

# Change Managers: The Architects of Project Success

April 15, 2025



**The recent Third Annual Change Awards, hosted in the stunning and historic Drapers' Hall in London, was not just another industry gathering; it signalled a significant paradigm shift within the often-formulaic world of project management. Sponsored among others by the globally recognised, APMG, a global leader in project accreditation and certifications awards, the event underscored the increasingly vital role of change management, a discipline that has moved from the periphery of the project industry to become a central tenant of successful project delivery.**

The atmosphere at the awards was palpably energetic, reflecting the growing appreciation and buzz around this vital field.

The Change Manager of the award was presented to Gary Marshall, a Business Change Manager for Translink, for his impactful work in delivering public sector change initiatives, alongside Rabia Mir, a US-based Business Change Manager delivering change initiatives within the private sector. Their respective success as not just change leaders but as project professionals highlighted a critical evolution of the profession. Their recognition in this highly competitive field underscored the tangible influence that adept change professionals wield in ensuring projects not only launch but also achieve meaningful and lasting impact.

While the traditional metrics of project success; that of being on time and within budget for completion, remain important they by themselves are longer sufficient. Today's stakeholders rightly demand evidence of tangible outcomes, the enduring benefits that extend far beyond the project lifecycle. This is where the expertise of the change manager becomes indispensable. They are the often-unsung strategists who

bridge the gap between meticulously planned outputs and real-world impact, ensuring that initiatives translate into sustainable value for the individuals and organisations they serve.





Returning to the awards, Professor Adam Boddison, CEO of the Association of Project Management (APM), delivered a keynote address that thoughtfully articulated three key themes resonating throughout the evening. First, the emphasis on the long-term ramifications of project endeavours – the lasting value generated by practitioners. Second, the significance of language and framing, advocating for the recognition of change professionals as strategic leaders deserving of the capital ‘C’.

Most forward-thinking was the discourse surrounding the rapid integration of artificial intelligence and digital technologies. Rather than succumbing to anxieties about job displacement, the event offered pragmatic insights into mastering ‘prompt engineering’. Empowering professionals to leverage AI as a powerful tool, thereby reinforcing human agency in the technological landscape. This progressive perspective reframed technological disruption not as a threat, but as an opportunity for change managers to amplify their influence.

Gary Marshall’s gracious acceptance speech, paid homage to his “amazing and inspirational” team, and which exemplified the collaborative ethos that underpins effective change initiatives.

From all the evening’s nominees and winners there was a sense of unwavering commitment to driving meaningful change. Demonstrating the universal applicability of change management as not just a nice-to-have, but as an essential project delivery skillset.

The international reach of the Change Awards, with winners spanning continents from Australia to Pakistan, the US, and New Zealand, underscores its burgeoning global relevance. Margo Waldorf and her team at the Change Awards deserve significant recognition for cultivating not just an awards ceremony, but a platform that illuminates a previously underappreciated yet crucial dimension of the project management profession.

The Third Annual Change Awards served as a compelling reminder that in an era defined by constant transformation, the capacity to effectively manage change is no longer a niche competency, it is the very

foundation of successful project outcomes. Looking ahead, expect the insights and contributions of change managers to become increasingly prominent, shaping a project management landscape that prioritises not just execution, but enduring and positive societal and organisational transformation.

***The Change Awards, UK were held on the 10th April at the Drapper's Hall, London. Sponsored by Investigo and the APMG who presented for the first time, the 'Change Manager of the Year' category.***

***To find out more about the APMG Change Management Certification click [Here](#)***