

Major Projects Association

Strategy 2030



**Connecting people, sharing ideas,
improving major project outcomes**

www.majorprojects.org



Message from the Board

Connecting people,
sharing experience,
improving major project
outcomes.



In response to member feedback that our 2017–2021 strategy was mostly inwards focused, our 2021–2025 strategy was deliberately oriented outwards, particularly with the introduction of our three landmark objectives on sustainability, diversity and capability. This new strategy, to take us to 2030, is balanced and incremental. It is an evolution of the previous strategy and builds on the successes of the last four years, particularly with membership growth, the dramatic increase in member activities and the influence from our collaborative outreach work.

The outlook for major projects is positive, as the pipeline is as big as it has ever been and the need for major projects to be delivered at pace and with purpose to meet our grand challenges has never been greater. Those involved in major projects know we need to overcome the performance reputation to meet these challenges.

However, our seminars and studies over the past few years have highlighted another common theme, namely that the scale and pace of change means our major projects need to be ever more innovative and agile. The need to be more agile applies to the Association too, hence this strategy sees a shift from landmark objectives to a rolling set of thematic initiatives and supporting activities which we can instigate and/or adapt in a responsive way.

The Board has prepared this strategic plan with rich input from member feedback and with the comfort that the Association is in excellent health. We have strong finances, a stable and capable delivery team, and a diverse and collaborative membership. This strategic plan sets our ambition to improve the initiation, delivery and beneficial outcomes of major projects.

Emma Howard Boyd,
On behalf of the Board,
Chair, Major Projects
Association

Looking back: four turbulent but successful years

As we come to the end of our current strategic cycle we have reflected upon the successes of the past 4 years, and the challenges that lie ahead for the Association and our members.

The last four years have seen a steady growth in membership as we recovered from lockdown (up from 81 members to 94) and a year-on-year increase in member satisfaction, as measured by Net Promoter Score (NPS) in our annual membership survey. We introduced the concept of 'fringe' events to support the core programme of seminars and studies and facilitated the forming of member-led networks, such as the Project Sponsors Network. There have never been more ways for members to convene and share lessons and ideas with other members of the Association. We also celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Association and marked the occasion through our annual conference of that year looking ahead to what we can expect for major projects for the next 40 years.

In our last strategic plan, we chose to put the spotlight on three outward-facing landmark objectives: Sustainability, Diversity and Capability. Through the work of Board-led Task and Finish Groups we have achieved a lot. The goal of both the Sustainability and Diversity Groups was to make these issues part of business as usual, woven through everything we do, and we believe that through the work of the Sustainability

Ambassador Network and the Inclusion Hub these issues are now front and centre within the major projects space. For example, we know that many members have adopted the Inclusion Moment at internal events and meetings. Our Sustainability events have proven incredibly popular. Our Net Zero Position paper published for COP26 and the Sustainability Toolkit produced with PA helped members come to terms with new targets, requirements and standards. The Sustainability Playbook produced with KPMG from our 'No Planet B' seminar will help major projects to move the dial further. The Capability Task & Finish Group considered the capability gap in major projects, specifically at leadership level and via several linked seminars and workshops produced the very well-received 'No More Heroes' report. The report examines the future capabilities needed by major projects and the role of members, government and adjacent professional bodies to develop them. This is already being reflected in competency frameworks and accreditation. This was all achieved alongside a full programme of events and reports and against a backdrop of the uncertainty of lockdown and big changes within the delivery team of the Association.



Looking forward: being responsive, restoring pride, strengthening relationships

Looking forward we will continue to be responsive, at pace, to the shifting sands of major project politics, socio-economics and the impact of AI on the needs of major projects and our members.

We will address a few key themes, set on a rolling basis by our Board, using our existing structures of events, professional development, member networks, studies and reports.

The purpose of the Association has always been about improving the initiation and delivery of major projects and as such promoting the value of major projects has been implicit in our core objectives. We now aim to make this more explicit. Specifically, we aim to become more of an advocate for major projects, not by lobbying for more projects or for any specific project, but rather by helping to improve confidence in and perception of major projects and the positive impact they have on society, the environment and the economy. Over the next strategic period we will work with our members to develop the mechanisms and capabilities required to be a voice for major projects and the diverse range of professionals that make them possible.

We are keen to build upon our member-led networks that have grown over the past four years, as they are invaluable as a means of developing capability and strengthening relationships between members, between professions and with adjacent associations and institutions. We will also further develop our professional development offerings beyond the classroom, for example to include the facilitation of member-to-member secondments.

As in previous years, our ability to develop member services is based upon sound finances. Our reserves are healthy, and we will be reinvesting a proportion of these to make the Association more efficient/innovative and in providing new or enhanced services – ensuring that we spend member money on member benefits.

Purpose and values

The purpose and values of the Association are standing the test of time and remain unchanged except for promoting the value of major projects more explicitly.

Purpose

Our purpose is to improve the initiation, delivery and outcomes of major projects through the interaction of our broad range of members in sharing their experience, knowledge, research and ideas.

Values of the Association and members

Promoting the value of major projects and good practice (new)

- We promote, through evidence, the beneficial societal impact of major projects and advocate good practice initiation and delivery. We seek to influence change in practice for better outcomes.

Collaborating and convening for greater impact

- We provide a safe, confidential space for members to come together to learn and to share ideas and experience to improve project performance and socio-economic outcomes.

‘Connecting people’ means all people

- We lead EDI best practice in major projects through the actions of the Association and its members. We include a diversity of people and organisations equally in everything we do.

Driving environmental sustainability

- We strive, through the initiatives of the Association and its members, to make major projects environmentally sustainable and part of the solution to addressing the climate crisis and the nature emergency.

Focusing on membership value

- We strive to maximise membership value through the calibre and quality of our members, events, studies, reports, outreach and development activities.

What makes the Major Projects Association unique?

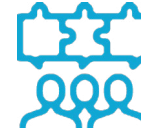
The membership survey and consultation highlighted what makes the Major Projects Association different from other associations, institutions or networks that members or their employees may also belong to, which is summarised below:



A central focus on major projects



Multi-disciplinary outlook



Broad mix of different types of members (e.g. clients, contractors, advisors). High-calibre, cross-sectoral membership



Independence / neutrality



A collaborative and convening philosophy (with members, government and institutions)



Knowledge: an aggregator of learning rather than a developer of guides

This strategic plan seeks to build on our unique position as a cross-cutting membership organisation and preserve those aspects which differentiate the Association.

Context: the changing world of major projects

Through member consultation and workshops exploring various factors using models such as PESTLE and SWOT we identified external drivers influencing the world of major projects, our members and hence how the Association can best serve its members. The analysis, upon which our strategic plan is based, is summarised below:

Context	Impact for members and major projects	Impact for how we serve our members
Reputation of major projects Low confidence in performance of major projects. Trust has eroded. Public perception can be negative, e.g. some are seen as a polluter or part of the arms trade.	Recognising and addressing the poor reputation of major projects (performance, sustainability). Addressing the lack of storytelling in project promotion (too much engineering and 'Greenbook' speak).	We have a role in reaffirming the success of major projects and the value of their outcomes and being an advocate for the value of major projects.
Economy & new administration Weak economy – inflation, growth, productivity, interest rates. Government finances – debt and tax challenging, public services stretched; cuts expected.	Understanding the shift to 'mission based' government and the role of major projects to deliver in that context. Responding to the changes in policies, e.g. planning, procurement and the role of private finance.	Navigating and supporting the change to governance and oversight of major projects (e.g. NIC/IPA to become NISTA, the role of the Office of Value for Money, alignment to the Industrial Strategy).
Sector shift Increase in major projects for energy transition, water (e.g. reservoirs, transfers), gigafactories/data centres, defence and housing. Fewer transport projects.	Addressing the skills gap in the upcoming sectors. Ensuring talent from existing sectors is not lost to major projects.	Ensuring our member mix reflects the most active sectors and organisations. Assisting with the skills required for transitioning sectors (e.g. member-to-member secondments).
Sustainability Climate change more critical/urgent, but counter-factual pushback on need for or pace of change. Shift towards resilience and adaptation. Biodiversity net gain a legal requirement.	The challenge of maintaining long-term thinking whilst facing short-term pressures. Building in resilience and adaptability to infrastructure and major projects.	Continue to advocate the importance of sustainability and the role of major projects in moving from being part of the problem to part of the solution. Following up on our Net Zero position paper and our UN Global Compact pledge.
Trends in content consumption From in-depth to short form explainers. From written to audio, video or animated. From 'at desk' to 'on the go'.	Increased need for 'sensemaking' from information overload.	We need to cut through the noise and, importantly, not add to the noise. Implications for our communications and reports (e.g. add 'explainers' to our content mix).
AI moving us on from the fourth industrial revolution AI will be a disruptor creating threats and opportunities. The pace of industrial revolutions is accelerating.	Keeping up with the pace of change (e.g. The Transport Works Act does not currently address autonomous vehicles). How do we plan/design long-term projects whilst enabling them to be adaptive.	Using AI to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Association and also innovating how we provide member services.

Key elements of the strategic plan

From blended and
events oriented



To blended, integrated
and influencing oriented



Key elements of the strategic plan

Member services and activities that are blended, integrated and influencing oriented.



The move from advocating the value of major projects from being implicit to explicit prompts a change of approach in how we plan and deliver the work of the organisation. Specifically, how the different elements integrate to enable key themes to run through them and in aggregate to contribute to influencing the practice and perception of major projects. Each element of what we do will feed into another or others. For example, seminar content includes ideas or hypotheses from our studies, our reports (short form and in-depth) capture the membership 'perspectives' on the topic from the seminar.

The perspectives are used to influence change (to initiation and delivery practices) and are also incorporated into our CPD activities. The CPD activities create alumni which help sustain our member networks. Our member networks explore their area of interest and recommend studies, which can then feed into seminars and the cycle repeats. Our flagship events are used for influence and advocacy (as well as member retention and recruitment purposes).

Oversight of this blended and integrated approach means changes to our Programme Committee and Studies and Knowledge Committee – their terms of reference, membership, information needs and timings. Our seminars and events will be rebalanced in terms of number of seminars, number of CEO dinners, number of alumni/network events etc. Knowledge Management/Content will be enhanced to address needs of short form content, pace and use of AI for sensemaking from our knowledge repository. Establishing and running alumni (e.g. Rising Stars alumni) is a new service to be introduced over the course of the new strategic plan.

2030 Objectives

Our objectives from 2025–2030 provide a balance of external and internal criteria to ensure that the Association remains relevant, responsive, provides value for members and safeguards the long-term sustainability of the Association.

Influence / Impact

- The Major Projects Association and our thematic initiatives are visible and seen as relevant, interesting and influential (measured through member/stakeholder surveys).

Operational

- Membership – maintain a strong mix of engaged members from across different major project types and sectors as well as up and down the supply chain. Aim to maintain or increase total number of members.
- Member satisfaction – aim to maintain or improve the current overall satisfaction score (82.4%) and the Net Promoter Score (73.8%).
- Member engagement – improve our understanding of what it means to be an ‘engaged’ member and support member organisations to develop their own engagement plans.
- Continue to seek diverse voices to contribute to our activities and ensure that there are opportunities for all to take part.
- Meet the commitments in our UN Global Compact pledge for sustainability.

Sustainability of the Association

- Manage our finances within 10% of annual budget; reserves remain between minimum and maximum thresholds.
- Ensure that our risk management and succession plans are in place and up to date.

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