THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND GEOSCIENTISTS OF ALBERTA

BRANCH MANUAL

2023

Peace Region

Fort McMurray

Yellowhead

Lakeland

Edmonton

Vermilion River

Central Alberta

Calgary

Medicine Hat

Lethbridge
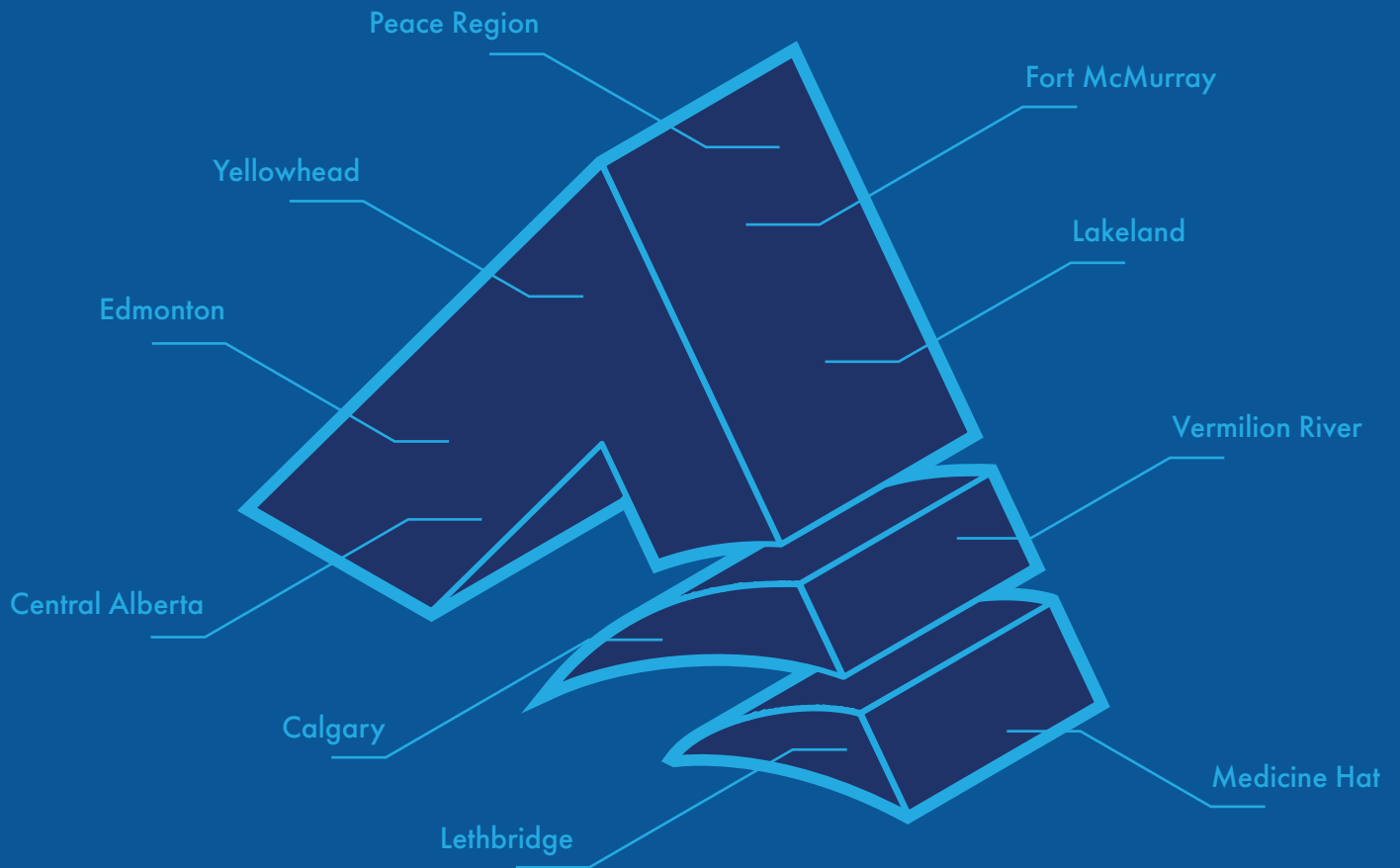
APEGA

The Association of Professional
Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

CONTENTS

SECTION 1:
INTRODUCTION

1.1: ABOUT APEGA

APEGA's Vision

Driving Alberta forward with courage and innovation.

APEGA's Mission

APEGA safeguards the public welfare of Albertans by proactively regulating the practices of engineering and geoscience.

APEGA's Diversity Statement

Encourage a business culture of belonging, inclusion, and diversity for equity within the engineering and geoscience professions.

APEGA's Mandate

Since 1920, APEGA has been a strong, self-governing body, proudly fulfilling the mandate given to it by the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act* (*EGP Act*). APEGA derives its authority from this Act.

The *EGP Act*

- Defines the practices of engineering and geoscience
- Establishes the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta
- Stipulates that one must be a member of APEGA to be a professional engineer or a professional geoscientist in Alberta
- Charges APEGA with the administration of the Act
- Vests in Council all authority to govern APEGA

APEGA's Duties Under the *EGP Act*

- Serve and protect the public interest
- Exercise its powers and functions and perform its duties
- Enforce the Act

APEGA's Responsibilities

- License professional engineers and geoscientists
- Set practice standards
- Develop codes of conduct and ethics that govern members and permit holders
- Investigate and discipline members and permit holders
- Investigate and take action against individuals and organizations that practise our professions without licences or permits
- Investigate and take action against individuals and organizations that use our protected titles without licences or permits
- Provide services to members and permit holders to support them in their professional practices

1.2: APEGA BRANCHES

APEGA's 10 branches are key to APEGA operations:

- Calgary Branch
- Central Alberta Branch
- Edmonton Branch
- Fort McMurray Branch
- Lakeland Branch
- Lethbridge Branch
- Medicine Hat Branch
- Peace Region Branch
- Vermilion River Branch
- Yellowhead Branch

APEGA and its 10 branches are situated on Treaty 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 territories and on the Métis Nation of Alberta's Regions 1 to 6, which have been and continue to be home to many Indigenous Peoples for millennia. We are honoured to show our respect to Indigenous Peoples, past, present, and future, who were and continue to be part of this place. We recognize the need for continued work towards righting relations to build strong and positive relationships as intended through the spirit and intent of treaty.

The branches function as channels between APEGA and its members. For a list of the areas each branch covers, visit the branch webpage at **www.apega.ca/members/branches**.

This branch manual contains the terms of reference branches use to govern themselves, the roles and responsibilities of the branch executive, and the procedures and guidelines for conducting branch business.

As branch executive members change, the branch manual provides continuity and operational standardization across all branches year over year.

1.3: ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF APEGA STAFF

Registrar & CEO or Designate

Responsibilities include:

- overseeing branches and branch governance items. Each branch is ultimately accountable to the Registrar & CEO or designate
- approving volunteering requests

Membership Manager

- guiding and directing branches in line with APEGA's strategic priorities
- ensuring branches are engaged with APEGA business and relevant to members
- evaluating branch effectiveness
- acting as a facilitator for branch chair meetings
- evaluating and approving branch budget requests

Branch Coordinator

Responsibilities include:

- building relationships with branch executive members
- setting and reporting timelines
- ensuring branch initiatives and goals support APEGA's strategic and business plans
- training, onboarding, and assisting branch executive members with branch business
- training and assisting branch chairs in creating and maintaining business plans, which align with APEGA's Strategic Goals and actively engage local members

- liaising with branch executive members on creating, initiating, and planning branch events, which increase member engagement and public visibility. Including (but not limited to): professional development seminars, monthly luncheons, golf tournaments, and social events
- distributing branch announcements and other communications through the Communications Department
- coordinating logistics for branch events including (but not limited to) liaising with internal departments, internal/external vendors, and tracking registration
- attending (when possible) branch events
- attending (when possible/required) monthly branch executive meetings
- training and assisting branch treasurers in creating and maintaining accurate financial tracking and budgeting tools and reports
- connecting with branch treasurers monthly to ensure timely submission of the financial reports
- working with the APEGA People Experience Team (APEGA Volunteer Management) to recruit and screen volunteers for the executive
- set expectations and create rubric for executive recruitment
- compiling metrics from branch events to report trends and relationships
- receiving branch records and event metrics and reporting progress regularly to the Membership Manager and RCEO or designate

Outreach Staff

Responsibilities include:

- developing the provincial strategies, programming, and promotional material
- approving branch outreach events (Registrar & CEO or designate)
- giving advice and support to branch outreach leads
- receiving branch records and event metrics and reporting progress regularly to the Director, Outreach & Product Services
- working with the APEGA People Experience Department (APEGA Volunteer Management) to recruit volunteers. Upon request, helping screen and train volunteers on processes, policies, procedures, guidelines, and standards. ◆

SECTION 2:
BRANCH STRUCTURE & OPERATION

2.1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

At all times, members of the branch executive will act as community ambassadors of APEGA and the professions, and branch members will conduct themselves professionally and ethically in all areas of branch business.

Branches will use this Branch Manual to provide guidance for effective branch operation and governance.

Branch Purpose

- Advance APEGA's strategic initiatives at the branch level
- Enhance the profile of the professions in the branch communities
- Positively affect the ability of the professions to serve the public interest
- Be a voice for APEGA and its members on APEGA matters
- Provide feedback to APEGA Council and staff

Branch Accountability

Branches are accountable to the Registrar & CEO, or designate, to develop and implement annual branch business and financial plans, and to report on those plans as outlined in the Branch Manual.

Branch Authority

- Branches can adapt the branch business plan to reflect their focus and available resources if the initiatives are tied to APEGA's strategic plan and priorities and approved by head office
- Branches can create other relevant positions within their branch members-at-large based on branch size and focus. Fifteen is the maximum number of branch executives per branch
- The branch executive can set up committees as necessary to deal with specific events or programs
- Branches can adjust budget allocations within approved activities and budget limits. Any activities/funds not yet approved must go to head office for approval

Branch Executive Responsibilities

- The branch executive will elect a chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary. Members-at-large will be appointed by head office.
- The previous chair fills the past-chair position
- Branches will hold membership meetings, such as executive meetings and chair meetings, as detailed in Section 2
- Branches support APEGA program delivery at the branch locations
- The branch membership may raise issues at branch meetings. The branch executive will consider these issues and forward them to the Registrar & CEO, or designate, for APEGA consideration

Limitations

- The branch executive will not negotiate with any order of government (i.e., municipal, provincial, or federal), other regulatory body, or technical society in any way that commits APEGA to, or implies APEGA support of, any matter without prior written approval of the Registrar & CEO or designate
- The branch executive will not act as a bargaining agent or lobbyist

Renewal

The Registrar & CEO, or designate, will review these terms on an annual basis.

// original signed and dated document on file //   _Date_

Jay Nagendran, P.Eng., FCAE, ICD.D, FEC, FGC (Hon.)
Registrar & Chief Executive Officer

2.2: BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

Branch and branch executive membership is limited to professional members, licensees, and members-in-training—as defined by APEGA and the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*—who work or live in the branch's geographic area.

The only exception to this rule is the branch college liaison position (when applicable), who may come from an academic institution that does not employ APEGA members or have one willing to volunteer.

Each branch's geographic area is determined by postal code in APEGA's member database.

Branch Executive

The branch executive consists of the following positions:

- Chair
- Vice-chair
- Past-chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Members-at-large

In addition, the branch can create relevant positions within their branch members-at-large based on branch size and focus. These positions can be (but are not limited to) the following:

- college liaison
- communications liaison
- golf tournament lead
- luncheon and professional development event lead
- member liaison lead
- mentoring lead
- outreach lead
- social and sporting event lead
- sponsorship lead

Role descriptions can be found on the branch SharePoint, or by request to the Branch Coordinator.

2.3: BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENTS

APEGA's branch executive committees are an integral part of APEGA operations. Volunteers on these committees have an opportunity to bring the perspective of local registrants to APEGA and to serve as APEGA ambassadors in their communities.

The committee includes up to 15 appointed volunteers, including members-at-large and five core positions: chair, past-chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary.

The core positions are recommended by the nominating lead (past-chair) or, if more than one person is interested in the same position, through an internal vote. If there is no past-chair, the branch executive committee appoints a nominating lead for the year.

The following terms apply for the core positions:

- Candidates for vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary must have one year of experience on a branch executive committee.
- Candidates for chair must have served at least one year as vice-chair, treasurer, or secretary.
- The nominating lead can choose, along with the branch executive, to have one person serve as both secretary and treasurer, if required.
- For the Edmonton and Calgary branches, the past-chair can serve only as a member-at-large for the coming year.

    Note: These requirements may be waived if there are not enough candidates to fill the committee or at the discretion of the nominating lead.

After candidates are recommended for the core positions by the nominating lead or through an internal vote, they will be reviewed, approved, and appointed by APEGA staff.

All remaining positions are appointed by head office after being vetted by APEGA staff based on predetermined criteria, including good-standing status and past volunteer experience, as well as skills and branch activity interest. Barring any volunteer concerns or personal choice, all current branch executives are welcome to serve an additional term, and the application process is open for any unfilled member-at-large positions.

Prior to the end of the branch executive term, a call for volunteers is put out asking registrants to apply for available positions on the branch executive. Each applicant must be an APEGA registrant in good standing (except for the college liaison) and either live or work in the branch region.

Before being appointed, all applicants must pledge, in writing, to act in accordance with the volunteer position description, the APEGA volunteer acknowledgement, and the Branch Manual.

2.4: BRANCH MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Branch Executive Meetings

The branch executive will meet at least 10 times per year to discuss branch business and to share updates and information from APEGA. All branch executive members are expected to attend the executive meetings.

For these meetings, quorum is four persons of the branch executive. Quorum is the minimum number of required branch executives needed to vote on any branch business matters. All branch executive members can vote in executive meetings. All votes must be cast in person (or by teleconference/videoconference) and not by proxy or otherwise.

Robert's Rules of Order should govern all executive branch meetings.

Branches can use APEGA offices and APEGA technology (e.g., Teams) for meetings by contacting your Branch Coordinator.

Branch Chair Meetings

Branch chairs must meet four times per year. APEGA staff usually organizes these meetings.

Branch chairs may be invited to attend Council meetings to get a sense of the issues being discussed. Branch chair meetings will typically be held around the date of the Council meeting.

Other members may attend a Council meeting at their own expense and with sufficient notice to the Registrar & CEO of the reason for attendance.

One branch chair meeting occurs (typically in June) to share APEGA's business plan and priorities and to start discussions on the branch business plan and budget development for the next year.

One branch chair meeting occurs (typically in December) to reflect on the past year, to celebrate accomplishments, and to confirm priorities for the upcoming year.

An orientation and development session for branch executives will be held yearly. Attendance requests by non-executive branch volunteers will be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly if the volunteer has shown interest in becoming a member of the branch executive. However, current branch executives will have priority.

2.5: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties. A conflict of interest can exist in many different situations.

Professional conflicts are those where the interests of one client conflict with another client, or where the professional member acts in two different roles for the same client.

Personal conflicts are those where the personal interest of a branch executive conflicts with their professional ones. For example, a potential conflict of interest exists if a branch executive member of APEGA is also a board member of an association/committee that has interactions with APEGA's branches

If a branch executive encounters a conflict of interest, it must be declared to the branch chair and Branch Coordinator, and the branch executive member is required to recuse themselves from the discussion/activity that presents as a conflict of interest.

2.6: RESIGNATIONS, TERMINATIONS, AND CONDUCT

Members of the branch executive can leave their positions mid-term by:

- providing a resignation letter to the branch chair, secretary, and/or Branch Coordinator
- ending branch membership
- ending APEGA membership

Where there is a vacancy in a branch, the remaining members of the branch may appoint an eligible APEGA member to fill the vacancy until the next term renewal. This can be done by a vote during a branch executive meeting.

If a member of the branch executive is unable or unwilling to fulfill the required duties or misses three meetings in a row without a reasonable explanation, the branch chair will determine whether the member is able and interested in the position and able to carry on. If the member's interest and/or performance does not improve, the branch chair may conduct an in-camera review with the branch executive members on whether to declare that executive's position vacant. The outcome of this review will be disclosed to the executive by the branch chair.

The performance of each branch executive member will be evaluated by head office on an annual basis. This evaluation will take into consideration the responsibilities of each volunteer role as well as the core competencies of the APEGA volunteer program: teamwork, results orientation, and integrity.

It is expected that each branch executive member will always demonstrate consistent exemplary professional conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority, appropriate decorum, and fulfillment of the required volunteer duties. Branch executives who do not choose to accept this breadth of responsibility are obliged to resign. Branch executives who do not fulfil this code of conduct may have their position on the branch executive declared vacant by the Registrar & CEO or designate and they may not be eligible to serve on the branch executive in subsequent years. ◆

SECTION 3:
BUSINESS PLAN

3.1: BUSINESS PLAN

Each branch must prepare a brief statement of its goals for the year. This plan should align with APEGA's strategic priorities and is the foundation for the branch budget. The creation of the next year's business plan should be one of the first activities of a new executive, and it should be sent to the Branch Coordinator to share with the Registrar & CEO or designate by a date confirmed by the Branch Coordinator, usually in the summer months.

Business plan progress will be updated on SharePoint monthly and finalized on a quarterly basis.

Please refer to SharePoint for the format.

The branch business plan should identify the branch's strategies, activities, and goals, as well as who will complete each task by when. The plan must support APEGA's strategic plan and priorities.

Each branch's interests and capabilities will determine its level and focus of activity.

To communicate APEGA's priorities for the next year, information will be shared at the second branch chair's meeting, typically in June, to help to develop the branch's business plan for the next year.

APEGA's strategic plan is available at **apega.ca/about-apega/publications**. ◆

SECTION 4:
FINANCES

Each branch must prepare a cash-flow budget for the next year's activities. The budget must align with the business plan. The budget (along with the business plan) must be sent to head office by a date confirmed by the Branch Coordinator, usually in the summer months, so any financial requests can be added to APEGA's budgeting process. APEGA's business plan is submitted to Council for review at the September Council meeting, with budget approval at the December Council meeting.

The fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

4.1: FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES

Financial planning for events should aim to achieve a break-even or better status whenever possible. However, communication activities with members, the public, and K–12 and university students may be considered investments rather than revenue opportunities.

Financial transparency among the branches and head office is of utmost importance. Explanations for variances (when comparing budgeted and actual numbers) must be uploaded onto SharePoint monthly for the Branch Coordinator to view.

4.2: BRANCH BUDGET

Each branch must prepare a yearly cash-flow budget. This budget must align with APEGA's strategic priorities and the branch business plan. The creation of the budget for the upcoming year should be one of the first activities of a new executive, and it should be sent to the Branch Coordinator to share with the Registrar & CEO or designate by a date confirmed by the Branch Coordinator, which is usually in the summer months.

Please refer to SharePoint for the format of the financial tracker.

To communicate APEGA's priorities for the upcoming year, information will be shared at the second branch chair's meeting, typically in June, to help to develop the branch's budget for the upcoming year.

The cash-flow budget estimates the revenue and expenses the branch will require to finance its activities and initiatives.

4.3: SPONSORSHIP & FUNDRAISING

To help the branch achieve a break-even or better status whenever possible, the executive may raise additional money through sponsorships as outlined in APEGA's sponsorship guideline.

The branch cannot issue charitable donation receipts. Although the branch can organize charity events, only an organization with charitable status can issue tax receipts.

All donations made on behalf of the branch must be approved by the Registrar & CEO or designate and align with APEGA's goals

Refer to Section 8 of the Branch Manual for more information on sponsorships and grants.

4.4: BUDGET TRACKING FORM

The APEGA Branch Budget Tracking form tracks actuals against the forecast, including variances. The form can be found on SharePoint.

Once approved, the cash-flow budget becomes a living document with actuals entered as the year progresses. This becomes the framework of the monthly branch financial statements where explanations for variances (when comparing budgeted and actual numbers) are explained.

4.5: PAYMENTS & REIMBURSEMENTS

Branch executives and members cannot receive payment for performing any branch services.

Upon approval by the Registrar & CEO or designate, the branch chair or treasurer will approve the reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for local branch activities or travel for APEGA business (such as attending APEGA AGMs or Council meetings). The Travel and Expense Policy can be found on SharePoint. Travel within the city is typically not reimbursed.

Expense claims must be submitted through Concur within 30 days after incurring the expense. Receipts must support all expenses and be itemized for GST and gratuity. Before an expense is submitted, please confirm the correct coding for your expense with your Branch Coordinator to reduce delays. Refer to SharePoint for more information on Concur.

Invoices from vendors for services rendered need to be submitted by email to APEGA's Finance Department and cc'ed to your Branch Coordinator. Once the branch chair or treasurer checks the invoice for errors and approves the expense, the vendor will be paid.

4.6: REPORTING

The Branch Coordinator will send the branch treasurer a monthly financial report of branch operations. Branch treasurers must report on branch financials monthly by uploading to SharePoint, no later than one week after receiving the financial statement from the Branch Coordinator. This report must include:

- updated budget tracking form with actual values from the previous month
- explanation for variances (+/-$20% or +/-$5,000) related to budgeted vs. actual revenue and expense figures ◆

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

To further each branch's purpose, branches may choose to hold various events and activities in their region. These events and activities should be detailed in the annual branch business plan and accounted for in the annual branch budget if there are associated costs.

5.1: OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The branches are an integral part of APEGA's Outreach Program, which aims to inspire and empower youth to explore the engineering and geoscience professions, pursue their passions, and grow their skills and technical competence. Outreach informs the public about engineering and geoscience and how they shape and positively impact modern society.

APEGA focuses on two areas for outreach: K-12 (elementary, junior high, and senior high) and university.

APEGA K-12 Outreach

The APEGA K-12 Outreach Program runs multiple in-person and virtual events, including the following:

THE APEGA SCIENCE OLYMPICS

An annual team-focused inter-school event where teams of students compete in a variety of engineering and geoscience challenges.

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE NIGHTS

An evening of fun, hands-on activities and demonstrations for the students, teachers, and families of a host school. Member volunteers help students with activities while explaining scientific concepts and real-life applications.

ROCK & FOSSIL CLINIC

This event serves as an introduction to the wonders of geoscience! At past events, attendees have brought their own rock and fossil samples for identification by professional geoscientists and university geoscience students. Going forward, there will be geoscience-themed virtual sessions and in-person activities at partner locations throughout Alberta!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Event planning guides and suggested activity outlines are available on the Branch SharePoint. Contact your APEGA Outreach Coordinator **(outreach@apega.ca)** and your Branch Coordinator for more information.

APEGA University Outreach

Branches that have a college or university with a transfer engineering or geoscience program should hold at least one event during the school year (a transfer program allows students to earn university credits, diplomas, and degrees that can then be used to satisfy admission requirements for their chosen degree at another institution).

The APEGA University Outreach Program runs multiple events such as the following:

APEGA PRESENTATIONS

- **APEGA 101**: Introductory presentation for first-year students
- **APEGA 400**: Presentation about ethics and professionalism for fourth-year undergraduate students and graduate students

APEGA VIRTUAL/CAMPUS EVENTS (UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY, AND MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY)

- **Rapid Résumé Reviews**: Students improve their chances of landing an interview by having their résumé reviewed by numerous volunteers
- **Speed Mock Interviews**: Students practise interview skills by receiving feedback from numerous volunteers
- **Industry Mixers**: Students mingle with professional members to practice their networking skills and to learn about the different careers within the professions
- **Speed Networking**: Students meet one-on-one or in groups with numerous professional members
- **Panel Discussions**: Experts provide information on various topics
- **Webinars**: Various topics
- **APEGA Requirements for Registration:** Students learn about the requirements to register with APEGA at a presentation tailored to their needs

Events at the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and Mount Royal University are organized by APEGA Student Liaison Committees under the direction of APEGA University Coordinators.

Contact an APEGA University Coordinator or your Branch Coordinator for detailed information on planning these events.

Actions, Responsibilities and Timeframes

The branch outreach lead is responsible for:

- organizing outreach events (refer to SharePoint for the Outreach Event Planning Documents and Checklist)
- maintaining their APEGA Outreach files, including event and activity information, volunteer rosters, and contact information for that region on SharePoint
- developing and monitoring the outreach budget for the branch in concert with the branch chair and branch treasurer
- communicating regularly with the branch, Branch Coordinators, and the APEGA Outreach/University Coordinators
- informing the Outreach Team at **outreach@apega.ca** when new events are scheduled
- knowing and following APEGA communication policies (such as logo use, documents, and speaking notes on behalf of APEGA)

Metrics

The APEGA Outreach team uses metrics to measure and report on the success of events to APEGA senior leaders, including the Registrar & CEO and APEGA's Council. In addition to providing insight into what went well and what can be improved, this information enables us to demonstrate the value of our programming and is used to evaluate which events and programs should continue.

TABLE A:
5.1: BRANCHES WITH TRANSFER SCHOOLS

BRANCH	POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION
Central Alberta	Red Deer Polytechnic
Fort McMurray	Keyano College
Lethbridge	University of Lethbridge

Metrics must be captured at all Branch Outreach Events. Please complete the Outreach Metrics form following each event and solicit feedback from all event volunteers and participants (teachers, parents, and students). Feedback can be captured by either handing out a paper evaluation at the event or sending a survey after the event has been completed. Feedback forms for all stakeholders for different events are available on the Branch SharePoint. All metrics need to be sent to your APEGA Outreach/University Coordinator within one week after each Outreach event. Please connect with an APEGA Outreach Coordinator (outreach@apega.ca) or your Branch Coordinator if you have any questions.

5.2: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS, SITE TOURS, & SOCIAL EVENTS

Professional development (PD) event topics, site tours, and social events are sourced at the branch executive level, with support from APEGA's Branch Coordinators, if needed.

One or more members of the branch executive must be on hand at each event to confirm registrants, to monitor amenities, and to ensure members' expectations are met. The branch must provide complimentary event registration to the branch chair or member of the branch executive that is running the event on-site.

To have an event published on the APEGA website and promoted in the ePEG, the **Branch Event Posting Request** form (link on SharePoint), must be submitted at least five weeks before the registration deadline of the event.

For any questions, or assistance with event logistics and promotion, contact your Branch Coordinator.

Metrics

The Branch Coordinators use metrics to measure and report the success of events to APEGA senior leaders, including the Registrar & CEO. This information helps to evaluate events and speakers and to see how we can improve.

Metrics can be captured by either handing out a paper evaluation at the event or sending a survey after the event has completed. Please connect with your Branch Coordinator to determine the best method of capturing metrics, and to ensure metrics are captured at all branch events.

5.3: PRESIDENT'S VISIT & PROFESSIONAL MEMBER INDUCTION

A President's Visit to a branch is a special event during which the professions and the community meet.

It is a time to:

- recognize members for their achievements
- be challenged and inspired by the President's message
- raise members' pride in the professions
- raise local government and business awareness of and appreciation for APEGA and the professions
- network with members, local government officials, and business leaders
- liaise with the branch executive

The event can include:

- meetings with permit holders and visits to their facilities
- visits with local government officials and business leaders
- a banquet recognizing the achievements of members with a keynote address by the President

APEGA staff and the branch chair, or designate, will work together to ensure the event's success. The branch provides suggestions on dates, activities, and meetings to undertake. Coordination and financing of the event will be completed by APEGA. Branch executive are encouraged to attend and may be asked to emcee or otherwise support the event.

5.4: LIABILITY INSURANCE

Branches should ensure participants do not encounter undue risk at branch events.

APEGA's general liability insurance covers its employees and volunteers, including branch volunteers, activities, and events.

Although APEGA's general liability insurance normally exceeds a venue's request for minimum liability coverage, contact your Branch Coordinator for guidance for events with a greater potential risk.

Head office budgets liability insurance expenses for branch activities and events. During the branch business-planning process, branch chairs must inform their Branch Coordinator about events requiring liquor liability coverage for head office's budgeting purposes.

For branch events that include alcohol, additional coverage is required. Please contact your Branch Coordinator when you fill out the Branch Event Posting Request so the paperwork can be processed for your event. ◆

SECTION 6:
ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTERS: ePEG

The Communications Department creates and emails electronic newsletters to APEGA members on behalf of their branch. Each newsletter promotes events, event registration, and volunteer recruitment and spotlights articles on various topics.

6.1: NEWSLETTER PROCESS

The ePEG is useful for bulk information sharing. However, with the implementation of Canada's anti-spam legislation (CASL) on July 1, 2014, emails can only be sent to members who have given specific authorization to APEGA to do so. Head office maintains the list of members who have given that authorization, so all bulk emails must be sent by APEGA's Communications Department. Your Branch Coordinator will let you know if the requested submissions have been approved.

Submission Dates

To avoid overwhelming members, we limit the amount of email that is sent. Maintaining communication consent under CASL is critical for the ability to continue reaching members. Too many emails may prompt members to ignore messages or to opt out of APEGA emails entirely.

The ePEG is sent bi-weekly and branch-specific content is found at the top of the newsletter.

Content

Messages must relate directly to APEGA, to branch activities, or to the engineering and geoscience professions. Each message should include:

- the date and time of the event
- the speaker's name and APEGA professional designation (when applicable)
- a short description of the event and food offered
- a link to more information or contact information
- who you would like the information sent to (i.e., the entire APEGA membership or only members in your branch area)

The information provided in the Branch Event Posting Request is the content used for events.

Thank-you messages to sponsors or other supporters will not be included in electronic newsletters.

The Communications Department edits all messages for brevity, clarity, and consistency with APEGA's corporate communications policies and style.

Submitting Content

Please send your newsletter content to APEGA through your branch communications liaison (when applicable) and Branch Coordinator. They will ensure multiple events happening in the same time period are promoted in upcoming newsletters. ◆

SECTION 7:
EMAIL & DOCUMENTS

In today's world of technology, email is the most used form of communication. To keep transparent and consistent communication, any email that is sent pertaining branch information must be cc'd to your Branch Coordinator, or directly to branches@apega.ca.

7.1: BRANCH EMAIL

Each branch has its own email address that the branch must monitor. The email address is branchlocationbranch@apega.ca. For example, the email address for the Central Alberta Branch is centralalbertabranch@apega.ca.

It is up to the branch chair or designate to check and respond to branch related messages in the branch email. This task must be completed at least twice per month. Any emails that are not branch related must be forwarded to branches@apega.ca for follow-up and response.

To access your email:

1. Open your web browser
2. Type https://www.office.com in the address bar (note the https)
3. Enter the branch email address as the username: branchlocationbranch@apega.ca
4. Enter the password (obtained from your Branch Coordinator)

7.2: DOCUMENTS

Each branch uses SharePoint to store and share its documents.

To access your branch's SharePoint, open your web browser and type https://portal.office.com in the address bar. Enter the login information provided by your Branch Coordinator. Then go to https://apega.sharepoint.com/sites/branches to see the branch SharePoint.

SharePoint contains the branch manual and branch templates. It should also be used to save branch reports and other documents.

Please refer to SharePoint for a SharePoint tutorial. ◆

TABLE B:
7.1: SHAREPOINT USES

BRANCH TEMPLATES	BRANCH REPORTS & DOCUMENTS
PowerPoint presentations	Branch business plans
Monthly budget and financial reporting	Branch budget
Business plans	Branch event calendar
Agendas and minutes	Branch meeting minutes
Sponsorship packages	Branch event surveys

SPONSORSHIPS & GRANTS

Sponsorships and grants are important in helping to balance branch budgets. They are also a great opportunity to engage local permit holders and to acknowledge their support of branch events and activities. The following section provides perspectives and guidance on getting sponsorships and grants in your community.

8.1: GRANTS

A grant is a gift of cash or in-kind service with no or minimal recognition, such as a charitable donation.

A branch can ask an organization, institution, or individual for a grant or in-kind gift.

All grant applications must be approved by head office. To get approval to apply for a grant, you must submit all of the required information and completed applications through your Branch Coordinator a minimum of six weeks before the grant deadline. Government (municipal, provincial, or federal) grants in particular require specific reporting and accountabilities that require explicit head office approvals and signatories. In all cases, head office will also review the information presented by the branch for the grant and provide input to produce the strongest possible application for the best chance of success.

Local businesses may be willing to provide in-kind gifts, such as food and beverages, transportation, or items for door prizes or silent auctions.

8.2: SPONSORSHIPS

A sponsorship involves money for an event or program in return for recognition. It usually does not qualify as a charitable donation because of the value of the benefit received by the sponsor.

Sponsorships are more complex than grants and in-kind gifts. Sponsorship is about organizations being recognized for doing good things in the community. Sponsor organizations want to be seen in a positive light by their current and potential staff and customers, as well as other influencers, such as government and the media.

Why Do Organizations Sponsor an Event or Program?

Organizations or individuals become sponsors to:

- create awareness of and loyalty to their brand
- change or reinforce their company image
- drive sales
- recruit and retain employees
- differentiate their company from competitors

Sponsor Recognition

Types of recognition vary and may include:

- a logo on event promotional material
- a logo on event signage
- verbal recognition at the event
- an opportunity for the sponsor to bring greetings at the event
- tickets to the event
- distribution of promotional material at the event

Potential Sponsors

Sponsorships are most often the result of making direct, personal contact with organizations or individuals whom you already have a relationship with as opposed to impersonal email blasts, letters, or cold calls. If you are looking for a sponsor for a branch program or event, consider contacting the following:

- local permit holders
- service providers (non-engineering and geoscience firms that provide goods and services to local engineering and geoscience firms)
- service clubs or foundations that may have a similar goal (such as science outreach to local children)
- local businesses with which you have a relationship

Contacting Sponsors

Generally speaking, people give to other people (i.e., not to organizations). Before contacting someone for a sponsorship, make sure it's a mutually beneficial relationship. You need to show prospective sponsors why they should sponsor you branch event.

Possible sponsorship events include:

- professional development session or series
- golf tournament or bonspiel
- branch social events
- outreach activities

Sponsorship Request

See SharePoint for a sponsorship letter template. Key elements of your sponsorship request include:

- an event overview (date, location, cost, schedule)
- an overview of APEGA and the branch (e.g., what APEGA is and does, how many branch members live and work in the community)
- why the organization should sponsor your event
- demographics of event attendees (e.g., children, families, teachers, branch members, government officials)
- a list of sponsorship opportunities with corresponding benefits and recognition

All sponsorship letters must be approved by APEGA prior to being sent to sponsors. Send your draft sponsorship letter to your Branch Coordinator to have your letter approved.

Sponsorship Commitments

Fulfill the commitments you made involving recognition:

- let the sponsor know you fulfilled those commitments
- call or write a note or letter recognizing the sponsor's support of your event or program

Keep in mind, it's all about relationships. Building good relationships now will:

- benefit you
- benefit the next branch event or program for which you will need sponsors
- build the reputation of the branch in your community
- contribute to the positive image of the profession

While branches are encouraged to reach out to multiple companies, they are not authorized to reach out to any company that provides member benefits to APEGA. The list of current member benefit providers can be found online here: **apega.ca/members/benefits**

If the branch would like one of these companies to sponsor an event, please reach out to your Branch Coordinator.

All sponsors who have been contacted need to be listed in the Sponsorship Tracker on SharePoint. ◆

9.1: BRANCH ONLINE PRESENCE

Web Page

Each branch has a dedicated page on the APEGA website to update members on important branch events and information. Each branch page consists of a message from the chair, a list of the branch executives, a list of the communities served by each branch, and ways to connect with the branch. Also included are links to other relevant pages on the APEGA website. Contact the Branch Coordinator to update any information on the branch web page.

Facebook Group

Each branch has an open Facebook group created by head office.

Group Status

The open groups are searchable, and anyone can ask to join at any time. Members of an open group can be added or invited by another member of the group or ask to join. The membership approval setting must always be set to "Only admins and moderators."

Roles & Responsibilities

APEGA staff moderates all branch Facebook group accounts. APEGA staff (a Branch Coordinator and a Communications staff member) and one or two branch executive members will be responsible for each group.

The Branch Coordinator can help if members of the branch executive have questions or concerns at any time about the Facebook group or social media.

TABLE C:
9.1: FACEBOOK GROUP ROLES

BRANCH EXECUTIVE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	APEGA STAFF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Post information and manage the flow of engagement	Set up the initial group page
Invite individuals to join the group	Monitor activity and help branches
Accept or decline individual requests to the group within 48 hours of receiving request	Contact the branch executive if there is little or no effort made to keep the group current (after a period of three months of low or no activity)
Monitor ongoing activity	

APEGA Branch Logo Usage and Facebook Group Cover Photo

The APEGA branch logo will be displayed as the cover photo on the group page. Due to current Facebook limitations, only one image can be uploaded as the cover photo. Using the branch logo as the cover photo alongside the name of the group ensures integrity and transparency.

Content and Group Engagement

Branch administrators create and approve content. They also respond to comments left by other group members. Any group member can post to the group, but all posts must be approved by a page admin. When approving posts, please keep the house rules in mind, and if you are unsure, ask your Branch Coordinator.

Rules of Conduct

All group members should have access to the APEGA branch Facebook group's house rules and group description. These two items must be visible and easily accessible on the main group page.

All group members must conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Opposing opinions are allowed and encouraged, if the comment(s) do not contain slurs or obscenities. If you are unsure of how to respond to a comment or post, reach out to your Branch Coordinator.

If a group member is behaving unprofessionally, administrators must deal with the situation quickly and effectively by immediately removing the individual from the group.

After a group member is removed, the administrator should post a short message announcing a member was removed (without giving names), explaining why, and reminding group members of the house rules to reinforce APEGA's desire to maintain the integrity of the group.

The APEGA branch Facebook group house rules as well as tips on engaging members on social media can be found on SharePoint.

9.2: BRANCH MEDIA RELATIONS

As an APEGA member, you have at least three possible roles:

1. to be a representative of APEGA, your branch, and the professions
2. to be a representative of your firm or employer
3. to be an independent, self-regulated professional with status in the community

In a media interview, always be aware of which role you are playing. Identify this role to reporters when responding to their interview requests.

APEGA Media Relations Policy

Members of the branch executive may speak with media only about their position and area of expertise.

- Make no comments on hypothetical situations or areas outside of your direct responsibility
- If possible, speak with your Branch Coordinator to be connected with the Director, Communications or designate before responding to a media inquiry
- As soon as possible, share the details of your media interactions with your Branch Coordinator and the Director, Communications or designate

Media Enquiries

The Communications Department will respond to media enquiries you receive if:

- you do not wish to respond
- the issue is not local
- the issue is controversial or sensitive

The Communications Department will share consistent and appropriate messaging that matches the situation to ensure fair and accurate representation of the professions and APEGA.

There are two types of media interactions: proactive and reactive.

Proactive

You have invited local media outlets to an event (in consultation with APEGA staff) or you've shared information about a program. These could include:

- a branch luncheon or professional development event with a speaker or presenter of interest. Note: Always seek consent from your speaker or presenter before contacting media
- an outreach event, such as the Science Olympics
- a local charity or local charity event
- an APEGA President's visit

Reactive

A media outlet has contacted you regarding an issue, perhaps related to a:

- local news situation or event
- permit holder or a member
- matter affecting the engineering or geoscience professions, or both

Whether your interaction is proactive or reactive, the APEGA's Communications Department can assist. Keep your Branch Coordinator informed on what is happening in your branch regarding media.

Media Coaching

The Communications Department can provide media coaching:

- before an event or issue is identified
- before you respond
- before you invite media to an event

The Communications Department can help you:

- develop key messages
- role play or rehearse
- debrief with you after an interview

Informing Head Office

Please advise your Branch Coordinator, so they can advise the Director, Communications, or designate, as soon as possible whenever a reporter contacts a branch. You may even wish to contact your Branch Coordinator before responding to a voice mail message or email request.

For further information on speaking with the media, including tips, please refer to SharePoint.

9.3: SOCIAL MEDIA

APEGA runs seventeen social media accounts, pages, and groups. This includes a **LinkedIn** profile and group, a **Facebook** page with ten connected branch groups, an **Instagram** account, **Twitter** profile, **YouTube** channel, and Reddit account.

These channels are used to educate, inform, and engage our followers with the work APEGA and our members do to build a safe and resilient Alberta.

APEGA content is seen more than two million times annually. It is key to our continued success that you, as an ambassador of the APEGA brand represent the integrity and values that APEGA is known for.

Representing APEGA online

The expectations of your online presence and actions are that you remain professional and nonpartisan in all engagements. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- That you do not misrepresent your opinions as APEGA's.
- That you always maintain complete confidentiality of APEGA's proprietary information and that of its membership.
- That you are respectful in all engagements with APEGA, other members, and the public.
- That you maintain compliance with the **Code of Conduct** at all times.

It is imperative that APEGA does not take or advance positions on subjects that fall outside our mandate as regulator. While we acknowledge that anyone has the right to freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communications, it is not part of our regulatory obligations to advocate or defend areas that fall outside of our mandate.

Best Practices

Engaging online as a representative of a brand is not quite the same as engaging as yourself. Anything you post may be associated with APEGA. Below are tips for protecting your privacy and interacting online.

Personal vs. Professional Use

There is little to no distinction between personal and professional use. When you are affiliated with an organization, in any capacity, lines can be drawn to that organization. We recommend adherence to the Code of Ethics that informs our professionals of the expectations of behaviour in all interactions.

Knowing your audience

More isn't always better on social media. This applies to platforms, profiles, and posts. Knowing who you're talking to will help you understand how to make the decisions on when and where to post what content. Consider the audience for the channel you are choosing prior to posting. Outreach, mentoring, and volunteer stories make for great content on Facebook and Twitter especially, where more technical and professional content is less successful. LinkedIn is the primary audience for APEGA, and may be for yourself as well. If you want to see what content your audience likes, find similar content on APEGA's profile, or elsewhere, to take the pulse of your audience.

Formatting your content

Each platform has its own purpose and the format of your posts should align with it. **LinkedIn** is the most professional of the major platforms and offers some longer-form writing options to share information and opinions with detail. Make sure you're using the right one for your purpose. If you're on your third paragraph, consider posting an article instead. Also, remember that LinkedIn only shows the first 150 or so characters before prompting viewers to click to 'see more' of a post. Put your messaging at the top so even if followers don't opt to see more, they see what is important.

Twitter is quick, real-time, trending. Keep content on Twitter as brief as possible and leverage visual elements wherever you can. You have 280 characters to start. Adding a link? You're down to 255. Twitter reports that users whose posts average 100 characters or less earn 17% higher engagement than those using more characters. Be brief!

The **Facebook** character limit is over 60,000. Never use more than 0.5% of that! Facebook data proves year over year that shorter is better. Be as brief as you are able to and save your additional thoughts for the comments and engagements. Like LinkedIn, Facebook will cut off your content and offer a 'see more' option. Avoid posting content that requires the 'see more' function; brevity is king.

Maintaining your privacy and security

LinkedIn is the most active channel for APEGA and its membership. If you are in a prominent role, we recommend that you review your privacy settings regularly and set them to your comfort level.

Even if you choose not to adjust these settings, it is important to know they exist and where to find them.

Engaging

Engaging online when you're associated with a brand ups the ante. You are more accountable for what you say, and people are more likely to point out errors and inconsistencies in your posts. Below are 5 pro-tips to keep you free from conflict.

1. **STICK TO WHAT YOU KNOW.** Your best chance at being engaging online is talking about the things you know best. Other experts will be happy to point out mistakes if you stray beyond your scope. Sharing APEGA's posts is always going to be a safe way to source content.

2. **BE HONEST.** Be honest about your identity and your biases; don't use pseudonyms or screen names. If you have a vested interest in a topic you're discussing, be up front about it.

3. **OWN YOUR MISTAKES.** Everyone makes mistakes so when it happens, take the opportunity correct it openly. You will get credit for doing so. If it requires removing a comment or post entirely, be transparent.

4. **AVOID KEYBOARD WARS.** There will always be someone contradicting you. Identify no-win situations and avoid them. If it is necessary to respond, only use facts and respond once. Do not host debates.

5. **KEEP IT FAMILY FRIENDLY.** Before you hit send on any post, consider whether you could comfortably read it aloud to your children and your parents. If not, don't post it. If you're looking for content related to your field, visit APEGA's profiles! APEGA posts frequently about all of the areas the association is involved. Outreach, volunteering, mentoring, events, professional standards, and news in our fields all feature regularly on APEGA feeds. You're encouraged to borrow our content by sharing it and adding your own thoughts!

APEGA staff are here to assist you if you encounter a difficult situation. Contact your branch coordinator with any questions.

9.4: SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

APEGA accounts

LinkedIn
linkedin.com/company/apega-ab

Facebook
facebook.com/apega.alberta

Instagram
instagram.com/apega_ab

YouTube
youtube.com/user/APEGAabca

LinkedIn Group

All Branches
linkedin.com/groups/1812772

Facebook Branch Groups

Calgary Branch
facebook.com/groups/APEGACalgary

Central Alberta
facebook.com/groups/APEGACentralAlberta

Edmonton Branch
facebook.com/groups/APEGAEdmonton

Fort McMurray
facebook.com/groups/APEGAFortMcMurray

Lakeland
facebook.com/groups/APEGALakeland

Lethbridge
facebook.com/groups/APEGALethbridge

Medicine Hat
facebook.com/groups/APEGAMedicineHat

Peace Region
facebook.com/groups/APEGAPeaceRegion

Vermilion River
facebook.com/groups/APEGAVermilion

Yellowhead
facebook.com/groups/APEGAYellowhead

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