

# PMI Educational Foundation

## Grants Promote Project Management Through Project-Based Learning Framework

**T**he PMI Educational Foundation (PMIEF) knows the 21st century mandates the abilities to think critically, work collaboratively and communicate effectively. Without question, these are skills inherent to project management. This is why the foundation not only advocates helping young people learn through projects, but also helping them learn how to manage those projects.

PMIEF's 2016 grant to the Buck Institute for Education (BIE) funded the creation of "HQPBL," an initiative to develop a framework for high-quality, project-based learning (PBL). Designed with the input of several globally renowned education thought leaders and influencers, the framework is intended to help teachers, students, parents and education stakeholders understand what constitutes high-quality PBL and if (and to what extent) they are engaged in it. Most notably, it includes project management among the six criteria for high-quality PBL. This is because project management builds students' competencies in managing themselves and their teams while using the necessary processes, tools and strategies to execute project work.

"BIE is both excited and worried about the rapid growth of PBL implementation across the U.S. and internationally," explained Bob Lenz, BIE executive director, when discussing how the framework can catalyze meaningful PBL globally. "We're excited because we believe high-quality PBL facilitates transformational learning experiences for



*Ram Dokka, PMI-ACP, PMP, PgMP, PMIEF board director, and Bob Lenz, BIE executive director, helped launch the "HQPBL" framework at the 2018 SXSW conference.*

all students—especially those furthest from opportunity—but we're worried because we're seeing a lot of projects that are not PBL. For example, they are missing intellectual challenge and project management. The framework gives educators a set of criteria so they can both design high-quality PBL and reflect on the results from the student experience."

BIE debuted the framework at the 2018 SXSW conference in Austin, Texas, USA in March 2018. The response to date has been tremendous: More than 3,600 schools, 90 partners and nearly 4,600 "sign-ups" have committed to this initiative. Moreover, Getting Smart, BIE's strategic partner for "HQPBL," has written several articles about this PMIEF-funded initiative. These include op-eds for *Education Week*, the preeminent U.S. newspaper for all education topics.

### Ongoing Reflection and Improved Practice

Junior Achievement Ireland (JA Ireland) teachers who received professional development in project management through PMIEF's 2017 grant to that organization plan to use the framework to support their instruction. For them, the framework better enables ongoing reflection and improved practice, particularly given the country's increased focus on teaching through projects.

Moreover, the teachers recently attended BIE's annual PBL World, the premier conference on PBL for teachers from across the globe, through a grant-funded, study-abroad experience.

"The opportunity for JA Ireland teachers to attend PBL World enabled them to further enhance their knowledge and expertise," said Teresa Leahy, JA Ireland's area manager MidWest. "PBL has never been more applicable in Ireland as students are now required to carry out projects in their various subjects. Learning the project management life cycle equips teachers to help students develop the skills required to complete them."

Visit [pmief.org](http://pmief.org) to view a video about PMIEF's grants to BIE and JA Ireland. You may also download the framework at [hqpbl.org](http://hqpbl.org).

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## Grant Builds Junior Achievement Ireland Teachers' Project Management Skills

Equipping PM Knowledge Youth—a strategic focus of the PMI Educational Foundation (PMIEF)—requires empowering teachers with project management knowledge they can thoughtfully apply to their practice and integrate into their curricula. The foundation's 2017 grant to Junior Achievement Ireland (JA Ireland) for the "PMIEF – JA Ireland Project Management Skills for Life for Students and Teachers" initiative funded the organization to design its first-ever teacher training program. The pilot complemented PMIEF's support for JA Ireland to develop a nationwide program that enabled nearly 600 youth to learn project management, for which several Ireland Chapter of PMI members volunteered as mentors through their employers.

Secondary school teachers who wished to participate submitted a personal essay and received administrator recommendations. Ray Mead, founding partner of P3M Global (a PMI Registered Education Provider), facilitated a three-day project management fundamentals training for the 15 teachers selected. The teachers also attended the Buck Institute for Education's (BIE) PBL World, the leading global conference for project-based learning (PBL).

Teresa Leahy, JA Ireland's Area Manager MidWest, could not be more delighted.

"The Junior Cycle high school curriculum in Ireland has changed over the last couple of years, with subjects such as science, math, English, geography and business now requiring classroom-based assessments," she explained. "This necessitates utilizing a PBL approach in the classroom. The grant allowed our teachers to learn practical project management techniques they can easily integrate into their instruction."

In addition, the teachers will incorporate BIE's "HQPBL" framework in their practice. Also funded through a PMIEF grant, the framework better enables education stakeholders—including teachers, students, and parents—to identify the criteria necessary for high-quality PBL. Among these is project management, which permits students to effectively manage themselves and teams of peers as they strategically execute project work.

"BIE's mission is to build teachers' capacity to design and facilitate high-quality project experiences for students," said Bob Lenz, BIE Executive Director. "The framework helps guide and inspire those who want to do PBL to ensure it's high quality. It includes project management because these skills are critical as students pursue post-secondary education and careers."

Each teacher also submitted a portfolio to demonstrate project management integration into their curricula, which permitted them to earn PMIEF's Managing the Learning Project Cycle digital microcredential. Practically applying their project management training not only encouraged their reflections on their lessons learned and what these mean for their pedagogy, but also deepened students' awareness of the importance of knowing how to manage projects. Three teachers—Fiona Bourke, Niamh Dwyer and Dáire Gillen—discuss their experiences in the following profiles.

**Teacher:** Fiona Bourke

**School/Location:** Galway Community College/Galway, Ireland

"Project management has made a difference for me as a teacher because it has shown me that, in the past, I have over-managed projects. I need to give responsibility to my students so they develop confidence and problem-solving skills."



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## Grant Builds Junior Achievement Ireland Teachers' Project Management Skills

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Ms. Bourke's microcredential portfolio showcased her students' fundraising bake-sale project for an area charity. She taught them the project life cycle and triple-constraint theory to build their project management capabilities. Their tasks included seeking school permission, identifying a baking environment in compliance with health and safety standards, ensuring fresh products and a maximum target market, and identifying team members.

State examinations the same day as the bake sale created unexpected complications, but, as Ms. Bourke explained, "I realized a project does not have to be executed exactly as planned to be successful. Learning takes place at every stage of the project life cycle, and part of that learning involves an openness to amend based on monitoring." She plans to use BIE's framework not only to ensure each of her classroom projects is student-led, but also to develop more cross-curricular links so that all stakeholders understand their purpose.

**Teacher:** Niamh Dwyer

**School/Location:** Assumption  
Secondary School/Dublin, Ireland

"Since I have begun using the project life cycle in my instruction, I have found my students plan their projects concisely, deliver them on time, and better meet their requirements. They have told me they find their



projects less stressful when they use project management and, on average, they receive higher grades."

Ms. Dwyer highlighted her action research project for her microcredential submission. It required students design a holiday for leaving certificate students within a set budget. They initiated their project by completing a personality profile to determine team members, after which groups developed a scope statement, identified constraints, devised a work breakdown structure and monitored their work to ensure milestone achievement. In addition to using PMIEF's no-cost educational resources to support her instruction, Ms. Dwyer will leverage BIE's framework to ensure the authenticity of each project she assigns. This includes public exhibition of student work so they can take pride in their accomplishments.

"Project management allows me to better structure the projects I design, whether for lesson planning in my classroom or to benefit the wider school community," she said. "Most importantly, it has allowed me to share my newly developed skills with my school leadership, colleagues, and students."

**Teacher:** Dáire Gillen

**School/Location:**  
Rosses Community School/  
Donegal, Ireland

"Learning project management has made my classroom instruction much more efficient. My students collaborate better and I have noticed that I now

speak less in class because I have become much more of a facilitator."

Mr. Gillen's microcredential portfolio spotlighted students' anti-bullying week project. While his school offers anti-bullying activities each



year as part of its well-being program, this was the first time students integrated the project life cycle to organize a speaker series, workshops and fundraising events. They began by identifying their goals, after which they each assumed specific roles as well as continuously monitored and reflected on their progress through the weekly reports they shared with one another. According to Mr. Gillen, project management enabled them to determine what did and did not work well so they could make mid-course corrections as necessary.

"Project management allows me to equip students with the skills they need to complete purposeful projects, and that will better prepare them for the world of work," he said. "It also helps them improve essential communication and presentation skills." Mr. Gillen intends to use BIE's framework to create a roadmap for student learning and as a checklist to ensure he instructs high-quality PBL.

Visit [pmief.org](http://pmief.org) to view a video about PMIEF's grants to JA Ireland and BIE. You may also download PMIEF's no-cost educational resources on its website.