



FAI NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 11 FALL 2016 | FAI QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

From the Acting Director



Jeff Birch,
Acting Director, FAI

Happy New Year! As we transition into FY17, we are also preparing for the Presidential Transition – it’s a busy time for all.

As members of the Federal acquisition workforce, you play a key role in achieving your agency’s mission, especially during times of change. Having the right skill sets, level of proficiency, and business acumen are vital to successfully managing procurements, contracts, and programs.

While operating in a constrained budget environment may pose unique challenges, collaborating across agencies and functional areas provides opportunities for more innovative and efficient strategies to deliver better acquisition outcomes and values for American taxpayers.

The FAI team plays a critical and unique role in developing and maturing acquisition readiness. We serve as a conduit between acquisition policy makers, workforce managers, and other professionals involved in acquisition workforce development. As an integrating force, we will optimize opportunities to promote collaboration and innovation across the enterprise, ensuring that investments made in developing a high-performing and qualified

acquisition workforce lead to a more effective and efficient government. Over the next several years, we will work towards achieving our three strategic goals.

Across government, in both defense and civilian agencies, we share many of the same acquisition workforce challenges, including our ability to attract, develop, and retain the necessary talent pool. By working collaboratively and operating as a single government, we are

better prepared to conquer our resource challenges to successfully accomplish our complex missions. Through maximizing resources, crossing agency boundaries, and encouraging innovation, we will increase efficiencies and synergies across government. An excellent example is Acquisition Open Opportunities (article on page 2). I encourage you to expand your network, thought process, and operating practices to build a leaner and stronger government.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sign Up for the Acquisition Open Opportunities Today!

FAI is piloting Acquisition Open Opportunities, which will provide experiential learning opportunities to the 1102 community. FAI would like to thank the team that initiated this pilot and tirelessly dedicated much of their time to spread the word!

As a reminder, Acquisition Open Opportunities utilizes the existing Open Opportunities platform to “advertise” acquisition-related tasks and projects to participants seeking career development opportunities without having to leave their agencies. It provides Federal acquisition workforce members the chance to enhance their depth and breadth of experience that is not available or cannot be obtained in their current work roles or at their home agencies.

The program is a win-win for all participants. The task and project work offers hands-on, experiential training and skill-sharing opportunities to participants while concurrently helping transfer and share knowledge and best practices among agencies.

Sign up on the [Open Opportunities home page](#) to post opportunities, serve as a host organization, browse opportunities from other hosts, and participate in interesting career development opportunities!

Have a question about Acquisition Open Opportunities?

- For technical support contact Lisa Nelson (lisa.nelson@gsa.gov).
- To discuss a potential opportunity contact Anne Reinhold (anne.reinhold@gsa.gov).

THANK YOU!

Acquisition Open Opportunity Team Members

- Ali Pourghassemi, HHS
- James Morris, NSF
- Lisa Nelson, GSA
- Rob Robinson, NRC
- Stacy Greber, VA

Have You Taken the Price Analysis Challenge Yet?

You may have seen the advertisement in the [Summer 2016 FAI Newsletter](#) featuring FAI’s launch of the first Acquisition Challenge on Price Analysis. So, what exactly is an Acquisition Challenge? Simply put, an Acquisition Challenge is a learning tool used to make online learning and development more accessible (available for mobile devices) and engaging (earn points by answering questions correctly) for acquisition professionals.

The new Price Analysis Acquisition Challenge is available for mobile devices using either [Apple iOS](#) or [Google Android](#). Download the app, register with your name and email address, and then challenge your knowledge of price analysis principles through a series of thought-provoking scenarios and questions. Each scenario will offer new information and then pose questions on how a price analysis would be performed. The sooner you answer the questions correctly, the more points you earn—and the quicker you earn your completion certificate. Email yourself the certificate and use it to secure one continuous learning point (CLP).

Download the Acquisition Challenge: Price Analysis app today from [Apple iTunes](#) (for Apple devices) or [Google Play](#) (for Android devices)!

Are you up to the (Price Analysis) Challenge?!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community of Practice (CoP) for Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) Is Now Available!

As a COR, there's a good chance you often find yourself thinking, "I wish there was a forum specifically designed for CORs where I could connect with other CORs from across government to share knowledge, learn best practices, discuss hot topics, talk about challenges I'm facing, and exchange resources and tools." If this sounds familiar, then wish no more! Thanks to the Federal Project Management Community of Practice (FedPM CoP) Acquisition Working Group, CORs now have a COR-focused CoP where they can collaborate with other CORs government wide!

The FedPM CoP Acquisition Working Group has established the CoP for CORs as an extension of the FedPM Acquisition-focused forum. The COR CoP will focus on specific challenges of CORs and will encourage first-hand knowledge sharing from those in the field. Members will learn best practices, share resources, and loop others in on events of interest.

The FedPM CoP is the central source for sharing project management expertise across the entire Federal government. The forum provides a peer-to-peer networking environment where members can exchange best practices and lessons learned, engage in mentoring partnerships, leverage training resources, and develop their careers. The FedPM CoP focuses on five major areas of expertise, as shown in the figure to the right, with a Working Group taking the lead in each area.

The [COR CoP on the Fed PM CoP website](#) is hosted on the OMB MAX platform. If you do not have an OMB MAX account, you can create one by completing the [OMB MAX Registration Form](#) or contact the COR CoP Coordinator Leah Ballard at leah.ballard@ee.doe.gov or 202-586-1934.

Create an OMB MAX account now, and join the COR CoP today! Don't miss this exciting opportunity to connect, network, and collaborate with colleagues from across the COR community!

Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Community of Practice (CoP)



To sign up or learn more about the COR CoP, visit the [COR CoP on the FedPM CoP website](#) or contact the COR CoP Coordinator Leah Ballard (leah.ballard@ee.doe.gov or 202-586-1934).

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

FAI Offers FREE Training to the Entire Acquisition Workforce!

Believe it or not, there are good things that come FREE these days—and Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) training for the entire acquisition workforce is one of them! That’s right, FAI offers a number of FREE training classes and modules through registration in [FAITAS](#) to support the continuous learning point (CLP) requirements for Contracting Officers (FAC-C), Contracting Officer’s Representatives (FAC-COR), and Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM).

Keep reading to learn more about these free-of-charge training opportunities and other important training updates for FAC-C, FAC-COR, and FAC-P/PM!

FAC-C Training

The table below shows several upcoming FAC-C courses that still have seats available. Be sure to register in FAITAS today to secure your seat and to take advantage of these FREE offerings!

Upcoming (FREE!) FAC-C Training						
Course	Title	Offer #	Location	Last Day to Register	Start Date	End Date
CON 170 (FED)	Fundamentals of Cost and Price Analysis	17A	Atlanta, GA	10/07/2016	10/17/2016	10/28/2016
FCN 190	FAR Fundamentals	17A	Atlanta, GA	01/13/2017	01/23/2017	02/03/2017
CON 270 (FED)	Intermediate Cost and Price Analysis	17B	Washington, DC	11/25/2016	12/05/2016	12/16/2016
CON 280 (FED)	Source Selection and Admin. Of Service Contracts	17B	Denver, CO	10/14/2016	10/24/2016	11/04/2016
CON 360 (FED)	Contracting for Decision Makers	17B	Alpharetta, GA	01/13/2017	01/23/2017	02/03/2017
FQN 406	Contract Negotiation Strategies and Techniques	17A	Denver, CO	11/05/2016	11/14/2016	11/18/2016
FQN 413	Performance-Based Acquisition	17A	Washington, DC	11/06/2016	11/15/2016	11/17/2016
FQN 413	Performance-Based Acquisition	17B	Washington, DC	01/01/2017	01/10/2017	01/12/2017
FQN 445	Source Selection	17A	Washington, DC	11/26/2016	12/05/2016	12/09/2016

FAC-COR Training

Four More for COR: FCR 201 Offerings Added to FY17 Schedule!

FAI is pleased to announce that four more FREE offerings of the FAC-COR level II training, FCR 201, have been added to the FAC-COR FY17 training schedule! Two offerings will be classroom-based and held in the Washington, DC, area, while the other two will be virtual instructor-led trainings (vILT).

As a reminder, key benefits of vILT classes are:

1. Students avoid travel, hotel, and per diem costs that might otherwise be incurred by their agencies;
2. Trainings provide greater networking opportunities with fellow Federal employees from (potentially) around the world; and
3. Students can maintain their workloads during training.

Check out [FAI.gov](#) for [more information about the additional FY17 FCR 201 offerings](#), including the class start and end dates, registration deadlines, instructions for registering through FAITAS, and the vILT class schedule and syllabus.

Targeted Continuous Learning Opportunities for CORs

In partnership with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), FAI administers the Acquisition Workforce Competency Survey (AWCS), open to all civilian acquisition workforce members and their supervisors. One of the primary objectives of the AWCS is to identify priority training needs of the workforce. Through analysis of the FY16 FAC-COR AWCS responses, FAI identified critical training needs among the COR acquisition workforce related to four of the COR competencies. While a snapshot of the FAC-COR responses showed a slight decline across most of the COR competencies, a larger decline was noticed in the areas of Defining Government Requirements, Acquisition Planning, Pre-award Communications, and Contract Negotiations.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

FAI Offers FREE Training to the Entire Acquisition Workforce! (Cont'd)

In response, FAI has identified a number of FREE recommended FAC-COR continuous learning opportunities, including a variety of classes, CLP modules, and other aids and resources for CORs to obtain additional training in support of these key competencies.

Take a look through the [FAC-COR Continuous Learning Opportunities](#) that FAI has compiled to pinpoint the FREE training and resources that are most applicable and relevant to support your needs!

FAC-P/PM Training

FY17 FAC-P/PM Training Schedule Is Now Available!

The FAI P/PM training delivery contract for FY17 has been awarded, and the FREE classes are now available for registration through FAITAS. The FY17 FAC-P/PM classes include:

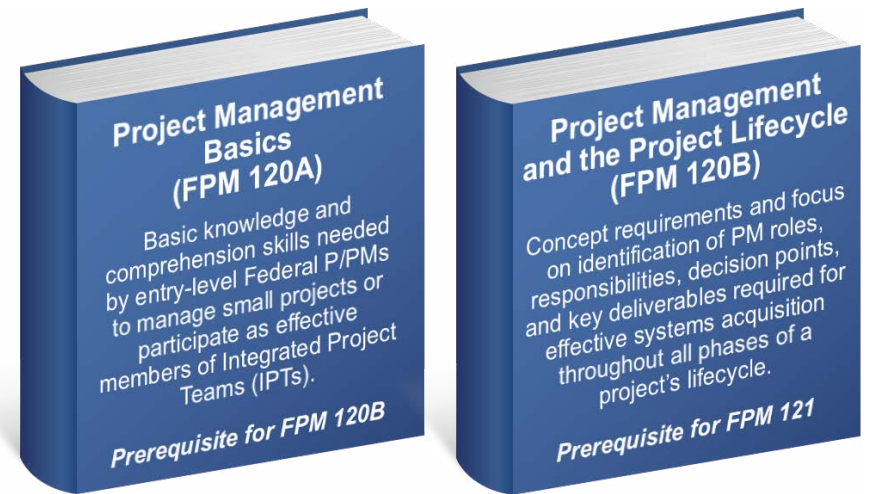
- FPM 121, the FAC-P/PM entry-level training that follows FPM 120 (see below for more information about FPM 120A and 120B);
- The full series of training for FAC-P/PM mid and senior levels; and
- New offerings for the IT PM Core Plus Specialization curriculum.

Check out FAI.gov for the [full FY17 FAC-P/PM training schedule](#), and be sure to register in FAITAS today before seats are all taken!

FPM 120A and 120B Courses Launch on October 1, 2016

FPM 120A and 120B classes are now complete and, effective October 1, 2016, FPM 120 will be retired and the new FPM 120A and 120B courses will take its place. As a reminder, the FPM 120 entry-level class (42-hour/90-day course) has been split into two separate courses, FPM 120A and 120B, giving students 60 days to complete each class. Both courses prepare entry-level project managers by offering the fundamental knowledge, skills, and understanding that is required to fulfill their responsibilities as program and project managers.

Registration for FPM 120A and FPM 120B will be available through FAITAS beginning on October 1, 2016.



P/PM Modular Training Approach Is On the Way...

FAI is working with OFPP and the P/PM Functional Advisory Board (FAB) to simplify P/PM training requirements by offering an optional path for students to complete their P/PM training courses. This not only reduces confusion for students when mapping out their training plans, but it will also establish the standard for P/PM training providers to design their courses and to ensure alignment with the P/PM competency model.

The modular P/PM training approach will not be fully implemented until the end of FY17 since it will take most of FY17 for training providers to transition their course materials to align to the modular strategy. However, in the meantime, here's a [sneak peak of the FAC-P/PM modular training requirements](#) that will be coming in the near future.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Seminars! Get Your Seminars (as Continuous Learning Modules)!

FAI has improved the process for registering in FAITAS to earn continuous learning points (CLPs) for watching previously recorded Acquisition Seminars. We are pleased to announce that all the Acquisition Seminars listed in the table below have been released as “for credit” continuous learning (CL) modules in FAITAS!

Follow the instructions on the right to view seminar descriptions, obtain details for earning CLPs, and register for any of the CL modules! Please note that the course IDs for the CL modules are denoted with a “(CL)” to distinguish them from the live events.

Check out the modules in [FAITAS](#) today, and be sure to catch-up on any previously recorded Acquisition Seminar that you may have missed!

Course Number	Course Name
FCL-A-0021 (CL)	To Bid or Not to Bid: Industry Perspective
FCL-A-0022 (CL)	FSSI OS3: Office Supplies Solution
FCL-A-0023 (CL)	EEO Responsibilities in Procurement
FCL-A-0024 (CL)	Agile Acquisitions 101: Means Behind the Magic
FCL-A-0025 (CL)	AbilityOne
FCL-A-0026 (CL)	Lifting the Curtain: Debriefings
FCL-A-0027 (CL)	Can We Talk: Industry Day Conferences
FCL-A-0028 (CL)	Using GSA Multiple Award Schedules Program
FCL-A-0029 (CL)	Ten Tangible Techniques to Trim Time
FCL-A-0030 (CL)	Suspension & Debarment
FCL-A-0031 (CL)	Category Management & Acquisition Gateway
FCL-A-0032 (CL)	Lifting the Curtain: Past Performance

Acquisition Seminar CL Modules

Instructions for Registering for Acquisition Seminar CL Modules in FAITAS

Go to Manage Career → Training → Search for Training

My Status | **Manage Career** | Manage Workforce | Help | Logout

Training | Search For Training

Career Path Management | Course Catalog

Certification | My Training Requests

Select Order by Course Number below Continuous Learning Modules

Standard Search

Select a course, then select 'Submit'

Resident and Distance Learning Offerings (e.g., CON 127, CON 270 (FED), FCN 101, FCN 400, FCR 201, FCL-A-0030, etc.)

Order by Course Title | Order by Course Number

Continuous Learning Modules (e.g., CLC 056, FAC 018, HBS 428, etc.)

Order by Course Title | **Order by Course Number**

Use the Select Course drop-down to locate the FCL-A-00XX (CL) modules*

Continuous Learning Modules (e.g., CLC 056, FAC 018, HBS 428, etc.)

Order by Course Title | Order by Course Number

Select Course: FCL-A-0031 (CL) - CATEGORY MANAGEMENT & ACQUISITION GATEWAY

FCL-A-0029 (CL) - TEN TANGIBLE TECHNIQUES TO TRIM TIME

FCL-A-0030 (CL) - SUSPENSION & DEBARMENT

FCL-A-0031 (CL) - CATEGORY MANAGEMENT & ACQUISITION GATEWAY

*** Select the desired module and click 'Submit' to review the FAITAS Learning Management System (LMS) Tech Requirements. Upon review of the Tech Requirements and the Training Request, select 'Submit Request'.**

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Coming Soon – FREE Training on New Acquisition Legislation!

Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces

President Obama signed the [Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive Order 13673](#) on July 31, 2014, that requires prospective Federal contractors to disclose labor law decisions and gives agencies guidance on how to consider labor decisions when awarding Federal contracts. The Executive Order is designed to improve contractor compliance with labor laws and increase efficiency and cost savings in Federal contracting. To implement the Executive Order, the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council (FAR Council) created and issued the final [FAR Rule](#) (FAR Subpart 22.20) and [Guidance](#) on August 25, 2016. The regulation is comprised of three main requirement areas, as shown in the figure to the right, and will be effective on October 25, 2016, with a scheduled phase-in period.

Earlier this year, FAI released a short, introductory video, entitled “[Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive Order: An Introduction](#),” to explain the Executive Order’s goals and requirements, including the respective roles and responsibilities of government and industry. Now that the final FAR Rule has been issued, FAI is developing two new, in-depth modules as follow-on training to provide critical and more detailed information and guidance about this important FAR Rule.

The first module will address the importance and objectives of the Executive Order; the new FAR-based requirements, their sequence, and how they fit in the procurement process; and the roles and responsibilities of key members involved throughout the acquisition process. The second module will address requisite steps for Federal contractors.

The new trainings will be available by mid-October—so stay tuned for more information and keep checking back on [FAI.gov](#)!

Compliance with Labor Laws

Improve contractor compliance with labor laws

- Federal contractors and subcontractors must disclose labor law decisions and violations of certain labor laws
- Contracting Officers (COs), when making their responsibility determination, consider the advice provided by the Agency Labor Compliance Advisors (ALCAs)

Paycheck Transparency

Ensure contractors receive detailed information about their earnings

- Contractors and subcontractors with contracts of \$500,000 or more are required to provide their workers with wage statements, or pay stubs, that contain the number of hours worked in the pay period; number of overtime hours; rate of pay; gross pay; and itemized additions and deductions

Arbitration of Employee Claims

Limit pre-dispute arbitration clauses used in employment agreements on Federal contracts

- Contractors on contracts of \$1M or more are prohibited from requiring employees to enter into pre-dispute arbitration agreements, except where valid contracts already exist and remain unmodified
- Subcontracts for the acquisition of commercial items are exempt from this requirement

Main Areas of Requirements from FAR Subpart 22.20

Uniform Use of Line Items

FAI also encourages you to be on the lookout for a new training course coming in the near future addressing another FAR requirement, FAR Case 2013-014, “Uniform Use of Line Items.” This FAR regulation is nearing finalization and is designed to improve accuracy, traceability, and use of acquisition data. FAI’s training course for this regulation will guide you through the new civilian requirement for establishing and using a standardized line item numbering structure. You are sure to find the training packed full of practical applications and hands-on exercises. Check back periodically on [FAI.gov](#) to learn when this important learning opportunity will be available!

FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS

Earn FAC-P/PM Credit for Your Project Management Institute (PMI) Credentials!

FAI Announces New Reciprocity Agreement with PMI

FAI, in collaboration with the Program and Project Management Functional Advisory Board (P/PM FAB), is excited to announce that an official Letter of Understanding (LOU) has been established with PMI to award P/PMs the credit they deserve for earning certain PMI credentials! The LOU outlines training equivalency and continuous learning (CL) credit that can be awarded to P/PMs that hold a PMI Certified Associate in Program Management (CAPM) and/or Project Management Professional (PMP) certification.

FAI and the P/PM FAB agreed upon the training equivalency and CL credit after thoroughly reviewing and aligning PMI courseware requirements for the CAPM and PMP certifications with the FAC-P/PM competencies established in the [FAC-P/PM Core Competency Model](#) as well as the certification training standards addressed in the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) memorandum "[Revisions to the Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers \(FAC-P/PM\) Memorandum](#)," dated December 16, 2013.

The table below summarizes the competency alignment, training equivalency, and one-time CL credit that can be earned for the PMI credentials, as authorized by your agency's Acquisition Career Manager (ACM).

Thinking About Getting or Renewing a CAPM or PMP? Then Keep Reading!

Individuals pursuing or renewing PMI credentials who have completed training toward the FAC-P/PM certification or have attained the FAC-P/PM certification may submit evidence to PMI of such training or certification, subject to PMI review, toward meeting the education requirements of the initial or recertification of the applicable PMI credential.

Check out the official [Letter of Understanding between FAI and PMI](#) for all the details and to ensure you are taking advantage of this opportunity!

FAI is excited about the renewal of this partnership with PMI to better serve the Federal acquisition workforce.

Training Equivalency and CL Credit for PMI Credentials

PMI Credential	FAC-P/PM Entry-Level		FAC-P/PM Mid-Level		FAC-P/PM Senior-Level		Continuous Learning (CL)
CAPM	N/A		N/A		N/A		24 hours; one time FAITAS entry*
PMP	Meets all Business, Cost and Financial Management training requirements	or	Meets all Business, Cost and Financial Management training requirements	or	Meets all Business, Cost and Financial Management training requirements	or	40 hours; one time FAITAS entry*

*ACM may award additional CL credit for classes taken over the minimum PMI requirement.

FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS

Program Management Improvement Accountability Act (PMIAA): What You Need to Know

The “Nuts and Bolts” of PMIAA

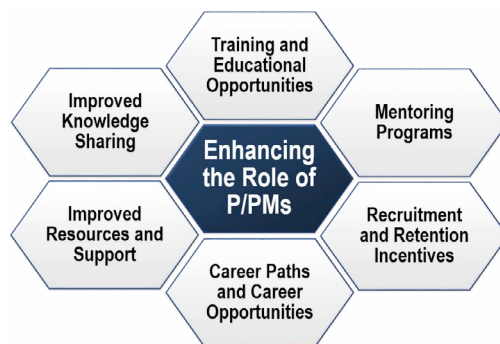
In short, the [Program Management Improvement Accountability Act \(PMIAA\)](#) is a bill that, if passed, would require agencies to implement certain program management standards, best practices, and oversight and accountability measures to better support program and project management positions government wide.

Impact on the Program and Project Management (P/PM) Workforce

If PMIAA passes, there are a number of requirements that agencies and Federal oversight bodies would need to adhere to, as shown in the figure to the right. Of these requirements, the P/PM workforce would likely see the most impact from the following mandates:

Office of Personnel Management (OPM) must identify key skills and competencies for a P/PM and establish a new job series and career path for P/PMs.

Agencies must select a Program Management Improvement Officer to develop and implement strategies for enhancing the role of P/PMs.



Key Areas for Enhancing the P/PM Role

Status of PMIAA

PMIAA was passed unanimously by the Senate at the end of 2015. Recently, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform reviewed the bill,

made a technical amendment, approved the amended version, and sent it on to the full House of Representatives for consideration. The amended version was passed by the House on September 22, 2016. However, since the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee added a technical amendment, the updated bill will need to go back to the Senate for a final vote before it can be cleared for the White House. The updated version has steadily been gaining sponsors the last few months so the odds of it passing this year do seem to be improving!

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Program Management Policy Council	Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Program Management Policy Council as the principal interagency forum for improving agency practices related to program and project management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and assist OMB Review programs identified as high risk by the GAO Discuss topics of importance to the workforce Advise on the development and applicability of government-wide standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key skills and competencies needed for a P/PM Establish a new job series for P/PMs Establish a new career path for P/PMs
Head of Agency	Program Management Improvement Officer	Government Accountability Office (GAO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify senior executive as Program Management Improvement Officer, reporting to head of agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement agency program management policies Develop written strategy for enhancing the role of program managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on the bill’s overall effectiveness and impact on program management across the Federal government after three years

PMIAA Stakeholder Requirements

FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS

IT Program Management Improvement Initiative: Integrated Project Teams (IPTs) Making Progress!

Since the December 2015 kickoff of the Information Technology (IT) Program Management (PM) Improvement Initiative, six IPTs have been busy working on objectives to help agencies better leverage the Federal Acquisition Certification for IT Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM-IT) as well as to comply with the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) and the Services Acquisition Reform Act (SARA). For more information about the 2015 Summit and IPT initiatives, please see the [Spring 2016 FAI Newsletter](#). Here's what each IPT has been up to over the last several months:

IPT #1 is working to **increase awareness and access to learning assets** across all Federal agencies and has drafted a data call for existing training classes to distribute to agencies' acquisition leaders in the new fiscal year.

IPT #2 is establishing a more **integrated P/PM Talent Management Framework** that ensures agencies have the right people, in the right positions, at the right times. The IPT has drafted a preliminary Talent Management Framework that is tailored to the IT PM talent management lifecycle and modeled after the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF).

IPT #3 is working to **increase the number of professionals holding the FAC-P/PM-IT certification** by: 1) making it more valuable to all stakeholders, and 2) better communicating the value of holding the certification. The IPT has drafted a Communications Plan to promote the FAC-P/PM-IT certification and convey the importance of improving program management.

IPT #4 is working to obtain consensus on an **updated set of government-wide competency standards** for the FAC-P/PM-IT, which include: 1) streamlining the original 33 P/PM-IT competencies down to 16 (see the [Summer 2016 FAI Newsletter](#) for more on the "Sweet 16"), and 2) defining alternative paths for obtaining the IT-P/PM Specialization. The table on the right side of this page describes each of the changes to the accreditation requirements and process.

Changes in the Accreditation for the IT P/PM Specialization		
Topic	Current	Proposed
Number of Competencies	33 Competencies: 18 General Core-Plus Competencies and 15 IT Specific Core-Plus Competencies	16 IT Core-Plus Competencies
Competency Fulfillment	"satisfy through training, education, or other relevant certification programs or demonstration and documentation through fulfillment of knowledge, skills, and abilities" [16 Dec 13 Memo]	
Experience Fulfillment	At least two years of program or project management supporting IT projects and programs	
Experience-Based Alternative	None	(1) At least four (4) years in the last ten (10) of P/PM experience ideally covering more than one phase of the program life cycle of a major IT investment as defined by OMB Circular A-11, and; (2) A minimum of 20 hours of IT continuous learning
CIO Involvement	None	Confirmation of an applicant having met the minimum requirements for all IT Core-Plus competencies by a CIO-designated official(s) prior to final approval by the Agency's P/PM certifying official

IPT #5 is working to define a strategy for **diversifying and enriching the spectrum of professional development options** available to the workforce by leveraging new technologies and defining a central training repository. The IPT is currently collecting and reviewing tools, resources, and materials from across the government to support these objectives.

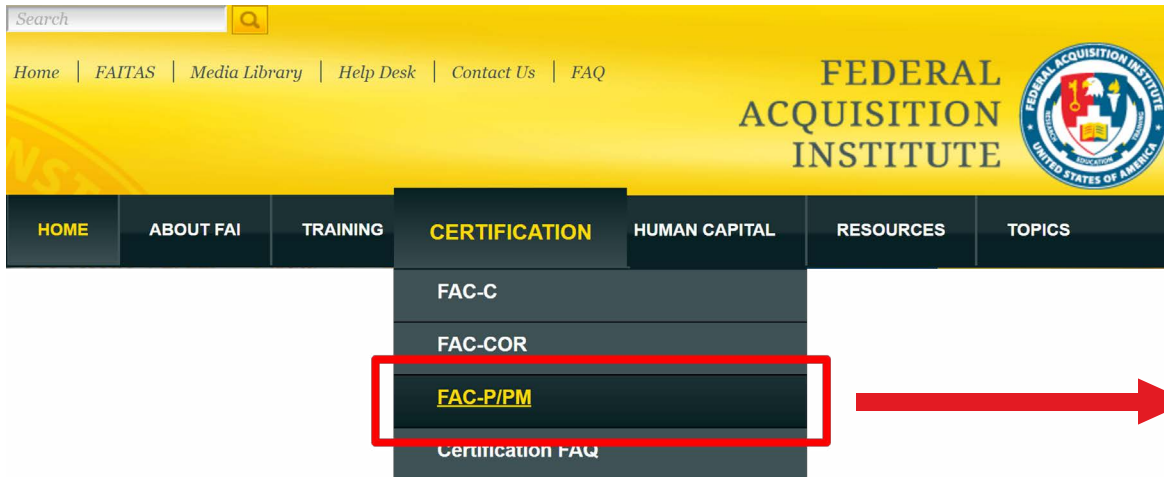
IPT #6 is working to establish a **Master IT P/PM Designation** that focuses on qualifications versus certification. The team has drafted an outline for a white-paper that describes the need to build an "Elite Force" of IT P/PMs managing mission-critical and highly-visible projects and programs.

TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

FAI.gov Program and Project Managers Certification (FAC-P/PM) Web Page Gets a Face Lift

Check Out the New FAI.gov FAC-P/PM Web Page!

FAI is excited to announce that the [Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers \(FAC-P/PM\) Web page](#) has recently been reformatted to offer a more user-friendly experience and to serve as a better “one-stop shop” for all FAC-P/PM-related information and resources! The new Web page features important guidance, legislation, and memorandums for the FAC-P/PM and FAC-P/PM IT Core-Plus Specialization certifications; up-to-date FAC-P/PM training requirements, prerequisites, and course schedules; a variety of useful templates, tools, and resources for acquisition professionals performing program and project management activities and functions; and much, much more!



Check out the [new FAC-P/PM Web page](#) today, and start taking advantage of all of its valuable FAC-P/PM certification information and resources now!



ACM IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Getting to Know Yolande Harden, Acquisition Career Manager, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)



Yolande Harden, ACM,
NASA

1. How long have you worked at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)?

I began my NASA career in 1991 at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX. I moved to the NASA Headquarters in Washington, DC, in 2001.

2. Where were you before coming to NASA?

I was with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Houston, TX, for approximately four years before moving to NASA. Prior to that I was with private industry.

3. Tell us about the biggest successes achieved by your team.

We have a couple of successes that I would like to highlight. Our team worked hard to implement the refreshed FAC-C curriculum as early as possible. The new curriculum contained courses that we immediately wanted to integrate into our training and development program, particularly the advanced pricing course. We have a lot of complex contract actions both in the competitive and sole source environments. It is critical for our workforce to become more proficient in cost and price analysis techniques. In fact, the advanced cost and pricing course is required to achieve FAC-C Level III at NASA.

Another success for the team is the establishment of a strong working relationship with the Office of the Chief Engineer, which is primarily responsible for program and project management at NASA. The vast majority of NASA's programs and projects are related to space flight. The relationship was established initially to identify programs and projects that were within the parameters of the original FAC-P/PM memorandum. We developed a FAC-P/PM implementation plan that blended with the pre-established development model

for agency program and project management and systems engineering. We engaged senior agency leadership to obtain 'buy in' for the plan and worked diligently to ensure that the NASA competencies and the FAC-P/PM competencies were consistent. That relationship has strengthened over the years. I worked on a rotational assignment within the Office of the Chief Engineer, supporting the Academy of Program and Project Engineering Leadership (APPEL) to gain more insight into the program and project development framework and share information regarding FAC-P/PM and procurement processes. We have worked together to implement more acquisition related courses into the APPEL curriculum through the Acquisition Series. Procurement personnel have reviewed planned course material to ensure that it is consistent with NASA procurement processes and procedures. The Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer resides within the Office of the Chief Engineer, and our team is represented and thoroughly involved with knowledge sharing activities and efforts. Bringing the technical and procurement communities together helps to ensure that key stakeholders have a better understanding of roles and responsibilities within the acquisition process.

4. What are some of the biggest challenges in your position?

One of the challenges that we face at NASA is taking advantage of some of the FAI and Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) sponsored programs that seek to grow and develop future leaders since many of those programs limit participation to those in the DC area. This is a challenge for NASA because we have stellar candidates throughout the entire NASA 1102 workforce, which is disbursed throughout the country at our ten centers. The manner in which many of these programs and opportunities are designed is not conducive for individuals who do not work/reside in the DC area.

Another challenge that we face is managing the expectations of the newer entrants into the 1102 field in terms of advancement and level of experience.

ACM IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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Many of our junior 1102s do not realize or appreciate the fact that obtaining proficiency within the field of procurement occurs over time and with experience. We struggle to emphasize that completing courses alone is not sufficient to achieve advancement. Additionally, since we have fewer resources and more demanding workloads at our centers, managers are forced to assign more complex and demanding workloads to individuals who are not always prepared. We are constantly attempting to balance experience, workload, and training to ensure that the 1102 workforce has access to the resources needed to be successful, competent, and proficient contract specialists and contracting officers. Our team works to ensure that individuals complete certification requirements within time frames consistent with appropriate levels of experience and do not rush through the training curriculum just to complete the courses and receive a certificate.

5. What motivates you to put your best foot forward on a daily basis?

Making sure that the NASA acquisition community has access to the tools and resources necessary to successfully support the agency's mission is the basis of my motivation. We do some exciting and cutting edge things at the agency, and the acquisition community plays a key role in the success of those efforts.

6. What skills do you think are most critical to successfully perform your job?

An ACM must have a solid foundation and background in the acquisition process. Experience as a procurement professional, particularly as a contracting officer, is extremely helpful because it provides an understanding of not only the procurement process but the entire acquisition process. The ability to engage key stakeholders in the acquisition process to ensure that all areas are sufficiently addressed is also important. For example, at NASA, I work very closely with my counterparts in the Office of the Chief Engineer and the Office of the Chief Information Officer to ensure that program and project management issues are addressed in a manner that fits with the agency's mission.

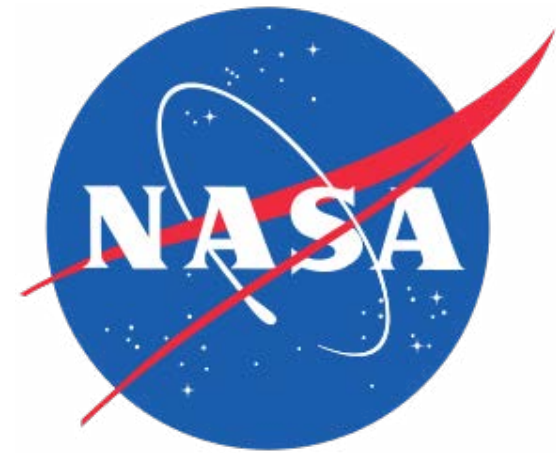
Another key ingredient to successful performance is having a good team. At NASA, our team is very small. We have an ACM, a functional lead for procurement, a functional lead for Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs), and a Chief Knowledge Officer for the Office of Procurement. The four of us work very closely together, along with representatives from the NASA centers, Office of the Chief Engineer, Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer, and Office of the Chief Information Officer to provide an agency-wide model that meets the OFPP requirements within a framework that allows us to best support the agency's mission.

7. What could the FAI team do to move the Federal acquisition workforce forward?

More emphasis could be placed on providing training opportunities that enhance the skillsets of members of the acquisition community who have achieved all of the mandatory certifications. This type of training could focus on targeted areas, problem solving, or case studies and could be conducted either in the traditional classroom or interactive online formats.

8. What words of wisdom would you offer to your fellow Acquisition Career Managers?

The focus should always be on competency and proficiency levels rather than a specific number of classes when considering the optimum way to meet requirements. People learn in a variety of ways so we should not limit the way in which



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we provide opportunities to grow and develop. Classroom training is just one of many tools that we should consider when making decisions regarding how the acquisition workforce should meet Federal and agency requirements for certification. In the end, a course completion certificate or a FAC certificate will not help an individual negotiate or administer a contract, manage a project, or be a better COR. It is the access to a full range of opportunities, including courses, on-the-job experience, rotational assignments, teaming opportunities, workshops, problem-solving, and case-study sessions that will increase proficiencies and allow the acquisition professional to better support the agency mission.

9. What is a goal you have for your acquisition workforce?

My common theme is increasing proficiency and maintaining skills currency to support the mission. A proficient contracting officer can support the mission by being able to engage with and work with technical organizations to develop requirements and negotiate contracts that are in the best interests of the government. A proficient COR understands not only the technical aspects of contract performance but also understands the necessity to engage the procurement and resources community to ensure that contractor performance is measured and monitored appropriately. A proficient program and project manager understands the components of the life cycle and engages key stakeholders to ensure program, project, and, ultimately, mission success.

10. What is something about yourself that others might not know?

I have completed five marathons, several half marathons, and other middle distance races. I'm a middle of the pack 'age group' runner who enjoys the rush of crossing the finish line at a major event. When I first moved to the area, I was an assistant coach with the DC Fit marathon training program. I haven't done much racing in recent years and my pace has slowed considerably, but I still enjoy running, particularly in cooler weather. There are so many great places to run in the DC area, one of my favorite is along the Mall.



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