



Young IPWEA Membership Engagement Strategy

Background

Under our Key Focus Areas of *Delivery of Enhanced Relevant Membership Experience* and *Building Capacity of the Public Works Industry*, Young IPWEA has prepared an Engagement Strategy. The strategy is designed to promote Public Works Engineering as a worthwhile career option as well as increase fee-paying members.

Introduction

There has been wide spread acknowledgement throughout public works that there is a chronic shortage in supply of good quality public work professionals to meet the increasing demand for specialised skills. This recognition has led to the establishment of the Australian National Engineering Taskforce (ANET). ANET provides industry and education collaboration and aims to “create a national strategy for the development of Australia’s current and future engineering workforce”.

In addition to the establishment of ANET, the Federal Government recently undertook a senate enquiry into “The shortage of engineering and related employment skills” within Australia with the enquiry being completed in mid-2012. From the enquiry, it was identified that there is considerable effort required to attract, retain and develop engineering skills within Australia, with specific mention of the public sector (recommendation 6 of the enquiry).

As the peak body representing Public Works Professionals across Australasia, the Institute of Public Works Engineers Australasia (IPWEA) has been an instrumental driver in the need for change to the way the public works sector is viewed within this country. This is clearly reflected in IPWEA’s vision: “To be recognised nationally and internationally as the leading professional association that effectively informs, connects, represents and leads public works professionals for Australia.”

Complimentary to the IPWEA objectives relating to a Young IPWEA network, each of the Divisions are at various stages of progressing Division based networks. Through the support of the IPWEA President and Division boards it was agreed that a national approach to supporting the Young IPWEA group would provide optimal outcomes in achieving both Division and national objectives.

Engaging young professionals as association members is a priority for many organizations. This document outlines YIPWEA Membership Engagement Strategy

YIPWEA Mission Statement

To support, develop and advocate for young members of IPWEA enabling them to realise their full potential leading public works and services, infrastructure planning, delivery and operations

Vision Statement

Developing tomorrow's leaders to enhance the quality of life and liveability of our communities

YIPWEA Value Proposition Statement

How much is your career worth?

As a young public works professional your priority is to focus on nurturing your fledgling career, feeding it and living it as it grows.

Membership of IPWEA is the step in building a successful career and growing as a professional; the opportunities for developing your networks and relationships are many, from a local to a global scale.

IPWEA also delivers on advocating for its younger members, working to ensure that there is a career path from where you are today to where you want to be in the future; it's about becoming involved in something greater and achieving excellence for your community.

IPWEA membership represents great value for money; join the IPWEA family and let your career take flight.

YIPWEA Membership

Automatically, any person who joins IPWEA, and is under thirty-five (35) years of age, will be affiliated with the Young IPWEA group. This will be communicated to the Young IPWEA members through a Young IPWEA marketing material, events and through the Communities of Practice.

Young IPWEA has similar target groups as the main IPWEA body, however with a greater focus on those groups which strongly support the retention of young members and are willing to give their support to the growing of Young IPWEA.

Student Member

This grade of membership is available to people not in full time employment and enrolled in full time or part time undergraduate studies in an accredited/recognised educational program in Australia or New Zealand (University or TAFE). The maximum term for Student membership is 6 years.

Current YIPWEA Membership Demographic:

Division	FY2016/17	FY2017/18 (Current)
International	1	1
NSW	126	117
NZ	70	74
QLD	121	144
SA	42	48
TAS	21	20
VIC	59	52
WA	48	44
TOTAL	488	500

Current Student Membership Demographic:

Division	FY2016/17	FY2017/18 (Current)
International	6	11
NSW	116	103
NZ	22	27
QLD	57	5
SA	263	270
TAS	6	5
VIC	151	172
WA	16	20
TOTAL	637	613

How we engage with our Members

YIPWEA acknowledges that communications and stakeholder engagement remains a critical component of our operations. We also recognise that efforts to communicate and engage with members face a number of challenges including the complexity of the issues and the wide variety of membership views.

In order to ensure we communicate effectively with our young members, YIPWEA proposes to use a number of different methods including (but not limited to):

- Phone
- Email
- Website
- Face to face meetings
- Attendance at various networking events including but not limited to conferences, forums, group meetings
- Social media; LinkedIn, Facebook
- Newsletters
- Media releases (including letters)
- Advertising
- Publications (Annual Report, InTouch, Inspire)
- Annual Pulse Survey

Highlights of Challenges to Young Professional Engagement

Based on research gathered from 35 association executives¹, much of the challenge of engaging young professionals rests within the association, which means that with a different strategy and approach, associations can lessen or overcome these challenges. The following list represents the primary challenges to successfully engaging young professionals.

- Having a culture that is resistant to the change needed to engage young professionals.
- Overestimating the knowledge and understanding that young professionals have regarding the existence and role of associations.

¹ Engaging Young Association Members: A Strategic White Paper for the Association Industry; Association Laboratory Inc. ©2015

- Not providing young professionals with engagement value propositions that meet their needs or capabilities.
- Not sufficiently understanding young professionals' financial barriers to engagement.
- Not communicating a clear value proposition regarding the benefits of engagement to young professionals or their employing organizations.
- Not creating paths for engagement that meet the needs of young professionals.
- Underestimating the influence of external factors on the desire and ability of young professionals to engage with the association.
- Not fully understanding the impact of career uncertainty and not linking the benefits of association engagement to young professionals' career goals and needs.

A successful young professional engagement strategy will need to take these challenges into account.

Key Engagement Strategies

IPWEA is seeking to equip a new generation of engineers with relevant and meaningful growth opportunities through cadetship, mentoring and enterprise skills development. The following details the X Key engagement strategies

No.	Strategy	Strategy Description	Timeline/Responsibility
1	Alignment of Division Membership Grades	Ensure all Divisions offer Free Student Membership	October 2018 IPWEA Australasia Staff
2	Convert Student Membership to Fee Paying Member	Refer to Appendix A for an example of what a Student Membership Conversion Plan could look like for new student YIPWEA members. Membership Conversion Plan Developed Membership Conversion Plan Implemented in all Divisions	October 2018 YIPWEA Committee February 2019 All IPWEA Divisions
3	Step Up Social Media Interaction	Develop a social media strategy that's aligned with your organization's membership and marketing strategies, and with the needs and interests of your prospects and members.	November 2018 YIPWEA Committee with help from IPWEA Australasia Staff
4	Provide Targeted, Valuable Content	Identify members needs to ensure relevance is provided by asking: What do they need to know to advance their career or do their job better? What do they need to know to improve their bottom line? What issues trouble them? What challenges do they encounter?	Undertake Pulse Survey Annually All Divisions complete by November

5	Enhance the Member Experience	Utilise Pulse Survey results and analyse data on the interests and engagement of prospects, new members, and existing members.	TBA
6	Increase number of Networking Events in each Division	Value described by members of these events include: opportunities to meet with / hear from other young professionals and share problems they are facing; establishing and maintaining connections, exchanging information, and fostering a support network. As with other engagement activities, they also provide an opportunity to meet with members and provide input / feedback or receive information.	TBA

Success Measures

Successful implementation of this engagement strategy will see:

- An annual increase in full fee-paying membership retention of 5%
- An annual increase in student membership to full fee-paying membership 5%

Appendix A: Example of Student Membership Conversion Plan

Month 1:

- Send them a welcome email
- Give them a phone call
- Welcome them on social media and/or in Divisions and Australasian newsletter

Month 2:

- Invite them to an event
- Send them a targeted email (based on the interests they checked when filling out the member application form)

Month 3-4:

- Follow up with another phone call to check in and see how they're doing
- Invite them to a new member orientation (either in-person or via webinar)

Month 5-6:

- Send them another targeted email (with relevant and valuable content)
- Invite them to another webinar or event

Month 8:

- Pair them with a member mentor (if they haven't been paired already)
- Send them a personalized email highlighting a specific benefit or area of your website that will help them specifically (for example, if they're a student member, direct them to your job board)

Month 10:

- Take a look at who's at risk (based on involvement - new member orientation attendance, webinar attendance, etc.)
- Survey your new student members - ask them what benefits they're utilizing, what they'd like to see from your association, etc.

Month 11-12

After the ten-month mark is where we will need to start sending out renewal reminders, offering renewal incentives, offering referral incentives, etc.