

CIWEM Rivers and Coastal Group Early Career Professionals Challenge submission guidelines

Competition guidance and information

The CIWEM Rivers and Coastal Group Early Careers Professional Challenge is a competition designed for young professionals within their first three years in the water and environment sector, from different stakeholder organisations, to develop teamwork and networking skills whilst working on solutions to particular issues affecting the sector.

Those who are interested in participating in the competition will complete the electronic application to the Rivers and Coastal Group team. Teams of four to five participants will be selected by the Rivers and Coastal Group team and these participants will be invited to the Briefing Event on **Monday 19 May 2025** at the WSP offices, The Mailbox, Wharfside Street, Birmingham, West Midlands B1 1RQ.

At the Briefing Event the challenge will be revealed and the teams will be asked to get to know their teammates and begin working on the challenge question. They will have eight weeks in which to work together to develop their idea to be presented at the Early Career Professionals Judging Event, which will take place on **Tuesday 15 July 2025** at the WSP offices, The Mailbox, Wharfside Street, Birmingham, West Midlands B1 1RQ.

The Prizes

Awards will be given to the top three teams, based on the judging criteria. The winning team will receive vouchers to attend and the opportunity to present at the *Rivers and Coastal Group Technical Conference 2026* and to be featured in a CIWEM publication in Autumn 2025. Second and third placed teams will receive vouchers to the value of £50 and £30 per person respectively. The organisers' decision will be final.

In addition, we are also offering a number of other exciting prize opportunities for each member of the winning team to participate in, including a spot mentoring sessions with River and Coastal Group committee members and speaking opportunities at next year's Rivers and Coastal Group Early Career Professionals Challenge.

Entry Requirements

1. Entries are welcome from early career professionals/postgraduate students who have been working (or studying) within the water and environmental sector. Typical stakeholder organisations in the Water and Environmental sector include, but not limited to: engineering and environmental consultancies, water companies, academic institutions, regulators, local authorities, Tier 1 consultants and contractors, supply chain, NGOs and charities.
2. Entrants should be within the first three years of their careers in employment within the water and environment sector or in postgraduate education in a course relevant to the water and environment sector.
3. In principle, participants should be able to attend the briefing and judging events in-person which will be held at the WSP offices in Birmingham.

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Submitting an application and selection of those to be invited to the briefing event

If you are interested in participating in the challenge, please complete the [electronic application form](#).

Applications will be open from **09:00 on Tuesday 15 April 2025 until 17:00 on Friday 9 May 2025**.

Teams of four to five participants will be selected by the Rivers and Coastal Group team with the aim to foster collaboration across organisations and geographies. We aim to have a maximum of ten teams taking part in the challenge.

The inclusion of participants will be decided by the organisers and their decision will be final.

The Briefing Event.

Successful applicants will be invited to take part in a briefing session at the WSP offices in Birmingham on **Monday 19 May 2025**. This session will introduce the challenge, the teams and include presentations from keynote speakers from across the industry.

Following the presentations, team members will have the opportunity to introduce themselves and to begin developing their ideas and approach to the challenge theme and task.

The Development Phase

Following the briefing event, the teams will have eight weeks in which to develop their ideas, collect and put together content, and finalise their presentations to pitch at the judging event.

Each team will be assigned a member of the Rivers and Coastal Group committee member to provide guidance and feedback as needed.

The Judging Event.

The teams will be invited back to present their work in front of a judging panel and audience at a special in-person judging event at the WSP offices in Birmingham on **Tuesday 15 July 2025**. This event will be introduced and followed by keynote speakers.

Entry Fee

There is no entry fee to take part in the challenge this year. Participation in the challenge will give selected candidates a place at both the briefing event and judging/awards event. Candidate's sponsor organisation will get one free delegate place at the judging and awards event and a profile of your organisation in the awards event programme.

Contact information

For further information, please contact the organisers [Lucy Crockford](#) or [Liliana Rose](#).

Key Dates

Applications open:	Tuesday 15 April 2025	09:00 BST
Application Deadline:	Friday 9 May 2025	17:00 BST
The Briefing Event:	Monday 19 May 2025	14:00 – 19:00 BST
Judging & presentation date:	Tuesday 15 July 2025	14:00 – 19:00 BST