



# IWA Leap

**Leadership Programme for Young Water Professionals**

# IWA LeaP

## Leadership Programme for Young Water Professionals

Embark on a transformative journey with IWA LeaP, the IWA Leadership Programme for Young Water Professionals.

This initiative is your gateway to professional empowerment, realising your potential and expanding your horizons. This leadership programme beckons for 12 exceptional young water professionals from diverse backgrounds and regions to rise to the leadership challenge.

Fuelled by curiosity and courage, participants will take part in a transformative journey.

Over 12 months, forge robust professional networks and enhance your leadership skills to become the leader that you want to be.

This immersive programme is your springboard to effecting meaningful change. It is not just about learning - it is about living the experience. Prepare to be challenged, rewarded, and empowered as you elevate your strategic vision and leadership capabilities.

## WHO IS IT FOR?

High-potential emerging Young Water Professionals who are looking to:

- Transform their leadership - empowering them to think and act globally.
- Build confidence to inspire and influence others - accelerating their impact at a local, societal and global level.
- Learn how to adapt and thrive in ambiguous, complex, fast-changing environments.
- Strengthen their foundations for future success, overcoming personal or professional barriers.
- Raise their impact and visibility within IWA with the potential to take on leadership roles in the Association over the coming years.

## WHAT WILL YOU GAIN?

- Clarity and understanding of your leadership purpose, strengths and legacy.
- Develop your leadership qualities such as compassion, courage and curiosity.
- Expand your influence to effect change locally, systemically and globally.
- Greater clarity and confidence in how you lead and how you inspire and enable others.
- Be part of a diverse group of Young Water Professionals, united by shared purpose within the IWA community.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The programme is for those aged 18 to 35. Applicants must be at least 18, and not be older than 35 at the conclusion of the programme (November 2027).
- Applicants should possess a proficient knowledge of the English language to allow reading and discussion.
- Applicants must have maintained active membership of IWA for at least one year at the time of application.
- Applicants must demonstrate their leadership experience and capacity in the application process (e.g., sharing of professional achievements, experience in leadership roles within IWA, academia or their organisation, key volunteering roles, etc.).
- Applicants should demonstrate a strong commitment to driving positive change within the water sector. This commitment should be substantiated by a track record of generating impactful and innovative ideas in the field.

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

- 4 days of retreat in a remote setting in late January-early February 2027 (dates may change).
- Estimated 4 hours a month of preparation and project time.
- Estimated 5 hours a month in virtual learning, coaching and project team meetings.
- Attendance and workshop delivery at the 2028 IWA WWCE in Kuching, Malaysia.





*Join us and emerge as a  
beacon of change within your  
organisation and community!*

## Timeline

**11 May 2026**

Open Call for Applications

**12 June 2026**

Close Call for Applications

**6-17 July 2026**

Interviews conducted by the  
IWA Secretariat and LeaP  
Programme Committee

**4-8 October 2026**

Announcement of the  
selected candidates at the  
IWA World Water Congress &  
Exhibition 2026 in Glasgow

**November 2026**

Virtual Launch Event

**End January-**

**Early February 2027**

Retreat

**February-November 2027**

Virtual Learning

**November 2027 onwards**

Workshop Preparation

**2028**

Attendance at  
IWA WWCE, Malaysia

For more information, visit [www.iwa-network.org/iwa-groups/iwa-leap-leadership-programme](http://www.iwa-network.org/iwa-groups/iwa-leap-leadership-programme)

# The LeaP Experience

## From Our First Cohort

As we open applications for our second set of leaders, we look back at the journey of our first. Explore the first-hand experiences of some of our 2024–2025 cohort and see what it means to be part of the IWA leadership legacy.



**Bénigne Ishimwe**

Rwanda



The IWA LeaP has given me a true sense of belonging. It created a safe space for us to share openly, and that has been life-changing for me. Knowing that I'm not alone in the challenges I face or the questions I ask myself as a young leader—and being inspired by the bold steps my peers are taking—has made me feel more validated and motivated than ever.



**Matthew MacRorie**

United Kingdom



The IWA LeaP has provoked me to understand myself better than I have ever before. Our coaches have created an open and safe environment to really explore who we are and what motivates everything we do. I have come to believe that understanding this deep source of inspiration is crucial to growing, not only as a leader, but also as a person. For me, the truly special aspect of this programme is that we have gone on this journey as a cohort, alongside other inspiring individuals. It has been a privilege to grow together and learn so much from such a diverse, kind and open-minded group of people - they have given me so much hope for the future!



**Chotiwat Jantaraksem (CJ)**

Thailand



Being accepted into the LeaP has been life-changing for me, especially after attending the retreat with my cohort. One of the most valuable aspects has been meeting incredibly capable coaches and outstanding YWP leaders from diverse cultures around the world. Listening to their stories has inspired me to become a better version of myself as a YWP. Each participant brings a unique perspective, and they are all truly passionate about their work in the water sector. They are excellent examples of people who genuinely care about both water and people. On top of that, they have become true friends. Although we may not often meet in person, every time I connect with my cohort online, it brings me joy. It makes me feel like I can share my ideas freely and always receive constructive feedback tailored to my needs.



**Laurence Strubbe**

Switzerland



I used to believe that leadership was reserved for older, more experienced people. But being part of this programme has shown me otherwise. Despite our youth and relative inexperience, we are given a voice through the LeaP programme, and that's empowering. Leadership is not about age or status; it's about growth, collaboration, and the courage to step forward. Most importantly, this programme equips us not only to lead ourselves but also to inspire leadership in others.

**Founding donors**  
**Glen and Patty Daigger**



## Hear from the founding donors

The IWA LeaP leadership programme is supported by the Emerging Water Leaders (EWL) Endowment Fund. Founding donors Glen and Patty Daigger see that their generous contribution is a way of creating a lasting legacy.

*"The thing about an endowment is that it is sustainable," says Patty. "It is evergreen. It goes on forever. We are hoping that by doing this we will encourage young water professionals from around the world to step up and to become the next generation of leaders in the field and to carry the sector forward. From our perspective, our contribution is a start to grow something that contributes to the existing excellent Young Water Professionals programme."*

Glen, a past IWA President, adds: *"We understand how essential water is for human life and to sustain the environment. We understand what life as a water professional can mean, both for the individual, but also for the contribution that one makes."*

### **Contact**

If you are interested in knowing more about how you can support IWA LeaP as a donor, please contact Keith Robertson ([keith.robertson@iwahq.org](mailto:keith.robertson@iwahq.org)) at the IWA Secretariat.

For more information, visit  
[www.iwa-network.org/iwa-groups/iwa-leap-leadership-programme](http://www.iwa-network.org/iwa-groups/iwa-leap-leadership-programme)

**inspiring change**

IWA | Export Building, 1 Clove Crescent, London E14 2BA, UK  
Company registered in England No. 3597005 | Registered Charity (England) No. 1076690

**IWA**  
the international  
water association