



# NEWSLETTER 2026

Quarter two

Celebrating the brilliant minds behind our  
APMP community!

**Growing with confidence**



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# NOTE FROM APMP SSA DIRECTOR

From my desk as a proud director of the APMP Sub-Saharan Africa chapter for the past seven years, I am pleased to reflect on the steady progress we continue to make.

Our finances have always been managed with care, and the organisation remains in a healthy position. I have also seen the committee grow stronger each year, with the collective effort of committed members reflected in our newsletters, events, certification support and, of course, our annual conference.

It is encouraging to be part of a team that shares practical experience and a genuine passion for strengthening the proposal profession in South Africa and across the continent. I look forward to seeing our membership grow, mentorship programme take root, and closer networking with APMP members in other African countries. It would be a highlight to see members attending conference from outside SA borders this year.

The annual conference remains a highlight, always inspiring members with fresh ideas, industry trends and renewed energy. My personal tip to proposal writers is to use AI with confidence, but with care.

**Let it save time, summarise requirements and sharpen win themes, while you continue to apply your own judgement, client knowledge, compliance discipline and balance in managing deadlines, your own health and wellbeing.**

Warm regards,

*Marlize Schwar*

Director, APMP Sub-Saharan Africa

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## HOPPING AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

### Agile Bid Management for Faster Wins (28th April 2026)



Ever feel like bid deadlines turn into a frantic Easter egg hunt? You're not alone.

The big takeaway from our Hopping Mad session is that most teams don't lose bids because they don't try hard enough—they lose because they react too late. Too much content, too many cooks, and not enough clear direction can quickly tip even the best teams into chaos. Agile flips that script. It's less about fancy frameworks and more about a mindset—thinking earlier, aligning sooner, and making smarter decisions while there's still time to influence the outcome.

So what does Agile actually look like in the real world of bids?

It's about ditching the last-minute heroics and working in small, confidence-building steps.

During our breakout discussions, we explored the gap between being Agile and the reality many bid teams face day to day. Across the groups, the same challenges surfaced repeatedly: securing early stakeholder buy-in and diary commitment remains difficult, realistic planning is often constrained by limited resources and capacity, and teams frequently find themselves prioritising deadlines over bid strategy and true value creation. The conversations also highlighted some clear ways to close this gap.

#### Key takeaways:

- Start earlier — avoid last-minute bid heroics.
- Define roles and responsibilities upfront.
- Strengthen bid qualification before committing effort.
- Develop win themes earlier in the process.
- Use regular check-ins to maintain alignment and momentum.
- Agile bidding is about better outcomes, not just faster submissions.



# TENDER SUCCESS SUMMIT 2026

## Key Insights & Implications for APMP

The Tender Success Summit 2026 in Johannesburg brought together procurement leaders, SMEs, and solution providers around a shared ambition: unlocking opportunity in a rapidly evolving tendering landscape. While the programme addressed themes such as market access, finance, and digital transformation, the most important insight emerged beyond the stage—through direct engagement with the market.

## What became evident is that there is a clear gap between participation in tenders and understanding the profession that underpins success.

There is strong market interest but limited understanding of bid and proposal management as a strategic discipline. Most organisations engage in tendering activities, yet lack structured approaches to performance, including visibility of win rates, loss analysis, and ownership of bid strategy.

Bid management continues to be widely perceived as an administrative or document-driven function. In contrast, the reality is that it is a strategic business development capability that directly impacts revenue, competitiveness, and growth. The gap is not capability—it is awareness and positioning of that capability. Direct engagement at the summit confirmed that conversations, not content, drive value. When challenged on key areas such as win rates and bid performance, organisations quickly recognised gaps in their approach. This indicates that while effort is being applied, capability development is not keeping pace.

## Strategic insights

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>01</b></p>  <p><b>The profession has a branding challenge:</b></p> <p>There is limited clarity in the market on what bid management is, why it matters, and where it fits within organisations.</p> | <p><b>02</b></p>  <p><b>Organisations do not measure what matters:</b></p> <p>Many teams lack insight into bid performance and do not track win/loss metrics effectively, limiting continuous improvement.</p> |
|--|---|

**03**



**Capability is the critical differentiator:**

The market often focuses on tools, funding, and solutions, yet the real need lies in skills, structure, and best practice. Tools support bids—capability wins them. A single trained bid professional can materially improve win rates, strengthen submissions, and influence organisational outcomes.

## Opportunity for APMP

The summit reinforced that the market is curious but under-informed, while the profession remains critical yet undervalued. This creates a clear opportunity for APMP to:

- Educate the market on the role and value of bid management
- Position itself as the leading professional body and enabler of best practice
- Drive adoption of structured approaches to bidding
- Grow membership, mentorship, and community engagement

## Conclusion

Success in today's tender environment is no longer driven by effort alone. It requires structured, strategic capability. Organisations are actively participating in tenders but are not consistently equipped to maximise outcomes.

**APMP is uniquely positioned to close this gap elevating the profession and enabling organisations to win more through better bids.**

## Why this matters for APMP SSA?

The summit confirmed a clear opportunity: many organisations participate in tenders, but do not yet understand bid and proposal management as a strategic profession. APMP SSA can help close that gap through education, certification, mentorship, and community engagement.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## UPCOMING WEBINAR: USING AI WITHOUT BREAKING THE BID

AI is changing the way bid and proposal teams work but confidence must be balanced with quality, compliance, governance, and professional judgement. Join this practical discussion to explore how AI can support better bids without compromising standards.

- Where does AI add the most value?
- What are the risks?
- How do we maintain quality, compliance and customer focus?
- What role should professional judgement continue to play?

Join APMG International and an expert panel of industry practitioners for a practical discussion on how AI is being used in real bid environments today.

This session is designed for bid and proposal professionals who want to understand how to leverage AI responsibly while maintaining the standards that drive successful business development and proposal outcomes.

If AI is already part of your world, or soon will be, this is a conversation you won't want to miss.

 Zoom Live Webinar

## Using AI Without Breaking the Bid

The biggest risk isn't using AI.  
It's using it **badly**.

 CONFIDENTIAL DATA

 COMPLIANCE RISK

 **Thursday**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026**

**Time:** 11:00 AM SAST / 13:00 GST

  
**Ahmad Al-Zoubi**  
Managing Director and the Founder of Shipley MENA

  
**Izane Cloete-Hamilton**  
COO and Chief Inspiration Officer, nFold

  
**Dheshnee Naidoo**  
Win Works Executive, nFold

  
**Maryke Otto**  
Global Senior Bid Manager NTTDATA





# WEBINAR

## UPCOMING WEBINAR: MAXIMISING YOUR APMP CEUS

**Turn Participation into Progress: Maximising Your APMP CEUs – Hosted by Annelize Smit – 09 July @16:30 to 17:30**

Keeping your APMP certification current is key to staying competitive in a fast-moving work-winning environment. This webinar will walk you through why CEUs matter, how to earn them through APMP SSA events and activities, and how they support your ongoing professional development.

You'll gain clear insight into the types of activities that qualify for CEUs, typical values you can expect, and how to maximise the benefits of your membership. Whether you're attending conferences, joining webinars, or contributing to the community, every interaction can contribute to your certification.

Join us to learn how to turn everyday engagement into measurable career progression—and remain certified, relevant, and connected.

Gain insight into the types of activities that qualify for CEU points. Turn your participation into progress.

To register, follow the below links or scan the QR code on the invitation.

Click to register

**REGISTER**



### Why should you join?

- Understand how CEUs help keep your APMP certification current.
- Learn which APMP SSA activities can contribute to your professional development.
- Turn everyday participation into measurable career progress.



Gain insight into the types of activities that qualify for CEU's.

### PRO-PROPOSALS WEBINAR

Turn participation into progress

Maximising your APMP CEU's

Join us to learn how to turn everyday engagement into measurable career progression and remain certified, relevant and connected.

- MS Teams Event
- 09 July 2026
- 16h30 - 17h30
- Annelize Smit



Scan me to register



APMP SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE 2026.

# WHY JOIN THE CONFERENCE?

Experience the thrill. Join the winner's circle.

This is not just a conference about proposals. It is a front-row seat to how business is actually won – through early positioning, sharper strategy, disciplined decisions, stronger collaboration, and the confidence to pursue the right opportunities.



Learn how **winning teams** make better bid decisions.



**Connect** with proposal, bid, capture, procurement, and business development professionals.



Gain **practical insights** you can take back into your organisation.



Build **relationships** across the APMP SSA community.



Be part of the region's **flagship** proposal profession event.



01 October 2026



Sandton Campus

**JOIN US**



[www.apmp.org.za](http://www.apmp.org.za)



# WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU ON STAGE



**APMP**  
Sub-Saharan Africa

17TH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

## CALL FOR SPEAKERS

When strategy meets the stakes  
winning isn't luck.

Date: 01 October 2026  
Location: Sandton Campus

**APPLY NOW**

MORE INFORMATION  
info@apmp.org.za  
https://apmp.org.za



Do you have practical experience, lessons learned, fresh thinking, or a bold perspective on how organisations win work? Share your knowledge with the APMP SSA community at our 17th Annual Conference.

**Apply to speak** >

# HELP GROW THE PROFESSION THROUGH SPONSORSHIP



**APMP**  
Sub-Saharan Africa

17TH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

## CALL FOR SPONSORS

Winning isn't luck.  
Position your brand where  
strategic wins are made.

-  Access decision-makers
-  Gain visibility where it matters
-  Engage a high-intent professional audience

 200+ MEMBERS |  14,400+ WORLDWIDE |  14 INDUSTRIES

01 October 2026  
Sandton Campus

**SPONSOR NOW**

info@apmp.org.za  
www.apmp.org.za



Scan to become a sponsor

Sponsorship is more than brand visibility. It is an investment in professional growth, skills development, and the future of bid and proposal management across Sub-Saharan Africa. Put your brand where winning decisions are shaped.

**Become a sponsor** >





## Member Spotlight

# THE CAREER I NEVER PLANNED FOR: LESSONS FROM A YOUNG BID MANAGER

### A message to young professionals

At 26 years old, I am often asked how I became a Bid Manager so early in my career. The answer usually surprises people because it was never part of my plan.

Growing up, I wanted to be a chef and for many years that was the career path I imagined for myself. When I realised it was not the right fit, I found myself unsure of where to go next. In 2023, I joined NETid as the CEO's Personal Assistant, not knowing that the role would introduce me to a profession that would completely change my career.

Like many people outside our industry, I had never heard of bid management as a career. My first exposure came through supporting the administrative side of the bid process, but the more involved I became, the more I realised there was so much more to it. What started as helping with documentation quickly became an interest in understanding requirements, developing responses, and seeing how a well-prepared submission could create real opportunities for a business.

What drew me in most was the challenge. Rather than waiting for opportunities to come my way, I started asking questions, volunteering to help, and taking every chance to learn. Looking back, those small moments of initiative ended up shaping the direction of my career.

I was fortunate to have a leader who recognised potential in me before I recognised it in myself. Through encouragement, mentorship, and trust, I was given opportunities to take on new challenges and responsibilities that pushed me beyond my comfort zone.

Completing my APMP Foundation certification has further strengthened my understanding of the profession and reinforced the importance of continuous development. The knowledge gained through the programme provided valuable insight into industry best practices and the structured thinking required to produce competitive submissions.

If there is one lesson my journey has taught me, it is that age does not define potential. Growth happens when we step outside our comfort zones, stay curious, and have the confidence to put our hands up for opportunities that may seem intimidating at first.

As our profession continues to evolve, attracting and developing young talent will be critical to its future. There are many capable young professionals who may never consider a career in bid and proposal management simply because they do not know it exists. By creating opportunities, encouraging curiosity, and investing in development, we can introduce the next generation to a profession that is both challenging and rewarding.

Sometimes the career that changes your life is the one you never planned for.

**Sometimes the career that  
changes your life is the one you  
never planned for.**

**Author: Erin Newman (CF APMP)  
Bid Manager**





## 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 Graphics Micro-certification | 23 to 24 July 2026 | Online

Learn how to create clearer, more persuasive graphics for bids and proposals. Use visuals to simplify complex information, support key messages, and improve evaluator understanding.

### APMP Foundation Certification with nFold | Kicks off 3 August 2026 Cohort 3

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 | August 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.





# CERTIFICATION CELEBRATION

Every APMP certification represents more than a milestone; it reflects a commitment to continuous learning, professional excellence, and raising the standard of our profession across Sub-Saharan Africa.

This edition, we are delighted to celebrate the members who successfully achieved their APMP Foundation Certification in March and May, along with one member who reached the significant milestone of Practitioner Certification, Debra Zakwe.

Congratulations to each of you on your well-deserved success! Your dedication and perseverance inspire our growing community and demonstrate the value of investing in your professional development.

We look forward to seeing many more members take the next step on their APMP certification journey.

**Congratulations to the new APMP Foundation Certified delegates**

**March 2026**

- Claudia du Plessis
- Bruce de Ridder
- Yovani Mootosamy
- Suraya Sathar
- Lebogang Mabena
- Pretty Mawasha
- David Mokwana

**May 2026**

- Alicia Naicker
- Anton Schafer
- Erin-Jane Mthembo
- Riëtte Bester

Riëtte Bester



Alicia Naicker



Anton Schafer



Debra Zakwe.



APMP SSA encourages members to continue growing with confidence by investing in certification, professional development, and recognised best practice.

# GROW WITH CONFIDENCE. SIGN UP FOR THE APMP SSA MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



The APMP SSA Mentorship Programme officially launches on **1 August 2026**.



Applications are now open for both **mentors** and **mentees**.



This structured **six month** programme is designed to connect experienced professionals with members looking to develop their skills, expand their networks, and accelerate their careers in proposal and bid management.

## WHAT TO EXPECT



Six month mentorship journey



From **August 2026**



One mentor and mentee meeting each month, scheduled at a time that suits both participants



Bi monthly workshops featuring practical insights, professional development, and opportunities to learn from the wider APMP community



A supportive environment focused on knowledge sharing, career growth, and meaningful connections

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?



Participation is open exclusively to **current APMP members**.



Whether you are looking to share your experience as a mentor or gain guidance as a mentee, we encourage you to apply.

## APPLY NOW



Applications are now open. Join us as we build stronger proposal professionals and a stronger **APMP Sub-Saharan Africa** community through mentorship.



## NOT SURE YOU'RE READY TO BE A MENTOR?

Start with a conversation. Reach out to us to schedule a 30-minute informal one-on-one discussion

To register your interest or ask a question, contact: [info@apmp.org.za](mailto:info@apmp.org.za)



## Why should you join

- Build confidence in your bid and proposal career.
- Learn from experienced professionals across the APMP SSA community.
- Get guidance on career development and certification pathways.
- Expand your professional network across Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Contribute to the next generation of proposal leaders



# BUILDING AFRICA'S NEXT GENERATION OF PROPOSAL LEADERS

As we reflect on Youth Day in South Africa, we are reminded that the future of our profession depends on the people we encourage, support, and develop today. Many young professionals do not yet know that bid and proposal management exists as a career — and that creates an opportunity for all of us.

Through mentorship, certification, events, and community, APMP SSA is helping to make the profession more visible, more accessible, and more connected across the region. Whether you are new to the profession, growing your confidence, or ready to guide someone else, there is a place for you in this community.

**The future of bidding in Africa will be shaped by confident, skilled, connected professionals — and APMP SSA is here to help them grow.**

**Join the conversation. Get involved. Grow with confidence.**



# ANNOUNCEMENT

GROWING WITH CONFIDENCE

## BE THE VOICE. DRIVE THE IMPACT.

Help us grow the profession across Sub-Saharan Africa.  
Inspire. Connect. Promote. Grow.



### APMP SSA SOCIAL IMPACT APPRENTICESHIP



**6-MONTH**  
CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP  
OPPORTUNITY



**2-4 HOURS**  
PER WEEK



**CREATE**  
Engaging social  
media content



**PROMOTE**  
Events, webinars,  
certifications &  
membership



**CONNECT**  
Celebrate members  
and build community



**GROW**  
Increase awareness  
of the profession  
and APMP SSA

### WHAT YOU'LL GAIN



#### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Build your impact  
and confidence



#### MENTORSHIP & NETWORKING

Learn with industry  
peers and leaders



#### RECOGNITION & CERTIFICATE

Achievement  
that stands  
out



#### MAKE AN IMPACT

Shape the  
profession and  
your future

READY TO  
**GROW WITH US?**

Share your passion. Build your future.  
Help shape the voice of our profession.



**APPLY NOW!**

Send your expression of interest to  
[info@apmp.org.za](mailto:info@apmp.org.za)

Subject: Application: APMP SSA Social  
Impact Apprenticeship



INSPIRE OTHERS.  
SHARE KNOWLEDGE.



GROW AWARENESS.  
GROW OUR PROFESSION.



GROWING WITH CONFIDENCE  
TOGETHER, WE WIN.



# An African Bid Story

## A tale of resilience

The bid still haunts me like a vuvuzela at midnight or a hadeda in the middle of an important teams meeting: a South African municipal water infrastructure tender released during peak load shedding, just to keep things interesting.

Every submission requirement was clear and sensible until page 147, where they calmly requested “the original, notarised, wet-ink, black-pen signed copy”—despite lingering COVID hangover restrictions and a very committed Stage 6 power schedule.

I spent three days chasing a director who was stranded on the N1 near Polokwane (roadworks, obviously – or was it a pothole?), a commissioner of oaths who closed at 3pm sharp and didn’t “do Fridays,” and a printer that would only awaken during brief moments of Eskom-approved electricity.

By the time the documents were signed, stamped, scanned, rescanned, compressed, renamed exactly as “Appendix F (FINAL\_FINAL\_v7),” and uploaded, the deadline had mysteriously moved forward an hour due to a “system enhancement” (system offline?)

On submission day, the portal froze at 99%. Naturally. I refreshed like it was Black Friday, cleared my cache, changed browsers, changed devices, and briefly questioned my career choices.

I sacrificed a cheese scone to the bid gods, whispered encouraging words to the progress bar, and finally received the confirmation email—three minutes late, but miraculously accepted. We didn’t win (thanks to a “minor administrative deviation,” which remains unexplained to this day), but we did secure a permanent place in bid manager folklore.

The lesson? In Africa, resilience isn’t a buzzword—it’s knowing which café has a generator, which cousin knows a notary, and that “final” is never, ever final.

**Author: Amber Hartnady**



*Thank you for reading!*

Stay in the loop! Update your contact details on the APMP portal so we can keep you connected!

[www.apmp.org.za](http://www.apmp.org.za)