



WHITE PAPER

SEPTEMBER 2025

Governing AI in Projects

**with the AI
Project Governance
Framework (AIPGF)**

**How to facilitate ethical,
efficient and effective
human-AI collaboration in
Projects and Programmes**

Governing AI in Projects with the AI Project Governance Framework

by Emanuela Giangregorio | September 2025

Executive Summary

AI adoption in projects is accelerating, and Gartner predicts that by 2030, 80% of project management tasks will be AI-powered. Even if this prediction is over-stated, we currently have AI-powered tools that are transforming how projects are conceived, planned, and delivered, offering unprecedented opportunities to accelerate efficiency and enhance decision-making. However, these benefits come alongside significant risks, including lack of transparency, regulatory exposure, reputational damage, and financial losses.

The **AI Project Governance Framework (AIPGF)** provides a pragmatic, structured, and adaptable approach to manage risks and opportunities when using AI assistance in projects and programmes. It ensures that AI strengthens project outcomes without exposing the organisation to unnecessary risk and undermining stakeholder trust. By implementing the Framework, organisations can systematically govern AI use across their portfolio of projects and programmes, as their AI adoption scales and as AI tools evolve. The accompanying **AI Project Governance Capability Maturity Model (AIPG-CMM)** can be used to establish maturity benchmarks and actions towards continuous improvement. For executives, the question is not whether AI should be used in projects - but how to ensure that its use is ethical, efficient, and effective.

The Governance Gap in AI-Assisted Projects

Ignoring AI governance won't stop adoption - it will simply ensure it is unmanaged.

Projects are the primary vehicles through which organisational strategy is operationalised. As AI embeds itself into this project ecosystem, governance becomes a strategic imperative. When email first emerged, lack of governance led to years of security breaches and compliance failures. AI's risk profile is vastly greater, and its consequences more profound. Left unchecked, unmanaged AI can lead to disastrous consequences.

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Key Risks of Unmanaged AI Assistance in Projects include:

- **Transparency Gaps** - Stakeholders cannot explain AI-generated recommendations.
- **Inefficiency** - Poorly integrated tools increase workload.
- **Compliance Exposure** - Breaches of data privacy laws and AI regulations.
- **Reputational Risk** - Misuse undermines stakeholder trust.
- **Bias** - The AI tools are only as good as their training data, which may be predisposed to bias.
- **Financial Loss** - Ineffective use of AI could result in costly project overruns.

The convergence of these risks creates a perfect storm for AI-assisted project failure. Projects that fail to govern AI use effectively face not only immediate operational challenges but also long-term strategic disadvantages. As AI capabilities advance and regulatory frameworks tighten, organisations without robust governance structures will find themselves increasingly exposed to competitive, legal, and reputational threats. It is better implementing proactive governance now, rather than face reactive crisis management later.

Overview of the AIPGF

The AIPGF enables organisations to govern how AI is used in projects.

It is founded on three **Principles**: human-centricity, transparency and adaptability.

1. **Human-Centricity** - AI enhances human capability, but humans remain accountable.
2. **Transparency** - AI decisions must be explainable, auditable, and trusted.
3. **Adaptability** - Governance scales with AI adoption, AI automation and organisational AI governance maturity.

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Modelling its five **Core Values** provides assurance that AI assistance is used ethically, efficiently and effectively, delivering benefits of AI use whilst managing associated risks.

1. **Accountability** – Every AI decision is explainable and attributable.
2. **Sensibility** – Balance AI outputs with human judgment.
3. **Collaboration** – Encourage synergy between teams and AI tools.
4. **Curiosity** – Explore AI innovations responsibly.
5. **Continuous Improvement** – Regularly review and refine AI use.

The AIPGF provides guidance on modelling the values through its **Core Behaviours**.

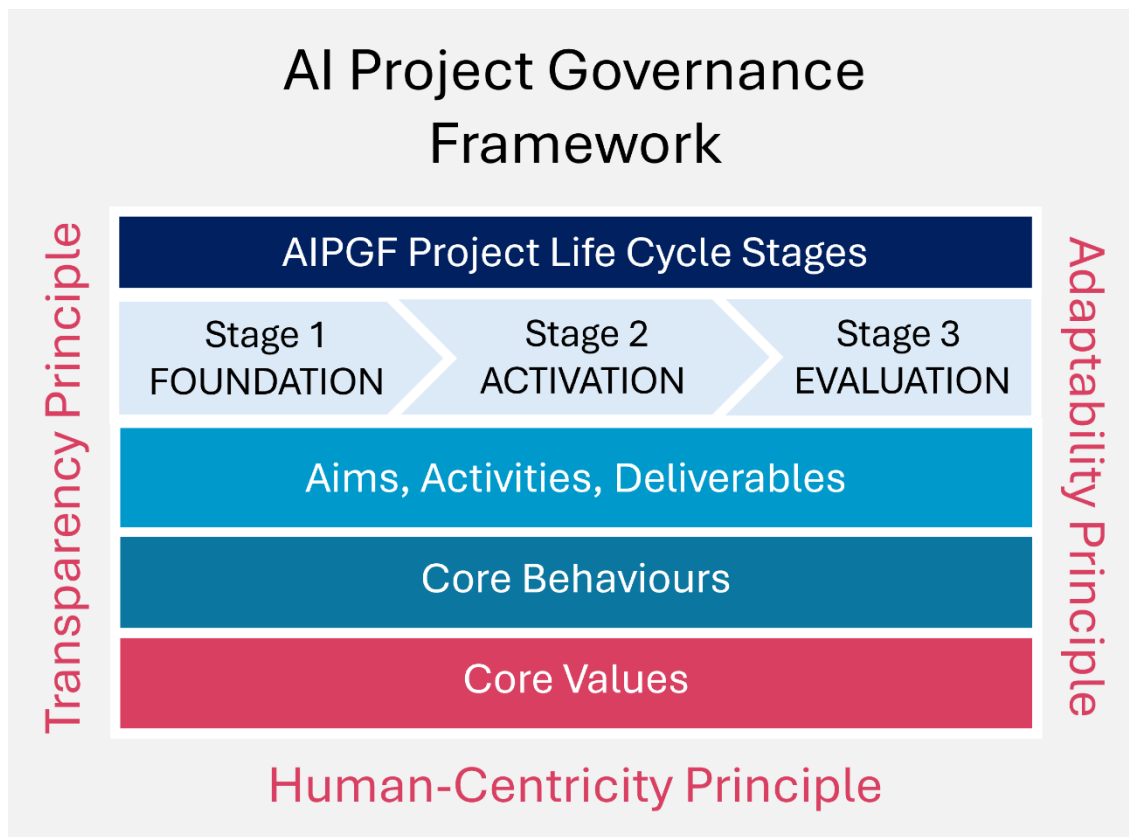


Figure 1: Overview of the AIPGF

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All projects have a project life cycle and there are many project methodologies and approaches with their definition of a project life cycle. The AIPGF simply has **three Life Cycle stages**, which easily map to any project management approach. This enables easy integration of the AIPGF with an organisation's choice for project method.

Foundation Stage

- Establish the objectives and scope of AI Assistance in this project.
- Select relevant AI tools.
- Assess data availability and quality.
- Enable the team.
- Identify and manage AI-related risks.

Activation

- Operationalise the AI Assistance Plan developed in the Foundation Stage.
- Facilitate ethical, efficient and effective human-AI collaboration.
- Monitor AI effectiveness.
- Continue to anticipate and mitigate AI-related risks.
- Manage AI-related issues.
- Keep relevant stakeholders updated regarding AI usage benefits and red flags.

Evaluation

- Evaluate AI impact and AI decision-making processes for transparency, fairness, and accountability.
- Document and share lessons learned.
- Identify and action areas for improvement in AI adoption, tool selection and training needs (humans and/or AI) for future projects.

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The three stages create a continuous improvement cycle, which can be applied in a waterfall or agile manner.

Assessing Governance Maturity

The AIPGF recommends using the **AI Project Governance Capability Maturity Model (AIPG-CMM)** to benchmark **governance of AI usage in projects and programmes**. This allows organisations to prioritise actions for continuous improvement.

The AIPG-CMM describes **five levels of governance maturity**: Ad Hoc, Initialised, Standardised, Enterprised and Optimised.

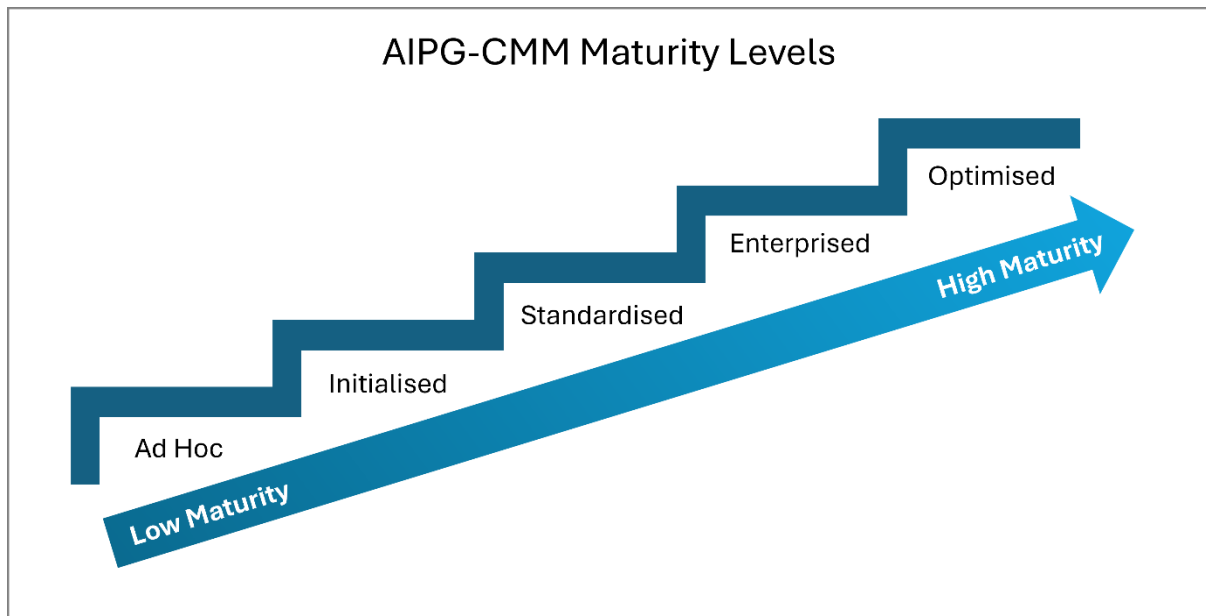


Figure 2: AIPG-CMM Maturity Levels

- **Level 1: Ad Hoc** - Governance of AI usage in projects is largely non-existent, sporadic or reactive.

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- **Level 2: Initialised** - AI governance processes in projects are minimally defined and only occasionally implemented.
- **Level 3: Standardised** - AI governance processes in projects are documented, repeatable, and consistent across projects within parts of the organisation.
- **Level 4: Enterprised** - AI governance processes in projects are institutionalised, integrated across the organisation, and measured regularly. Audits provide independent assurance regarding the ethical, efficient and effective use of AI in the organisation's projects and programmes.
- **Level 5: Optimised** - AI governance is fully integrated across the organisation's project ecosystem, continuously refined, and residual risk related to AI-usage is consistently low.

Each subsequent level in the AIPG-CMM represents an increase in capability maturity regarding governance of AI use in an organisation's project environment.

The AIPG-CMM Assessment is structured against **four Pillars**:

1. AI Strategy & Governance
2. AI Tools & Infrastructure
3. Human Capability & Accountability
4. Data Readiness & Quality

See image on next page.

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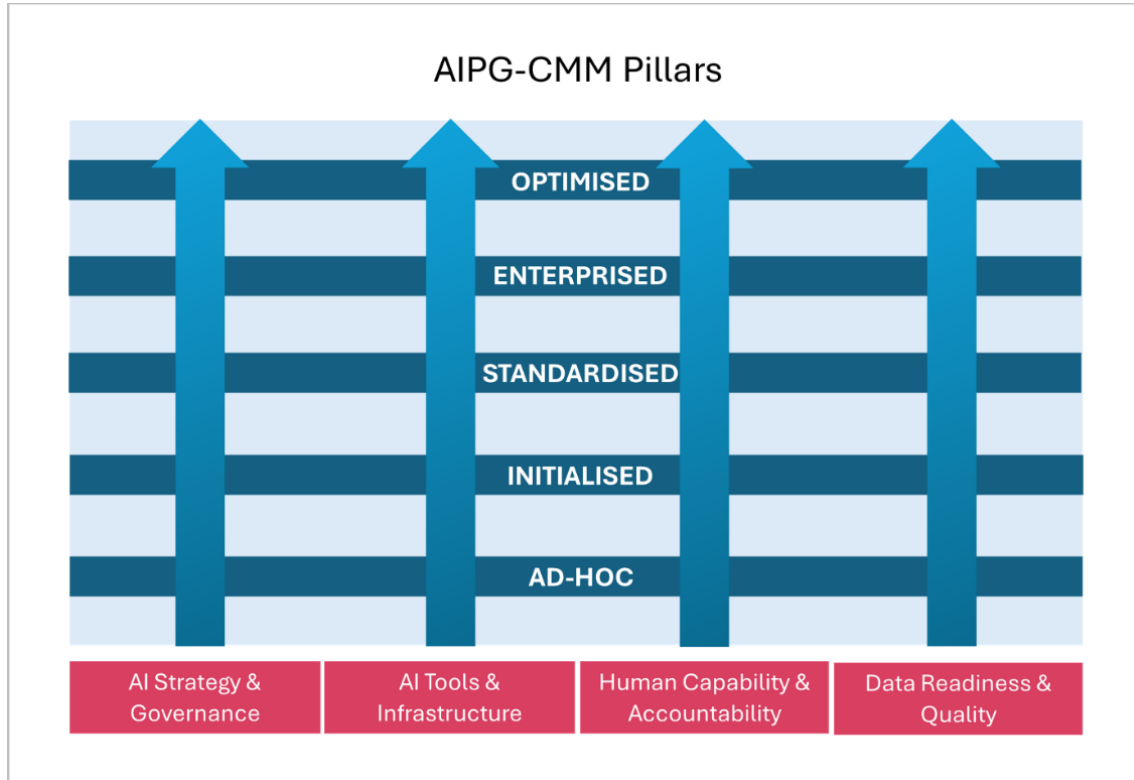


Figure 3: AIPG-CMM Assessment Pillars

The assessment instrument comprises 16 statements, four per pillar. The full self-assessment questionnaire can be found in the AIPGF official publication available on Amazon, and on the website: <https://aipgf.pro/aipg-cmm-self-assessment>.

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Executive Leadership Priorities

AI governance cannot be delegated solely to project teams or technical specialists. Executives set the tone, provide sponsorship, and ensure that governance frameworks are embedded into organisational practice. Their priorities should include:

- **Benchmarking AI governance maturity in the organisation's project ecosystem** – use the AIPPG-CMM self-assessment instrument to take a benchmark and identify priorities for improvement.
- **Championing the implementation of the AIPGF** – Signal from the top that responsible and transparent AI use in projects and programmes is a strategic, mandated priority.
- **Allocating Roles and Responsibilities** – Define who is responsible for AI oversight, from project managers to compliance and data teams, ensuring clarity across functions (the AIPGF provides sufficiently detailed guidance on recommended roles and responsibilities).
- **Building Capability** – Invest in AI literacy and governance competence across project leadership and delivery teams to embed sustainable capability.
- **Demonstrating accountability** – Provide assurance to relevant internal and external stakeholders that AI use in projects is governed responsibly, transparently and ethically.

Senior executives must treat AI governance in projects as they would financial controls or cybersecurity: a non-negotiable requirement.

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Strategic Benefits of Adopting the AIPGF

Adopting the AIPGF enables organisations to build trust, align with international standards, scale responsibly, future-proof capability and enhance performance.

- **Build Trust** – transparency and accountability enhance stakeholder confidence in AI use.
- **Align with international standards** – the AIPGF complements the ISO/IEC 42001 and the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, practically and tangibly.¹
- **Scale responsibly** – the AIPGF adapts governance to project complexity, risk and AI adoption maturity.
- **Future-proof capability** – embeds safeguards in preparation for more autonomous AI systems.
- **Enhance performance** – proper use of AI in projects shifts Project Managers and teams from project administration priorities to more value-driven priorities, such as strategic thinking and stakeholder engagement.

These benefits position AIPGF as a critical enabler of resilience in the evolving project economy and AI revolution.

¹ ISO/IEC 42001:2023 – *Artificial Intelligence Management System Standard*
NIST, *AI Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0)*, 2023

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Conclusion: Governing the Future of Projects

AI is both an extraordinary opportunity and a significant risk. Without governance, AI adoption is fragmented, inconsistent and potentially damaging. With governance, AI becomes a strategic enabler: amplifying human judgment, safeguarding ethics and accelerating project success.

The AIPGF represents more than a framework - it embodies a fundamental shift in how organisations approach AI integration within their project ecosystems.

The Framework's three-stage lifecycle approach ensures that AI governance is not an afterthought but an integral component of project success from conception to completion. By anchoring governance in the principles of human-centricity, transparency, and adaptability, organisations can navigate the complexities of AI adoption whilst maintaining ethical standards and operational excellence.

The maturity model provides a roadmap for continuous improvement, acknowledging that AI governance is not a destination but a journey. As AI capabilities evolve and regulatory landscapes shift, organisations using the AIPGF will be positioned to adapt and advance their governance practices systematically.

For executives, the imperative is clear: AI governance in projects is not optional. It is a strategic necessity that demands leadership commitment, resource allocation, and cultural shift. The organisations that embrace this reality today will be the leaders of tomorrow's AI-powered project economy.