages on LinkedIn and peruse community forums such as Reddit and Quora for real-life reviews and experiences. **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS.**

It's crucial to ensure that the institution and the course you take are accredited and that the certification is globally recognized. This is especially important in the era of remote work. Failure to do so could lead to heartbreak, and wasted time and money. Don't take an institution's word or website at face value – do your research and make the right choice the first time.

CONCLUSION

If you still want to pursue a career in project management and acquire a certification after reading this guide, congratulations! You've made a great decision. Certifications can help you gain recognition and respect, increase your earning potential, open the door to many job opportunities, boost your confidence and increase your knowledge.

There is a growing need for skilled project managers who are well versed in Agile and traditional leadership, planning, organization, collaboration, profit and loss, and communication. You can help make a difference with project teams and an organization's bottom line, and the increased earning potential is significant. We wish you well in your future project management endeavors.

SOURCES:

1. [PMI-ACP](#)
2. [PMI stats](#)
3. [PMI-PMP Salary](#)
4. [CSM Avg Salary](#)
5. [PSM Avg Salary](#)
6. [SAFe Scrum Master](#)
7. [CSPO Avg Salary](#)
8. [PMI-ACP Avg Salary](#)
9. [ICAgile Agile Fundamentals](#)
10. [CAPM Avg Salary](#)
11. [PRINCE2 Avg Salary](#)
12. [Six Sigma Salary Ranges \(AVG\)](#)

AUTHOR BIO PAGE

SNAPSHOT



Brett Day is a writer and editor for Cloudwards. His writing and research focus largely on project management software.

BACKGROUND & EDUCATION

Brett Day brings to the table a vast and diverse experience that ranges from retail management with top names like CVS, Old Navy and Kohl's to owning a successful photography business.

With an impressive 13 years in the writing realm, Brett has showcased his expertise on various esteemed platforms, such as [Yahoo](#), [GotGame](#), [411Mania](#), [The Phoblographer](#), [Photofocus](#) and [SmartBrief](#). His deep-seated passion for technology and software, combined with his background in planning and executing significant projects, makes him a valuable asset to the Cloudwards team.

Beyond the professional realm, Brett is a passionate gamer, hiker and photographer. Brett has fortified his professional background with a Six Sigma White Belt certification from Educate 360, emphasizing his dedication to continuous learning and improving processes in the business realm.