

Australian National Committee on large Dams (ANCOLD)
Brandon Pearce, National Young Professionals Convenor

The Australian National Committee of Large Dams (ANCOLD) has a vision of advancing excellence in dam technical practice and the management of dams in Australia. ANCOLD disseminates knowledge, provides guidance in achieving excellence for technical dam practice and management, and supports industry members to develop capability.

A significant contributor to the success of ANCOLD's mission is the ANCOLD Young Professionals (YP) group which was established in 2010 in response to strong industry movement that the development of young professionals and keeping them in the dam industry is of high priority.

Since 2010 the industry presence of the ANCOLD YP group has grown as it aims to provide learning and networking opportunities to professionals from 92 member organisations. As the current Australian National YP Convenor, I am privileged to lead a team of nine motivated and innovative YP state representatives who are empowered to lead their own state-based local organising committees.

In the past 12 months the team has achieved many significant milestone firsts including initiating an ANCOLD industry mentoring programme, releasing a 'Life of a Dam' technical learning webinar series, and presenting our YP strategic plan to member organisations at our 2023 ANCOLD national conference.

Our YP group provides first-hand dam exposure to members via regularly organising site visits to member organisation assets. The team also facilitates and hosts industry leading technical expert discussion panels to encourage further industry learning. Through YP member initiatives we strive to support ANCOLD's strategy to continuously improve our industry's competency and encourage knowledge transfer from industry experts to developing professionals. By providing various platform opportunities for knowledge exposure and expert networking we are positively encouraging and assisting with the development of future ANCOLD leaders.



Above: **Brandon Pearce (ANCOLD National YP Convenor) and Erin Hughes (Queensland YP State Rep) presenting the ANCOLD YP Strategic Plan at the ANCOLD 2023 National Conference**

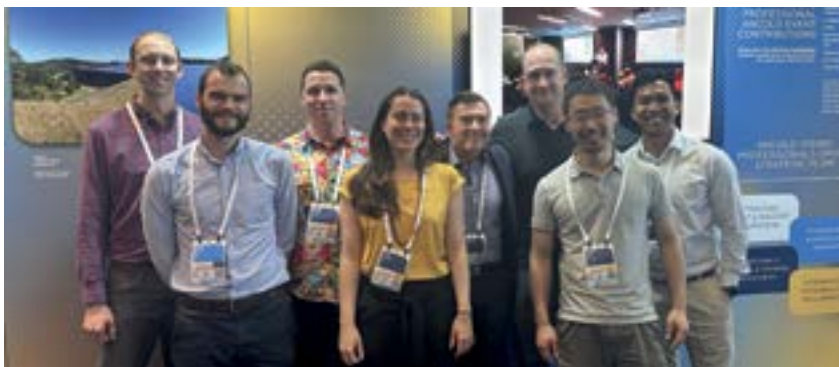
Although ANCOLD YP initiatives are designed to target members of 35 years of age or younger, it is recognised that all members should have the opportunity to participate in learning initiatives, and as such all members are invited to participate where possible.

Our ANCOLD YP group also facilitates state-based social networking opportunities to encourage YPs of various industry organisations to build their professional social circles and learn from one another's industry experiences. These meetings of asset owners, consultants, contractors, researchers and regulators encourage a broader YP awareness of our industry and provides opportunity for YPs to reflect on the various impacts of their industry involvement.

We are also very keen to present dams engineering as an attractive option to graduates exploring which industry to launch their career, as so many of the current YPs are really

energised by the opportunities in the dams sector. In October 2024 I am privileged to be representing ANCOLD YPs at ICOLD24 in New Delhi, India. I am excited to share our Australian YP strategies and successes on a global stage and feel Australia is well positioned to positively influence the future of YP development internationally.

In an ever-changing Australian and international dams climate it is critical that the dams industry continues to invest in the future of its professionals via learning and development initiatives. YP engagement in ANCOLD initiatives has continued to grow substantially, with the YP leadership team hosting sellout events and an increasing number of member organisations approaching ANCOLD with further YP industry learning and development opportunities. While the industry continues to change through long term climate predictions, sustainable renewable energy opportunities and the renewal and repurposing of assets, it is critical that there is a constant investment in industry education, knowledge transfer and mentoring to ensure the dam industry remains at the forefront of best practice and expert innovation for generations to come. ●



Above: **ANCOLD YP Leadership Team at ANCOLD 2023 National Conference, Left to Right, Jake Gallup (Australian Capital Territory), Sam Lalli (Victoria), Josh Clark (Tasmania), Erin Hughes (Queensland), Brandon Pearce (Aus National Convenor), Joel Eadie (Queensland), Yuqi Tan (Northern Territory), Ryan Misola (New South Wales)**



Left: **Author: Brandon Pearce (ANCOLD National Young Professionals Convenor)**

