PMP alternatives for technical project managers and engineering leads

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Short answer: PMP remains the best-known general project management credential, and if you manage projects of any kind and meet its experience rule, it is a strong choice. If your work is technical, such as leading software delivery or managing engineers, the useful alternatives are a Scrum or agile certification for the team process, a cloud or architecture certification for the platform, or a technical leadership credential such as IICTP's CTP.

TL;DR The short version

- PMP is the best-known general project management credential and a strong choice if you meet its experience rule.
- For technical work, alternatives are a Scrum or agile certification, a cloud or architecture certification, or a technical leadership credential such as IICTP's CTP.
- CTP is a scenario-based exam of 150 questions in 180 minutes; technical project managers may hold both PMP and CTP.

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Why look for an alternative at all?

PMP tests project management that applies to construction, marketing and software alike. That breadth is its strength. Its limit, for technical roles, is that it does not test the engineering decisions a technical project manager is judged on: architecture trade-offs, release strategy, technical debt, security and incident handling.

OPTION	BEST FOR	WHAT IT PROVES
PMP (PMI)	Project managers in any industry	General project management, with years of experience
PMI-ACP (PMI)	Experienced agile practitioners	Broad agile knowledge, 2+ years of experience
CSM / PSM I	Scrum Masters and team leads	Scrum framework knowledge
SAFe Agilist	Managers in SAFe organisations	The Scaled Agile Framework
IICTP CTP	Technical PMs, tech leads, engineering managers	Technical judgement across architecture, delivery, AI, infrastructure and leadership
IICTP PgTP	Leaders of programmes of technical work	Programme-level technical leadership

How IICTP's CTP differs from PMP

CTP is a scenario-based exam of 150 questions in 180 minutes with a 70% pass mark. It requires a bachelor's degree and 36 months of technical leadership experience, or a high-school diploma and 60 months. Its domains are Architecture & Systems Design (30%), Engineering Governance & Agile Delivery (24%), Applied AI (18%), Infrastructure & Security (18%) and People Leadership (10%). IICTP is a new, independent body; PMI is far older and larger, and its credentials are much more widely known. See IICTP and PMI: two credentials, two jobs.

Should you take both?

If you are a technical project manager, holding PMP and CTP shows both halves of the role: running the project and understanding what is being built. See PMI or IICTP: which first? to decide the order, and technical project manager role and skills for the skills behind both.

> Facts about Scrum Alliance, Scrum.org and Scaled Agile were read on their own websites on 20 November 2026; facts about PMI were read on pmi.org on 20 October 2026. Issuers change exams and rules, so check their pages before you book.

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Sources and further reading

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