



# NEWSLETTER

# 2026

Quater one

Celebrating the brilliant minds behind our  
APMP community!

**Growing with confidence**



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# NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

## Welcome to a year of growing with confidence

Welcome to the first APMP Sub-Saharan Africa newsletter of the year and the start of what promises to be an exciting and impactful journey ahead.

Our 2026 theme, **Growing with Confidence**, reflects what matters most to us as a chapter: **our members**. It's about building confidence in your skills, your voice, and your place in this profession, no matter where you are in your career.

## A community built around you

APMP SSA exists to support proposal and bid professionals across the region, from those just starting out to experienced leaders shaping the future of our industry.

This year, our focus is firmly on member value: practical learning, meaningful connections, and real opportunities to grow. We want every member to feel seen, supported, and confident that being part of this chapter genuinely adds value to their professional journey.

## Not sure where to start? Start with a conversation

If you're unsure how to get involved or where to begin, that's okay. Growth doesn't always start with a plan. Sometimes it starts with a simple conversation!

You are always welcome to reach out to me personally. No formal agenda needed. Just a conversation about where you are, where you'd like to go, and how APMP SSA can support you along the way.

## Highlights to look forward to this year

We have an exciting line-up planned, with two key highlights shaping the year ahead:

### ✔ Mentorship Programme

Designed to connect experienced professionals with emerging talent across the region, our mentorship programme is about shared learning, confidence-building, and career growth through real-world insight.

### ✔ 2026 Conference

Our annual conference will bring the community together to share ideas, challenge thinking, and celebrate the people behind winning proposals.

Alongside these, we'll be hosting regular webinars throughout the year, offering practical insights, expert perspectives, and opportunities to learn from one another.

## Let's Grow — Together with Confidence!

APMP SSA is more than a professional association. It's a community — one that grows stronger when we grow together.

Thank you for being part of this journey. I look forward to connecting with you throughout the year as we continue growing with confidence.

Warm regards,



Chairperson, APMP  
Sub-Saharan Africa





## 2026 APMP SSA VSURVEY RESULTS

### Your voice, your APMP community

#### Thank you for sharing your voice!

A sincere thank you to all our members who took the time to complete the “Your Voice, Your APMP” Survey. Your feedback is incredibly valuable and plays a vital role in shaping the future of our community. Through your insights, we gain a clearer understanding of what matters most to our members and how we can continue to grow, improve, and deliver meaningful value across the APMP Sub-Saharan Africa chapter.

Your voice helps guide our events, professional development opportunities, networking initiatives, and the overall member experience. We truly appreciate the time and thought you put into sharing your perspectives.

We encourage all members who have not yet participated to take a few minutes to share their thoughts. Every response helps us build a stronger, more responsive APMP community.

**Haven't completed the survey yet?  
There's still time!**

Click the link below or

[APMP SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA MEMBERSHIP QUIZ](#)

scan the QR code to complete the survey and make your voice count:



**20+**

Completed surveys

**230+**

members





## APMP SSA 2026 KICK-OFF: A HIGH-ENERGY START TO AN IMPACTFUL YEAR

APMP SA 2026 Kick-Off: A High-Energy Start to an Impactful Year

We kicked off 2026 in true APMP style with energy, laughter, and a whole lot of collaboration! Our APMP SA Kick-off Session on 05 March 2026 set the tone for the year ahead and reminded us why this community is so special.

We opened the session with a little light dancing (yes... dancing!) to Justin Timberlake's "Can't Stop the Feeling" because nothing says ready for the year like a room full of proposal professionals finding the beat before the deadlines find us. This was followed by a hilarious "The Office"-style intro video that had everyone smiling before we even got started.

Our fantastic facilitators, Natalie and Connie, supported by Maryke and Margaret, guided us through an engaging and interactive session complete with the Wheel of Insight. Members and non-members alike jumped in, shared openly, and connected "beyond their title and name tag," making the session both fun and meaningful.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE DAY

From the conversations, the stories, and the shared experiences, three strong themes emerged:

- ✔ **Purpose Driven:** We are motivated by impact not just deadlines. Behind every submission is a purpose, a team, and a vision we want to help succeed.
- ✔ **Shared Reality:** We are all navigating similar pressures. Resource limitations, shifting expectations, constant change none of us are alone in these realities.
- ✔ **Human Centered:** Beyond our professional titles, we bring humanity to the work. Empathy, resilience, creativity, humour – these are the qualities that make our community stronger.



# MEET THE APMP SSA 2026 COMMITTEE

We're proud to be powered by an incredible committee of passionate volunteers from across the bid and tendering profession. These dedicated individuals generously give their time, energy, and expertise to elevate the standards of proposal management and coaching, helping to shape the future of our industry.

Their commitment, collaboration, and enthusiasm are what keep our community thriving and moving forward. Each member brings unique insights and experience, united by a shared goal: to champion excellence and professionalism in everything we do.

Meet your 2026 Committee – the driving force behind our continued growth and success!

 <p><b>Maryke Otto</b> Chair</p>	 <p><b>Belinda Engelbrecht</b> Website &amp; Technology</p>	 <p><b>Boitshepo Kowa</b> Membership</p>	 <p><b>Connie Singh</b> Events</p>	 <p><b>Laura Rispin</b> Social Media</p>	 <p><b>Margaret Vermeulen</b> Graphics</p>
 <p><b>Ester Dogbe</b> Membership</p>	 <p><b>Abishak Munjuri</b> Membership/ Treasury</p>	 <p><b>Natalie Hirschson</b> Events</p>	 <p><b>Annelize Smit</b> Treasury &amp; Secretary</p>	 <p><b>Jenelle Alexander</b> Newsletter &amp; Articles</p>	 <p><b>Candice Stephanou</b> Mentorship</p>



# BUILDING AFRICA'S NEXT GENERATION OF PROPOSAL LEADERS

## What if one conversation could fast-track your career by years?

That's the idea behind the APMP Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Mentorship Program – a structured initiative designed to connect experienced bid and proposal professionals with emerging talent across the region. This isn't just another “nice-to-have” member benefit. It's a strategic investment in the future of our profession in Africa.

## Why mentorship matters (Now more than ever)

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, the bid and proposal profession is growing rapidly – but structured development pathways are still limited.

Globally, mentorship has proven to be one of the most effective tools for professional growth:

- Professionals with mentors are **5x more likely to be promoted**
- Mentors themselves are **6x more likely to advance in leadership roles**
- Companies with strong mentoring cultures see **higher retention and performance outcomes**

**Close the skills gap. Accelerate capability. Build a stronger, more connected community.**

## What the APMP SSA mentorship program offers

The program is designed to deliver practical, real-world value – not theory.

Participants can expect:

- ✓ **Structured Mentor-Mentee Matching**  
Carefully paired based on experience, goals, and industry focus.
- ✓ **Guided Engagement Framework**  
Clear expectations, timelines, and conversation prompts to keep momentum.
- ✓ **Real Industry Insights**  
From bid strategy and storytelling to client engagement and career progression.
- ✓ **Cross-Border Collaboration**  
Connecting professionals across the SSA region to share diverse perspectives.
- ✓ **Professional Growth Accountability**  
Helping participants stay focused on tangible development goals.



# ANNOUNCEMENT

## LAUNCHING THE APMP SSA MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

### Be part of something bigger

The APMP SSA Mentorship Program is more than a development initiative.

It's about building a pipeline of skilled, confident professionals who will shape the future of bidding across Africa.

### And the truth?

The region doesn't just need more professionals. It needs better-prepared, better-connected, and more confident ones.

This is how we get there..

### Get involved

- Registrations will be opening soon.
- Whether you're ready to guide or ready to grow now is the time to step in.
- Because careers don't grow in isolation. They grow in communities.

### What's in it for Mentors?

Let's be honest, mentoring isn't just about giving back(although that's a big part of it).

Mentors will gain:

- ✔ Leadership development experience
- ✔ Increased professional visibility within APMP SSA
- ✔ Fresh perspectives from emerging professionals
- ✔ A stronger professional legacy in the African market

**In short: You don't just shape careers, you sharpen your own.**

### What's in it for Mentees?

If you're early to mid-career, this is your unfair advantage.

Mentees will benefit from:


- ✔ Accelerated learning from real-world experience
- ✔ Career guidance and clarity
- ✔ Improved confidence in bid and proposal roles
- ✔ Access to a broader professional network

This is the kind of support most professionals wish they had earlier.

### Interested in becoming a mentee or learning more about the programme?

### We would love to hear from you!

Reach out to us to express your interest and take the next step in your professional growth.

 [info@apmp.org.za](mailto:info@apmp.org.za)

Candice Stephanou

Mentorship portfolio





# THE SYMPHONY OF TENDERING

## A harmonious approach to winning contracts.

Author: Margaret Vermeulen (CF APMP)

Tendering, much like a grand symphony, is a complex process where various elements must come together to create a unified and compelling tender response. Just as a symphony requires the harmonious collaboration of different musical instruments under the guidance of a skilled conductor, the tendering process demands coordinated efforts from various stakeholders to craft a winning bid.

Let's explore the tendering process through the lens of a symphonic performance, highlighting the importance of teamwork, precision, and timing.

### The orchestra: a diverse ensemble of expertise

In an orchestra, musicians from different sections; strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion – bring their unique talents to the stage. Each section plays a distinct role, yet all follow the same sheet music, contributing to the overall composition. In the context of tendering, think of these sections as the different departments involved in the bidding process.

- ♪ Sales teams act as the string section, laying the foundation with a deep understanding of the market and the client's needs.
- ♪ Finance is the woodwind section, adding clarity and precision to the bid by ensuring that all financials are accurate and competitive.
- ♪ Legal plays the role of the brass section, providing strength and confidence by ensuring compliance with all contractual terms and conditions.
- ♪ Bid Management takes on the percussion section, keeping the rhythm steady by aligning the project plan and compliance requirements with the client's expectations.

Each stakeholder, like each section of the orchestra, must perform their part with excellence and cohesion. If one section falters, the entire performance is compromised.

**The Bid Manager acts like a conductor, ensuring that all elements of the bid come together seamlessly. Strong leadership and coordination are vital to aligning different contributions, meeting deadlines, and producing a polished and persuasive final submission.**

## The conductor: guiding the process to perfection

The conductor of a symphony is responsible for bringing out the best in each musician, ensuring that every note is played at the right time, with the right intensity. In tendering, the Bid Manager fulfills the role of the conductor.

The Bid Manager orchestrates the efforts of all stakeholders, ensuring that every aspect of the bid, from technical specifications to commercial terms, is perfectly aligned with the client's requirements.

Just as a conductor sets the tempo and guides the musicians through complex segments, the Bid Manager sets deadlines, coordinates inputs, and reviews drafts.

Their goal is to maintain a consistent narrative and quality throughout the proposal, ensuring that the final submission is not just technically sound but also compelling and persuasive.

## Rehearsals and drafts: refining for perfection

Before a symphony is performed on stage, musicians undergo countless rehearsals. They refine their section, adjust their timing, and ensure that their performance is flawless. In the tendering process, this stage is represented by the development and refinement of drafts and internal reviews of the proposal.

During these “rehearsals”, each stakeholder refines their contributions. The bid management team fine-tunes the proposal’s alignment with client specifications, finance ensures that the financial model and cost breakdown is accurate, and legal meticulously checks compliance with contractual obligations. These drafts are then reviewed collectively, much like a full orchestra rehearsal, to ensure that all parts come together seamlessly.

## The audience reaction: applause or silence?

The audience's reaction in a concert hall is immediate and unmistakable – applause, standing ovations, or sometimes, silence. In tendering, the client’s response, though delayed, is just as telling.

Winning the contract is like receiving a standing ovation; it acknowledges the effort, skill, and harmony of the entire team. On the other hand, losing a tender can feel like an empty concert hall, but it’s also an opportunity to learn, refine, and prepare for the next performance.

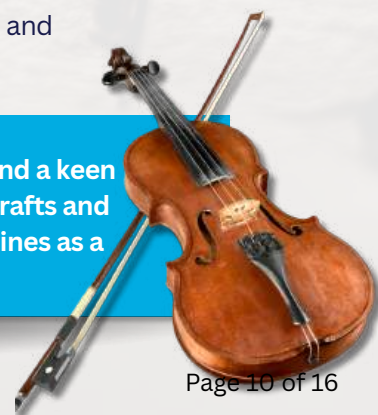
## The final performance: submitting the tender

The culmination of all the effort and coordination in a symphony is the final performance. This is when the orchestra showcases its interpretation of the composition to the audience.

In tendering, this moment comes when the proposal is submitted to the client. If every element of the bid is well-prepared and harmonised, the client is likely to be impressed.

A successful tender submission, like a magnificent symphonic performance, is the result of meticulous preparation, practiced execution, and flawless coordination. It’s not just about meeting the requirements, but about presenting a compelling case that resonates with the client’s needs and aspirations.

**Winning a tender, like delivering a captivating symphony, demands thorough preparation and a keen eye for detail. Just as musicians perfect their performance through numerous rehearsals, drafts and reviews polish the proposal, ensuring it not only fulfills the client’s expectations but also shines as a model of precision and impact.**





# CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## Why invest in APMP certification?

Think of APMP certification as your career superpower! It proves your expertise, boosts your credibility, and opens doors to exciting opportunities. Investing in yourself today means you're levelling up for tomorrow!

## Recommended reading in APMP library

The APMP Library is like a treasure chest for proposal pros. Packed with guides, case studies, and insider tips, it's your go-to spot to sharpen skills, discover new strategies, and stay ahead of the curve.



## APMP TV and how you can earn CEU points

Learning just got binge-worthy! APMP TV serves up webinars, interviews, and thought leadership sessions you can watch anytime and yes, you'll earn CEU points while you're at it. Learning + rewards = win-win.

## Look out for Meaningful Mondays

Start your week with purpose (and a sprinkle of inspiration)! "Meaningful Mondays" bring tips, insights, and motivational bites to kick off your week energised, focused, and ready to conquer.

## Look out for Tuesday Templates

Tuesdays just got an upgrade! Our "Tuesday Templates" are ready to save you time, spark ideas, and make your proposals shine. Grab them, tweak them, and watch your workflow get a serious boost.



# NAVIGATING THE APMP CERTIFICATION PATH

## START STRONG, GROW SMART!

If you've ever thought, "I'm ready for Practitioner... maybe even Professional?", you're not alone.

It tells us you're taking your bid and proposal career seriously and thinking about what comes next.

There's a clear shift towards professionals wanting to formalise their experience and grow with intention.

But then comes the gentle pause... and the question: Have you laid the foundation?



**The Foundation Certification:**  
Your first port of entry (Yes, pun intended)

The APMP Certification path is there for a reason. It's not just a series of exams, but rather a journey that builds your capability over time.

The Foundation Certification gives you exactly that: a solid grounding. It introduces the principles, terminology, and best practices that sit at the heart of what we do.

It's where everything starts to come together:

- A shared language with other professionals
- A clear understanding of best practice
- A base you can confidently build on

While it might be tempting to skip ahead (especially if you've been in the role for a while), it's a bit like stepping into the middle of a conversation; you can follow along, but you're missing the context.



**Stepping up:**  
Practitioner and Professional

Once that foundation is in place, the rest of the path starts to make a lot more sense.

- **Practitioner** is where you begin applying your knowledge in real, practical ways
- **Professional** moves into a more strategic space; thinking about leadership, influence, and shaping outcomes



Both are incredibly valuable, and for many, they are THE goal!

But they're also much more manageable when you've got that solid base behind you.

## And then... a slight twist

Now, having said all of that, not every role follows the same route.

If you're working in a more specialised pursuit/deal maker role, perhaps focusing on executive summaries, pricing, visuals, or content, then going straight into a Micro-Certification can make perfect sense!

It's a great way to:

- Build focused expertise
- Grow confidence quickly
- Contribute immediate value to your team

So yes, Foundation is the traditional starting point, but there are cases where a more targeted approach works just as well.

## So, where do You start?

This is usually the part where people hesitate a little. Some are right at the beginning and need that strong grounding. Others are ready to stretch into application or strategy. And some are building depth in a specific area.

There isn't a single "correct" route; but there is a right starting point for you.

## Building with intention

At the end of the day, the APMP Certification Path isn't about rushing through levels. It's about building capability in a way that lasts.

Start where it makes sense. Build properly. And allow yourself to grow into each next step.

**For a closer look at the full certification pathway:**



Contributor: Ilse Sfreddo CF ES-M APMP





## nFold is Africa's only

Approved Training Organisation (ATO)  
for the Association of Proposal Management  
Professionals (APMP), and **one of 13 globally.**

# WIN MORE BIDS. GET APMP CERTIFIED.



### nFold Masterclass & APMP AI Micro-certification | April 2026

AI is everywhere right now . . .  
but let's be honest, generating  
text is not the same as writing a  
Winning Proposal.

This masterclass and micro-  
certification cuts through the  
noise and shows you how to use  
AI where it matters, across the  
full business lifecycle. From  
analysing RFPs and structuring  
responses to strengthening  
content and improving quality,  
it's all about smarter, not just  
faster!

Designed for bid, proposal, and  
business development  
professionals, and anyone  
serious about improving how  
they respond to tenders and  
win work, this programme  
blends practical application  
with certification, covering AI  
tools, prompt engineering,  
governance, and real-world use  
in live bid environments.

### APMP Foundation Certification with nFold | May 2026 Cohort

If you're serious about building  
a career in bids and proposals,  
this is where it starts (yes...  
don't skip Foundation).

The APMP Foundation  
Certification is the global  
benchmark for proposal  
excellence. It provides a solid  
grounding in best practice,  
terminology, and the full  
business development  
lifecycle.

This structured four-week  
programme combines flexible  
online learning with expert-led  
exam preparation, helping you  
move from "learning on the job"  
to understanding what good  
really looks like; AND how to  
apply it consistently.

From capture and win strategy  
to compliance, persuasive  
writing, and knowledge  
management, you'll build the  
core skills that underpin  
successful, competitive  
proposals!

### APMP Practitioner Certification with nFold | June 2026

If you've already built your  
foundation, this is where you  
step into real mastery.

The APMP Practitioner  
Certification is designed for  
experienced professionals who  
lead, influence, and contribute  
to winning bids; validating not  
just what you know, but how  
you apply it in real-world  
scenarios.

This four-month, blended  
learning journey combines  
workshops, online learning, and  
mentoring to deepen your  
capability across strategy,  
customer and competitor  
intelligence, persuasive  
proposals, and leadership in  
complex bid environments.

# UPCOMING EVENTS



**SAVE  
THE DATE**

1 OCTOBER 2026

EXPERIENCE THE THRILL.  
JOIN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE.

THE 17TH APMP SSA  
CONFERENCE 2026

<https://apmp.org.za>





# UPCOMING WEBINARS

The Win  
Performance Gap  
**Wednesday**  
22nd April 2026  
@09:00

Hopping Mad  
APMP Webinar  
**Thursday**  
28th April 2026  
@16:30

Movies,  
Popcorn, and  
CEU Points  
**Thursday**  
25th June 2026  
@16:30

The latest **Loopio 2026 RFP Trends Report** highlights a clear pattern: Organisations are responding to more bids, using better tools, and investing more effort. And yet... win rates are declining.

At the same time, RFPs influence a significant proportion of company revenue. This combination raises a fundamental question:

Why are outcomes not improving?

Following our highly successful APMP SA kick-off webinar on 05 March 2026, we're thrilled to continue the momentum with our "Hopping Mad" webinar on the way!!!!

Hopping Ahead of the Competition: Agile Bid Management for Faster Wins

**Want to be part of our brilliant minds in our community?**

Contact us to facilitate or be a speaker at this webinar.

[info@apmp.org.za](mailto:info@apmp.org.za)

Somewhere between proposals, deadlines, and meetings, your CEU points have quietly slipped into the background. It's important because keeping your APMP membership current matters but navigating the portal, understanding what counts, and actually claiming the points? That feels like a sequel no one warned you about.

Now imagine this instead...  
You press play.

You're watching APMP TV, attending an insightful webinar, maybe even learning from peers across Southern Africa.

**And suddenly, it clicks:**

No stress. No confusion. Just clarity delivered in a way that's easy, engaging, and yes... fun.





## DEADLINE DETOUR

### 1. What does APMP stand for?

- A) Association of Proposal Management Professionals
- B) Accredited Proposal Master Program
- C) Advanced Proposal Management Practice
- D) Association for Professional Management Proposals

### 2. True or False: APMP certification can help you earn CEU points through webinars and APMP TV.

### 3. Which of these is a common type of proposal document?

- A) RFP Response
- B) Business Case
- C) Statement of Work
- D) All of the above

### 4. Fun Fact: The APMP Body of Knowledge is updated periodically. What's its main purpose?

- A) To provide free templates for proposals
- B) To guide best practices in proposal management
- C) To list all certified members worldwide
- D) To give motivational quotes to proposal writers

### 5. Quick Quiz: Which day in your newsletter is all about templates to make your life easier?

- A) Meaningful Monday
- B) Winning Wednesday
- C) Tuesday Templates
- D) Fun Friday

### 6. Trivia Tidbit: The first APMP certification exam was launched in 1998. True or False?

### 7. Bonus Challenge: Name one benefit of earning an APMP certification.

Answers:

- 1.A
- 2.True
- 3.D
- 4.B
- 5.C
- 6.True
- 7.Any correct benefit: e.g., career advancement, credibility, CEU points, access to global community.

*Thank you for reading!*