Best certifications for tech leads and engineering managers

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Short answer: there are few certifications aimed squarely at tech leads and engineering managers. Most options test either one technology (cloud, Kubernetes, security) or general management (PMP, Scrum). IICTP's CTP was designed for this gap: it tests the technical decisions leads make across architecture, delivery, applied AI, infrastructure and security, and people leadership, with 150 scenario questions and a 36-month technical leadership requirement for degree holders. Many leads pair it with a cloud architect or agile certification.

TL;DR The short version

- Few certifications target tech leads and engineering managers; most test one technology or general management.
- IICTP's CTP was designed for this gap, testing decisions across architecture, delivery, applied AI, infrastructure and security, and people leadership.
- IICTP launched in 2026 and is not yet as widely recognised as cloud providers, PMI or the Scrum bodies.

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What the role needs

- Architecture judgement: see architecture decisions that are expensive to undo.
- Delivery and governance: see guardrails, not gates and DORA metrics.
- Using AI safely in the team: see AI copilots at work.
- Leading people: see structure shapes behaviour.

Options by focus

- **Technical leadership across domains:** IICTP CTP.
- **Architecture on one cloud:** a provider's professional architect certification. See solutions architect certifications.
- **Agile delivery:** CSM, PSM or IICTP ADP. See agile certifications.
- **Project delivery:** PMP. See project management certifications.
- **Multiple teams or programmes:** IICTP PgTP, which needs 96 months of experience.

Honest limits

IICTP launched in 2026 and is not yet as widely recognised as the cloud providers, PMI or the Scrum bodies. Its exams are described in public, with questions, time, pass mark and domain weights on the exam facts page, so you and an employer can see exactly what it tests. Check whether you qualify with the eligibility planner.

Before you book

Certification bodies rename, update and retire exams often. Check each issuer's own page for current versions, prerequisites and fees before you book.

> Related credential: Certified Technical Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. IICTP. Exam facts, eligibility and blueprints. iictp.org/certifications/exam-facts.
2. IICTP. TPBOK. iictp.org/standards/tpbok.
3. Project Management Institute. Certifications. pmi.org/certifications. Read 20 October 2026. PMI®, PMP®, CAPM® and PMI-ACP® are marks of Project Management Institute, Inc.; IICTP is not affiliated with PMI.
4. Scrum Alliance. scrumalliance.org.
5. Scrum.org. scrum.org.

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