

Opportunity knocks

Paul Harvey catches up with members and founders of the newly-minted Institute for Event Management to find out about its mission for the sector.

The Institute for Event Management (IEM) launched in October 2020, amid the greatest crisis the sector has ever known. Its aim? To secure the sector's future.

Specifically, the IEM aims to provide an opportunity for event professionals to gain professional recognition and to enhance their profile, skills and knowledge.

Honorary founding fellow of IEM and CEO of DRPG Dale Parmenter (*pictured right*) says: "All too often the events industry is wrongly seen as some sort of interim way of finding work while they look for a 'proper job'. The work of the Institute of Event Management changes those perceptions."

SKILLS

Learning and developing is critical to the reimagining of the events industry. Lou Kiwanuka, from The Shaper Group, says this is why she got involved: "IEM's focus on recognising the skills needed to create exceptional events is something that enables a common thread. I strongly believe that in finding our common threads we will also find benefit."

The IEM has already instigated change in the SIC/SOC Codes and opened conversations with governments to further raise awareness of the industry where it needs to be heard.

The critical thread through all of this is the IEM Community, which executive board chair Susan Spibey describes as "a place to share your passion for events, a creative community with a difference and, through benefits like the IEM Mentoring Programme, a family we can all be proud of."

Parmenter sums up the IEM with a call to action for all.

"It shows from a career point of view that the events industry is a serious option and has enormous opportunities in so many ways," he says. "I'm passionate about the development of young people from all backgrounds and showing them what really is possible to achieve within our great industry."



NEXT GENERATION

“As an individual the IEM is something that I have been searching for in my career for a long time,” says Ash Rowe (*pictured left*), senior event manager at the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET). “The main reason that I want to be involved is to give back to the industry that has given me so much over the years and inspire the next generation of event managers that are due to enter the industry.”



The combined efforts will support the increasing professionalisation of events in the interest of the industry through event management education, professional development, recognition and building individual professional credibility.

Laura Rossignoli (*pictured below*) at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) in Belgium highlights the need for that wider network: “There have been times in my career when I felt quite isolated or alone, in terms of questions and queries around an event, or I wanted to improve my knowledge and/or skills. I think it is important for those in events to know they have somewhere they can turn to, whether it is for support, to ask a question or to better themselves through accredited learning so they can grow professionally.”



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OPPORTUNITIES

In its first few months, IEM membership numbers have been cautiously climbing, bringing together people and organisations from across the broad events sector to bring about change. According to Susan Spibey, the opportunities for IEM and its members are endless.

“With several member benefits already in place: networking, mentoring and a brand-new purpose programme, plus the potential for research, knowledge sharing and volunteering for students from the wider IEM community, the only limiting factor is our imagination as to how the institute grows and develops for the

benefit of all concerned,” Spibey says.

Jenny Davies (*pictured above*), deputy events and duty manager at Buckinghamshire New University, sees membership as “the chance to get professional recognition for my career, the chance to network with like-minded individuals, to share professional work standards and complete relevant, accredited career training. My workplace is not a ‘standard’ events location, but my skills are transferable so being able to get recognition for this and to have my work recognised under the IEM banner if I decide to move to another events role.”

