

IWA YWP Steering Committee 2025–2028: Valid Candidate Responses										
Full Name	Gender	Country of Residence	First Role Option	Second Role Option	Why are you the best for this role?	What are your learning expectations?	What is your motivation?	How would you be representing your region?	What is your availability for IWA related-activities?	How is your volunteer engagement with IWA?
Amr Ismail	Male	Canada	Specialist Group YWP coordination	Career Building	I would be a strong fit for the IWA YWP Steering Committee because I bring a record of delivering initiatives, experience across different professional environments, and a practical understanding of what young professionals need to grow. My background aligns closely with the two roles I selected. For the SG YWP Coordination role, I serve as a YWP Managing Committee Member of the Modelling and Integrated Assessment Specialist Group (MIA SG), where I founded the MIA Academy, a monthly initiative that makes modelling knowledge more accessible to young professionals worldwide. Through this platform, we have connected YWPs with experts, practical tools, and resources. Additionally, during my time with the Canadian YWP Chapter, I also worked with colleagues from other chapters on shared activities and outreach. That experience showed me how collaboration across chapters and Specialist Groups can create more opportunities for members. I am also well suited for the Career Building role because my own path has involved a practice across sectors, disciplines, and countries. I have worked as both a practitioner and an academic in Egypt and Canada, giving me insight into different career paths and professional cultures. I also transitioned from structural engineering to environmental engineering to pursue work with greater long-term impact. These experiences taught me that career development is rarely straightforward and that many young professionals benefit from guidance, visibility, and access to the right networks. If elected, I would contribute to practical initiatives such as mentorship opportunities, skills-based webinars, cross-sector discussions, and resources that help YWPs navigate career decisions with more clarity. I would approach the role by listening, contributing consistently, and helping turn useful ideas into activities that benefit young professionals across the IWA network.	I see this role as an opportunity to learn how strong international professional communities are managed, how decisions are made across a global volunteer network, and how successful initiatives are sustained over time. My experience so far has given me technical training, research experience, and volunteer involvement within IWA. What I now want to develop further is the ability to lead at a broader level: coordinating people across regions, setting clear priorities, building partnerships, and turning ideas into programs that continue delivering value after the initiative and underrepresented backgrounds to see that they can contribute internationally, build strong careers, and aim for opportunities beyond what may seem immediately available to them. Representation matters, but practical support matters even more. I would want to help create both. I am also motivated by building things that last. It is rewarding to see an idea become a program, a collaboration become a network, or an event create new opportunities for others. Some of the most valuable work in professional communities happens behind the scenes, and I value that kind of contribution. Finally, I am motivated by responsibility. If I have the experience, time, and ability to contribute, I believe I should use them in a way that benefits others. This role is an opportunity to do that through practical work, consistent service, and meaningful collaboration.	What motivates me most is the opportunity to create value for others while helping strengthen the future of the water sector. I come from Egypt, where it is not always common for young professionals to have a clear path into global leadership roles or international professional networks. Because of that, I do not take opportunities like this for granted. Being considered for a role of this scale means a great deal to me, and it also reminds me that many talented young people coming from diverse backgrounds where access, visibility, and confidence can be harder to build. One of my strongest motivations is to help people who are in the position I was once in. I want young professionals from developing countries and underrepresented backgrounds to see that they can contribute internationally, build strong careers, and aim for opportunities beyond what may seem immediately available to them. Representation matters, but practical support matters even more. I would want to help create both. I am also motivated by building things that last. It is rewarding to see an idea become a program, a collaboration become a network, or an event create new opportunities for others. Some of the most valuable work in professional communities happens behind the scenes, and I value that kind of contribution. Finally, I am motivated by responsibility. If I have the experience, time, and ability to contribute, I believe I should use them in a way that benefits others. This role is an opportunity to do that through practical work, consistent service, and meaningful collaboration.	I would ensure I represent IWA YWP members in my region by maintaining regular contact with them, understanding their priorities, and bringing those perspectives into committee discussions and activities. Good representation starts with listening to people in different settings and career stages. I would stay engaged with YWPs through chapter networks, direct conversations, online meetings, and IWA platforms to understand what they need most, whether that is technical training, career support, networking, or greater visibility within the association. My region includes professionals from utilities, consulting, academia, research, and other parts of the sector. Their priorities will differ depending on where they work and what stage of their career they are in. I would make sure those differences are recognized rather than assuming one approach fits everyone. I would also include young professionals who are not yet IWA members. Representation should not stop at those already inside the network. Many capable young professionals are not members simply because they have not yet seen the value of joining or have not had a clear point of entry. By delivering useful activities, sharing visible outcomes, and creating welcoming opportunities to participate, we can show the practical value of the IWA community and encourage wider engagement. I would pay particular attention to people who are less connected to established networks, including those from developing countries or chapters with fewer resources. Their perspectives are important and are often underheard. Just as important, communication should go both ways. I would not only bring feedback forward, but also report back on opportunities, decisions, and progress so people can see that their input leads to action. For me, representation means staying connected to people, understanding their realities, and making sure they are included in how the community grows.	Depending on my schedule, it could be both weekly and monthly.	Beyond formal roles, I have engaged as an IWA member by actively participating in conferences, professional events, and community activities. I have regularly volunteered at water sector conferences, including supporting event delivery and helping with practical tasks needed for successful operations. These experiences gave me the opportunity to contribute directly while learning from professionals across different parts of the sector. I have also used IWA as a space to build relationships with peers and senior professionals, exchange ideas, and stay connected to developments in the water field beyond my immediate workplace and research area. Additionally, I have tried to contribute where useful, whether by supporting activities, sharing opportunities with others, or helping create a welcoming environment for young professionals entering the community. For me, being an IWA member is not only about membership status. It is about participating, contributing, and helping strengthen the professional community around you.
Benedetta Sala	Female	Italy	YWP Chapter Coordination	YWP Events and Communications	I bring a combination of central (IWA Secretariat), local (chapter-level) and conference committee experience that positions me well to act as an effective bridge between IWA and its YWP communities. During nearly four years at the IWA Secretariat, I developed a strong understanding of how global programs, communications, and stakeholder engagement are structured and delivered. Over the past year as Communications Officer in the Italian YWP Steering Committee and as part of the Organising Committee of the 2nd IWA YWP EU Conference 2026, I have applied this knowledge in practice strengthening engagement, organising technical activities, and contributing to strategic partnerships and the organisation of the IWA YWP European Conference in Milan on 14-17 June 2026. This dual perspective allows me to identify gaps between global strategy and local implementation, particularly in supporting chapters that need clearer guidance, tools, and coordination. I would prioritise structured exchanges between chapters, improved communication flows, and stronger alignment with IWA's strategic priorities. My international professional background, including work across Italy and Denmark and engagement with utilities, authorities, and companies, enables me to connect diverse stakeholders and understand different regional contexts. I am used to operating in multicultural environments and translating complex topics into actionable initiatives. In this role, I would focus on strengthening chapter coordination, increasing visibility of YWP activities, and ensuring that young professionals are meaningfully integrated into IWA's broader mission.	I aim to deepen my understanding of how YWP chapters can effectively contribute to European and global water agenda, and I am particularly interested in advancing my water sector career and knowledge on topics such as water resilience, reuse, and sustainability.	I am motivated by the opportunity to strengthen the visibility, influence, and cohesion of the IWA YWP network. I am especially interested in improving coordination between chapters and to strengthen our common visibility and influence towards international institutions, universities, utilities and in learning how to scale local initiatives into impactful regional collaborations. With an established personal network across IWA, public institutions, and the water sector in Europe, I want to help position YWPs as a recognised and credible voice in international water discussions, while creating more opportunities for collaboration and professional growth within the community.	I will ensure active and continuous engagement through participation in key events (including the IWA World Water Congress in Glasgow for which I am already registered), regular interaction with European and international chapters through the establishment of regular calls/meetings and other input opportunities, and especially through the involvement in regional initiatives such as the YWP European, national conferences, other IWA or GM events. I will actively gather input from chapters, facilitate peer exchange, and ensure that YWP perspectives are represented in policy, stakeholder and multilateral processes where relevant (e.g. EU and international dialogues), ensuring alignment between member needs and IWA priorities.	Up to 1 full working day per week on average, with flexibility to increase availability during peak periods.	Beyond my formal roles, I actively contribute to the water sector through international engagement, and best practices exchange, advocacy on water sustainability and STEM awareness. My work focuses on strengthening knowledge sharing, promoting innovative solutions, and raising awareness on sustainable water management cooperation internationally.
Chotwat Jantarakase	Male	United States	Strategic Advisory	Career Building	I believe I would be well suited to this role based on three key strengths. First, I have strong expertise in strategic thinking and leadership vision for Young Water Professionals (YWP). In 2024-2025, I was selected as part of the first cohort of the IWA LEAP Leadership Programme. As part of this programme, I undertook the CliftonStrengths assessment, which identified my top strengths as Klarmont and strategic thinking. This capability is reflected in two major achievements. I established the IWA YWP Chapter Thailand by uniting YWPs and mobilising resources to strengthen YWP engagement nationally. I also co-founded FLOW RIPPLE (Future Leaders of Water Raising Impact through People, Project Leadership and Education), an IWA YWP-led initiative enabling young people to address water pollution in their communities. This initiative has recently attracted interest from the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, supported by my strong social and research capital. In my current role as a postdoctoral associate at MIT, I lead a research initiative that involved interviewing more than 50 YWPs across multiple countries to understand their challenges and needs. These insights have informed a funded research project that I now lead, demonstrating my ability to provide strategic advice to IWA on engaging and supporting YWPs. Second, I bring extensive experience across the IWA YWP ecosystem, from volunteering at flagship conferences to serving on steering committees, leading YWP forums, establishing a national chapter, and contributing to both specialist and world congresses as a speaker, organiser and panelist. This has strengthened my ability to liaise effectively between YWP representatives and senior IWA members, and provide feedback between senior water professionals and YWPs. Finally, my experience across academia, industry, regulatory bodies and nongovernmental organisations enables me to support YWPs from diverse professional backgrounds and ensure inclusive, cross-sector engagement.	Through this role, I wish to deepen my understanding of how to work closely with members of the IWA Strategic Council, the YWP Steering Committee and the wider YWP community to co-develop agendas and make meaningful contributions to the Association. I see this role as an important learning opportunity because I envision a long term relationship with IWA and continued service to the global water community. I recognise the significant potential for YWPs to complement and advance the IWA vision. At the same time, I observe that there can be gaps between IWA's strategic objectives and their practical implementation, particularly in addressing the evolving needs of YWPs. By working closely with senior leadership and governance structures within IWA, I wish to learn how strategic priorities are translated into action and how these processes can be strengthened to better support YWPs. Learning to collaborate effectively with the Strategic Council and Steering Committee will be highly valuable to my water career, as it will enable me to better bridge the gap between academia and practice. This experience will help me understand how research, policy and professional practice interact, allowing me to shape my academic work to address the right questions and respond directly to real world needs in the water sector. Moreover, I seek to strengthen my ability to translate insights from governance and leadership roles into impactful contributions at the implementation level. Applying these lessons to my career will help me align research, leadership and professional engagement in a way that catalyses lasting impact across the water sector.	I am motivated to take on this role because I strongly believe in empowering Young Water Professionals (YWPs) by sharing opportunities, building leadership capacity and inspiring others to step forward. I see this position as a way to give back to the YWP community by passing on opportunities, mentoring emerging leaders and strengthening collective impact. I have been working with IWA for almost a decade, starting as a volunteer and progressing to establishing a national YWP chapter and being recognised through selection into the prestigious IWA LEAP Programme. Through this journey, I have worked closely with YWPs internationally and locally in Thailand, the UK and the US. These experiences have given me a clear understanding of what works well, what could be improved, and how collaboration across cultures and contexts can be strengthened. I am motivated to use this experience and my personal strengths to provide strategic advice to the Association by helping identify and serve the diverse needs of YWPs. From a bottom-up perspective, I have listened carefully to the voices of YWPs at different career stages, including those serving in subcommittees and leadership roles. I believe I can bring this insight and articulate an agenda that genuinely reflects YWP priorities and help it forward within IWA's governance structures. I see significant potential for YWP impact across IWA programmes, conferences and specialist groups, and I am motivated to remain actively involved in these spaces. I am also driven by the importance of strong two-way communication. Through interviewing more than 60 individuals in resourceconstrained settings to understand challenges in access to clean water, I have learned the value of translating strategic-level decisions into meaningful implementation. I am motivated to use this skill to strengthen communication between the Strategic Council and the YWP Steering Committee. Finally, working closely with IWA Fellows and senior leaders has been a transformative experience for me personally and professionally, and I am motivated to help create similar opportunities for the next generation of water leaders.	I will ensure that I effectively represent IWA YWP members in my region through regular, structured engagement and continuous dialogue with YWPs at local, regional and international levels. In Southeast Asia, I remain actively involved in chapter-level leadership by hosting monthly IWA YWP Chapter meetings and weekly subcommittee meetings. These regular interactions allow me to stay closely connected to the needs, challenges and priorities of YWPs in the region. They also enable me to respond promptly and appropriately, while keeping myself informed of emerging issues that may affect YWPs' professional development and engagement. At the Asia Pacific level, I actively collaborate with YWP representatives from China, the United States and Canada through monthly or bimonthly meetings. Together, we work on strengthening regional initiatives that support youth engagement in water pollution control across Asia. This collaboration allows me to understand diverse regional perspectives and ensure that regional voices are represented in broader discussions and initiatives. In addition, through my role as a postdoctoral associate, I am currently leading problemsolving and research initiatives focused on improving access to clean water. I intentionally adopt participatory research approaches that incorporate the perspectives of YWPs. I consistently engage YWP representatives from South and Southeast Asia, and North American countries such as India, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Canada and the United States to ensure that their views and local contexts are reflected. This approach allows me to ground strategic discussions in real experiences and challenges faced by YWPs in the region.	Approximately 2.5 hours per week, with flexibility for peak activity periods.	My work has been presented at major IWA conferences, including the IWA Water Development Congress and Exhibition (WDCOE) 2023 and IWA ASPRE 2025. In 2025, I hosted a workshop at WDCOE and was invited to serve as a keynote plenary panelist on water and health, with a particular focus on wastewater surveillance. I participated in the IWA Emerging Water Leaders Forum in 2023, where I developed leadership skills and was inspired to later establish the IWA Young Water Professionals (YWP) Chapter Thailand. Since its inception, I have served as Chair, successfully connecting young professionals nationally and strengthening links with the international IWA community. During WDCOE 2025, together with the Chapter Committee, I organised activities for YWP participants, including a networking dinner, city tour and technical visit to a major polluted canal in central Bangkok. Through the IWA LEAP Programme, I also co-founded FLOW RIPPLE, a youth-led initiative that empowers local communities to participate in water pollution control. FLOW RIPPLE has delivered capacity building workshops for university students in China and Thailand, and this work has been submitted as part of IWA Specialist Group contribution to the IWA Global Trends Report 2026. In addition, I actively contribute to the scientific mission of IWA through the publication of peerreviewed research in IWA journals.
Denisa Carkova	Female	Czech Republic	Career Building	YWP Chapter Coordination	Through my role as Chair of IWA YWP Czech Republic, I have gained experience with Career Building activities, including organising and contributing to webinars, career development workshops, and technical tours at national and international level. Building on this experience, I would plan and coordinate Career Building activities such as targeted webinars and career talks with industry professionals, sharing successful stories about different career paths, and potentially a mentoring programme, supporting knowledge-sharing and career discussions. My goal is to help young professionals better understand their own strengths and how they can access meaningful opportunities. I would also actively share relevant opportunities for YWPs and support them in navigating their professional development. I also see value in opening discussions on the future work/life in the water sector and supporting global knowledge-sharing to help YWPs navigating opportunities across regions. Ultimately, I aim to connect YWPs with each other, with organisations, and with opportunities, supporting them in becoming more confident and well-prepared professionals.	In this role, I would like to further develop my ability to design and deliver activities that support the professional development of young water professionals at an international level. I am particularly interested in strengthening my approach to creating meaningful learning opportunities, including mentoring, workshops, and knowledge-sharing platforms that connect people across regions. Within the Steering Committee, I see a strong opportunity to learn from experienced members and contribute to the design of activities that are both impactful and relevant to diverse YWP communities. Additionally, I am highly motivated to work within an international team and learn from diverse perspectives, as I find great value in understanding how different regions approach similar challenges and bringing these insights together. I aim to apply these skills in my career by supporting capacity building in the water sector and helping young professionals gain clarity, build confidence, and translate knowledge into practice.	I am motivated to contribute to this role because it has a direct and meaningful impact on young water professionals. Supporting people in finding their career direction, developing relevant skills, and gaining confidence is something I find both important and personally fulfilling. During my own journey, I often felt uncertain about what opportunities were available in the water sector and how to navigate them. It was through webinars, courses, and networking activities that I was able to gain clarity and eventually find a role that I truly enjoy. This experience motivates me to help others navigate their own paths with more clarity and confidence. I am motivated to remain actively involved in these spaces. I am also driven by the genuinely enjoy connecting people, sharing opportunities, and creating spaces where young professionals can learn from each other and from more experienced colleagues. Being part of this role would allow me to contribute to a supportive and inclusive environment where YWPs can grow, connect, and become more confident professionals in the water sector.	To ensure I effectively represent IWA YWP members in my region, I will build on my role as Chair of YWP Czech Republic and my involvement in international YWP networks, following a structured approach based on listening, connecting, acting, and reporting back. I will gather input through regular communication, including informal discussions, events, collaboration with chapters, and platforms such as IWA Connect Plus, while creating a safe environment where young professionals feel comfortable sharing their perspectives. Building on this, I will actively connect IWA YWP members with existing regional networks across Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. YWP Chapters, IAWD) to strengthen collaboration and representation. I will bring these insights into discussions, advocate for YWPs, and communicate outcomes back to the community while continuously gathering feedback.	I am able to reliably participate in the monthly YWP Steering Committee calls. Thanks to flexible working conditions, including partial home office, I can adjust my schedule as needed. On a weekly basis, I can dedicate approximately one hour to IWA activities. I am aware that during more intensive periods (e.g. event preparation), a higher time commitment may be required, and I am prepared to adjust accordingly. Prior to applying, I consulted with current Steering Committee members to ensure I have a realistic understanding of the workload. Time management is one of my strengths.	Beyond my formal roles, I actively engage in the IWA community through participation in YWP events, technical webinars, networking activities, and international collaboration across chapters, including regional YWP calls and career-focused sessions. I contribute to community engagement by connecting young water professionals, sharing opportunities, and supporting knowledge exchange, including initiating connections between YWP chapters and organising informal calls. Through my involvement in YWP Czech Republic and regional initiatives such as the IAWD YWP network (under a Memorandum of Understanding with IWA), I support the development of new YWP groups in the Danube region and foster collaboration across countries. I also participate in international YWP conferences (e.g. 1st European YWP Conference) and promote stronger international engagement through the Czech Water Association. Additionally, I engage with IWA Specialist Groups focused on sustainability in water and public communication, exploring opportunities for deeper involvement.

Deely Katanga	Male	Zambia	Career Building	YWP Chapter Coordination	<p>I believe I am a good fit for the Careers Building role as I am passionate about skills development and have practical experience in capacity building in the water sector. I have been active in career building initiatives to name a few: mentoring and training 50 university students under the Bloomberg Action Fund Lusaka Transform Programme; training community members during the rehabilitation of the Chitoye water kiosk on operations and sustainability; supporting the Young WASH Voices campaign in schools; and contributing to initiatives like Toilet Making the Grade. These activities have enhanced my skills in providing meaningful and practical learning opportunities in both academic and community settings. I recognise the need for practical knowledge to complement academic learning, particularly for young professionals. I appointed, I will help build career-building activities like mentorship and workshops, and learning platforms. I will facilitate an inclusive and engaging environment for young professionals from different and under-represented backgrounds. I will also work closely with other committee members to ensure engagement and provide valuable career-building activities in line with IWA objectives. Drawing on my mentoring, training and youth engagement experience, I will work to support the development of a highly skilled, confident and engaged community of young water professionals. I am enthusiastic, proactive and willing to help others grow while I grow as a water professional.</p>	<p>In this position, I hope to enhance my knowledge of international best practices in water management, career development, and youth engagement in the water sector. Specifically, I want to learn how to develop and implement career development initiatives, such as mentoring schemes, skills training and knowledge exchange platforms that cater to young professionals in various stages of their careers. I also hope to build on my leadership, coordination and strategic planning skills by collaborating with a diverse international team. Collaborating with professionals from diverse regions will help me gain insights, ideas and best practices that I can tailor to the local context. Finally, I would like to enhance my skills in engaging diverse stakeholders, and providing opportunities for marginalised groups so that career-building initiatives are inclusive and effective. I plan to use this knowledge to improve capacity-building initiatives in my region, support youth engagement and leadership programs, and contribute to developing more sustainable and equitable water solutions in my community and region.</p>	<p>I am driven by the chance to help grow and empower young water professionals, as well as to learn and develop in the field myself. I have experience training students and community members, and I have witnessed the transformative power of knowledge, mentoring and experience in careers and water and sanitation outcomes. I am passionate about helping close the gap between academia and the workplace, particularly for young professionals who have limited opportunities for exposure and training. This opportunity offers the chance to engage in impactful programs that promote career development, sharing of knowledge and regional collaboration. I am also attracted by the chance to connect with a global community, learn from a range of experiences, and work towards local and global solutions. My driving motivation is to make a difference - helping others develop and contributing to a more capable, connected, and efficient water sector.</p>	<p>I will effectively represent the region by engaging with young water professionals in my region, and by facilitating communication and feedback channels. I will engage with regional networks, organisations, and professionals in YWP to identify their needs, concerns and opportunities. I will use formal and informal channels (meetings, workshops, social media) to collect feedback and share news about IWA YWP events. This will ensure that regional input is heard and considered throughout discussions and decision-making. I will also prioritise initiative by actively engaging with groups who are under-represented, such as students and early career professionals. Drawing on my past engagement with community-based and youth-oriented programs, I will encourage engagement and get more young professionals involved with IWA. I will also give regular feedback to the committee, to ensure my region's perspectives are incorporated into valuable and relevant programmes. I will strive to be a trusted bridge between the IWA YWP Steering Committee and its members in my region, to ensure they are supported.</p>	<p>I can dedicate to IWA YWP activities around 4-6 hours per week on average, depending on my other commitments. This includes attending meetings, contributing to ongoing projects and support for communication and coordination. I am available to commit to monthly participation in scheduled committee meetings, planning and execution of important activities like workshops, mentoring and outreach programs. I am able to attend during busy periods or significant events to maintain a strong contribution and timely completion of tasks. In summary, I am dedicated to regular involvement and active engagement in all tasks and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Given the newness of IWA YWP Zambia, my formal involvement has been minimal. But I have been engaging by joining IWA webinars and monitoring the important discussions and knowledge sharing platforms within the network. I have also supported the values of IWA in my local community through engaging in water and sanitation related activities including training, community outreach, and youth activities. These activities demonstrate my support for IWA's mission and initiative to engage with the growth of young professionals in the industry. I have also encouraged youth participation in water projects and activities to build on momentum for increased youth engagement in the region. As the local chapter grows, I look forward to increasing my involvement, being involved in activities and contributing to the growth of IWA YWP in Zambia.</p>
Eisa Jacob	Female	United Kingdom	Strategic Advisory	YWP Chapter Coordination	<p>A defining facet of my representation of young water professionals, as Strategic Advisor to the Steering Committee, would be a distinctive sensitivity to the water and climate challenges faced by communities worldwide. This awareness resonates with my own journey, raised across several Asian countries, educated in France and the UK, and working extensively in water-sector regions as a sustainability and resilience strategist for international urban development. As a result, my career and research are dedicated to re-centring water and nature-based solutions within infrastructure, planning, and policy agendas. Water, in its place within the natural world, connects all humanity physically, emotionally, and economically, highlighting IWAs role in unring an international community of experts through collaboration and cooperation. Yet, at a time of global water bankruptcy, it is more important than ever to amplify youth voices and their perspectives, who will not bear the brunt of our planet's mismanagement. I would approach advisory work for the Association as I approach project work: as a champion of integration. Rooted in systems thinking, this concept entails the creation of bespoke frameworks and methodologies to ensure multidisciplinary collaboration, nurture synergistic ideas, and negotiate trade-offs towards a compelling shared agenda. While deeply passionate, I repeatedly encounter glass ceilings in my field, and I am grateful for the national and international support of the current YWP Steering Committee Chapter Coordinator. In the same spirit, I volunteered as Fundraising Chair of the World Water Camp to propulse other emerging professionals and encourage lasting engagement in the Association. As Strategic Advisor, I could also contribute cross-sector insight from my involvement with Chatham House, the IUCN, and other fora to guide those who wish to engage at the intersection of water innovation and nature-based solutions, as these become central to addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.</p>	<p>In this position, I hope to enhance my knowledge of international best practices in water management, career development, and youth engagement in the water sector. Specifically, I want to learn how to develop and implement career development initiatives, such as mentoring schemes, skills training and knowledge exchange platforms that cater to young professionals in various stages of their careers. I also hope to build on my leadership, coordination and strategic planning skills by collaborating with a diverse international team. Collaborating with professionals from diverse regions will help me gain insights, ideas and best practices that I can tailor to the local context. Finally, I would like to enhance my skills in engaging diverse stakeholders, and providing opportunities for marginalised groups so that career-building initiatives are inclusive and effective. I plan to use this knowledge to improve capacity-building initiatives in my region, support youth engagement and leadership programs, and contribute to developing more sustainable and equitable water solutions in my community and region.</p>	<p>Children and youth, due to age and generally lower socio-economic conditions, are disproportionately vulnerable to the world's present state of water bankruptcy, all while lacking the political power to positively influence their future, for all the same reasons. More than ever, it is vital to have global youth from high- and low-income countries, and other underrepresented voices, engage in the conversation, as we are the inheritors of the degraded and insufficient systems left by today's mismanagement of the planet's resources. My motivation to join the Steering Committee as Strategic Advisor is clear: to help young professionals in the water sector break through glass ceilings of their immediate environments by engaging IWA's global community, and exert a force for good in the social, ecological, and technological systems of their community. As a woman in my late twenties living in a global city, I feel a profound responsibility to help my platform as a youth representative across institutions, associations, and think tanks to advance the often overlooked agenda of future generations.</p>	<p>As a French national living in the UK for the past ten years, working at the intersection of water engineering, sustainable development, and policy advisory, I am well positioned to represent the needs and concerns of the IWA YWP Chapter, particularly in the context of European cooperation in these spheres. The false narrative that water is solely a Global South issue is finally falling apart, with Global North nations increasingly facing questions of scarcity, cross-border tensions, and the systemic collapse of freshwater systems the ongoing case of the River Wye reaching the High Court now standing as a compelling example. Water, in its place within the natural world, connects all humanity physically, emotionally, and economically. As a result, we are commonly vulnerable to, and responsible for, its mismanagement. As such, I contributed to the co-creation of the Fair Water Footprints Youth Strategy, advocating for accountability and recognition of the natural context of water within initiatives that highlight the virtual and embedded water flows within global trade. There is no such thing as externalities. On the other hand, through the IWA global community of experts, the water sector can become a bridge between North, South, East, and West in an alarmingly fragmented world. My two-year mandate as Strategic Advisor would be marked by a principle of Global Water Balance: representing the voice of YWP at a regional level through consultation and engagement, while identifying opportunities for global collaboration and cooperation through my advisory responsibilities to the Steering Committee.</p>	<p>While I am currently committed to my role as Fundraising Chair of the World Water Camp, I remain available approximately four days per month, including weekends, somewhere in the range of six and ten hours per week. This availability will increase after October 2026, once the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition has passed. I am very flexible in terms of scheduling meetings during weekdays with reasonable notice, as I have my employees full endorsement, and will dedicate weeks to progressing advisory work and deliverables. Finally, given the international scope of my consulting role, I am experienced in cross-national coordination across multiple time zones and remain available late evenings and early mornings as required.</p>	<p>I have been actively engaged in IWA as a member since 2023. At a regional level, I take part in the activities of the UK Young Water Professionals Chapter, representing our community at events such as a courtesy meeting with His Excellency the Ambassador of Thailand, as well as the co-creation of the Fair Water Footprints Youth Strategy, five years since the signing of the Glasgow Declaration. To support the Chapters events programme, I also joined as Fundraising Chair of the World Water Camp, a leadership incubator running in tandem with the 2026 IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition in Glasgow, an opportunity to amplify voices of young professionals in the water sector. At a global level, I am engaged with several groups in line with my field of expertise, including the Nature-based Solutions for Climate Resilient Water and Sanitation Management Cluster, as well as the Sustainability in the Water Sector and Efficient Urban Water Management Specialist Groups. I have twice been an abstract reviewer for the IWA Water and Development Congress & Exhibition, and once for the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition. This fall, I will be presenting a poster on my personal research at the next IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition. Outside IWA's groups and events, I am very engaged in think tanks, international organisations, and learned societies such as the Chatham House Royal Institute of International Affairs, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the British Ecological Society (BES), to advance our shared agenda at the intersection of water, natural systems, and policy.</p>
Federick Pinogonos	Male	United States	YWP Events and Communications	Career Building	<p>I am applying for the Events and Communications and Career Building roles because they reflect how I am already contributing within the IWA community. Through my involvement in the Leadership Programme (Leap), the Programme Committee for the Emerging Water Leaders Forum, and the organisation of the Leap session for the upcoming World Water Congress in Glasgow, I have gained direct experience in coordinating activities, supporting programme development, and engaging peers across an international network. Beyond IWA, I have also served on multiple organising committees for conferences and symposiums, particularly those related to water, engineering, and youth engagement, including global initiatives connected with UNESCO and other international platforms. These experiences have strengthened my attention to detail, communication, and reliability within team settings, as well as my ability to coordinate across diverse groups and time zones. I am someone who follows through on commitments and can be depended on to support group efforts, which is essential in organising events and maintaining consistent communication across a global community. For the Career Building role, I bring a strong interest in mentorship and professional development. I take pride in my own career path and the experiences that have shaped it, and I am motivated to support others in navigating their own. With a strength in individualization, I approach mentorship by understanding different backgrounds, goals, and challenges, and adapting my support accordingly. I am also passionate about knowledge sharing and creating spaces where young water professionals can connect, exchange ideas, and learn from one another across regions. If selected, I would contribute by supporting well-organised events, strengthening communication across the YWP network, and helping create accessible opportunities for young professionals to connect and develop within IWA.</p>	<p>I hope to gain deeper insight into global water governance, strategic leadership, and how international networks operate at scale. I am particularly interested in learning how to design and deliver impactful programs that connect regions, strengthen collaboration, and address global water challenges. This role would also help me further develop my leadership, communication, and coordination skills in a global setting.</p>	<p>What motivates me to be part of this role is the opportunity to contribute to a community that is actively shaping the future of the water sector. Through my involvement in IWA, particularly in the Leap Programme and engagement with Young Water Professionals, I have seen how valuable it is to create spaces where peers can connect, exchange ideas, and learn from one another across different contexts. I am especially motivated by the opportunity to create meaningful pathways for engagement. Not everyone enters the water sector with the same level of access, exposure, or confidence, and I have seen how intentional opportunities and supportive environments can make a significant difference. Being part of the Steering Committee would allow me to contribute to building those spaces at a broader, more global level. My motivation also comes from the intersection of technical work and community. In my current role, I see the importance of strong technical foundations, but I also recognize that collaboration, communication, and shared learning are essential to advancing effective water solutions. I am interested in contributing to initiatives that bring these elements together in a way that is practical and inclusive. Ultimately, I am motivated by the opportunity to support a network where young professionals feel connected, represented, and encouraged to contribute, while continuing to learn from a diverse and global community.</p>	<p>I will ensure that I represent IWA Young Water Professionals in my region by maintaining active and intentional engagement with local and regional networks, while creating accessible ways for others to share their perspectives. Based in California and working within a state regulatory context, I am connected to a diverse community of early-career professionals across utilities, consulting, academia, and government. I would continue to engage with these groups through existing networks, informal conversations, and professional activities to understand the challenges and priorities they are facing. I would also focus on creating simple and consistent feedback loops, including regular check-ins with peers, using digital platforms to gather input, and encouraging open dialogue during events and meetings. I believe representation is not only about sharing information outward, but also about actively listening and bringing those insights back into discussions within the Steering Committee. This approach is reflected in my interactions within the Leap Cohort, where I have been intentional about engaging others and contributing in a way that supports collective understanding. Through the Leap Programme, I have developed a clearer sense of my purpose within the water sector: to listen and help amplify voices that are not always heard. I would carry this forward by using the platform of the Steering Committee to elevate perspectives from those who may not always have access to global conversations. I also recognize that representation extends beyond geographic boundaries. Through my involvement in international programmes such as Leap, I engage with peers across different countries and contexts and would continue to bridge these perspectives by sharing insights across regions and helping ensure that diverse experiences are reflected in the work of the YWP network. Ultimately, I would approach this role with a commitment to being present, responsive, and intentional in how I represent others.</p>	<p>I am able to commit approximately one weekday per week (around 6-8 hours) to support IWA activities, including meetings, coordination, and follow-up tasks. On a monthly basis, I can provide additional time as needed to support key events, deliverables, or periods of increased activity, such as during conference preparation. I am accustomed to working across different time zones and have demonstrated flexibility in coordinating with international teams through my involvement in the Leap programme and other IWA activities. I am committed to being consistent, responsive, and reliable in fulfilling the responsibilities of this role.</p>	<p>I have actively engaged as an IWA member through participation in a range of activities that support knowledge exchange and community building. I regularly attend IWA webinars and virtual events to stay informed on emerging topics and to engage with the broader water community. I have also supported Young Water Professionals (YWP) activities globally, contributing to events and initiatives that bring together early-career professionals across different regions. This includes engaging in discussions, supporting event coordination efforts, and contributing to collaborative initiatives within the IWA network. In addition, I have contributed through volunteer efforts, including reviewing abstracts, assisting in the development of blog posts, and supporting critical preparation for IWA platforms such as the Source magazine. These experiences have allowed me to contribute to knowledge sharing and to support the dissemination of ideas and perspectives within the water sector. Through these activities, I have aimed to stay actively involved, contribute where possible, and support the continued growth and engagement of the IWA community.</p>
Francisca Braga	Female	Denmark	Strategic Advisory	Vice-chair	<p>I believe I am well suited for the Strategic Advisor role due to my long-term engagement with IWA YWP at both national and international levels, combined with hands-on leadership experience and a strong strategic perspective. I have been an active member of IWP Denmark for the past seven years, serving four years on the board, first as Secretary and later as Chair. In these roles, I was closely involved in governance, strategic planning, member engagement, and collaboration with external partners. This experience has given me a deep understanding of how YWP chapters operate, the challenges they face, and the importance of aligning local initiatives with IWAs broader strategic goals. At the international level, I served on the IWA YWP Steering Committee as the Career Building role, where I led and co-developed numerous webinars and capacity-building activities aimed at supporting young professionals in navigating their water careers. Through this role, I worked closely with Steering Committee members, task forces, and IWA networks, gaining practical experience in strategic coordination, continuity, and delivery at a global scale. Besides that, I was a part of the program committee from the EVL in 20204. As a Strategic Advisor, I would contribute by Supporting strategic discussions with evidence-based insights and structured reflection; Ensuring alignment between YWP activities, member needs, and IWAs long-term vision; and Strengthening knowledge transfer and strategic coherence across roles and regions. My combined experience enables me to contribute not only operationally, but also strategically, with a strong focus on sustainable impact for the YWP community.</p>	<p>Through this role, I aim to further develop my understanding of strategic governance, long-term organisational planning, and leadership within international professional networks. While I have experience implementing initiatives and leading teams, I am particularly keen to learn how strategic priorities are shaped, evaluated, and sustained at a global level across diverse regions. This perspective will strengthen my ability to contribute to future leadership roles in the water sector, especially at the interface between research, professional development, and international collaboration.</p>	<p>My motivation comes from a longstanding commitment to the YWP community and a strong belief in the role young professionals play in shaping the future water sector. Having personally benefited from YWP activities early in my career, I am motivated to ensure that future generations continue to have access to high-quality, inclusive, and relevant opportunities. Serving as a Strategic Advisor allows me to contribute at a level where I can help shape structures and directions (not just individual activities) ensuring that YWP remains impactful, creative, and aligned with evolving global water challenges.</p>	<p>I will ensure strong regional representation by maintaining active and continuous dialogue with YWP members and chapter leaders in my region, building on my established network through YWP Denmark and the broader IWA community. I will actively listen to regional priorities, challenges, and emerging needs, and ensure these perspectives are clearly communicated within the Steering Committee. At the same time, I will support transparent feedback by sharing Steering Committee discussions and outcomes back to regional members, encouraging engagement and participation. By acting as a two-way bridge between regional members and global strategy, I will work to ensure that regional voices are meaningfully reflected in IWA YWP decision-making.</p>	<p>I will be available to participate in the monthly YWP Steering Committee meetings, as well as meetings related to the Strategic Advisor role, and can commit up to approximately two hours of work per week. I understand that the workload may vary over time, with some periods requiring higher levels of engagement than others.</p>	<p>Alongside my roles in YWP Denmark and the IWA YWP Steering Committee, I have served on the Programme Committee of the EVL conference in Canada and have been a member of the Management Committee of the IWA Specialist Group on MIA for the past two years.</p>

Hadi Mokarizaden	Male	Canada	Vice-chair	YWP Events and Communications	<p>Considering my strong experience and long-standing involvement, I believe I would bring meaningful value to this role through my combination of technical expertise, leadership in IWA, and active engagement at both regional and global levels. I have been involved with IWA Young Water Professionals Canada, one of the most active YWP chapters globally, for over four years, serving as Communications Director, Co-Chair, and currently Chair for the past two years, where I lead a national team of over 40 volunteers and executives. In this role, I have organized national and international conferences, workshops, mentorship programs, and knowledge-sharing initiatives that have strengthened engagement across Canada. I have also contributed internationally through the IWA & Grundfos Youth Action for SDG 6 Fellowship, collaborating with global peers to develop recommendations on locally led water resilience solutions. Professionally, as a Water and Wastewater Engineer at Parsons, combined with my PhD research, I bring both practical and technical perspectives. I have also received several awards recognizing leadership, community engagement, and contributions to sustainability, which have strengthened my ability to lead and collaborate effectively. The IWA YWP Steering Committee has already established strong and impactful initiatives, and I would be excited to build on this foundation. If selected, I will contribute new ideas shaped by my experiences, while supporting collaboration between chapters, inclusive programming, and meaningful engagement of young professionals. I am committed to contributing in a reliable, thoughtful, and impactful way aligned with the IWA YWP mission.</p>	<p>I hope to gain deeper insight into global water governance, strategic leadership, and how international networks operate at scale. I am particularly interested in learning how to design and deliver impactful programs that connect regions, strengthen collaboration, and address global water challenges. This role would also help me further develop my leadership, communication, and coordination skills in a global setting.</p>	<p>I&E'm motivated by the opportunity to contribute to a global community working toward sustainable water solutions and advancing SDG 6. Through my journey with IWA YWP Canada and my involvement in international initiatives, I&E've seen how powerful collaboration and shared learning can be. Supporting young professionals, creating spaces for connection, and helping others grow in the sector are things I genuinely care about.</p>	<p>I will maintain close communication with the Canadian YWP community through regular engagement, feedback collection, and collaboration with chapter members and leadership. I will ensure regional perspectives are represented by sharing insights, challenges, and opportunities from Canada while also creating pathways to connect our members with global initiatives.</p>	<p>Considering my involvement in YWP activities over the years, I understand the importance of active engagement and consistent contribution for team's success. I am able to commit on a regular basis to support this role, including weekly involvement and active participation in monthly meetings, events, and collaborative initiatives as required.</p>	<p>In addition to my leadership roles in YWP Canada, I have actively contributed to IWA through serving on scientific committees for major conferences such as the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition (WWCE) 2025 and the IWA Water Development Congress & Exhibition (WDC) 2026. I have also served on the organizing and executive committees for events including the 14th IWA Microplastic & Ecochazard Conference. Furthermore, I have presented at IWA conferences and YWP events, participated in international initiatives, contributed to knowledge-sharing activities, and engaged in global programs such as the IWA & Grundfos Youth Action for SDG 6 Fellowship.</p>
Matt Irwin	Male	United Kingdom	YWP Events and Communications	Strategic Advisory	<p>I have been an active member of the IWA for the past 4 years. Last year I joined our countries YWP steering committee under the secretary role. This has required me to help and support the other members of our committee whilst also organising meetings and taking notes. Additionally, the role has given me the opportunity to reach out and plan activities/events with other local country chapters. In early April 2025 we hosted our annual YWP conference which I helped organize and chaired for the whole first day of the event. During the course of which I helped with registration, welcome speeches, thanking sponsors and organisation to help ensure the conference ran smoothly. I also made specific mention to promote the Water Camp at the end of the event. This year I have been promoted to the role of World Water Camp main chair by our committee chair after the original chair had to drop out. This decision was made as I was known to be reliable, enthusiastic about supporting YWPs and great at coordinating different role leads to ensure successful delivery. I've been really proud of the team has put together so far and I'm looking forward to seeing all the other YWPs later this year in Glasgow.</p>	<p>I was recently on the scientific committee for the 2025 WYUPEU conference, being held in June in Milan. I hadn't done a role like this before, but I thought it would provide me a great learning experience but also give me a chance to take on a wider international role. By undertaking this steering committee role this would be the main things I would be looking to further expand my experience in. Long term I'm interested in undertaking a role in coordinating international research and work, with a particular interest in supporting other YWPs expand their work capacities and contributions.</p>	<p>I have been lucky to travel internationally to several different IWA conferences/events. During my travels I have always found myself inspired by the amazing work and commitment other YWPs have to the water sector. I&E'm looking to undertake this role as I&E'm looking to champion YWPs around the world who want to positively contribute to improving the water sector. I see this role as one I can undertake to help build and support events that further advance YWPs who are looking to further develop themselves. But further I would also like to create and promote events and spaces for YWPs who are interested in further developing themselves but are perhaps anxious or less experienced in finding opportunities to do so. This is a key driving factor for me, as I have met YWPs who show fantastic potential but just require the right platform/spaces to promote them and their work.</p>	<p>I would seek to keep regular contact with the different country chapter chairs so I can keep up with developments within my region. I would also be interested in starting up a monthly Q&A session where IWA YWPs can meet and here updates from me about the wider community. Then I'd be happy to take questions either about that or questions for future meetings. In my current secretary role I have already had experience with reaching out to other country chapter YWPs to coordinate potential collaborations and knowledge exchanges.</p>	<p>I am dedicated to this role and would have flexible weekly attendance to meetings if required. I enjoy international travel and so would look to join YWP activities internationally but particularly within my local region so I can meet people in person and give an in-person face as a representative of the international YWP committee.</p>	<p>I actively attend webinars hosted by the IWA and engage with the speakers with any questions I have. I also attend and present at IWA conferences. Most recently I have attended and chaired part of our annual IWA YWP conference which I have presented at in previous years. Last October I was also fortunate enough present at the IWA APSIRE conference in Christchurch, New Zealand. There was a pre-conference YWP workshop which gave me a chance to meet fantastic YWP who emphasized the importance of international collaboration for solving international problems.</p>
Natalie Lamb	Female	United Kingdom	Chair	Strategic Advisory	<p>I would be an excellent fit for this role due to my proven leadership within IWA at both national and international levels, combined with my experience working with strategy. During my recent term on the IWA YWP Steering Committee as Chapter Coordinator (2025-2026), I strengthened global connectivity by initiating and leading monthly informal forums that brought together YWP chapters worldwide. These sessions created a space to share challenges, best practices, and lessons learned, improving collaboration across chapters. I have also demonstrated strong governance and organisational capability by rebuilding the IWA YWP UK committee. Alongside the amazing help of Isabelle at HG, I developed bespoke Terms of Reference, led a full recruitment process, and interviewed candidates to create a new team. This experience aligns directly with the strategic oversight and leadership responsibilities outlined in the Terms of Reference. In parallel, I bring extensive experience in strategy implementation and delivery through my roles with IWA UK and the Institute of Water, I have successfully developed and executed national engagement strategies across multiple sub-committees, ensuring alignment, accountability, and measurable impact. I also have a strong background in communication and technical writing, supported by my PhD and publication record, enabling me to contribute effectively to strategic documents and advisory outputs. As Chair/Strategic Advisory, I would focus on strengthening global engagement, ensuring regional representation is embedded in decision-making, and supporting the delivery of impactful, inclusive initiatives. My combination of leadership, strategic thinking, and demonstrated delivery makes me well positioned to fulfil this role effectively.</p>	<p>Through this role, I aim to develop a deeper understanding of water governance, policy, and the institutional drivers that shape how water systems are managed at local and global levels. While my academic and professional background has provided me with strong technical expertise in water treatment and quality, I recognize that addressing water challenges effectively requires more than engineering solutions; it requires the ability to engage with policy, governance structures, and decision-making processes. I am particularly interested in learning how international organizations coordinate inclusive, multi-stakeholder approaches to water management and how communication strategies are used to translate technical knowledge into actionable policies. I also aim to learn directly from global experts and experienced professionals within the network understanding how they engage young water professionals in decision-making and develop future leaders in the sector. These insights will be critical in shaping my own approach to leadership and professional growth. In addition, I seek to strengthen my ability to communicate complex scientific and technical information in a way that is accessible to both decision-makers and non-technical audiences. I intend to apply these insights by contributing to more inclusive and participatory water governance systems, particularly in developing contexts where young professionals and vulnerable groups are often underrepresented. Ultimately, this role will support my ambition to become a well-rounded water professional who integrates technical expertise with policy, communication, and leadership to drive sustainable and equitable water solutions.</p>	<p>My primary motivation is to create meaningful opportunities and inclusive spaces for young water professionals globally. Early in my career, I experienced how challenging it can be to enter the sector without a strong peer network. This has driven my commitment to ensure that YWPs have access to supportive communities where they can connect, develop, and thrive. I am passionate about scaling this impact beyond a national level to ensure YWPs worldwide feel represented and supported. I am also motivated by the opportunity to build stronger global connections between YWP chapters. My experience on the Steering Committee showed me the value of sharing knowledge and learning across borders, and I am driven to further strengthen these links to create a more cohesive and collaborative global network. In addition, I am excited by the opportunity to contribute to major initiatives such as the World Water Congress 2026 in Glasgow, particularly through the development of programmes like World Water Camp. Supporting YWPs to access and engage with global events is something I care deeply about. Ultimately, I am motivated by the ability to make a tangible difference supporting individuals, strengthening networks, and contributing to a more connected and inclusive water community.</p>	<p>I will ensure strong representation by maintaining consistent, structured, and inclusive engagement with YWPs across my region. Building on my experience as Chapter Coordinator, I will continue to create regular opportunities for dialogue, such as informal forums, regional check-ins, and targeted discussions. These platforms allow YWPs to share their priorities, challenges, and ideas in an open and accessible way. I will also use a combination of surveys and direct engagement through existing networks to gather both quantitative and qualitative feedback. My involvement across multiple organisations, including IWA UK and the Institute of Water, enables me to craft a broad and diverse group of YWPs and ensure a wide range of perspectives are captured. Importantly, I will focus on representing not only the most active voices but also those who may be less engaged, ensuring inclusivity in decision-making. This includes actively reaching out to underrepresented groups and emerging chapters. Finally, I will ensure transparency by clearly communicating how feedback is used and how decisions are made. By closing the feedback loop, I will build trust and ensure YWPs feel genuinely represented at a strategic level.</p>	<p>As and when required.</p>	<p>My engagement with IWA has been extensive and has evolved from participant to leader. I first engaged with IWA through presenting at the IWA UK Young Water Professional Conference in 2017, which inspired me to become more actively involved. I subsequently supported the organisation of online initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic, including Twitter-based poster competitions, helping to maintain engagement during a challenging period. Since then, I have taken on several leadership roles: I have chaired the organising committee for the IWA YWP UK Conference for three consecutive years, leading a team of volunteers to deliver a flagship national event; I have also served as the YWP representative on the IWA UK Committee. Most recently, I was part of the IWA YWP Steering Committee as Chapter Coordinator, where I led global engagement initiatives and strengthened connections between international chapters. In addition, I have contributed to the long-term development of YWPs by establishing World Water Camp, a fund and support initiative enabling 30 young professionals to attend the World Water Congress 2026 in Glasgow. Through these experiences, I have consistently contributed to IWA's mission by supporting engagement, leadership development, and community building within the global YWP network.</p>
Natalie Paez	Female	Germany	Strategic Advisory	Career Building	<p>I am Natalie Paez, a doctoral candidate at the Technical University of Munich and the Chair of the YWP Chapter in Germany. I am also part of the first cohort of the IWA leadership program (LeaP). During my involvement in the YWP community I have gotten the chance to meet talented, kind and motivated people who have helped me to remember everyday why working for water is one of the most meaningful paths that we have to work for the wellbeing of our society and ecosystems. I truly believe that taking care of this community, enhancing it and empowering it, are crucial to help YWP build the present and future of the water sector while also guiding older and younger generations for farther management of this resource. While being part of the YWP community I have worked on several skills, including leadership, effective communication, and strategic planning. The latter, precisely, is one of the tasks that I enjoy the most and where I could see I could best contribute and give back to this community. As Chair of the Germany chapter, I have taken this role, and I have helped building the community and formalizing our strategy over the past two years. I would love to take these skills to a broader level, and I would be happy to contribute to this from the global Steering Committee. I enjoy looking at the bigger picture and understanding the needs, values and goals of the YWP community, and how these can be addressed through the various offerings of IWA. I envision the global YWP community having a strong and confident voice to impulse change wherever we are, and I am happy to bring my vision and strategic thinking into bringing this to reality.</p>	<p>Firstly, the responsibility that comes with leadership. Having served as Vice Chair, I diligently and willingly carried out the duties of the Chair when the outgoing Chair was unable to do so. I successfully led the Steering Committee monthly meeting when called upon. As earlier mentioned, I represented the IWA YWP Community on the Board and Governing Members in London. Having already taken on parts of this responsibility, I am ready to step into the full role of Chair. The leadership skills I learned from this role will be vital as I navigate complex technical, organisational, and interpersonal dynamics relevant to my work in the water sector. Secondly is collaboration. Any meaningful and lasting impact in the water sector depends on our ability to work together. Serving as Vice Chair has taught me a lot about working within a diverse team towards a shared goal. We all came from various academic backgrounds and countries, yet united by a shared mission, to lead an active YWP community that helps empower YWPs within IWA, both nationally and internationally. As Chair, I want to further cultivate the culture of collaboration, creating an environment where ideas can be shared openly, and where we can collectively drive initiatives that reflect the diversity of our global community. The water sector is anchored on cooperation, and this role of Chair offers a unique opportunity to practice and promote collaboration across regions, cultures, and disciplines.</p>	<p>My greatest motivations are my love for water and nature and my conviction that the only thing that can put us forward as a society for addressing our current challenges is community building and putting people and nature first. During my involvement in the different YWP activities over the last years I have met people with similar visions, who have motivated me and have reminded me of how valuable this community is. We can only keep it moving if we are an active part of it, and I am happy to contribute to this goal.</p>	<p>As an immigrant, I have lived through very different contexts and I have known first-hand what are the different challenges experienced by YWPs. I am also very observant and a good listener, and this has helped me to learn from all the people that have surrounded me during my path. I make sure to make the voices of people visible and valued, and this has been a guiding path into my work as the Chair of YWP Germany where we make sure to integrate the needs and values of our local community.</p>	<p>Currently, I am available to support and participate IWA activities for four hours per week, and I am flexible to contribute more when there are peaks of activities required.</p>	<p>I am part of the IWA leadership program (LeaP)</p>
Nataisha Mumba	Female	Zambia	Chair	Strategic Advisory	<p>Two years ago, I applied for the role of Vice Chair of the IWA Young Water Professionals (YWP) Steering Committee, a role that pushed me out of my comfort zone. Looking back, that decision shaped me in ways I am grateful for. It challenged me, helped me grow both personally and professionally, and inspired me. I likely would not have accessed it if I had not taken that leap. Now, after nearly two years, I am confident in my readiness to take on the role of Chair. As Vice Chair, I have always committed to representing the IWA YWP community and contributing meaningfully to the work of the Steering Committee. Most recently, I had the opportunity to represent the YWP Community and present on how Governing Members (GMs) can play a stronger role in supporting the growth and effectiveness of YWP Chapters. Once elected as Chair, I intend to build on this momentum by working closely with Chapter Coordinators, while also emphasising the shared responsibility of YWP Chapters in strengthening the relationship between the GMs and YWP Chapters. Having served on the management committee, I am acutely aware of what worked well and the areas we can improve on within our Steering Committee. This places me as one of the best people to take up the role of Chair to ensure continuity of the IWA YWP Strategy in alignment with the IWA Strategic Plan (2025-2030). There is a strong foundation to build on. The achievements of outgoing steering committee members have been remarkable. My focus as Chair would be to sustain this momentum, strengthen what is already working, and ensure that these initiatives continue to have real impact for the YWP community.</p>	<p>Through this role, I would like to better understand how to design and sustain engagement across a global and diverse community. While I have experience contributing to programmes and events, I am interested in learning how these efforts can be scaled and coordinated across regions to create lasting impact within the IWA network. I am also interested in learning how to translate ideas into structured initiatives that are both practical and impactful. In particular, I would like to gain insight into how successful YWP activities are developed, maintained, and adapted to different contexts, especially when working across different regions, cultures, and professional backgrounds. From a career perspective, I see this as an opportunity to strengthen my ability to bridge technical work with community engagement. As someone working in the regulatory space, I am interested in how knowledge, communication, and collaboration can support better decision-making and more inclusive participation in the water sector. Overall, I hope to learn how to contribute more effectively to building spaces where young professionals can connect, share experiences, and develop in a way that is meaningful and relevant to their own paths.</p>	<p>At the heart of this for me is service and community. I am someone who finds purpose in contributing to something bigger than myself, and being part of this committee has allowed me to do that in areas I genuinely care about, water and young people. I often come back to the proverb, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." It is to me, that captures the essence of what leadership and community is. There is strength in showing up together. There is a sense of belonging and a shared commitment that motivates you to keep going, even when things are challenging. Being part of the IWA YWP community has meant being surrounded by people who are willing to give their time, energy and ideas towards a cause they care about. That in itself is powerful. Looking ahead, I want my time as a YWP in IWA to reflect that. Not just that I was part of a vibrant community and that I played an active role in leading, serving, and contributing to it in a way that created meaningful engagement and opportunities for other YWPs to grow.</p>	<p>As Chair of the Steering Committee, and as a member of the IWA YWP Africa region, I want to stay closely connected to the realities of YWPs across my region. For me, that starts with encouraging African YWPs to consistently participate in the regional and global coordination calls, not just as a formality, but as a platform to engage. This is important because it shapes how effectively I can represent the African region. It will allow me to bring forward concerns and perspectives in a way that is grounded in real experiences when engaging with the IWA Board and the IWA Secretariat. In my role as Chair, I want to build on that by making sure these conversations continue to happen consistently, and ensure that what is shared in those spaces does not stop there, but is translated into how we advocate, make decisions, and support YWPs across the African region.</p>	<p>I am willing to dedicate 4 to 8 days a month to IWA activities, depending on what is required in a given period. On a more regular basis, I am able to commit at least one day a week to stay engaged, whether that is attending meetings, following up on actions or supporting YWP Steering Committee initiatives.</p>	<p>I interned at the IWA Headquarters Vice Chair of the IWA YWP Steering Committee Co-founded and Chaired the IWA Zambia Chapter Speaker at the IWA Emerging Water Leaders Forum Contributed to IWA Discussion Paper - Climate Resilient Urban Sanitation: From Ideas To Action Podcast host for the IWA Youth Voices Podcast</p>

<p>Njeri Njugi</p> <p>Female</p> <p>Kenya</p> <p>YWP Chapter Coordination</p> <p>Career Building</p>	<p>I bring a mix of practical experience in coordinating youth networks, engagement in the water sector and a passion to build capacity and capacity for young professionals, as the Youth Coordinator for Water (KYWP). I have led the coordination and development of a national youth water platform, engaging chapter members, facilitating dialogues and contributing to governance and partnership building. This is in line with the role of YWP Chapter Coordination. I have hands-on experience in engaging stakeholders and building multi-level partnerships, which will help me support YWP Chapters around the world. I have a strong collaborative spirit and experience working in multicultural teams. I am particularly keen to contribute to the development of chapters, improve communication between chapters and supporting chapters, particularly those that lack institutional support, to improve sustainability and effectiveness. I would engage with chapters through the needs assessment of chapters, identify operational gaps, and contribute to the development of guidance and tools that support and enhance chapters' potential. In my role, I would focus on enhancing coordination mechanisms between regions, peer learning and organisation of regional and global chapter events. I would also ensure that chapter experiences feed into the Steering Committee's agenda, providing a two-way flow of information. I am also interested in career building for young professionals. I would engage with the Career Building function, contributing to the development of capacity building opportunities, raising awareness of career opportunities and resources and documenting career pathways in the water sector. All in all, I would be well placed to support both the development of YWP Chapters and opportunities that support the development, leadership and impact of young water professionals around the world.</p>	<p>I am eager to gain a deeper understanding of how global water platforms function strategically, particularly in designing and implementing programmes, partnerships, and engagement structures across different regions. I am keen to learn how to better coordinate diverse YWP chapters, facilitate knowledge exchange, and help shape initiatives that are both impactful and inclusive. Additionally, I want to strengthen my ability to bridge local implementation experience with global dialogue and policy-making.</p>	<p>I appreciate IWA strong commitment to youth engagement, leadership and capacity building in the water sector through various initiatives and programs. The YWP Chapter Coordination offers the chance to promote opportunities for engagement and participation more accessible across regions. I am particularly keen to amplify the efforts made this far by the outgoing committee, ensuring chapters become more organised, integrated and effective. I am inspired by the opportunity to support the development of platforms that enable young professionals to be active leaders in the water sector. The power of well-organised youth-led networks in terms of capacity-building, collaboration and voice amplification cannot be overstated. I believe there is a need for young professionals to retain and support talent in the water sector. Helping young professionals develop their career journeys, opportunities and learn from different experiences in the water sector. This is particularly crucial in Kenya and many developing countries.</p>	<p>In order to accurately represent the IWA YWP members in my region, I will conduct consultations, virtual meetings and feedback mechanisms to gain insights into their needs, concerns and opportunities. I will engage with chapter leaders to collect information and ensure representation of their experiences in Steering Committee meetings. Particular care will be taken to include under-represented groups and resource-poor chapters. I will also ensure two-way communication between the Steering Committee and regional members through updates, opportunities and resources, and by providing opportunities for engagement. Through effective communication and member engagement, I will ensure that the regional voice is taken into account in global decision-making. IWA YWP Kenya, like some YWP Chapters, has a group on WhatsApp but the quality level isn't quite what it can be. This is an area with great potential. I will also support the formulation of YWP country chapters where they are yet to exist.</p>	<p>I am able to commit consistent time to support IWA activities on both a weekly and monthly basis. On average, I can dedicate approximately 5 hours per week, with flexibility to increase my availability during periods of peak activity such as events, campaigns or key deliverables.</p> <p>Yes, I have been an IWA (YWP) member for two years and have participated in the Young Water Professionals network through knowledge-sharing networks, webinars and discussions in the water sector on themes such as water governance, climate change adaptation and youth engagement. My primary group is Sanitation and Water Management in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Secondary group is Sustainability in the Water Sector and my Tertiary group is Institutional Governance and Regulation. These are sectors of particular interest to me professionally. I have also applied my IWA experiences to enhance my involvement in youth platforms, particularly in enhancing coordination, communication and knowledge sharing among young professionals. This includes facilitating collaboration and bringing a global outlook to local and regional projects I aim to enhance my participation in the IWA network through more active involvement in water sector governance and regulation. I am keen to explore career development opportunities to support the development of young water professionals.</p>
<p>Rakesh Kumar</p> <p>Male</p> <p>United States</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Strategic Advisory</p>	<p>I would be well-suited for this role due to my demonstrated leadership within the IWA Specialist Group and my sustained commitment to strengthening engagement among Young Water Professionals (YWP) at multiple levels. My two years within the Specialist Group have been spent on this role. As YWP Group Leader since 2024, I have run the operational backbone, including scheduling and minuting meetings with the management team, maintaining shared templates and communication channels, and acting as the focal point for external inquiries regarding our YWP activities, also at my current institution, where I am associated as Postdoctoral Fellow. The dedicated YWP session I organized for the 2024 IWA Conference on Diffuse Pollution & Eutrophication required precisely the coordination calls for gathering input from across our subcommittee and converting it into a program that measurably lifted early-career participation. In terms of strategic contribution, my work on the IWA Global Trends Report, the YWP bylaws, and the Research Excellence Recognition program has given me direct experience in shaping governance instruments and feeding YWP perspectives into association-level frameworks. I have also served as a reviewer for the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2024, the Water and Development Congress & Exhibition, work that has deepened my understanding of how IWA's flagship bodies set scientific direction. On wider consultation, the IWA blog and the upcoming Vienna sessions reflect a consistent pattern: I do not treat the YWP community as a constituency to be represented in the abstract, but as a network to be actively consulted before positions are formed. What I bring to the Steering Committee is a documented two-year record of coordinating, listening, and making judgments to translate YWP input into strategic contributions.</p>	<p>Through this role, I believe that I would have a great chance to expand my network both among young professionals and senior experts in the water and sustainability domain. As I gradually transition into the next phase of my career, I would like to build upon my existing network and skills. This role will help me bring together youth and experience in the various SGs to solve critical issues in the water sector. I envision that the expanded network and the bridges built in this role will spark better collaboration between professionals, thus helping me as well as the sector in improving our impact. I am particularly keen on organising and learning from interdisciplinary learning sessions between the science and engineering-based and the people-centric working groups. I have observed that water sustainability issues are tackled best when experts from physical and social sciences interact with engineers to co-create context-based solutions. I wish to increase the breadth of my knowledge and skills in various aspects of water and delve deeper into the work of various SGs. Further, I wish to learn more on catchment sciences and hard infrastructure issues in relation to climate change. I believe that the Specialist Group YWP Coordination role will give me sufficient scope to carry out the above plan and learn from the best.</p>	<p>My motivation for this role comes directly from what I've seen is possible and what's still missing since I began working with IWA in 2024. When I took on the Chair role for Young Water Professionals within the Diffuse Pollution and Eutrophication Specialist Group, I came in expecting to coordinate a few sessions and contribute where useful. What I found instead was a network where early-career researchers are doing serious work but often lack the structural channels to feed that work into IWA's strategic conversations. Organizing the dedicated YWP session at the 2024 Conference on Diffuse Pollution & Eutrophication made this concrete for me: the appetite for engagement was clearly there, what was missing was someone holding the connective lines together. That experience shaped how I've approached every contribution since drafting input for the IWA Global Trends Report, leading a book chapter with the management team, helping develop YWP bylaws, and working on the Research Excellence Recognition program. Each of these reinforced the same lesson: YWP engagement scales when there is consistent coordination, clear governance, and a deliberate link between early-careers and the bodies where decisions actually get made. Having served as a reviewer for the World Water Congress and the Water and Development Congress, and having organized YWP programming for the upcoming Vienna conference, I have a working sense of how these mechanisms succeed or fall in practice. What motivates me is straightforward: I want to make sure the next cohort of young water professionals enters an IWA where their pathway into governance, research recognition, and strategic engagement is clearer than mine was and where the coordination work that makes that pathway possible is done well.</p>	<p>Pursuing early-career education in India and exploring research in the water sector in the United States allow me to understand more about challenges and opportunities. Representing IWA YWP members across India and the United States gives me a vantage point that I think is generally useful to the wider network not because one context teaches the other, but because the two surface different problems worth solving. In India, YWPs work on water challenges at a scale and resource constraint that force innovation: decentralized treatment, community-managed systems, low-cost sensing, and reuse models built around real affordability ceilings. In the United States, where I am currently doing my postdoctoral research, YWPs often well established infrastructure but face their own pressing questions, aging networks, emerging contaminants, climate-driven shifts in source water, and equity gaps that complicate the assumption that "developed" means "solved." Neither context holds the full picture. Each sharpens what the other tends to overlook. My intention is to make this exchange structural with cooperation. Concretely, I will maintain regular contact with YWP chapters in all regions including India and United States: identify two or three researchers from each side whose work speaks to shared themes water reuse and management and provide occasions for that work to meet whether through joint webinars, paired conference sessions or contributions to IWA publications. I will also use my position to feed region-specific concerns into Steering Committee discussions so that strategic conversations at IWA reflect the actual diversity of YWP experience rather than a default global-north framing. Representation in my view is not standing in for a region. It is making sure the questions YWPs are asking in that region reach the rooms where IWA's direction is set.</p>	<p>I can commit approximately 4-6 hours per week to IWA activities under normal conditions, scaling up to 8-10 hours per week in the run-up to major milestones. Specialist Group conferences, Strategic Council meetings, cycles, and key reporting deadlines. On a monthly basis, this translates to consistent availability for Steering Committee and subcommittee meetings, scheduled calls with YWP representatives on the Strategic Council, response to external enquiries directed to the Committee, and ongoing coordination work such as drafting agendas, consolidating inputs, and circulating minutes. With my scientific and professional experience, my practical commitments that matter more than headline hours are: I tend to respond to correspondence and deadline management as a daily, not weekly, responsibility. Reminders, follow-up and quick turnaround on enquiries do not wait for a dedicated block get highlighted as senior Secretaries. I am</p> <p>Beyond my role in Specialist Groups, I have engaged with IWA across several channels that reflect a broader investment in the Association's work. I have served as a reviewer for two flagship IWA events: the World Water Congress & Exhibition and the Water and Development Congress & Exhibition, evaluating submissions across a range of topics in water quality, treatment, and management. Reviewing for these congresses has given me a working sense of the breadth of research the IWA community produces and of the editorial standards that shape its scientific output. I contributed to the IWA Global Trends Report, synthesizing developments in diffuse pollution and eutrophication into a format intended for a wider water-sector audience. I have also authored an IWA blog post, which gave me direct experience translating technical research into communication for non-specialist readers: a skill I see central to IWA's public-facing mission. Across these engagements, my aim has been the same: to contribute where I can add value, whether that is in scientific review, knowledge translation, governance, or recognition frameworks that strengthen the community over time.</p>
<p>Ramanuj Mitra</p> <p>Male</p> <p>India</p> <p>Specialist Group YWP coordination</p> <p>YWP Events and Communications</p>	<p>I feel that I would be the best fit for this role as I bring a balance of youth and experience, as well as between specialist group (SG) and young water professional activities (YWP). I have eight years of work experience in a wide range of roles in the sustainability and water domains. Other than professional roles, I also have hundreds of hours of volunteer experience in various countries and forums. I have always enjoyed being at the forefront of youth-led initiatives, starting from middle school. I have been part of and have led volunteering activities aimed at education for underprivileged children, livelihoods for women as well as door-to-door collection of donations for the above causes. I have served in the management committees of youth-run non-profits in India such as Fast Forward India (https://www.fastforwardindia.com/) and Kartavya (https://www.kartavya.org/about) from 2010 to 2016, where I learned both management and life skills. During my time as a Masters student in the US, I have worked with local communities and non-profits. This gave me valuable insights into working with people from diverse cultures and economic backgrounds. My academic background in Engineering and Sustainability provides me an optimum mix of knowledge and exposure needed to work on complex sustainability issues and articulate my thoughts in strategies and position papers. My work experience spans several countries and role types, where I have led policy advocacy efforts and research on water and climate domains. In the two years of my association with IWA, I have actively engaged with several Specialist Groups. As part of the Management Committee of the Sustainability in the Water Sector SG, I have enjoyed liaising with senior water experts and young professionals for research, webinars and newsletters. I also have engaged with the Alliance for Water Sensitive Design & Planning group recently.</p>	<p>Through this role, I believe that I would have a great chance to expand my network both among young professionals and senior experts in the water and sustainability domain. As I gradually transition into the next phase of my career, I would like to build upon my existing network and skills. This role will help me bring together youth and experience in the various SGs to solve critical issues in the water sector. I envision that the expanded network and the bridges built in this role will spark better collaboration between professionals, thus helping me as well as the sector in improving our impact. I am particularly keen on organising and learning from interdisciplinary learning sessions between the science and engineering-based and the people-centric working groups. I have observed that water sustainability issues are tackled best when experts from physical and social sciences interact with engineers to co-create context-based solutions. I wish to increase the breadth of my knowledge and skills in various aspects of water and delve deeper into the work of various SGs. Further, I wish to learn more on catchment sciences and hard infrastructure issues in relation to climate change. I believe that the Specialist Group YWP Coordination role will give me sufficient scope to carry out the above plan and learn from the best.</p>	<p>As a generalist in the water sustainability domain, my strength is interdisciplinary. In the last decade, most of my work has focused on bringing together diverse stakeholders to work towards common goals. I am keen to act as a bridge or connector between experts, forums and communities. This is my primary motivation to apply for the role of Specialist Group & YWP Coordination in the Steering Committee. In my policy advocacy projects, especially in the steel and textile sectors in India, I have organised consultations between academia, industry associations, technical experts, policy makers and the civil society. This had enabled me to glean insights from various perspectives and co-create policy briefs for various levels of government as well as the private sector. In the past few years, I have co-organised workshops and webinars with various water sector leaders and organisations, which gave me valuable experience in management and reporting. Recently, I have been focusing on interdisciplinary issues such as climate resilience at the catchment or watershed scale, which requires me to consult experts from various domains within the water sector. The success I got in creating position papers and hosting knowledge webinars with the help of various experts has inspired me to contribute more. If selected for the role, I would do my best to build bridges between experts and young water professionals, with the optimism that we could all learn together and solve problems. I have received a lot of help and support from fellow members of IWA and seniors in the sector. I would love to pay it forward and help others grow with me, while I chart my own path in the sector.</p>	<p>I am an active member of the IWA YWP India chapter. I also have connections with individuals in the South Asian region. Given that I have work experience and stakeholder connections in all of the South Asian nations, I believe I would be able to adequately represent my region in the work I would do. I plan to organise various awareness webinars as well as in-person workshops for YWPs to spread an understanding of the work done by various SGs and the ways the YWPs could get involved. This would be helpful for the young professionals as they gradually transition into senior roles within the sector. I also plan to organise subject-specific workshops where YWPs can learn from senior experts on diverse topics such as membrane technologies, bioremediation, catchment resilience, sustainable infrastructure, among others. Topics and themes would be chosen according to regional and sectoral relevance, in consultation with the SG management committees. In my current capacity as a Fellow in the IWA & Grundfos Youth Action for SDG 6 Fellowship, I have had the privilege to connect with brilliant minds from around the world. I intend to leverage these connections and create a truly global environment for the learning among the YWPs in my region and beyond.</p>	<p>I can give up to 5 hours weekly and 20 hours monthly to participate in and support IWA activities.</p> <p>I have actively participated in and have promoted IWA events and webinars through my professional and social media. I have helped organise workshops and webinars with various SGs as well as in conferences organised by IWA. As a part of the second cohort of the IWA & Grundfos Youth Action for SDG 6 Fellowship, I have organised additional workshops at the World Water Development Congress and Exhibitions in Bangkok (December 2025). I have further organised webinars that brought together different Fellows and sector experts in water sustainability. I have volunteered my time and effort for various activities with IWA in the last two years.</p>
<p>Rita Nishimwe</p> <p>Female</p> <p>Rwanda</p> <p>YWP Chapter Coordination</p> <p>Strategic Advisory</p>	<p>I offer a unique blend of leadership, hands-on experience, and active involvement at the community, local, regional, and global levels within the water sector. My background in youth engagement, WASH systems, and climate resilience closely aligns with the goals of the Steering Committee. At the community and national level, I lead youth climate education initiatives through Green City Clubs in 17 schools and provide capacity-building on gender-responsive, climate-resilient WASH practices in Bughera. This experience has sharpened my ability to turn technical concepts into practical, community-driven action and foster meaningful behaviour change. Regionally, I coordinate the Youth Track for the All Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium, where I bring together stakeholders from across Africa, design engaging sessions, and connect youth innovators with partners and investors to help scale their solutions. On the global stage, I co-chair the WaterAid Young Water Leaders Programme, where I contribute to advocacy on water security and governance, shape youth perspectives, and participate in high-level dialogues. I also mentor young professionals, helping them grow both technically and as leaders. If selected, I am committed to strengthening coordination across YWP chapters, supporting knowledge exchange, and ensuring youth engagement is inclusive, practical, and closely linked to real sector needs. I will actively participate in Steering Committee activities and work to bridge local experience with global conversations.</p>	<p>I am eager to gain a deeper understanding of how global water platforms function strategically, particularly in designing and implementing programmes, partnerships, and engagement structures across different regions. I am keen to learn how to better coordinate diverse YWP chapters, facilitate knowledge exchange, and help shape initiatives that are both impactful and inclusive. Additionally, I want to strengthen my ability to bridge local implementation experience with global dialogue and policy-making.</p>	<p>I am inspired by the untapped potential of young professionals in the water sector and the gap between their enthusiasm and actual influence. While many are eager and active, there are often few structured platforms for meaningful engagement and collaboration. My experience has shown me how impactful youth involvement can be when it is well-coordinated and linked to real opportunities. I want to help strengthen these spaces within IWA, ensuring that young professionals are not just invited, but are actively shaping the future of the sector.</p>	<p>I will maintain strong connections with YWP members by regularly engaging with local chapters, networks, and initiatives. Through consultations, discussions, and active participation in regional activities, I will ensure that a wide range of perspectives are heard and represented. I am committed to promoting knowledge exchange between chapters and making sure that insights from our region inform Steering Committee discussions and decisions. Additionally, I will work to increase the visibility of youth-led work across Africa.</p>	<p>I am able to dedicate approximately 3 hours per week (about 12 hours per month) to Steering Committee activities.</p> <p>Yes, I was a member of the IWA Emerging Water Leaders Forum programme committee in 2024.</p>

Yumeng Zhao	Female	China	Specialist Group YWP Coordination Career Building	<p>I am passionate about serving the position of Specialist Group YWP Coordination of the IWA-YWP Steering Committee, as I have gained solid knowledge and experience in IWA via being management committee member for a specialist group (SG) in IWA for over four years. Firstly, my position as a management committee member of the IWA SG Design Operation and Maintenance of Drinking Water Treatment Plants has provided me with high familiarity and work ability into managing SGs within the association. Over the past four years, I have actively contributed to various activities including: i) organizing and hosting two webinars (also actively broadcasting the webinar in China with a total online audience of over 20 000 people) ii) drafting IWA guideline iii) recruiting new management committee members (successfully attracting two members from Canada and USA) iv) becoming familiar with the IWA Connect Plus platform and communicating with professionals using the platform. These experiences have equipped me with the necessary skills to effectively fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the Terms of Reference. Secondly, my diverse professional network in the water treatment field both domestically and internationally positions me well to foster collaboration and engagement among young water professionals. In China I have established connections with individuals from academia (e.g. Tsinghua University) Tongji University) and industry (including design institutes water utility companies water treatment plants). Globally I have cultivated relationships with professionals from esteemed institutions including Yale University Technion - Israel Institute of Technology and Imperial College London. Given my background and skill set I am competent for this role by: i) coordinating SG activities via co-organizing webinars and IWA guidelines across different SGs 2) giving specific advice to SG on how to engage with youth membership via using the data from IWA Connect Plus 3) facilitating outreach efforts to engage young water professionals in the Asia-Pacific region.</p>	<p>In this role, I aspire to learn and gain valuable insights that I can apply to further advance my career in the water sector. Specifically, there are three key areas of learning that I am eager to pursue: (i) Expand my professional network among young water professionals globally from diverse backgrounds and regions, and establish meaningful relationships that can facilitate future collaborations, joint research endeavors, and innovative projects. (ii) Develop international organization skills, and learn how to effectively navigate cross-cultural dynamics, coordinate initiatives across different time zones, and collaborate with stakeholders from various backgrounds. (iii) Learn frontier ideas of young water professionals from different SGs. Through organizing and co-hosting IWA webinars or contributing to the development of IWA guidelines, I aim to gain exposure to the frontier ideas and innovations of young water professionals from different background, and broaden my understanding of emerging trends, technologies, and best practices in various subfields of water management. As a young female water professional from Helongjiang Province in China, I am motivated by the opportunity to contribute a perspective from a region facing evolving water management challenges. My motivation to be in this role stems from three key factors: (i) Promoting gender equity and empowering young professionals, particularly women, to actively engage in the field. By breaking barriers and fostering inclusivity, I believe we can create a more diverse and dynamic water community that harnesses the full potential of all its members. (ii) Expanding academic influence and professional network. Being an IWA water professional myself, I am eager to expand my academic influence and contribute to shaping the future of water management practices. Serving in the steering committee presents an unparalleled opportunity to contribute to decision-making processes, share expertise, and collaborate with other esteemed professionals in the field. (iii) Fostering international collaboration and professional connections. By actively contributing to the steering committee, I seek to expand my professional network worldwide, connecting with experts and practitioners from diverse backgrounds and regions. These connections will not only enhance my own knowledge and skills but also facilitate future collaborations and initiatives aimed at addressing global water challenges.</p>	<p>As a young female water professional from Helongjiang Province in China, I am motivated by the opportunity to contribute a perspective from a region facing evolving water management challenges. My motivation to be in this role stems from three key factors: (i) Promoting gender equity and empowering young professionals. By actively participating in esteemed IWA activities and assuming a role within the steering committee, I aim to amplify the voices of underrepresented groups and inspire other young water professionals, particularly women, to actively engage in the field. By breaking barriers and fostering inclusivity, I believe we can create a more diverse and dynamic water community that harnesses the full potential of all its members. (ii) Expanding academic influence and professional network. Being an IWA water professional myself, I am eager to expand my academic influence and contribute to shaping the future of water management practices. Serving in the steering committee presents an unparalleled opportunity to contribute to decision-making processes, share expertise, and collaborate with other esteemed professionals in the field. (iii) Fostering international collaboration and professional connections. By actively contributing to the steering committee, I seek to expand my professional network worldwide, connecting with experts and practitioners from diverse backgrounds and regions. These connections will not only enhance my own knowledge and skills but also facilitate future collaborations and initiatives aimed at addressing global water challenges.</p>	<p>I am committed to leveraging my existing networks and active participation in esteemed organizations in China to achieve the goal of representing IWA YWP members in my region. As a member of the Chinese Association for Science and Technology (CAST) Environmental Science Society, I have access to a wide network of professionals and resources within the environmental science field in China. Through my involvement in CAST, I will actively promote IWA YWP activities and initiatives among members, ensuring that they are informed and engaged in relevant opportunities for professional development and collaboration. Furthermore, my election to the CAST Youth Talent Support Project (6 slots nationwide per year) and election to the 'New Star Program' project of the IWA YWP China Chapter (less than 20 slots nationwide per year) demonstrate my dedication to representing and advocating for young professionals in the water sector. These prestigious appointments provide me with platforms to influence and shape discussions on water-related issues, both nationally and within the IWA community. By leveraging these affiliations and actively participating in in-person conferences, regular meetings, and other networking events, I will ensure that the voices and interests of IWA YWP members in my region are heard and represented effectively.</p>	<p>My availability to participate in and support IWA activities on a weekly and monthly basis is as follows: (i) Organizing and co-organizing IWA webinars with other Specialist Groups (SGs) on a bi-monthly basis. These webinars are crucial for disseminating knowledge, facilitating discussions, and engaging with professionals across the globe. (ii) Participating in tele-conferences to support IWA activities on a monthly basis. These meetings provide opportunities for collaboration, decision-making, and progress tracking, ensuring the effective implementation of initiatives and projects. (iii) Organizing and writing IWA guidelines on a semi-annual basis. Guideline development is essential for providing standardized approaches, best practices, and recommendations to address key challenges in the water sector. (iv) Participating in in-person meetings and workshops as needed by other members of the IWA steering committee.</p> <p>As an active member of the IWA specialist group Design, operation and maintenance of drinking water treatment plants, I have engaged in various initiatives and activities to contribute to the association's mission and objectives. Specifically, I have: (i) Selected for the IWA-Gates Foundation Next-generation sanitation system project in 2026. My role is to lead Train 2, which is using ceramic-membrane-based technology for household black and grey wastewater treatment. (ii) Organized IWA webinars twice and simultaneously broadcasted the webinar in China, i.e., (a) webinar: Breaking the Permeability-Selectivity Trade-off of Thin-Film Composite Reverse Osmosis and Nanofiltration Membranes (online audience over 5000 people in China). (b) webinar: New Insights and Innovations for Advanced Water Treatment (online audience over 20,000 people in China). (iii) As vice-chair, hosted the IWA YWP China Chapter Annual Conference in 2026, which attracted over 200 participants. (iv) Attracted new SG committee management members in 2023, including: Dr. Wen Ma from University of Sherbrooke in Canada and Prof. Fang Xue from the University of Missouri. (v) Wrote IWA Global trends & Challenges in 2022 regarding Design, Operation and Maintenance of Drinking Water Treatment Plants SG: https://iwa-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/IWA_2022_Global_Trend_SG_WEB.pdf. (vi) Elected for IWA YWP China Chapter Rising Star program, and then actively helped coordination and participation in the IWA YWP China Chapter in-person conferences in Beijing in 2023.</p>
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