

Appendix 5: Board Level Committee report for 2013-2017: Young Member Presidential Group

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ABSTRACT: The Young Member Presidential Group (YMPG) is a Board Level committee of the ISSMGE. It is comprised of members 35 years or younger from around the world who come together to work not only for the ISSMGE but also for students and younger members. In the past four years, the Young Member Presidential Group (YMPG) has continued to make efforts towards achieving its mission. This is accomplished through the cooperation and exchange of ideas from students and younger members across the world. The results of that work include increased participation amongst younger members in the geotechnical community and products to actively engage those members that will hopefully continue throughout their career. The work of the YMPG for the 2013-2017 term is presented herein.

KEYWORDS: ISSMGE, YMPG, Board Level Committee, younger members, students, opportunities.

1 INTRODUCTION

Formerly named the Student and Young Member Presidential Group (SYMPG), the YMPG was established in 2009 as a Board Level Committee (BLC) within ISSMGE by Past-President Jean-Louis Briaud. The YMPG works to develop and foster initiatives for Board consideration and action that represent and support younger member interests. The first term extended from 2009-2013, with President Roger Frank renewing the YMPG for 2013-2017. The following report outlines the structure, work plan, and products of the YMPG during this four year period, along with providing some recommendations to ISSMGE and member societies for moving forward.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Since the first term of the then titled Student and Young Member Presidential Group (SYMPG), it was decided to separate the four year term of the ISSMGE Board into two, two year terms. This was meant to keep renewed life in the group and provide fresh ideas throughout the course of four years. With the first initial term commencing, some changes to the original terms of reference for the SYMPG were made. These included:

- Change of name: The Young Member Presidential Group (YMPG).
While removing the student label from the SYMPG, it does not exclude students; however, students can be of many ages and not fit the young member definition of the ISSMGE (35 years or younger).
- Change of mission: to increase the attractiveness of the ISSMGE for younger generations of geotechnical engineers.
This was a slight change to the original mission which stated "...for the next generation of geotechnical engineers." The YMPG aims to continue in its work and reach all future generations, not just the next generation.
- Change of task scopes: Based on the feedback and ideas from the new membership in each two-year term, slightly different focus areas and resulting tasks and deliverables were made in each term. Task Forces were formed to achieve the new scope of work while

retaining some of the key ongoing work of the SYMPG.

3 MEMBERSHIP

The YMPG is comprised of 19 young members (YMs) from around the world. The Chair of the YMPG, Dr. Jennifer Nicks, was appointed by the ISSMGE President and then, the ISSMGE Vice Presidents each nominated three young members. Current membership demographics include about 70% male, 30% female and 50% practitioners, 50% students or academics. The full membership list for the 2013-2015 and 2015-2017 terms are posted on the YMPG site in the ISSMGE webpage, with bios of the members included.

For each term, a YMPG Executive Leadership Committee was formed to include a Vice-Chair(s) and Secretary for the YMPG. These positions were elected by the YMPG members. In addition, the YMPG was comprised of four Board Liaisons to this BLC: President Roger Frank, Fatma Baligh (VP for Africa), Paul Mayne (VP for North America), and Vlasta Szavits-Nossan (Appointed Board Member).

In addition to the formal members of the YMPG, there is also another distinction: a Corresponding Member (CM) of the YMPG. The CM group involves signing up to receive e-mails related to the ISSMGE, conferences, post-doc or entry level position opportunities, etc. The YMPG currently has almost 650 members (up from about 75 CMs in 2013), allowing the ISSMGE to reach more younger members than ever before.

4 YMPG WORK PLAN

As in the past, each member and CM was asked to provide three ideas that they thought would help achieve the YMPG mission. After compiling and grouping the ideas, a work plan was developed for each two-year term in these past four years. The work plan and achievements for the 2013-2015 YMPG term were previously presented at the 2015 Council Meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland and included as Appendix 7 of the meeting minutes (ISSMGE 2015). This report will focus on the work plan of the 2015-2017 term.

The work plan for the 2015-2017 term was finalized in February 2016. Four task forces (TFs) were established, and Statements of Work were developed to define the TF objectives, a list of tasks, and a list of deliverables. The TFs and their objectives for the 2015-2017 term are shown in Table 1. The Vice-Chairs of the YMPG each led two of the TFs during the 2015-2017 term: Dr. Aleksandra Chepuranova for the

Membership and Technical TFs and Lucy Wu for the Communications and Outreach TFs.

Table 1. YMPG Task Forces for 2015-2017.

Task Force	Objectives
Communications	To effectively communicate ISSMGE activities to younger members
Membership	To increase the network of younger members and promote participation in the ISSMGE and member societies.
Outreach	To reach out to the younger member community and create opportunities for interaction
Technical	To develop mechanisms to transfer knowledge and information

5 TASKS

To achieve these TF objectives, several key tasks were undertaken, including:

- Develop alternative mechanisms to deliver announcements and communicate opportunities to younger members.
- Advance the capabilities of the Corresponding Members map/network and increase the number of CMs.
- Create a logo for the YMPG to help brand the BLC.
- Solicit technical papers for publication in the YM Arena section of the ISSMGE Bulletin.
- Develop a social media presence to engage YMs.
- Assist in the topic selection of ISSMGE webinars that would be of interest to YMs.
- Recognize the work of CMs through an Outstanding CM Award
- Work with the organizing committee of the 19ICSMGE to host YM activities separate from the iYGEC.
- Create an online categorized library of conference proceedings and other geotechnical documents.
- Set up a database of scholarship and job opportunities for younger members.
- Prepare and distribute a state-of-interest survey amongst CMs to evaluate engagement of YMs in the ISSMGE and their member societies.
- Work with other BLCs as needed to assist and provide feedback from the perspective of younger members.

6 OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

The YMPG has been very active, with several deliverables and results achieved in these past four years.

6.1 Increase in Corresponding Members and the CM Map

The number of people that have signed up to be a CM of the YMPG has grown by over 850% since 2013 and by 240% since the last two-year term ending in 2015. This is a remarked increase that allows the ISSMGE to reach even more members.

To support the growing network of CMs, a new method was developed using Google Forms to allow CMs to sign up while also providing any key information about themselves, such as location, technical interests, job position, contact info, etc. This allows CMs to find those that share their interests or are located close to them to better network with each other. The method to sign-up CMs also allows the YMPG to review statistics related to the CMs, such as the percentages per degree type, their country/region, field of interest (based on the ISSMGE Technical Committees present at the time), etc. Inclusion in the CM map is voluntary, so not all CMs are included, but to date, there are about 360 CMs on the CM Map. A link to the map can be found on the Young Members page of the ISSMGE website.

6.2 Social Media Presence

The YMPG LinkedIn page was established to provide another forum to communicate information, distribute announcements, and start discussions amongst YMs. To date, about 260 members have signed up to the site. In addition, the YMPG worked with the Innovation Development Committee (IDC) and the Professional Image Committee (PIC) on the development of new ISSMGE social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, as well as on the ISSMGE website, to provide feedback from a YM perspective.

6.3 YMPG Logo

The YMPG issued a call for submissions to all CMs to enter the YMPG Logo Competition; three options resulted. A poll was then created, and the CMs voted on the logo they thought would best represent the YMPG and help brand the group for future activities and events supported by the YMPG. The chosen logo will be posted on the ISSMGE website and will be included in any YMPG correspondence.

6.4 YM Spotlight

The YMPG developed an initiative to engage and feature younger members through a YM Spotlight series. The series entails a short interview where the subject responds to five questions, ranging from their favorite project to their favorite food. The YM Spotlight will be featured on the YMPG LinkedIn page, the YMPG page on the ISSMGE website, and a selection of those presented will be gathered for inclusion in each issue of the YM Arena.

6.5 YM Arena Articles

The ISSMGE Bulletin created a section of the newsletter called the YM Arena to provide an avenue for YMs to publish technical articles, report activities, etc. The YMPG created guidelines for author submissions and a template and then distributed those amongst the CMs. Over the past four years, eight YM articles have been published, including one providing an update of the YMPG.

6.6 Outstanding Young Geotechnical Engineer

In collaboration with the ISSMGE Awards Committee, the evaluation criteria for a consolidated Outstanding Young Geotechnical Engineer Award were developed in collaboration with the ISSMGE's Awards Committee. The criteria are based on: (a) geotechnical project development and construction, (b)

research contributions in the geotechnical community, (c) involvement in national and international geotechnical societies, and (d) publications and education in the geotechnical discipline. The YMPG advertised the announcement amongst the CMs with encouragement to contact their national society if they wanted to be considered. In total, seven nominations were received and evaluated by the Awards Committee; three awards will be presented at the 19ICSMGE.

6.7 Outstanding CM Award

To encourage and recognize CMs that are active in their member society, the ISSMGE, or the YMPG, the YMPG created the Outstanding Corresponding Member Award. This award is separate from the ISSMGE's Outstanding Young Geotechnical Engineer Award; internal to the YMPG. This YMPG award will be distributed annually based on nominations received each year. The YMPG members will evaluate the candidates and select one per year, to be featured in the ISSMGE Bulletin, the ISSMGE website, and the YMPG LinkedIn page.

6.8 Webinars Geared Towards YMs

The YMPG solicited ideas from CMs on topics that they would find of interest to be part of the ISSMGE webinar series. Topics were then compiled by the YMPG and a poll was established for CMs to vote on their favorite choice. Working with the ISSMGE Board, two of those webinars were selected to move forward.

In February 2017, the first webinar was posted to the ISSMGE website: *An Introduction to Numerical Modelling in Geotechnical Engineering*, delivered by Prof. Helmut F. Schweiger. A second is under development, but will focus on *Fast-tracking your Career in Geotechnical Engineering*. Work is underway to find an appropriate speaker for the subject.

6.9 Technical Contact List

A list of technical contacts for younger geotechnical engineers was developed and is posted on the ISSMGE website. In addition, a section was included in the CM Map to highlight those individuals for quick access. The technical contact list is meant to serve as a quick guide for those who have questions regarding a certain topic but don't know who to turn to immediately. While tutoring younger members technically, or at least guiding them in the direction to find more answers, the list also serves as an opportunity for establishing a network of YMs with those of similar interests.

6.10 YM Opportunities Brochure and Presentation

A tri-fold brochure and PowerPoint presentation were developed to outline the opportunities available for YMs, including YM Conferences, the ISSMGE Foundation, the YM Arena, Networking and Mentorship, and the CM group of the YMPG. These items also provide a brief overview of the ISSMGE and the YMPG. The brochure and presentation are available on the YMPG page of the ISSMGE website. Member societies are encouraged to also print out the flyer for distribution at any conferences to help make YMs more aware of these options for involvement. Anyone is also welcome to download and deliver the presentation at conferences, in classrooms, society events, etc.

6.11 YM State-of-Interest Survey

To learn more about the current state of YM membership within member societies and awareness of the ISSMGE, activity level,

and YM opportunities, a survey was developed and distributed amongst the CMs. The results will provide insight for the next term of the group, the ISSMGE, and member societies moving forward to not only learn the state-of-interest of YMs, but also to serve as a benchmark to gauge the effectiveness of activities in the future.

6.12 YM Forum at 19ICSMGE and other YM activities

The YMPG has arranged a workshop for the 19ICSMGE, titled the YM Forum. This will provide an avenue outside of the preceding iYGEC for YMs to participate in the conference. The YM Forum consists of targeted presentations aimed at learning more about the ISSMGE and the YMPG, opportunities available for YMs, results from the survey, and tips on interviewing and networking in the profession. Following the presentations, a roundtable type discussion will occur to gather ideas for consideration by the next term of the YMPG to better meet their needs.

7 OTHER ACTIVITIES

Beyond the specific achievements and products discussed above, there are other activities in which the YMPG is engaged in within the ISSMGE. For one, the YMPG assists many of the other BLCs with review, feedback, and assistance on their work. YMPG Liaisons on the BLCs helps with this process and allows younger members to learn more about the ISSMGE. Some examples of YMPG assistance include:

- With the PIC and IDC, the development of an ISSMGE mobile application.
- With the PIC on a poster aimed at younger students to introduce the concept of geotechnical engineering early on in their education.
- With the TOC and CAPG, data reduction and analysis for the ISSMGE Global Survey on State of the Art and State of Practice.

Another major initiative of the YMPG is the development of databases for an online, categorized library of technical papers as well as scholarships/job opportunities. The ISSMGE has worked hard to provide the geotechnical community with open access to all ICSMGE conference proceedings that can be queried on the ISSMGE website. Work continues on this initiative to continue to add to the database. ISSMGE Board, two of those webinars were selected to move forward. The YMPG will assist as necessary.

Work also continues for the database of scholarships and job opportunities. An initial list has been developed, and conversations have occurred with the IDC on the best platform to arrange this database so that it can be self-sufficient, without having to manually update it; rather, users who enter information about a known opportunity could upload that information themselves. Avenues are being explored and the database will start to take shape.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these two terms of the YMPG from 2013-2017, the following recommendations are provided for consideration:

- Continue having two-year terms for the YMPG.

- Change the mission to not only include increasing the attractiveness of the ISSMGE, but also include increasing the engagement of younger members.
- Encourage member societies to reduce or eliminate student and young member fees for membership, conference participation, etc.
- Add to the evaluation criteria for Outstanding Member Society an activity related to involvement and engagement of students or younger members in their society.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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10 REFERENCES

ISSMGE. 2015. Minutes of the Council Meeting. Edinburgh, UK, pp. 92-97.