



THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION

# APM Systems Thinking Specific Interest Group (SIG)

SIG report 2021-22



APM at 50:  
Better projects for  
a better future

# APM SIGs – Get involved



The APM SIGs have an important role to play within APM in creating and disseminating new knowledge.

- Input to creating and disseminating new knowledge
- Create knowledge sharing opportunities on current interests of the profession – CPD!
- Further the understanding and practice of tools and techniques
- Inspire future project managers
- Give back to the project management profession
- Learn new skills
- Many more reasons!

Visit the SIG microsite website page to find out more  
[apm.org.uk/systems-thinking-sig](http://apm.org.uk/systems-thinking-sig)

# APM Systems Thinking SIG - 2022 to the future



Projects fail if the problem isn't understood fully, or the solution can't fix it. Systems Thinking recognises that the world is made up of interconnected, hierarchically organised, technical, social and natural entities; which often produce behaviours that cannot be predicted by analysing the behaviours of their parts or their sum, individually and separately. As major projects continue to hit the headlines with stories of delays and cost overruns, systems thinking is being seen more and more often as part of the answer.

'Systems Thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes rather than parts, for seeing patterns of change rather than static snapshots, and for understanding the subtle inter-connectedness that gives (living) systems their unique character'. Peter Senge in "The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization"

The APM Systems Thinking SIG is the youngest of the APM's SIGs and aims to share the value of the holistic systems thinking mindset and toolset in understanding the business problem and how well a proposed solution will solve it. Systems thinking helps quickly explore and understand the scope, interfaces and dynamics of the problem, the solution to be delivered and the impact of the project on business as usual.

This understanding aids in setting up projects that have a good chance of success, through solving the real problem with a quality i.e. fit-for-purpose, solution without the seemingly inevitable "Phase 2". To this end, we use systems thinking techniques in all our events, to illustrate how easy they are to understand and how quick they are to use.

Our current programme includes:

- A multi-SIG conference on improving project success through focusing on the future
- A webinar on justifying changes, including cancellation, to projects and programmes that are heading for failure
- A series of guides, the first of which is on "Using Systems Thinking to Select the Right Projects".

Come and join us!

**Phil Knights and Andrew Wright**  
APM Systems Thinking Co Chairs



# APM Systems Thinking SIG activity report 2021-22



- 1 Blog
- 1 Webinar/ networking event
- 13 Committee meetings
- 1 University activity

712 SIG followers