



# AAPG YP Annual Report

## Period 2020-2021

September 2021

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# 1. Organizational Overview

The AAPG Young Professionals Leadership Committee (YPLC) exists to promote the interests of young professionals (YPs) in the AAPG community and serve as a social network for YP communication. The committee consist of the global chairs facilitating the Special Interest Group (SIG) and the regional YP coordinators representing each Region. Local YP chapters are coordinated by the Regional YP committees.

The YP SIG mission statement is to:

- Foster a challenging and successful career in the energy industry for recent university graduates and early career geoscientists.
- Build an understanding of the value of a lasting relationship between AAPG and young professional members.
- Encourage geoscientists to progress from Student to Associate to Member.

The YP SIG benefits AAPG by providing local outreach between student and local chapters, grassroots connections for membership recruitment, effective social media communication on matters pertaining to YP interests, and visibility on YP-related events. The YP SIG is organized into three tiers of volunteer participation:

## 1. The YP Leadership Committee

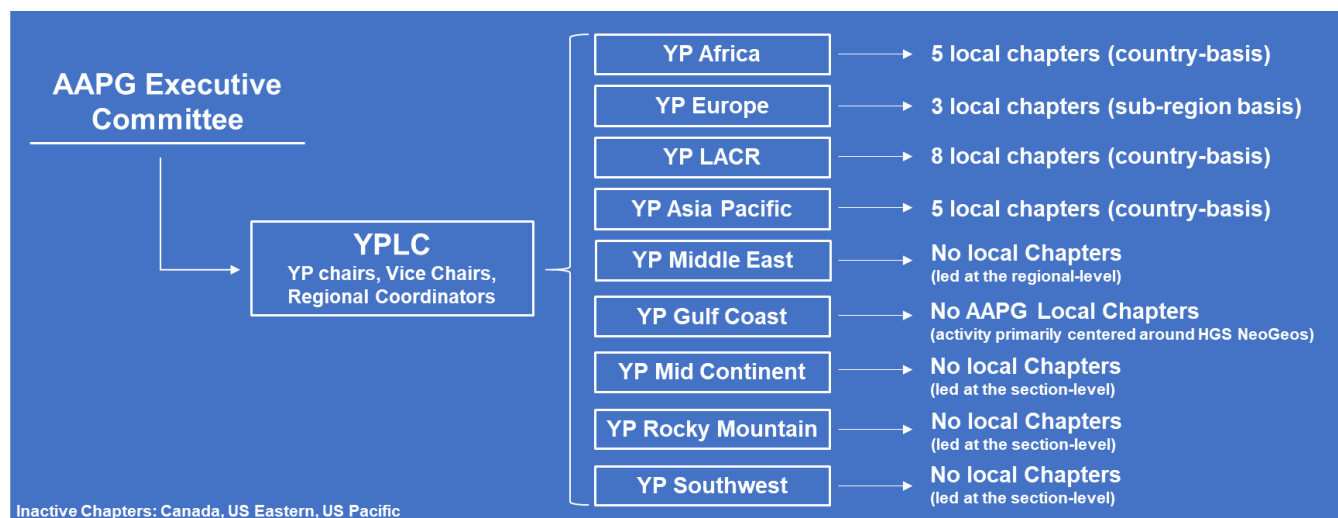
Consists of the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Section/Region YP Coordinators.  
Contains at least one YP coordinator from each section/region.

## 2. Section/Region YP Sub-Committees

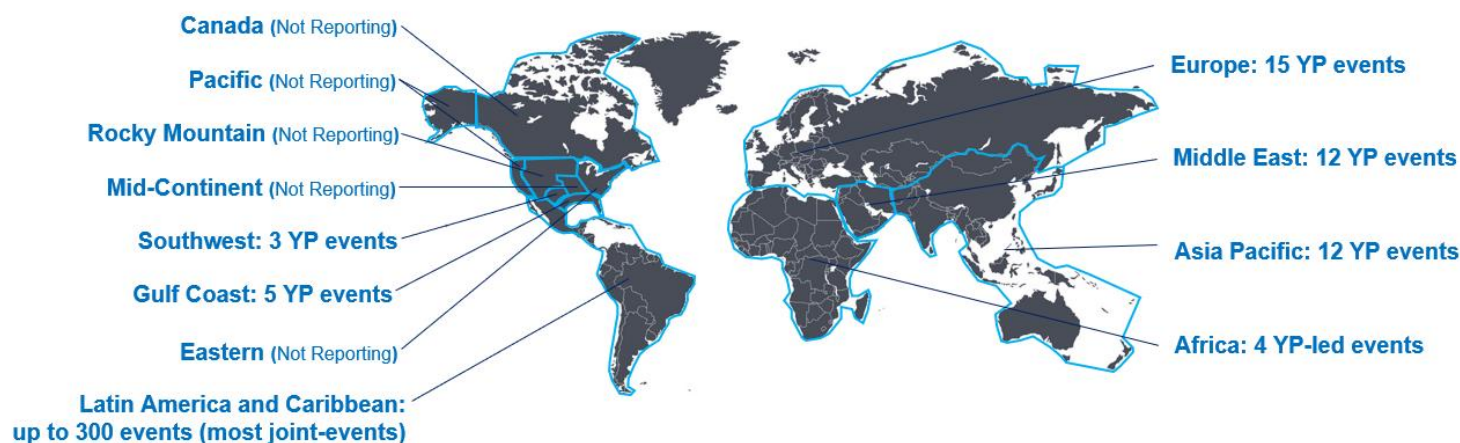
Consists of the Section/Region YP Coordinators, and a committee of YP volunteers from that region. Regional YP committees typically report to their regional AAPG leadership, while US sections operate independently or receive guidance from the global YP chairmen.

## 3. Local YP Chapters

Function on a local (country, state, or city-wide) scale, and reports up through the respective Section/Region YP Coordinator



## 2. Global YP Activity



Global YP Activity during the 2020-2021 fiscal year was mostly concentrated in the Europe, Middle East, Asia Pacific, and LACR where the Regional AAPG leadership directly incorporates the YP committees. Regional leadership committees kept most activities to a virtual format due travel restrictions and safety concerns with in-person social gatherings. The lack of YP-allocated funding also restricted event requests for in-person space reservations and catering.

Virtual Events mainly consisted of technical talks, professional development mentorship sessions, and trivia-type social events. Interaction between YP committees and student chapters also increased in several regions over the last year through open-invitation webinars and increased focus on YP IBA mentorship. Virtual platforms allowed students members and YPs to cross-participate between regions, helping keep audience sizes higher than what would normally be expected for in-person events. The VGP program also opened participation to YPs by creating a new “Associate” category. Most YP-directed virtual events averaged between 40-60 participants, with some events attracting audiences up to 200 persons.

Social Media presence was instrumental to maintaining YP engagement over the course of COVID-related shutdowns. Upcoming events, AAPG-related updates, and YP-relevant news articles were posted on regional social media pages, with key content being reposted on global pages for wider distribution. Regions such as Europe, Asia-Pacific, and Latin-America which heavily utilized Facebook and LinkedIn frequently received over 100 views per post, with the most popular posts reaching up to 900 views. Many regional committees appointed social media chairs to assist with the high volume of content generation.

Adaptation of the AAPG app has been slow amongst YP communities, mainly due to the lack of in-person events which were a primary function of the app. Many regions are electing to use Whatsapp instead to maintain communication channels and committee forums since it's already widely used in many countries and allows voice/video teleconferencing capabilities.

### 3. Individual Region Summaries

#### YP-Europe

The European region has one of the most active YP committees, having grown significantly over the last two years thanks to a restructuring of the leadership team and focus on social media outreach. The current YP committee led by David Estwell consists of 9 members and includes the local chapter presidents, social media managers, and content generators, each focusing on a sub-theme such as energy transition or career development. This is the largest YP committee of all the regions which enables a high rate of content generation supporting their active social media presence. This region mainly focuses on engagement through LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube where they post job adverts, industry news, and promote AAPG events. They strive to host at least one virtual YP-led event per month, usually in conjunction with the regional AAPG committee. Events focusing on job opportunities and energy transition have the highest popularity, typically gathering audiences of 30-40 people. Event participation is also boosted by utilizing incentives such as ticket giveaways, where participants who stay through the end of a virtual event are given a unique code to enter a raffle for conference tickets. This innovative technique is an excellent way to leverage non-cash sponsorship for virtual events which significantly increase turnout.

While this region's YP activity historically revolved around the London chapter led by Irma Panou-Filandra, the SIG made efforts to franchise two new local chapters in culturally distinct regions: YP-France and YP-Caspian. The YP-France chapter led by Stephanie Herrington seeks to build relationships with local universities and utilize the European AAPG coordinators to remain self-sufficient in the western European region. The YP-Caspian chapter led by Erol Nadir helps represent YPs in Russian and post-Soviet republics in eastern Europe. Their goal is to leverage existing geoscience organizations in Russia to help grow AAPG's presence and establish new student chapters. These two distinct local chapters help address the wide range of cultures included in this region by hosting events in native languages and focusing on topics most relevant to their audiences. Western European YPs are more supportive of topics in energy transition and climate change, while eastern European audiences are more supportive of traditional exploration topics relevant to Russian basins. The YP-led chapters in Norway and Amsterdam are no longer active.



*Three of the London YP committee members: YP-London president Irma Panou-Filandra (left), Social Media Manager David McCann (center), Energy Transition Manager Marcella Cilia (right), at the March 2020 APPEX international prospect conference and exhibition*



## YP-Asia Pacific

YP activity in the Asia-Pacific region mainly revolves around student chapter (SC) interaction since student membership accounts for approximately 60% of membership, compared to only 16% for YP and associate membership. There are over 50 student chapters throughout the region, with a third being inactive and a third still in the application process. Student chapters in this region are coordinated by the previous YP chairman Sankhadip Bhattacharya, helping keep tight continuity between SC and YP activities. In 2020, YP leadership turned over to Fatin Fariha and Grandika Primadani, who have done an excellent job continuing SC advancement by connecting local YP leadership to student chapters where the faculty lacks AAPG ties.

The strongest local YP leadership teams are in Indonesia, Kuala Lumpur, and India, where local YP leadership have established committees and regularly host virtual content. The Indonesia YP chapter launched in February 2021 is actively recruiting additional YP officers to grow membership and content generation. Malaysia YPs are actively participating in joint events with local geoscience organizations such as Geological Society of Malaysia, EAGE, and SEG. Australia has seen decreased YP participation in the last two fiscal years, with minimal YP leadership interaction and content generation coming from Perth and Sydney areas.



In early 2020 we attempted to establish YP coordinators in China to extend AAPG representation and start student chapters but encountered challenges due to cultural and language barriers. Many of our Chinese YP correspondents eventually became inactive. Geoscience YPs in China primarily chose to be involved with SPE since major professional networks at the China University of Geosciences and University of Petroleum China in Beijing boast active SPE chapters. Post-merger, we expect SPE's established presence in China will complement the existing AAPG YP network by adding significant membership and extending representation to previously unconnected geoscience YP networks.



**Liaisons**

Amrit Cooblal  
YP Liaison



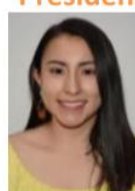
Mateyo Goyberg  
Argentina



Vladimir Machaca  
Bolivia



Priscilla Amaral  
Brazil

**Presidents**

Laura Becerra  
Colombia



Idalia Cruz\*



Nereyda Garcia  
Peru



Daiane Cardoso  
Vice YP Liaison



Shenille Samlal  
Trinidad & Tobago



Radhima Bisai  
Suriname



Jesus Monclave\*\*  
Venezuela

\*Idalia succeeded by Enrique Sadas in 2021  
\*\*Jesus succeeded by Yolimar Rojas in 2021

The Latin-America and Caribbean region also hosts the Sustainable Development in Energy competition, where teams of students and YP submit proposals for venture energy initiatives highlighting social, environmental, and economic impact. The top three teams won cash prizes, an invitation to present at an AAPG conference, and publication in the AAPG magazine.

Future growth efforts include the two new YP chapters in Ecuador and Uruguay, leadership summits connecting local chapter committees, and an increased focus on energy transition, including the regional sustainability committee.

## YP-Gulf Coast

YP activity in the Gulf Coast region is mainly focused on the Houston Geological Society's early-career organization, NeoGeos. Pre-covid, the group frequently held in-person happy hours and expert panels to socialize YPs between local companies. Additionally, they were major participants at local conferences such as the Student Expo and ACE, often planning YP events in conjunction with the conference. Post-Covid, NeoGeos hosted or participated in three virtual events and two in-person events including the student expo, the SPE Spring hiring event, virtual trivia nights, and geoscience short-courses.

This year, Vicky Gao and Philip Tesch were appointed as AAPG YP-coordinators for the Gulf Coast section, helping unite membership presence between other local chapters in the Gulf Coast area. Their goal is to share activity from other YP groups outside of Houston and facilitate relationships with company specific YP groups such as ExxonMobil's GeoOne and Chevron's Horizons program, where much of the YP presence in Houston is concentrated.



## YP-Africa

The YP-Africa Region is led by a committee consisting of the chairman, social media manager, and YP representatives from the 5 local chapters in South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Angola, and Ghana. Last year, the region hosted two virtual events through their “Link Up” webinar series, and two in-person events in conjunction with the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE), which is the prominent industry geoscience organization in the region. NAPE has their own active YP chapter, and the region is further subdivided into 5 local chapters.

SPE has a strong presence in the Africa region, and most geoscience YPs are already members of both organizations. The SPE local chapters in Nigeria are similarly aligned with the NAPE local chapters, making it straightforward to include both memberships in joint events.

The goal for next year is for the YP committee to facilitate at least 4 webinars and two in-person YP events.

## YP-Middle East

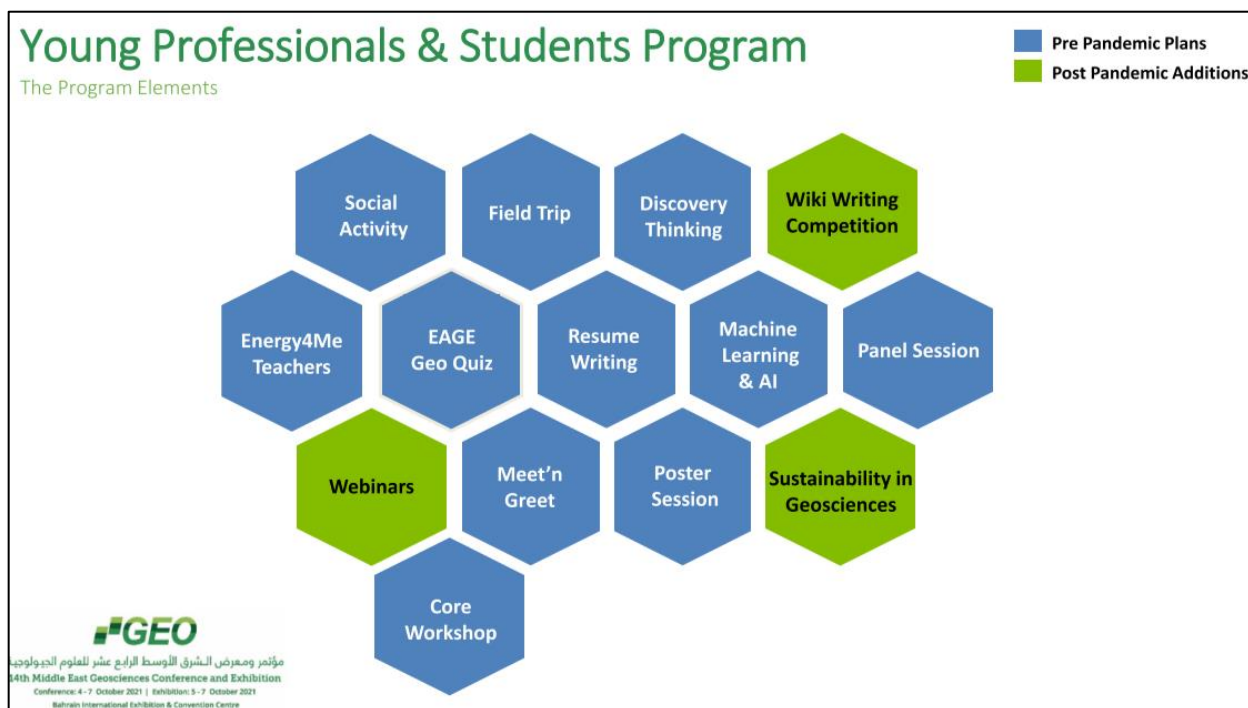
Unlike other regions which are generally led by a committee of local YPs, the Middle East region YP SIG was led by a single dynamic individual, Hala Alwagdani, who achieved great success driving professional development and IBA participation in her region through the 2020-2021 virtual environment. She helped recruit 13 YPs to serve as team mentors for the IBA competition, and one YP to serve as a judge for the regional competition. YPs also participated as instructors for short courses specifically targeting IBA participation.

Much of this region’s activity is currently directed at the Young Professional program of GEO, the annual middle east geosciences conference and exhibition in Bahrain taking place early October. The program this year is organized by a committee of 12 YPs from a diverse background of middle east and western countries to host abstracts, webinars, technical talks, and professional development events. In 2020 the program hosted 8 webinars that attracted over 1000 audience members.



The Middle East region is currently hosting the Geo-Wiki challenge where students and YPs paraphrase technical topics relevant to energy into Wikipedia-style articles for publishing on the AAPG wiki webpage. Entries are screened by a panel of judges, and top entries are formally recognized and published at the 2021 GEO conference.

In 2021 Hala stepped down as the regional YP coordinator and is succeeded by Naif Alassaf, who wants to focus on expanding the YP leadership into a committee and engaging the leadership to form local chapters.



## YP–Southwest US

The US Southwest Section has two local YP chapters in Midland and Dallas with approximately 50 members between them. The chapters mainly focus on social events, having conducted three virtual social trivia nights in the past year. The Midland chapter remained mostly inactive over covid, but is looking for sponsors to assist with future in-person social events such as a night at the ballpark, Jackalopes hockey game, and happy hour meet-ups. While AAPG YP involvement in the Southwest Section has decreased over the last three years, an eventual merger with SPE will hopefully increase membership and participation since Midland has an active and thriving YP SPE chapter.

## YP-Canada

The YP-Canada AAPG region was inactive during the 2020-2021 fiscal year, having no YP leadership providing representation. Additionally, only 1 of the 11 student chapters are currently active (McMaster University). Most YP geoscientists in the Canada region are instead involved with the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists (CSPG), a local affiliate of AAPG with parallel goals.

We're currently in talks with the CSPG YP chair Scott Norlin about appointing a joint YP chairman to represent geoscientists across both organizations, helping align their content with a more global audience. An eventual merger with SPE will help grow AAPG's YP audience in the Canada region through the inclusion of engineers, but may further drive the geoscience-specific YP crowd to CSPG instead since most content relevant to them would be exclusive to that geoscience-specific organization. A possible solution would be to appoint a local YP liaison between CSPG and AAPG prior to the merger to help establish a YP link prior to rebranding.

## YP-Mid Continent US

Not Reporting

## YP-Pacific US

Not Reporting

## YP-Rockies US

Not Reporting

## YP-Eastern US

Not Reporting.

## 4. Challenges

### ***U.S. Sections are independent, while international sections are AAPG-operated***

Because most U.S. Sections are only affiliated with AAPG and not directly reporting to the global organization, it can be difficult to build influence and establish YP ties within their organizations. Historically, our YP leadership committee and local YP coordinators have only had loose ties with the U.S. sectional leadership, causing us to rely mostly on our own resources for events and content generation. Internationally, the regions operate almost entirely under the AAPG banner, helping share a common brand, utilize organizational resources, and promote events to a larger audience.

One potential solution is for the U.S. YP sections to engage the student chapters more heavily and direct future content generation towards joint student/YP participation since the student chapters report directly to AAPG and receive support from the student chapter coordinators. This would help us avoid relying on non-AAPG organizations which may have varying levels of support for the YP committee and their local coordinators.

### ***U.S. YP Sections don't report to their sectional leadership, while international YP regions report to their regional leadership***

International YP committees often report directly to their AAPG regional leadership, helping maintain a high degree of content generation, frequent communication, and resource sharing. This “direct report” interaction frequently leads to greater engagement since the regional committees include YP involvement during early stages of event planning and set expectations for them to contribute in meaningful ways.

Conversely, the U.S. sections usually don't include their YP coordinators as part of their leadership committee, leading most section coordinators to feel unengaged or excluded from executive functions. This sometimes results in YP events losing legitimacy, getting minimal support or visibility from their sectional leadership, and in some instances attempting to plan events that conflict with executive planning efforts.

One potential solution is for the U.S. sections to appoint their sectional YP coordinators as contributing members of their executive leadership committees, helping add legitimacy and engagement to the local YP leaders. This would also enable the regional coordinators to directly interact with the local chapter leadership at sectional-level planning meetings. Currently, 6 of the 8 US-based YP officers are past their three-year term and eligible for replacement or re-appointment. The U.S. sections could either appoint these roles from high-impact YPs within their section, or they could reappoint the existing YP coordinators to serve in this new capacity.

### ***Lack of funding for local YP chapters to conduct events***

Historically, the YP SIG was allocated up to \$12,000 to support local chapters planning YP-directed events. This allocation was kept at the headquarters-level, facilitated by the global YP leadership, and reimbursed to local YP chapters after they submitted summaries of their events, received funding approval, and presented receipts for eligible reimbursable items (space reservation, travel for speakers, catering, etc.). Due to covid, no funding was allocated to YP events in 2020-2021, causing most YP chapters to either self-fund with local sponsors or charge an admittance fee to participants. In the future if YP-allocated funding was made available, it would encourage local chapters to plan more frequent events within the AAPG banner knowing they'll receive support from their early engagement.

Alternatively, instead of holding the allocated funding at the HQ-level, YP-allocated funding could be held by the Sectional and Regional executive committees and earmarked exclusively for YP-related events, incentivizing further interaction between the executive and local YP leadership.



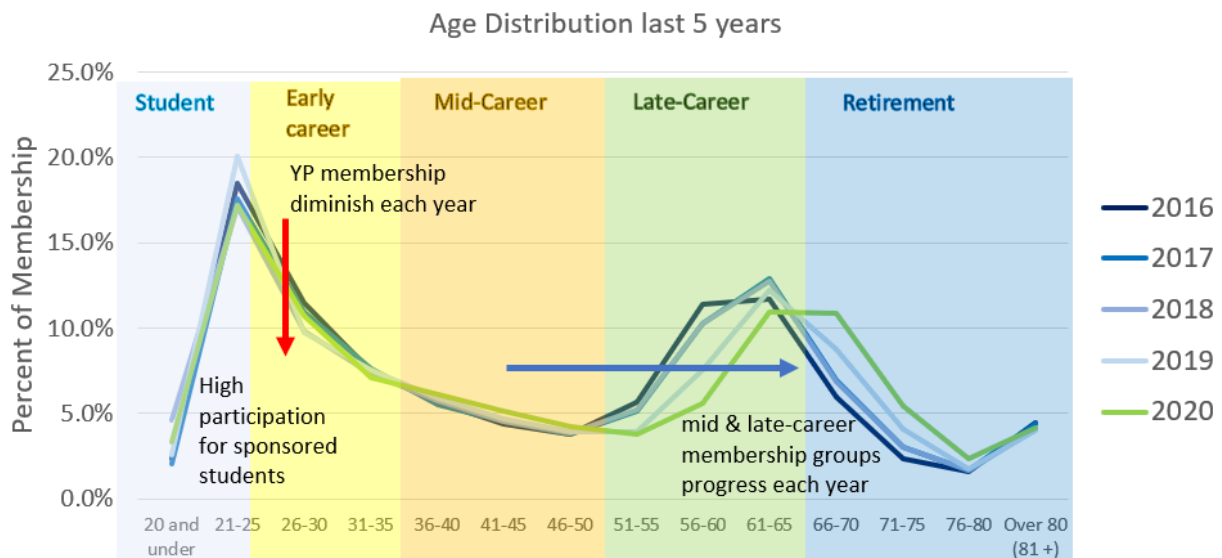
*2018 AAPG Rig Tour field trip at the Eagle Ford shale play, led by the Texas A&M student chapter and open to YP & student members of SPE. Funding was provided by a combination of AAPG, Marathon Oil, and individual participant contributions*



## 5. Threats

### Decrease in YP participation globally

Almost all YP regions observed a decrease in YP membership and participation over the last year, particularly in the U.S. Sections. Additionally, the generational gap in AAPG continues to grow, leading to decreased YP representation at major decision-making points. In the last 6 years since the 2015 downturn, YP membership has decreased from 30% to 25% of total membership, and unlike the mid and late-career generations, YP demographic groups don't progress through subsequent age groupings together.



Many YP regions report decreased student to YP transitions due to the lack of entry-level career opportunities in traditional petroleum roles since the 2015 and 2020 downturns. The high cyclicality of jobs, the preference to retain more experience workers, and locality-specific job markets have caused many early career professionals to permanently depart the industry and discourage future students from pursuing careers in oil and gas. Additionally, younger millennials in culturally western regions identify strongly with careers in sustainable development and renewable energy rather than traditional oil and gas upstream, driving them to affiliate strongly with non-petroleum organizations.

1. *The future of work in oil, gas and chemicals.* Deloitte Insights. Published 2020. <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/insights/industry/oil-and-gas/future-of-work-oil-and-gas-chemicals.html?fbclid=IwAR2jN1ML9Er3z4rRoU9UobjPHPWDQaWDFIZq9syyp-ct2ACxjfZNNLTVZwI>
2. *"A Slap in the Face": The Pandemic Disrupts Young Oil Careers.* The New York Times. Published 2021. [https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/business/oil-industry-careers.html?fbclid=IwAR1w\\_s3Q0nYHD72br5qKhd9nFLsoeGl06B2rBi-5zbuIS9n9WiDHpd7uCOY](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/business/oil-industry-careers.html?fbclid=IwAR1w_s3Q0nYHD72br5qKhd9nFLsoeGl06B2rBi-5zbuIS9n9WiDHpd7uCOY)
3. *Rigs sit idle and jobs go unfilled in Canadian oilfields as workers walk away from volatile job market.* financialpost. Published August 4, 2021. <https://financialpost.com/commodities/energy/oil-gas/rigs-sit-idle-and-jobs-go-unfilled-in-canadian-oilfields-as-worker-walk-away-from-volatile-job-market>

### ***Wide geographic and cultural divides in some regions***

Regions such as Europe, Africa, and Asia Pacific span a wide range of cultures and language barriers making unification of YP content difficult. For example, in Europe many YPs in former-soviet countries prefer content to be in Russian, and don't identify with themes in renewable energy and energy transition. Conversely, western European YPs requested to see more content emphasizing sustainable development and geothermal energy. A similar trend occurs in the Asia Pacific region where Australian YPs want to see more content in renewable energy and energy minerals, while YPs in Indonesia, India, and China still support content focusing on conventional offshore exploration. In Africa, most content is hosted in English, but several of the local professional societies will occasionally host content in native languages.

One potential solution is to start new YP chapters and appoint local leadership from areas that were previously culturally unrepresented. The formation of the YP-Caspian local chapter within Europe is an excellent example where we extended AAPG influence into a previously unrepresented energy-rich region. The formation of a future YP-China or revival of the YP-Australia chapters could be similarly successful in targeting large populations of unrepresented YPs.

### ***Concentration of YP development in closed-door corporate organizations***

Most private national oil companies (NOCs) and public international oil companies (IOCs) offer professional development and networking opportunities internally as part of closed-door early career development programs and interest groups. These groups rarely interact formally with external organizations, leading to a lack of representation for most full-time employed early career geoscientists. Particularly in large corporations where training resources are provided directly by the company and external idea-sharing is discouraged, AAPG involvement has minimal impact on career advancement ultimately deterring geoscience professionals from investing time and energy in the AAPG community. This has led to an over-representation of small cap, unemployed, or underemployed geoscientists in the YP community, and under-representation of employed geoscientists at incumbent E&P companies.

Particularly in the Gulf Coast section, many of these closed-door early career geoscience organizations function similarly as local AAPG YP local chapters, with elected committees, internal technical talks, and regular social events. If these organizations can be encouraged by senior members to participate formally with AAPG events through joint sponsorship, advertising, and committee involvement, it would significantly boost YP participation within the professional community.



*2019 Joint event with AAPG Middle East and SAEA: Camp, Hike, and Run*

## 6. Opportunities

### *Social Media and Virtual Engagement*

YPs have been relying on social media as a primary source of communication during the Covid lockdowns. The most popular platforms include LinkedIn, Facebook, and Whatsapp. We've capitalized on this by appointing dedicated social media managers and content generators in the sub-committees and granting them joint edit capabilities across local, regional, and global pages. This allows them to quickly distribute content to audiences outside their local network, drawing a larger audience than traditional in-person events normally would. Most social media platforms are free and intuitive, allowing us to quickly generate announcements and share them across chapters.

In addition to social media, the virtual platform helped us keep overhead costs low for technical talks, networking events, and professional development sessions. Normally these events would be done in-person, requiring space reservation, catering, and volunteer coordination. In the virtual realm we can increase the frequency of events, lower the audience time commitment, and expand the invitation to non-local participants.

### *Recapitalizing on In-Person Social Events*

Prior to the Covid lockdowns, informal social events such as happy hours, sporting tournaments, or meet-and-greets were a large component of the YP SIG. Many members felt they already had enough technical content from the normal AAPG agenda and requested non-technical content to help support their geoscience friend network locally. Especially when done in conjunction with larger conference where members were already travelling for the technical program, local meetups were exceptionally popular. We hope to return to leveraging non-technical social events as a source of YP participation and revenue generation in a post-covid environment.



## 7. One-Year Plan

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- Continue to advance YP interests through virtual or hybrid content generation, advertisement of YP participation activities, and representation of YP interests at the executive level.
- Support local YP chapter generation in France, Caspian, Ecuador, and Uruguay through targeted content generation, appointment of YP officers, and engagement with local geoscience organizations in those regions.
- Revive regional AAPG presence in Canada through joint participation with CSPG.
- Increase the number of in-person events in a post-covid environment, particularly in conjunction with conferences.
- Grow YP presence in the US sections by connecting YP officers with the sectional executive leadership.
- Increase YP involvement with Student chapters and the VGP to facilitate student to YP transitions.
- Begin tentative plans for potentially merging with SPE, including a rough framework for chapter organization, a list of complementary YP programs, and socialization with SPE YMEC (Young Member Engagement Committee) at both the local and global level.
- Increased engagement from closed-door YP communities supported by major E&P companies.

## Three-Year Plan

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- Revive YP chapters in Australia and China, potentially through leveraging SPE membership in those regions.
- An established system of funding where either the global YP committee or the regional executive committees can tangibly support content generation at the local level.
- YP officers incorporated in conference and event planning at the executive level of both US Sections and international Regions.
- All local YP committees have an appointed social media manager to help generate content, distribute advertising to wider audiences, and regulate AAPG-owned pages.



## 8. Global YP Chair Biographies

### ***Telemachos (Telly) Manos***

[manosta@vt.edu](mailto:manosta@vt.edu)

Telly is a U.S. Army Captain and former ExxonMobil (XTO) geologist currently serving a military deployment in the middle east region with the US Army Corps of Engineers. He graduated with a B.S. in Geosciences from Virginia Tech and holds a M.S. in Geology from Texas A&M University. His experience is mainly in unconventional operations, development planning, and A&D, but is looking to transition to sustainable development roles in renewables, CCUS, or geothermal. He's actively involved with the local Houston Geologic Society's YP group NeoGeos, where he's presented basin modelling research at both AAPG and HGS events.



### ***Martin Oviedo***

[mactin69@gmail.com](mailto:mactin69@gmail.com)

Martin is a Peruvian geologist with thirteen years' experience in geoscience exploration for the Oil & Gas Industry. He's currently working as an Exploration Geologist at Karoon Brazil. He graduated with a B.S. as Eng. Geologist from UNSAAC-Peru, holds a M.S. in Geology from UNMSM and currently enrolled in M.S. in Non-Renewable Resources at IMF Business School-Spain. His experience is in regional geology, Play Based Exploration, Seismic Stratigraphic interpretation, Petroleum System evaluation, Mud Logging, and Field Geology. He's currently working in siliciclastic and carbonate (Pre-Salt) reservoirs in several basins around South America. He's active involved in AAPG activities as YP and VGP.

