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## 2024 INTELLIGENT WATER SYSTEMS CHALLENGE

# FAQs

### The Challenge

#### **What is the overall goal of this Challenge?**

We aim 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 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. It is also about shared learning and (we hope) having fun together. The teams come up with the need statements they will address in their solution.

### Teams

#### **What is a Team?**

A Team consists of two to six individual members who will work together to address a Need Statement.

#### **Who can be on a Team?**

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

Steering Committee members and judges may not be part of a team. If you are working closely with a Challenge judge, that judge must recuse reviewing your submission.

#### **Can an individual participate on more than one Team?**

An individual can be on multiple teams. However, if an individual is on multiple teams, they must disclose to each team their participation and role all teams for transparency and to 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 potential 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. Suppose confidential aspects of a proprietary technology or software are presented as part of a Team's solution. In that case, 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, suppose a utility does not wish its data to be shared beyond the IWS Challenge Teams working with that data, In that case, 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 already have a great solution already in place?**

Problems with previously completed solutions are not eligible for prize consideration but may be submitted for potential 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 2024.

### **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 I submit a solution if I have submitted a solution in a previous year?**

- If you submitted a solution, and did not win first prize, you are welcome to submit your old solution as long as significant updates have been made. In your challenge plan, you must be clear about the changes.
- If you won first place, your old solution may not be resubmitted, but you are welcome to submit a new solution.

### **Can proprietary technology be used in a solution?**

Proprietary technology (i.e., custom analytics tools 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 seven pages in total. The Problem Statement should be a maximum of two pages, while the Solution should be a maximum of five pages. You are welcome to submit appendices; they will not count towards the maximum page count. However, there is no guarantee that they will be reviewed so we encourage you to keep all pertinent information within the 7-page limit.

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