

Facilities Management from A to Z



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The International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) is the world's oldest, largest and most widely recognised association for professional facility managers with more than 19,000 members in 78 countries. The Association's members, organised in 124 local Chapters and 16 specialist councils, manage more than 37 billion square feet of property and annually purchase more than US\$100 billion in products and services.

The IFMA certifies facility managers, conducts research, provides educational programs, recognises facilities management certificate programs and produces World Workplace, the world's largest facilities management conference and exhibition.

In the early 1970s, facilities professionals either had no representation at all or belonged to other organisations related to aspects of the role but not dedicated to the workplace. The first step toward the formation of a more specialised organisation occurred in December 1978 when the Herman Miller Research Corporation hosted a conference called "Facility Influence on Productivity," in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

This conference was the meeting place for the three founders of the IFMA. George Graves of Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation, Charles Hitch of Manufacturer's Bank in Detroit and David Armstrong of Michigan State University voiced a need for an organisation comprised of facility professionals from private industry.

In May 1980, Graves hosted a meeting in Houston, Texas, to establish a formal organisational base for a facilities management association. By the end of the meeting, a new organization known as the National Facility Management Association (NFMA) had a constitution, bylaws, temporary officers and plans to expand nationally.

At the first annual meeting of NFMA in October 1980, there were 47 participants of which 25 were direct members of the Association. The attendees from Houston helped to establish the first Chapter and committed to host the second annual national conference. Shortly after the 1981 conference, the name was changed to the International Facility Management Association to accommodate a large Canadian membership.

The organisation has grown around the world although around 100 of the current Chapters are in the USA. The UK Chapter was decertified in 2006 following an agreement with the BIFM. IFMA was one of the Founder Members of Global FM and its CFM (Certified Facility Manager) examinations are available in American English, Canadian, European Business English, Dutch and German, with localisations for other countries under way.

For more information on IFMA visit www.ifma.org