yp summit

March 22-24
CHARLOTTE, NC

Water Environment Federation
American Water Works Association

ATTENDANCE JUSTIFICATION TIPS

AWWA/WEF Young Professionals Summit | March 22-24, 2026

HOW TO SELL ATTENDANCE TO YOUR BOSS

YP Summit attendees will learn about emerging issues in the water industry and connect with a diverse group of water industry peers. The program is intended to challenge attendees to think critically about our industry (present and future) and to establish lasting connections with peers. Where else can you find so many professionals facing the same issues as your organization and learn how others are addressing those challenges? Are there solutions (or problems) you're not aware of? Following are several tips to guide you in your request for approval to attend the YP Summit.

JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE

- Focus on the knowledge and information you will bring back to your organization and team as a return on the initial investment.
- Emphasize relevant sessions and workshops designed to teach specific technical or soft skills that will assist you in being a better team player and future leader.
- Offer to deliver a short presentation and Q&A session about your summit experience upon your return to other young professionals in your workplace and their supervisors.
- Prepare a plan that shows who will help cover your workload while attending the YP Summit.

HIGHLIGHT THE DETAILS

- Session Content:
  - Program topics and speakers to be announced soon.
  - Once announced, identify specific program topics that are relevant to your organization's work, a project you are going to be working on in the future, or maybe even a topic that you are looking to explore as a part of your career path.
- Building Your Network:
  - Young professionals from all types of vocational backgrounds attend YP Summit. You'll meet utility operators, engineering consultants, vendor representatives, municipal employees, representatives from both research and permitting agencies, finance consultants, and employees who work in various roles from administration to operations to field work to project management and design.
  - There will be plenty of opportunities to network with young professionals from across North America, Canada, and other countries, each with their own unique water industry experience, challenges, and perspectives.
  - You'll get to know people who could potentially become future clients, sub-contractors, or consultants on your projects or with your company.

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2026 Registration Costs

Registration is reduced for both AWWA/WEF members and students.

Not a member? Join AWWA or WEF and save now!
Refer to the YP Summit registration information.
Consider staying for the WEF/AWWA Utility Management Conference (UMC), taking place the same week as YP Summit. During this prestigious management conference, you will learn about the latest approaches, practices, processes, techniques, case studies, and research in all aspects of utility management.

Registration Type	Member Super Saver	Non-Member Super Saver
Young Professional		
2026 YP Summit	$220	$300
2026 YP Summit + UMC	$395	$500
Students		
2026 YP Summit	$0	$80
2026 YP Summit + UMC	$75	$175

Expenses Worksheet

Use the worksheet below to develop a cost estimate for attending the YP Summit.

Expense	Cost
Summit Registration	$ Member Rate
Lodging	$288 to $320 per night, inclusive of tax
Mileage Reimbursement	
Flight	
Transportation (Airport to Hotel)	
Transportation (Hotel to Airport)	
Parking Reimbursement	
Food Per Diem	
Total Cost:	$

Are you a utility YP? Apply for a scholarship to attend the 2026 YP Summit! The deadline to apply is December 1, 2025.

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Benefit Examples

"I'll make connections with people who could potentially save us time and money in the future."	**UTILITY CONTACTS:** I will find other utilities facing the same problems we face and will develop contacts who can share their knowledge of cost-effective solutions, so that I can learn from their mistakes and benefit from their successes. **VENDOR CONTACTS:** I will meet vendors who know our processes and how they can be cost-effectively improved, including new technologies that can save us money in the long term. **SUPPORT CONTACTS:** Government officials and consultants will know which technologies qualify for grant funding and how to obtain it. **REGULATORY CONTACTS:** Agency reps can help us clarify and understand our regulatory requirements so that we remain current on compliance issues.
"I hope to hear others' viewpoints on these topics to find solutions to our current challenges."	**Issue 1:** Example: regulatory compliance **Issue 2:** Example: equipment issue **Issue 3:** Example: customer service challenge **Issue 4:** Example: workplace or management process improvement
"I'll find ways to do more with what we already have."	I will meet vendors and operators who know our processes well and can give us insight into how we can deliver better performance using current equipment at a lower cost.
"I'll learn about new technologies we should research."	I will see where the industry is heading and the newest innovations that are making operations more cost-effective.
"This will provide opportunities for others to cross-train on my role's responsibilities."	I plan to have _____ cover my duties while I am away. I will have this person ready to assume these duties before my departure, will meet with them for a debrief upon my return and will provide counselling/feedback/coaching for this person with written reports for supervisor's use and for their personnel file.
"I'll prepare presentations to share information upon my return."	**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:** I will prepare and submit a written report to my manager of my findings and of the short-term and long-term action items that result from what I learn at YP Summit. **STAFF BRIEFINGS:** I will prepare and deliver a staff briefing of my findings so that others may benefit from what I learn. **TRAINING ASSISTANCE:** I will help others learn how to effectively attend a major summit such as the YP Summit and deliver the maximum benefit to the Utility upon their return.

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SAMPLE LETTER

After you have identified the specific advantages of attending the YP Summit, provide the expenses and benefits to your manager. Below is a sample letter you can use as a template for your request.

< Date >

Dear < supervisor's name >,

I would like to attend the AWWA/WEF Young Professionals (YP) Summit and YP workshops in Charlotte, North Carolina on March 22-24, 2026. The event includes professional development sessions directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with various water industry experts and colleagues. Many of the presentations are tailored to the <your specialty> profession and provide valuable insights on improving our infrastructure and operational efficiency. With the attached cost estimate, I am seeking your approval for the registration fee, time, and travel.

The water industry faces significant workforce challenges, including a shortage of skilled professionals and an aging workforce. Attending this summit will directly support my development and benefit our organization by:

- Fostering meaningful peer connections that support my career growth and advance the future of the water sector.
- Developing interpersonal and leadership skills specific to the water and wastewater industry.
- Broadening my understanding of the water sector through increased awareness of industry roles, challenges, and opportunities.

This year's program will cover topics that align with several challenges we face, such as <bring up a specific issue>, regulatory compliance, equipment efficiency, and customer service improvements. I will also have the opportunity to engage with a wide variety of hands-on water and wastewater tools and approaches in a team setting to expand practical knowledge and build lasting peer-to-peer support networks.

The opportunity to network and gain knowledge in specific areas of the water industry makes my attendance at the YP Summit a worthwhile investment, yielding rich dividends for <name of your organization>. As you will see in the attached cost estimate, registration rates for young professionals to attend are significantly discounted. I am confident that my participation will not only enhance my own professional development but also contribute directly to advancing <name of your organization> goals as we prepare for the future workforce needs of the water sector.

Sincerely,
< Your Name >