

AWRA Technical Committee Manual



RESEARCH TO
APPLICATION
COMMITTEE



TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE



JAWRA
EDITORIAL
BOARD



INTEGRATED
WATER
RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT



FUTURE RISK
COMMITTEE



POLICY
COMMITTEE



AMERICAN
WATER RESOURCES
ASSOCIATION

WE WORK TOGETHER. WE LEARN TOGETHER.
WE SOLVE PROBLEMS TOGETHER.

PURPOSE

This manual describes and highlights key components and responsibilities of the AWRA Technical Committee model and the partnership between existing committees, the AWRA Board of Directors, and the AWRA community.

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Technical Committee Leaders:

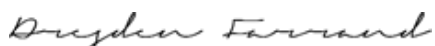
The American Water Resources Association (AWRA) cultivates the work of technical committees to better meet the needs of multidisciplinary water resources professionals in the AWRA community and beyond. AWRA technical committees embody the true mission of our efforts: providing leadership, vision, professional development tools, and advocacy for our members.

Our work together is vital for transforming the education process and improving learning and understanding of emerging issues in our space. Likewise, AWRA's national leadership allows AWRA technical committees to have their hands on the pulse of national debate and dialogue while using the AWRA brand to strengthen collaboration and networking with leaders worldwide.

This Technical Committee Manual is intended to be a guide for creating and sustaining the partnerships with existing committee leaders and supporting their various efforts and contributions to the community; publishing papers in *JAWRA (Journal of the American Water Resources Association)* and/or *Water Resources IMPACT Magazine*, hosting meetings and events, hosting webinars, and other educational offerings. We know that flexibility, good intent, and timing are critical ingredients to building a strong technical committee and producing content for the organization that reflects the needs of the specific mission of that committee and AWRA. And we also know that both technical committees and AWRA need clear expectations for this partnership to work effectively.

Thank you for your perspective, team effort, and resilient commitment to creating content and opportunities for the AWRA community.

Warm regards,



Dresden Farrand
Chief Executive Officer
American Water Resources Association

SECTION 1A: OVERVIEW

AWRA Technical Committees: A Volunteer Partnership for Water Resource Professionals

The AWRA technical committees are the most effective way to advance our mission both nationally and beyond. An AWRA technical committee is defined by a select group of members that share AWRA's mission, vision, and function at the national level to affect change in the field of water resources. The AWRA partnership offers an opportunity to:

- build a strong partnership among committee members leveraging the national office and the AWRA State sections;
- advocate for AWRA members at the committee level while maintaining awareness of the national perspectives;
- create a network of active and elite community leaders who collaborate to exchange best practices and work together to find solutions;
- most importantly, develop and deliver professional development opportunities in the water resources community.

1. AWRA Mission

To advance multidisciplinary water resources education, management, and research.

2. AWRA Vision

To be recognized as the pre-eminent multidisciplinary association for information exchange, professional development, and education about water resources and related issues.

3. AWRA Objectives

- To advance water resources research, planning, development, management, and education.
- To convene a common meeting ground for physical, biological, and social scientists, engineers, and other persons concerned with water resources.
- To foster the collection, organization, and dissemination of ideas and information on water resources science, technology, management, and policy.



[Learn about AWRA's 6-decade history.](#)

SECTION 1A: OVERVIEW

4. AWRA Strategic Goals for 2022-2025 (JUST EXAMPLES BELOW)

- DEI in Water Resource Sectors: Increase the education and application of implementing DEI initiatives in the workplace.
- Professional Development: Increase skills and competencies of water resource professionals among early career professionals.
- Team capacity: Build system-wide support for technology in water resources through strategic partnerships and professional learning opportunities.
- State Capacity: Expand the scope of AWRA state sections and state chapters by creating collaborative professional learning opportunities.

5. AWRA Membership Dues Structure

AWRA is a nonprofit, professional membership association. **Membership dues are required for committee members.**

Type of Membership	AWRA Dues
Premier Membership	\$849
Professional Membership	\$179
Gateway Membership	\$89
Student Membership	\$39



[Learn about AWRA Membership Benefits.](#)

SECTION 1B: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

To be a functional AWRA technical committee, it should have at least two co-chairs who lead the committee through a fiscal year (January 1 – December 31).

Definition of Co-chair

One of two or more chairpersons who preside jointly over something (such as a meeting, organization, committee, event, or department).

Responsibilities

1. Schedule bi-monthly meetings at the beginning of each fiscal year for the rest of the year.
2. Maintain regular communications with AWRA Board Liaison and staff.
3. Work with the AWRA staff to do an open call for the recruitment of new committee members.
4. Actively recruit new members throughout the year.
5. Work with the committee at the beginning of the year to set an agenda and goals for the upcoming year. The goals should entail creating a deliverable for the current fiscal year or the next fiscal year, such as a conference or meeting, publication, webinar, etc.
6. Send out a bi-monthly agenda, take and distribute meeting minutes, and perform an attendance roll call for each meeting.
7. Provide a bi-monthly written activities report to the AWRA Board of Directors for them to review and provide feedback.
8. Work on succession planning with the committee to determine new leadership roles for the following year.

SECTION 1C: FUNCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

AWRA technical committees have the power to influence AWRA's capacity-building resources in the water resources community and continue the long-known success of building community, conversation, and connections. To this end, the committee members should.

- Obtain and maintain an AWRA membership.
- Attend bi-monthly committee meetings, as their schedule allows.
- Support the committee chairs in writing bi-monthly updates to the AWRA Board of Directors regarding committee activities. The committee needs to provide the activities and a description of their needs from AWRA.
- Maintain cabinet-level leadership for the committee, which includes succession planning, holding regular meetings, promoting AWRA events, and promoting annual elections of board officers, awards, and scholarships.
- Provide professional development and/or leadership opportunities in the water resources community, such as events and meetings, webinars, publications, and other educational offerings.
- Plan and attend an annual meeting at the American Water Resources Annual Conference to offer updates to the AWRA member community and recruit new committee members.

SECTION 2A: SUCCESSFUL AGENDAS

The key to building a successful technical committee is to develop the mission and goals of the committee for that year. The current committees have established missions; however, the AWRA Board of Directors strongly suggests that these mission statements are reviewed annually. It is necessary to question whether they are still relevant or circumstances may have changed where the language needs to be updated. In the first couple of meetings in the new year, we strongly encourage leaders to perform the following tasks and actions:

- If necessary, review and develop your committee's mission and goals.
- Identify what "activity or contribution" you want to make to AWRA this year for the next one or two fiscal years. The committee can:
 1. Host an AWRA conference, event, meeting, or gathering;
 2. Co-host an AWRA webinar or webinar series;
 3. Co-host a National Leadership Institute (similar to NLI for state water officials; however, these can be on different topics and water resource professionals.
 4. Publish a manuscript paper in JAWRA;
 5. Publish a special issue or article(s) in IMPACT Magazine
 6. Publish a white paper or policy statement;
 7. Survey the AWRA membership to understand their needs.
 8. Identify key educational tracks to propose at current AWRA conferences, especially the American Water Resources Annual Conference;
 9. Identify specific training that would be relevant and useful to the AWRA community and work with AWRA staff to implement it;
 10. Identify an emerging topic and work with the planning committee to develop a workshop at an upcoming in conference;
 11. Connect with other technical committee leaders to learn strategies and best practices for delivering resources into the community.

Resources for Technical Committees

AWRA can provide resources and support to committee activities such as scheduling meetings, technology services, virtual and in person meeting planning, speaker recommendations, coordination of work between AWRA editorial staff and committee members, and much more. AWRA strongly encourages the committee to do a needs assessment that aligns with their committee goals and activities. Conversely, the AWRA Board of Directors will also provide suggestions for hot topics that committees should consider. These needs should be communicated to AWRA staff. Currently, AWRA is working to hire a technical director/subject matter expert, to serve as technical support for committees to execute their goals.

SECTION 2B: SPECIALTY CONFERENCES

AWRA technical committees contribute to the water resource community by hosting special conferences in the spring and summer. This provides a great opportunity for providing education, professional development, networking, and growing the network of early-career professionals in water resources. Most importantly, hosting events adds value to AWRA membership and ensures resource development for the association. [Review past and present conference programs online.](#)

The benefits of hosting an AWRA Specialty Conference are to:

- Provide more in-depth education and conversation around the important emerging trends and topics covered under your committee's mission. This also means your theme and topic will be part of a national conversation at AWRA Specialty Conferences, which typically have a national presence.
- Focus on content that attempts to solve current obstacles/issues in the community while the conference logistics and planning are executed by AWRA staff.
- Discuss trends, policy, technology, and future foresight work that can be built into a post-conference statement and/or policy statement.
- Focus on relationship-building and intimate dialogue among peers and colleagues.
- Encourage local leaders to get to know reputable and highly selective vendors in their community.

Schedule Policy

The format of AWRA specialty conferences varies by the planning committee and theme; however, the long-standing model is comprised of workshops, keynote/featured speakers, panel discussions, 90-minute blocks of technical sessions, student activities, and a Wednesday conference luncheon with awards. In addition, vendor exhibits are also part of the engagement and fundraising efforts. **Specialty conferences cannot be scheduled between September 1 and February 1 or near the American Water Resources Conference dates.** Please check with AWRA staff to get approval on dates for specialty conference proposals.

AWRA Specialty Conference Proposals

All conference proposals from the technical committees or outside AWRA partners must be submitted in writing to the AWRA Board of Directors. The proposal will go on the agenda of the next scheduled board meeting. To ensure your proposal is reviewed in a timely manner, please submit your proposal at your earliest convenience as the board cannot always guarantee time on the agenda for such requests. [Review the AWRA Conference Planning Manual for details.](#)

SECTION 2C: OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Formation and Dissolution

For the development of new AWRA technical committees or changes to the technical committee mission and goals need to be provided by formal written request to the AWRA Board of Directors. The AWRA Board of Directors will discuss the request at the next scheduled board meeting and AWRA staff will report back the final discussion and decisions.

For a request to **create a new technical committee**, please include the following:

1. Submitters full contact information (name, address, email, affiliation)
2. Name of the proposed committee
3. Purpose, mission, and goals of the proposed committee
4. Identified committee members (at least 5 to start)
5. A list of activities the committee is interested in pursuing and the needs associated with these activities

For a request to **change a current technical committee description, mission, or goals**, please include the following in the request to the AWRA Board of Directors.

1. Submitters full contact information (name, address, email, affiliation)
2. Proposal on the change
3. Signed letter of agreement from current committee

For a request to **dissolve the technical committee**, please submit the following below.

1. Submitters full contact information (name, address, email, affiliation)
2. Reason for dissolution
3. Any description of activity related to trying to find way to maintain the committee.

APPENDIX A: BOARD REPORTING TEMPLATE

AWRA _____ Technical Committee
(insert name of)

I. Goals of the Committee

II. Committee Activities & Progress Timeline _____ through _____
(insert dates mm/dd/yyyy) (insert dates mm/dd/yyyy)

- List all activities indicating when they will be initiated and the expected completion date.
- List all the needs the committee has to complete their goals or activities from AWRA staff or AWRA Board of Directors.

III. Meeting & Conference Calls

- List meetings and conference calls held with Chapter leaders over the last four months.
- Describe input/advice provided by Chapter members during these meetings/calls.

IV. Committee Members

- Report any changes to the committee roster.

V. Concerns or issues the AWRA Board/staff should know about Requested Board Actions

_____ Action Needed, if action requested, please briefly describe.

_____ None



**AMERICAN
WATER RESOURCES
ASSOCIATION**

American Water Resources Association
PO Box 2663 | Woodbridge, VA 22195
(540) 687-8390 | info@awra.org | www.awra.org
