**1.1 BACKGROUND**

In 2017, WM Symposia (WMS) established a new award to recognize “Young Professionals” in our field. The objective was to annually recognize one young professional for their distinguished contributions to the advancement of radioactive waste, radioactive material management, decommissioning or other associated fields, or contribution to the Waste Management Symposia Conference. Elevation to the status of “Young Professional” is attained through peer recognition and confirmation by the WMS Board of Directors (BOD).

The candidate must be less than thirty-six (36) years old by the end of March of the specific conference (e.g., March 31, 2023) to be eligible. Award winners will be presented with an award at the Tuesday Awards luncheon at the annual conference and listed on the WMS website.

**1.2 QUALIFICATIONS**

The honor of being accorded a “Young Professional” is reserved for professionals of good reputation who shall have:

- Made a significant contribution to the advancement of radioactive waste and radioactive material management, decommissioning and other associated fields. or

- Made a significant contribution to the operation of the WM Program Advisory Committee (PAC); for example, by having organized a session, played a major role in reviewing papers, and being recommended by all Track Co-Chairs in a Track, or

- Have been an author and presented, or a co-author and presented, a paper at the WM Conference which was identified as a “Superior Paper” by the Paper Reviewer or rated as a “Superior Presentation” by one of the Session’s Co-Chairs, or

- Have been an author or co-author of a poster that was selected as “Best in Track.”
1.3 PROCEDURES

Nominations from any WM participant are to be made on our website by selecting “Young Professional Award” under the Awards Nomination section. Three sponsors endorsing the nominee are suggested. One sponsor shall be designated as the principal sponsor. Preferably, sponsors of a given candidate should be broadly dispersed geographically and from different companies/organizations.

The worthiness of a given candidate for advancement to “Young Professional” grade is determined by a critical review and assessment of submitted credentials and qualifications. Thus, the nomination package should be carefully prepared. In the process of review and selection, emphasis is placed on excellence of achievement.

The documentation supporting a nomination shall include details of the candidate’s merits with regards to at least one of the three (3) qualification criteria listed in Section 1.2. We strongly encourage that evidence of the candidate's contributions be submitted by a written recommendation from the sponsors and others as appropriate.

Annually, the WMS Honors and Awards Committee (the Committee) will also screen the list of PAC members and select one or more for nomination. Preferably a Track Co-chair or the PAC Chair will serve as the principal sponsor for the Committee nominee(s), including preparing the required nomination forms.

Nominees not approved for “Young Professional” in a given year will be carried over and considered for the next three years (dependent on age of professional) before a new nomination submittal is required.

The Young Professional nomination should clearly specify whether the nomination is a surprise or not. If not clearly specified, nominations will be considered not a surprise.

1.4 APPROVAL PROCESS

The completed information and endorsement letters shall be uploaded to the website in a timely manner (see Section 1.5). Nominations should provide adequate supporting evidence for at least one of the three (3) criteria listed under Section 1.2.

All Young Professional nomination forms will be then screened by the Committee, and the Chair of the Committee will prepare a letter of endorsement listing the Young Professional nominee/candidate approved by the Committee for submittal to the WMS Board of Directors for final approval.
To be eligible for consideration, approval, and subsequent recognition/induction at the WMS Annual Meeting, all information required to evaluate proposed Young Professionals must be submitted to WMS by the due date. Please submit your nomination online. For additional information regarding the submission due date, please visit the WMS website.

All questions related to the WMS awards should be directed to Billy Morrison, Chair of the WM Honors & Awards Committee. He can be reached by email at wmorrison@energysolutions.com.