

## The International Water Association

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### Young Water Professionals Guidance Document

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The following document describes the scope, structure, and activities related to the IWA Young Water Professionals Community.

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## **PART ONE: IWA Young Water Professionals Community**

### **Rationale, Vision, and Mission**

#### **a. Rationale**

The demand for water professionals to provide innovative solutions to the growing water challenges and opportunities will continue to rise. From entering the sector and throughout their career, (young) water professionals need to stay current by regularly updating and enhancing their skills, knowledge, and know-how. This is done through established training and, increasingly, through being part of an organisation that fosters networking, sharing, and professional development.

Considering the five strategic objectives of the IWA Strategic Plan 2025–2030, IWA recognises the need to harness the insight, energy and ambition of young water professionals, further enabling the member-led creation and operation of Young Water Professionals (YWP) Chapters as a key mechanism for participation and for strengthening the IWA network at local, national and regional levels.

Accordingly, as set out in the Strategic Plan, IWA is committed to:

- Further developing its value proposition for young water professionals, particularly by enhancing networking opportunities, expanding pathways for meaningful engagement in the growth of IWA’s network, and sustaining long-term participation—positioning IWA as the leading global platform for career development, recognition and professional progression in the water sector.
- Recognising the pivotal role of youth in driving innovation and change, by providing inclusive spaces for young professionals to exchange knowledge, promote disruptive and forward-looking ideas, and actively contribute to the development and adoption of innovative solutions at the local level.

#### **b. Vision**

The global vision for the IWA Young Water Professionals (YWPs) Community is to develop a strong and highly valued brand (IWA) and network for young water professionals, actively engaging members and empowering them to contribute to the water sector's solutions.

#### **c. Mission**

The mission is to empower YWPs to contribute to sustainable water management (IWA's vision of a water-wise world) by connecting them with professional development opportunities, engagement and recognition.

#### **d. How to achieve the mission:**

*Connections* - The IWA YWPs Community encourages connections among young members through:

- Formation of National or Regional YWP Chapters. The IWA YWP Steering Committee guides these Chapters.
- Encouraging connections between YWP peers and senior professionals online;

- On-site at YWP conferences – host member gatherings, and IWA induction meetings.

*Professional Development* - IWA YWPs Community supports the professional development opportunities for IWA members through:

- Providing useful resources such as webinars, publications, articles and readings through the IWA channels;
- Supporting the IWA Secretariat in developing the online dialogues with senior professionals, YWP Get-Together meetings, as well as IWA webinars;
- YWP chapters - local organisation of workshops, career fairs, and conferences at the national or regional level;
- Connecting and engaging YWP within IWA beyond the YWP network.

*Engagement and Recognition* - Organising Global Coordination Calls for YWP chapters.

- Contributing to the IWA annual report;
- Representing the community at the IWA Strategic Council and Board level;
- Supporting IWA in promoting YWP engagement in SGs and other communities, as well as in congresses/events, sharing the youth's voice through blogs, articles, white papers, etc.

#### **e. Where to find details on the IWA YWPs Community**

Explanation of the [IWA YWPs Community](#) is provided on the [IWA website](#), accessible to all interested water professionals. Additionally, IWA supplies a communication platform for the YWP community to enable profile updates, knowledge and news sharing, and discussions on specific topics.

### **Definitions**

**The IWA YWPs** – all IWA members aged 35 and below are automatically classified as YWPs. Although the IWA YWP does not have to engage in the IWA YWP community, as some only choose to get involved in Specialist Groups (SGs), the Regulators community, or the IWA programmes, it is highly recommended that they join the Chapters, participate in events (online and in-person) and actively contribute to the community.

**The IWA YWPs Community** – The coordination of Membership Engagement services and professional development offered to IWA members and supporters of the IWA YWP members. The IWA YWPs Community is heavily engaged in the services that IWA create for their young members.

**The IWA YWP Steering Committee** - The Committee is a representative body composed of young water professionals (35 and below) with an active IWA membership who will advise the association on matters concerning the YWP Community. They will lead an active YWP community, provide regional representation for young IWA members and actively pursue opportunities to contribute to the network.



Republic - Export Building, 1st Floor  
1 Clove Crescent  
London E14 2BA  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7654 5500  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7654 5555  
E-mail: [water@iwahq.org](mailto:water@iwahq.org)  
[www.iwa-network.org](http://www.iwa-network.org)

**The IWA YWP Country Chapters** – a coalition of Young Water Professionals, IWA members or non-members, from the utility, academia, research, consultants, etc., that manage the country activities that align with the vision and mission of IWA.

**PART TWO: Governance of YWP**  
**IWA YWP Governance Structure**

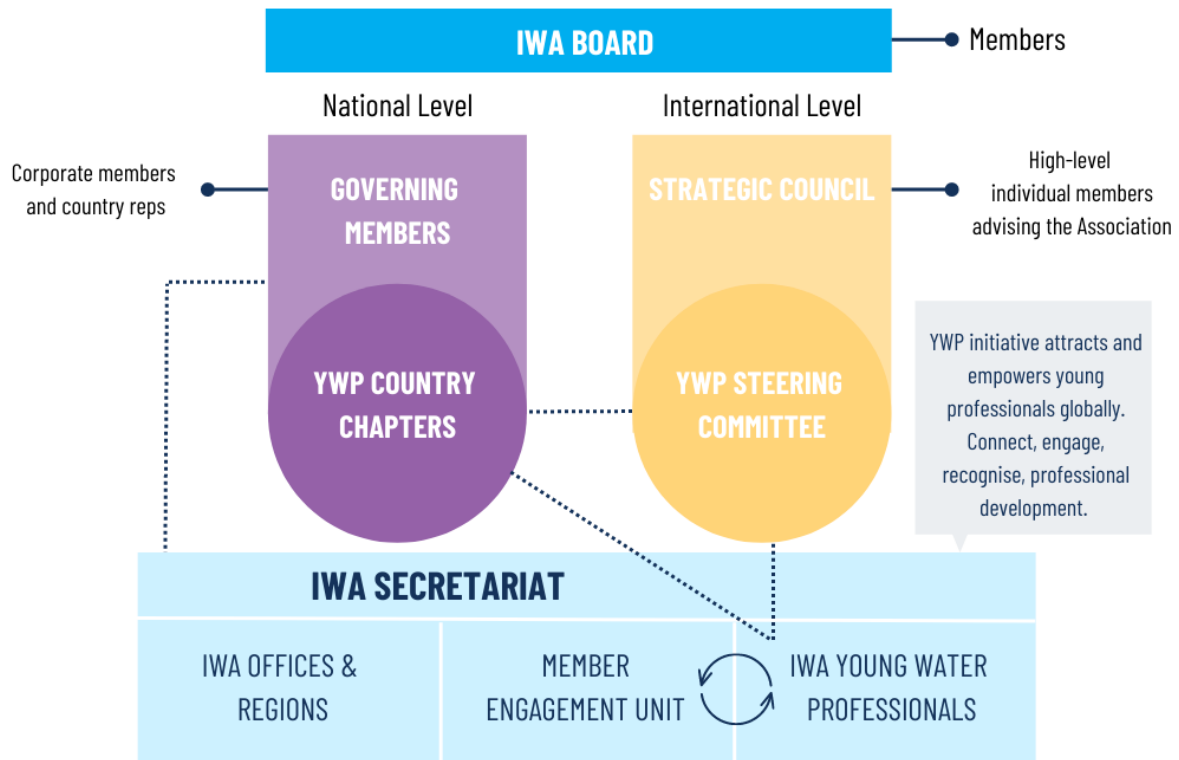
Figure 1 represents the IWA Structure with formally recognised IWA Leadership.



**FIGURE 1:** IWA structure with formally recognised IWA leadership (IWA member groups).

The IWA YWP Steering Committee represents the IWA YWP community, including the IWA YWP Chapters. It reports to the Board upon request and gains appropriate approval/consent from the Board for strategic matters and is supported by the IWA Secretariat, as can be seen more in Figure 2.

## How Young Water Professionals fit within IWA's structure



**FIGURE 2:** IWA YWP fit in IWA's structure.

### IWA YWP Steering Committee - Scope and Responsibilities

#### a. Purpose and scope

According to the IWA Strategic Plan 2025-2030, IWA should consult with and engage young members to stay relevant and current and trickle down its vision and mission to the regions. The Committee should advise IWA on how to attract and serve its young members and lead an active YWP community that helps empower YWP within IWA and the water sector, both nationally, regionally, and internationally.

#### b. Duties and responsibilities of the Steering Committee

The primary responsibilities and duties of the Steering Committee shall be to (detailed responsibilities per role are available in the *IWA YWP Steering Committee ToR*):

- **Provide advice to the association** about the appropriate ways to serve young professionals' needs (e.g., networking, learning opportunities, professional development and certain thematic/topical interests) and interests to engage and contribute to IWA's current activities (governance, programmes, conferences, and SGs) at the national and international level.
- **Lead an active IWA YWPs Community** to encourage members to get engaged and feel a sense of belonging to IWA. This will be done through active communication and dissemination of the IWA Secretariat and the

Steering Committee information to its members, as well as through subcommittees, online interaction, onsite engagement, networking and encouraging YWP to contribute/interact with the broader IWA network, as well as present and profile the IWA network and opportunities for non-members to learn about IWA.

- **Provide regional representation** and contact for information on and engagement in the IWA Network. This is done by keeping up an exclusive Regional Network of IWA YWP members and engaging with the YWP chapters to encourage membership growth.
- **Actively pursue opportunities to contribute to the network**, such as conference and event organisation, authoring papers and blogs, and supporting other committees across the network (e.g., SGs, Strategic Council, etc.).

Additionally, they will be responsible for:

- **Support the election of the following IWA Steering Committee members.**
- **Review procedures/guidance of YWP chapter activities.** Working with IWA Staff, the Committee shall establish and periodically update the **Guidance Document for YWP chapters, Operation Formation and Termination.**
- **Overview and recommendations.** Based on their experience with the YWP, the Committee shall make recommendations to the IWA Secretariat as it deems appropriate to ensure compliance with programme objectives and further enhance the programme's value to the association and its members.

**c. Reporting relationships and duties:**

The Steering Committee shall report annually (in alternating biennial cycles) to the Board through the Governance and Nominations Committee on the recommended appointment of new Steering Committee members. Additionally, they will report to the Board on the status of the IWA YWPs Community and at any other times and on other topics necessary or beneficial to the association.

**Composition of the IWA YWP Steering Committee and its terms**

In line with IWA's –2025-2030 Strategic Plan and the IWA Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Steering Committee shall, by 2030, be composed of:

- a) At least **50%** of representatives from (and residing in) low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).
- b) At least **50%** of women and other gender minorities representatives.

The IWA Secretariat, with the support of the IW YWP Steering Committee and its Nomination Committee, shall work towards having a balance in both gender and geography.

The IWA YWP is led by a Steering Committee composed of **3 Management Committee** (Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary) and **ten additional members** (numbers may vary) generally representing the diversity in experience, gender, type of affiliated organisation, geography, etc. These members are elected to regional representative roles (see *Detailed roles and responsibilities*) by the IWA YWPs Community members. The highest-voted representative from each region (upon initial classification) is automatically elected. The required conditions to be elected to these roles and the number of positions available are outlined below:

- Strategic Advisory Role (2 positions)
- Specialist Group Role (2 positions)
- YWP Chapter Coordination Role (2 positions)
- YWP Events and Communications Roles (2 positions)
- Career Building Role (2 positions)

The normal term in office for a committee member shall be **2 years** (with a maximum of 2 terms). The Chairperson shall be appointed from nominations of the preceding Committee and shall serve for 2 years (the Chairperson can serve a maximum of 1 consecutive term, which is 2 years). The Vice-chair, secretary and strategic advisory role can be nominated from the preceding Committee OR actively engaged young members. The current Committee members are listed in Annexe 1.

## **The nomination and election process**

### **1. Criteria of eligibility**

The following are the **minimum requirements** to be eligible for the Steering Committee.

- Have been an IWA Member with an active membership for at least 1 year
- 35 years old or younger by the end of the term
- Fulfil the criteria per role (as described below)

The specific roles have their own additional eligibility:

- **The chair** must be a committee member of the preceding term.
- **Vice Chair, and Secretary:** must be a committee member of the preceding term and an IWA member who has proven engagement in IWA (sub-committees, SGs, Events, YWP chapter committee, Strategic Council, etc);
- **Strategic advisory:** must be an IWA member who has proven engagement in IWA (Sub-committees, SGs, Events, YWP chapter committee, strategic council, etc)
- **Specialist Group:** must have been engaged in SGs (e.g., YWP affiliate, SG events, SG management committee);
- **Communications and Events:** must have served on IWA (YWP) Conference/ workshop/events committees;
- **Career Building:** must have been involved in IWA communities (e.g., YWP Chapters; SGs), and IWA workshops (e.g., Career development workshops).

## 2. Who can make a nomination?

IWA YWPs can self-nominate themselves under open positions as determined above by the Steering Committee; this will ensure certain constituencies and regional balance, etc.

## 3. Submission documents/forms

- Fill in the IWA YWP Steering Committee nomination form available on IWA Connect Plus, which will be updated accordingly every election.

## 4. Process for election

- I. The IWA Steering Committee shall establish a Nominations Committee, composed of Steering Committee members who are not nominating themselves in any capacity. The Nominations Committee shall ensure the geographical diversity of the Steering Committee by determining which positions are open for nomination.
- II. The IWA Secretariat shall use this selection for the call for nominations.
- III. The IWA Secretariat shall review the completeness of the nomination and eligibility according to the minimum requirements outlined above.
- IV. The IWA Secretariat shall issue the voting to the IWA Young Water Professionals community.
- V. The Nominations Committee shall validate the voting result with the following voting rules:

- **Definition**

- The proposed candidate refers to a valid proposal from an existing YWP or the Secretariat, for the selection on the YWP Steering Committee.
- Eligible voters are IWA YWP (IWA members aged 35 years old or below).

- **Voting Rules**

- Eligible voters shall be presented with the list of proposed candidates standing for election.
- Eligible voters shall cast one (1) vote for each of the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, and up to two (2) votes for the remaining positions, based on the individual merits of the candidates.
- Abstentions shall be permitted during the voting process. Abstentions shall not count either positively or negatively and shall not be included in the total number of votes cast.
- For a voting round to be considered valid for a particular position, the total number of votes cast for that position shall represent at least 20% of eligible voters. If participation falls below this threshold, the decision on the validity of the vote shall rest with the Nominations Committee.
- The candidate receiving the highest number of valid votes shall be proposed for appointment to the Steering Committee.
- The Nominations Committee shall submit the elected candidates to the Governance and Nominations Committee for recommendation to the Board.

- Should vacancies arise outside the standard nomination and appointment cycle, the Nominations Committee shall nominate candidates to fill the vacant positions for the remainder of the established term, subject to review and approval by the Board.

## 5. Timeline (to be applied on even years)

- **Early March:** Call for Nominations opens on Connect Plus.
- **End of March:** Submission deadline 31 March.
- **Early April:** The IWA Secretariat and Nominations Committee check the eligibility of candidates.
- **Mid-April:** Nominations Committee puts voting forward (ensuring gender/geographical/age/ background diversity).
- **End of April:** IWA Secretariat organises online hustings for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. For the other roles, IWA will collect videos and disseminate them on social media. Debates will be organised via Connect Plus posts.
- **Early May:** end of the voting period.
- **Mid-May:** The Nominations Committee presents voting process outcomes to the Governance and Nominations Committee, and a recommendation is presented to the IWA Board.
- **Mid-July:** A new committee is presented (online announcement).

## Operating guidelines for the Steering Committee

### 1. Subcommittees

The Steering Committee may establish subcommittees with members consisting of current IWA YWP, as it deems necessary/desirable to accomplish the duties listed above. The Steering Committee has the sole authority and responsibility to establish the membership and Terms of Reference for any subcommittees it establishes.

### 2. Meetings

The Steering Committee shall have its first meeting the day before the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition. During this meeting, the strategy of the Steering Committee will be developed. The Steering Committee will then meet remotely every month to report on the implementation of the strategy. In addition, the Steering Committee might organise a non-mandatory in-person meeting at least once a year, in line with health and safety guidelines. This implies that the in-person meeting might be adapted to a hybrid or online format according to current government guidelines. The time and location shall be decided at the previous meeting.

Communication and activity of the Steering Committee shall mainly be facilitated via IWA Connect Plus, e-mail, Teams or other conference calling facilities.

The agenda and supporting papers for the Steering Committee meetings will be prepared by the Committee Secretary in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Minutes of Meetings should be prepared and circulated on a rotation basis by Committee members.

Costs of travel and subsistence of the members to attend in-person meetings will not normally be covered by IWA HQ (except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance by the IWA Secretariat in accordance with the Association's General Travel Policy).

### 3. Decision Making

- Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary can make decisions in case of an urgent need for decision-making (without consulting the entire Committee);
- Elected Committee members can make **non-strategic** decisions within their sub-committee. These are decisions that **do not** influence IWA practice, IWA groups, the Steering Committee, or other sub-committees. Such decisions have to be presented and recorded in the minutes of the next Committee meeting.
- Other decisions will always have to be proposed to the entire Steering Committee at large (with a week's notice to review the materials necessary).
- Seven members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum;
- The Chair shall report to the IWA Board upon request.
- The Committee shall report to the IWA Executive Director once every 6 months by e-mail via the IWA Secretariat (Membership Engagement Senior Officer – Dr Isabela Espindola, [isabela.espindola@iwahq.org](mailto:isabela.espindola@iwahq.org));
- The Committee shall report to the IWA Secretariat (Membership Engagement Senior Officer – Dr Isabela Espindola, [isabela.espindola@iwahq.org](mailto:isabela.espindola@iwahq.org));
- The sub-committees shall report to the Vice Chair, Chair and IWA Secretariat (Member Engagement Senior Officer responsible for the IWA YWP community, Dr Isabela Espindola, [isabela.espindola@iwahq.org](mailto:isabela.espindola@iwahq.org)).

### 4. Representation in the IWA Strategic Council

Two of the five available YWP positions on the IWA Strategic Council are reserved for members of the IWA YWP Steering Committee. These representatives have been elected by their peers as Strategic Advisors to formalise and improve the long-term strategic alignment between the activities of the Committee and the Strategic Council. The two representatives are responsible for improving strategic information sharing between YWP representative groups and enhancing the ability of YWP members to democratically elect their representatives.

The process for the election of these representatives is described in this Guidance Document. This would result in the selection of YWP representatives with:

- Two of the five YWP seats on the strategic council are filled by IWA YWP Steering Committee representatives
- Three of the five YWP seats on the strategic council are filled by YWP chosen from the general membership.

In keeping with the current terms for representation of different segments, the nominations committee for these roles will consider elections for the existing YWP representatives on the Strategic Council, to maintain the current split of:

- 1 YWP Consultant Segment Representative
- 1 YWP Other Segments
- 1 YWP Regulators Segments
- 2 YWP Utility Segment Representatives

## **5. Termination of Committee membership**

Membership of the Committee is at the absolute discretion of the IWA Secretariat, who may terminate such membership (in consultation with the Core Group) if, in the opinion of the IWA Secretariat, a member:

- Has failed to fulfil the requirements of proper professional and ethical standards;
- Is engaged in activities that are detrimental or contrary to the objectives or interests of the association.

The IWA Secretariat shall have the right for good and sufficient reason to dissolve the Committee.

**ANNEX 1: Current IWA YWP Steering Committee members (2024-2026):**

<b>Position</b>	<b>YWP SC Member Name</b>
Chair	Chelsea Hayward
Vice Chair	Natasha Mumba
Secretary	Claudia Prehn
Strategic Advisory Role	Ashton Mpofu
Strategic Advisory Role	Anique Azam
SGs YWP Co-ordination Role	Marina Batalini de Macedo
SGs YWP Co-ordination Role	Andrea Carranza Munoz
YWP Chapter Co-ordination Role	Natalie Lamb
YWP Chapter Co-ordination Role	Victor Ambuso Oruko
Events & Communications Role	Rita Noelle Mousa
Events & Communications Role	Jacqueline Sampah Adjei
Career Building Role	Francisca Sousa Braga
Career Building Role	Hayat Raza