



2023 INTELLIGENT WATER SYSTEMS CHALLENGE

FAQs

The Challenge

What is the overall goal of this Challenge?

Our goal is to demonstrate the value of using advanced sensing and/or data technology to deliver cost-effective operations and sustainable watershed management for utilities while allowing students, professionals and technology enthusiasts the opportunity to showcase their talents and innovations.

What is the Challenge approach?

The Challenge is about building a complete team to address utility needs through better decision-making, and also about shared learning and (we hope) having fun together. The teams come up with the need statements that they will be addressing in their solution.

Teams

What is a Team?

A Team consists of no more than six individual members who will work together to address a Need Statement.

Who can be on a Team?

There is no constraint on organizational affiliations of the team members and full flexibility in team membership. We envision some teams with multiple (or even all) members from the same organization, perhaps taking advantage of the Challenge to build better inter-departmental ties.

Steering Committee members and judges may not be part of a team.

Can an individual participate on more than one Team?

An individual can be on multiple teams. If an individual is on multiple teams, they must disclose to all teams their participation and role in each team for transparency and clarify participation expectations.

Can teams add members?

Teams may freely add members up to the challenge plan submission deadline. If you decide to add or change your team members, inform WEF and WRF of the change. If there is a possible conflict of interest, the team must submit a written request to the Steering Committee that includes an explanation of the possible conflict of interest. The Steering Committee will approve or deny the request within one week.

How can a utility or team keep its intellectual property confidential?

The IWS Challenge is not responsible for protecting Teams' intellectual property rights. If confidential aspects of a proprietary technology or software are presented as part of a Team's solution, it is the Team's responsibility to indicate this in their submittal and to request appropriate non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) from Steering Committee members and judges. Similarly, if a utility does not wish its data to be shared beyond the IWS Challenge Teams working with that data, the utility is responsible for requesting similar agreements from Team members. A model NDA form is available from the Steering Committee.

Solutions

What can I do if I have a great solution already in place?

Problems with previously completed solutions are not eligible for prize consideration but may be submitted for recognition as advancing the concept of Intelligent Water Systems.

Recognition may include opportunities to showcase the completed solution during the planned IWS Challenge educational activities, and acknowledgement at the IWS Challenge finals at WEFTEC 2023.

What should I do if I have a neat Need and am already working towards a solution?

Opportunities and problems with solutions already begun are eligible for prize consideration, but the submittal must clearly describe previously accomplished work, including existing IWS components.

Can proprietary technology be used in a solution?

Proprietary technology (i.e. custom analytics tools, as contrasted with open-source software) can be used in a solution. The Challenge criteria are intended to give judges flexibility in evaluating the value of a solution; for example, a portable and scalable solution implemented with proprietary tools may provide an alternative contribution worthy of consideration.

How many pages can my solution be?

Final submissions are limited to 7 pages in total. Appendices do not count toward the maximum page county. The Problem Statement should be a maximum of 2 pages while the Solution should be a maximum of 5 pages.

The Steering Committee is responsible for all determinations of eligibility with respect to Need statements, teams, and solutions.