Helping Youth Fulfill Their Aspirations

Strategic Overview 2019
Education should “enable students to understand the world around them, and the talents within them, so that they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens.”

Sir Ken Robinson – Author, speaker, expert on education, creativity and innovation

“Success means that young people can fulfill individual goals and have the agency and competencies to influence the world around them.”

Foundations for Young Adult Success, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, a study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation
PMIEF’s Evolving Strategy

Since its founding in 1990, PMIEF has modified its strategy over time. Initially focused on academic research, the Foundation’s perspective has matured and allowed us to recognize that project management changes lives and can be a force for social good. This evolution resulted in the Foundation’s driving aspiration: to be a force in the world for changing lives and communities through project management education.

Over the past 10 years, we have tested ways to change lives in three major areas. We have been discovering what it takes to build project management into both formal and informal youth educational programs and systems; we have been exploring how we can help nonprofits to operate more efficiently so their programs will have a greater social impact; and we have experimented with how we can help unemployed and under-employed populations gain differentiating workplace competencies.

Our experimentation in these three areas has shown that project management is an appreciated skill in all of them. At the same time, our sweet spot for greatest impact is emerging clearly.

Where the Greatest Opportunities Lie

1. Young people most readily pick up project management (PM) knowledge, skills and competencies, and apply it in their lives.

2. Learning and applying PM helps youth build technical and social skills, as well as gain greater confidence in their ability to shape their futures – a lifelong impact.

3. Many nonprofits deliver life skill development to young people through projects. Our services fit well into their efforts and are welcomed.

4. PM volunteers are enthusiastic about transferring their knowledge, skills and competencies to youth and to the nonprofits serving them.

What Limits Our Impact

1. By focusing on multiple audiences, it’s hard to ‘change lives’ in all of them. A single audience focus will be more impactful.

2. Even though results are encouraging, bringing PM into classrooms globally is a complex, slow process that is not easily replicable. PMIEF and its volunteers have worked steadily and purposefully, yet it remains hard to gain global scale.

3. Volunteers have worked successfully in local school systems, but entrée is difficult in some areas of the world.
Focusing PMIEF’s Strategy

Over the past 10 years, our experiences across many areas of project management education has helped us gain new clarity and renewed focus. Our 2018 strategic analysis has led us to sharpen our strategy around three primary approaches:

**Youth**
Sustain our emphasis on young people, creating generation after generation of adults who fulfill their own goals and are prepared to shape their world.

**Nonprofits**
Amplify our ability to reach and influence youth by emphasizing the global delivery of our services through engaging, experience-based project activities offered through nonprofits.

**Volunteers**
Leverage volunteers to help deliver the benefits of project management to youth.
To date, our research shows that project management helps young people plan, learn, think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, organize, collaborate, be creative and get things done. These qualities directly correspond to the skills and competencies that outside researchers say are critical for youth to succeed. Our research also reveals just how eager young people are to integrate these skills into all aspects of their lives.

**We have a compelling story.**

According to Jodi Grant of the Afterschool Alliance, nonprofit programs “are at the cutting edge of combining education and youth development, creating programs that children want to attend — where hands-on, fun creative learning is the norm.”

All over the world there are nonprofits helping young people learn life skills – whether those skills are to help them be better students, more competent future workers, or to be leaders in their communities. We have a history of successfully working with these nonprofits.

**We have a promising market.**

According to a report commissioned by PMIEF (2018), the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education notes that there is a mutual benefit for nonprofits and volunteers. Nonprofit organizations are rarely project management savvy; yet they recognize and desire access to the professional expertise of project management volunteers. And, “In the end, volunteers get more than they give. It’s a special feeling. And they want to do more”, according to Karime Ruibal, PMIEF Liaison in Uruguay.

**We have a unique, valued, and ready resource.**

**Why youth?**

**Why nonprofits?**

**Why volunteers?**
How Will PMIEF Deliver This Strategy?

**Vision**

*Inspiring youth to achieve their goals, making dreams a reality.*

**Mission**

*Enable youth to realize their potential and transform lives through project management.*

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One youth-serving nonprofit’s experience with PM education

PMIEF worked with a European nonprofit that delivers programming to less-advantaged youth to prepare them for workforce entry and success. Its programs were focused on addressing the statistics that showed 20% of youth in the country do not complete secondary school, with a long-term effect of higher unemployment.

PMIEF partnered with the nonprofit in two efforts to embed project management into their programming to teach students life skills, using projects as a way to learn. Examples of the projects students initiated were creating a marketing and fundraising campaign for youth mental health issues, and a year-end school variety show.

PMIEF taught the nonprofit’s staff project management, helped them to integrate it into their programming, and helped them gain access to project management volunteers. The nonprofit then used project management volunteers from the local PMI chapter to help deliver the programming and mentor the youth.

By the conclusion of the effort, 40% more of the youth felt confident managing a project and over 70% felt more confident about entering the workforce.
PMIEF delivers ‘wrap-around services’ to youth-serving nonprofits to maximize their ability to transfer project management knowledge, skills and competencies to the youth they serve.

- **COMMUNITY**
  PMIEF creates sharing networks so that youth-serving nonprofits can learn from each other.

- **SCHOLARSHIPS**
  Scholarships are made available to youth and nonprofit staff who want to further explore project management.

- **VOLUNTEERS**
  PMIEF leverages PM volunteers to help nonprofits customize PMIEF materials for their programs, and mentor youth in learning and applying PM.

- **RESOURCES**
  PMIEF designs engaging activities and globally-appropriate resources for youth to learn project management, and helps nonprofits build them into their programs.

- **RESEARCH**
  PMIEF monitors, learns, and adjusts its products and services to assure the maximum impact on youths’ success.
Help us use project management to inspire youth to reach their goals!

Young people are tomorrow’s global leaders. The youth who learn to think critically, collaborate, and make confident decisions are better equipped to become those leaders. Our experience and research proves project management is a conduit for acquiring and applying these crucial skills. Whether the task is to complete a school project, find a job, or improve communities — project management can open young minds, put dreams within reach and ultimately change lives.

Our goal is to forge partnerships with the nonprofit organizations that support and prepare youth for success by offering our project management expertise, resources, and volunteers to aid them in their missions.

You are part of our strategy. Whether you are a volunteer, donor, interested nonprofit, project management training organization or researcher, your skills, enthusiasm, and financial support can help make our vision a reality.

Watch our website (pmief.org) for more information.

“I call on all with influence to prioritize youth in development plans, strengthen partnerships with youth-led organizations, and involve young people in all decisions that affect them. By empowering today’s youth, we will lay the groundwork for a more sustainable future for generations to come.”

Former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon