



***FIG***

# ***Young Surveyors Network***

A 'how to' guide for young surveyors to get involved at the local level

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# 1. Introduction

This document is a tool that has been created under the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) African Task Force (ATF). It has been written for young surveyors and professional surveying bodies, with the aim of empowering regional and local young surveyor networks.

This document:

- Provides an overview of how young surveyors 'fit' within the FIG
- Provides basic guidelines on setting up a local, regional or national young surveyors network
- Outlines mentoring program opportunities and possible structures
- Suggests potential activities that could be held to support the aims of individual skills-building and young surveyor networking.
- Presents the first-step for young surveyor engagement in their local networks and the FIG. Further tools, such as individual activity guides and regional opportunities, will become available over time on the FIG Young Surveyors website and through other initiatives.

This document is a joint outcome of the FIG Africa Task Force and the FIG Young Surveyors Network.

## 1.1 The International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)

The International Federation of Surveyors is the premier international organization representing the interests of surveyors worldwide. It is a federation of the national member associations and covers the whole range of professional fields within the global surveying community. It provides an international forum for discussion and development aiming to promote professional practice and standards. For further information on the FIG, visit [www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net).

## 1.2 The FIG Young Surveyors Network

The FIG Young Surveyors Network (YSN) is a network within the FIG. The YSN aims to facilitate an international network of young surveyors and their involvement in the FIG. The FIG YSN vision is that:

- Individual members can see and grasp opportunities, locally and internationally;
- The surveying profession is united across disciplines and generations;
- The international community understands the role of surveyors.
- To improve the number of young professionals participating within the FIG.
- To help young professionals in the beginning of their careers with contacts.
- To increase co-operation between the commissions and the students and young professionals network.

All young surveyors are welcome to join the YSN, irrespective of their professional body's membership of the FIG. Membership is gained simply by joining the YSN on online networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and by joining the mailing list through attendance at an FIG event or by emailing [fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com](mailto:fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com)

Addresses for the online sites include:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/26072565877/>

LinkedIn: [http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1957180&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1957180&trk=hb_side_g)

FIG YSN website: [www.fig.net/ys](http://www.fig.net/ys)

### **1.3 The FIG Africa Task Force**

The FIG Africa Task Force (ATF) is an initiative that aims to support FIG African Member Associations and Academic members over the period 2010 – 2014.

The key purpose of the task force is to enable the surveying profession in Sub Saharan Africa to deal with social responsibility in terms of contributing to achieving the MDGs. In this regard, the role of the surveyors as change agents engaging with the politicians is important. This relates to the professional status of surveyors that in turn is based on the principles of social responsibility and justice.<sup>1</sup>

This document arises from the 2012 workshop of the ATF, hosted by the University of Cape Town, Geomatics Department and the South African Council for Professional and Technical Surveyors. This meeting had as its aim:

*Building Resilience in the Profession: – to develop a suite of tools for member associations in Africa so that they may have innovative ways to engage with, and attract young people and women into the survey profession.*

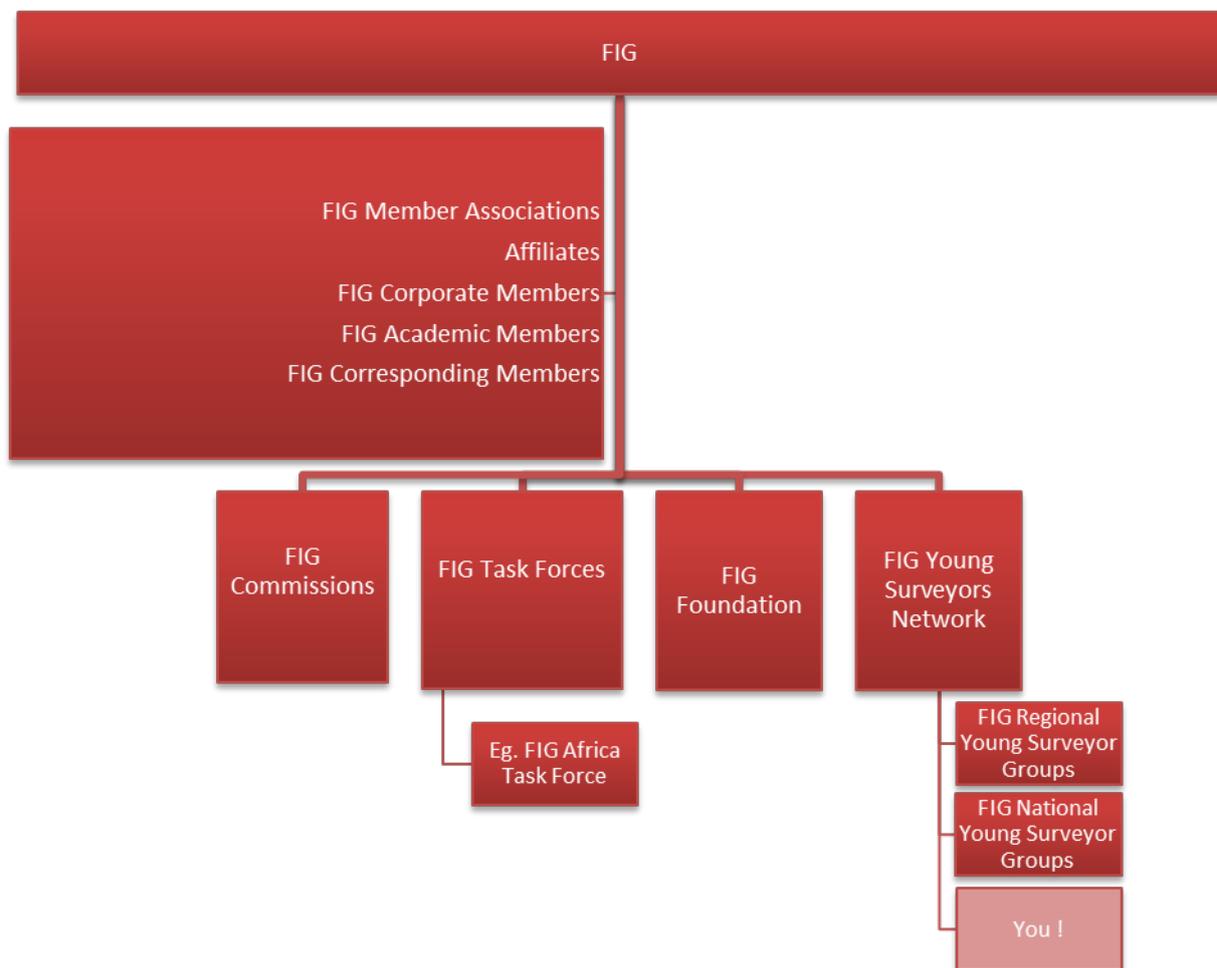
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<sup>1</sup> FIG ATF webpage <http://www.fig.net/tf/africa/index.htm> accessed June 2012

## 2. ***Setting up a local or national Young Surveyors Network***

This section provides a step-by-step overview of how you, as a young surveyor or young surveyor supporter, can ensure that young surveyors are participating and active within their local and regional membership bodies. It is just a quick overview – for more information refer back to the FIG Young Surveyors Network website and/or post questions and calls for assistance on the FIG Young Surveyors Network Facebook or LinkedIn pages.

### 2.1 ***Institutional setting: Where do young surveyors fit?***



At the core of the FIG are the FIG Member Associations – these are generally the national professional membership bodies that represent and regulate individual surveyors. Some examples include:

- The Institution of Surveyors, Kenya
- The Nigerian Institution of Surveyors
- The Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers
- The South African Council for Professional and Technical Surveyors

To find the relevant professional body for you, have a look at:

<http://www.fig.net/members/memassociations.htm#K>

Of course, your country may not yet have a professional body of surveyors, or the professional body may not be a current member of the FIG. In this case, there may be relevant Affiliates or Corresponding members for your country that you can contact.

Within the FIG there are 10 Commissions, 3 Task Forces (as at June 2012) as well as the Young Surveyors Network. Most Member Associations will not only have a delegate to the FIG, but also a delegate to each Commission. It is the aim of the Young Surveyors Network that Regional and Commission coordinator positions will be developed to facilitate information sharing and the FIG involvement of young surveyors. *Eventually, we aim to have a national young surveyor representative from each country, nominated by the FIG Member Association!*

But first things first ...

## **2.2 How can I be a part of the FIG, and my local organization?**

So how can you be a part of the FIG? And what does a local, regional or national Young Surveyor Network consist of? Essentially all you need is an enthusiastic group of young surveyors, keen to improve their skills and networks and also to contribute this to the wider international community. A few small details, outlined below, may also help...

### **1. Work within an overarching professional surveying organization**

The first step is to simply be a member of your local professional surveying organization.

Most countries have a national professional surveying organization – and many of these are FIG member associations. As a surveyor, membership of your professional body often provides you with some form of professional accreditation, lending credibility to your work. Membership bodies are also often sources of technical information, knowledge sharing, and certification and may provide additional benefits, like advertising job opportunities.

As a *young* surveyor, working closely with a national body will ensure greater resources and also continuity – young surveyors should feel part of a wider community of professional surveyors, both locally and internationally. Many issues of concern for young surveyors will also overlap with those of professional bodies – for example, skills shortages, technical skills, community profiles and networking. Young surveyors can make significant contributions to solving these issues, but need to work within a wider network of intergenerational and international surveyors in order to do so.

#### ***But how can I find my local professional surveying organization?***

You should have heard about your professional body whilst at university, but if you are struggling to make contact, try talking to colleagues or if really stuck email the FIG: [fig@fig.net](mailto:fig@fig.net)

Some countries may have more than one representative body – in this case, the young surveyor should find out more information about the relevant bodies to determine which is the ‘best fit’ for him or her. Once you’re a member, start getting involved – attend seminars and events and put your hand up for some responsibility.

*Having joined the professional body, the next step is to join the local young surveyors group, and become an active member. If no group exists already.. then read on!*

### **2. Formalise the young surveyor network structure, goals and responsibilities**

The most vital element of a young surveyors network is ... people! Enthusiasm and energy are also important. Once you have these elements, it is wise to try to formalize the young surveyor structure to make sure you are all striving for a common goal.

Some example goals and targets may include:

- To increase the student and young surveyor membership numbers and participation within your professional body.
- To increase student and young surveyor engagement in activities.
- To provide opportunities (such as: job openings, internships, skills-building, networking, etc.).
- To provide youth-focused seminars, eg. On technology, registration or starting your own business.
- To provide mentoring.

Formalising and reaching these goals will act as a measure of success. Using a system such as SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**greed-upon, **R**ealistic and **T**rackable) to define your goals may best ensure that you achieve your goal. As the young surveyor group, ask yourselves:

1. Is our goal specific and clearly-defined?
2. Is it measurable (how will we know when we have achieved our goal)?
3. Do we agree upon this goal and how we will achieve it?
4. Is our goal realistic? Will we achieve it?
5. When do we expect to achieve our goal by?

One word of advice: don't set the bar too high! Start with 1-2 small, achievable goals and work your way up to a broader vision.

Make sure to also keep the wider FIG Young Surveyors Network informed of your progress through facebook and LinkedIn – these sites should serve as

### **3. Link to the FIG Young Surveyors Network**

Make sure your members are aware of and engage also with the Young Surveyors Network.

Join us on:

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/26072565877/>

*Use facebook to promote activities and opportunities and to highlight surveying news.*

**LinkedIn:** [http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1957180&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1957180&trk=hb_side_g)

*Use LinkedIn to ask questions of colleagues, or to discuss issues relevant to young surveyors*

**Twitter:** @fig\_young

*Use twitter to tell others about your day-to-day news or to flag key news pieces*

**FIG Young Surveyors Network website:** [www.fig.net/ys](http://www.fig.net/ys),

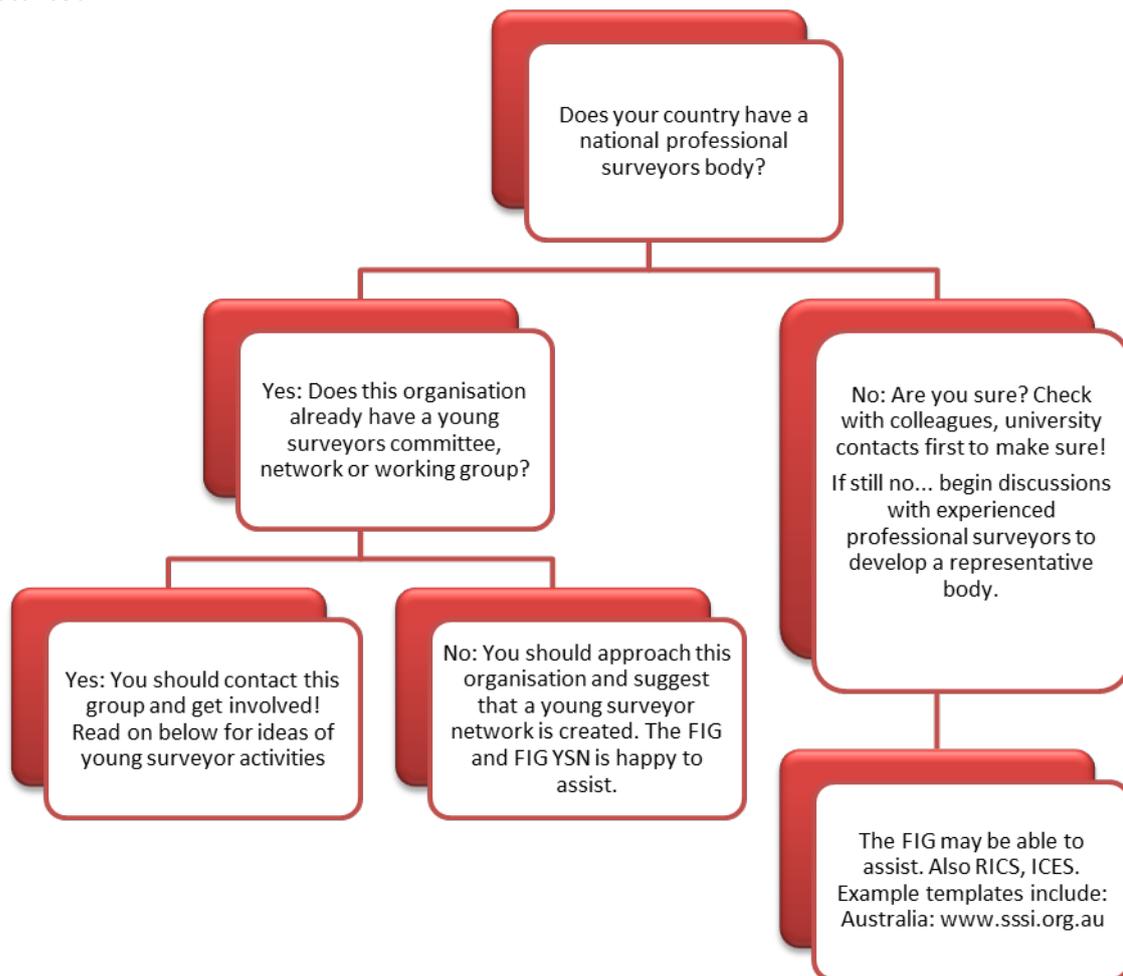
*View our website for resources such as the YSN workplan, newsletters and committee contact details.*

### **4. Communicate**

Be proactive in communicating and marketing your message to not only young surveyors and the professional bodies, but to all stakeholders – including employers and teaching institutions.

Regional and local networks of young surveyors should maintain regular contact with YSN representatives to promote and learn about international opportunities. You can send in articles for the FIG YSN Newsletter (eg. to report goals, internships, work experiences, etc.) and also simply email for feedback on what you require from a global organization!

5. So that's it! But for a quick overview of the above points, here's a handy checklist to get you started:



### **3. Mentoring of Young Surveyors**

*In the early stages of developing a local young surveyors network, within a wider professional institution, mentoring can be an easy and highly effective first activity to coordinate. Mentoring will expose young surveyors to a wider network of professional surveyors and provide many opportunities for career development. Strong, ongoing relationships with a mentor are often cited as key components of successful careers.*

*This section has been strongly informed by the Australian Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute Young Professionals Queensland Region Mentoring Guidelines. At the time of writing, this document is still in draft, but links to it will be posted on the FIG Young Surveyors Network website when available.*

#### **3.1 What is mentoring?**

The underlying philosophy of mentoring is self-managed learning through relationships of sharing and trust. A successful mentoring relationship includes a transfer of knowledge, advice or skills between two or more people.

Mentoring may be one-to-one, one-to-many or even facilitated through group situations (many-to-many). What is important is that it works. For the surveying profession as a whole this means that it:

- supports the career development of young surveyor participants
- retains talent within the profession
- accelerates learning outside of traditional study and/or the everyday workplace
- strengthens the leadership potential of young surveyors

It is important to keep in mind that mentoring is a two-way learning relationship. Whilst the benefits to the (typically younger) mentee are often stressed, the benefits to mentors should also be clearly stated. These include:

- Mentors can use the mentoring process and structure to develop their own leadership, communication and management capabilities.
- A successful and ongoing mentoring relationship is likely to also assist the career development of the mentor.
- Younger mentees have generally had more exposure to new technologies and advancements, and may have different skillsets to mentors. These factors can be exploited if the two-way learning relationship is acknowledged.
- Mentoring will support the profession, likely increasing both visibility and growth.

#### **3.2 How should a mentoring program be structured?**

A successful mentoring program is likely to include the following elements:

- A clear statement of program goals.
- A clear statement of roles, responsibilities and limits to expectations for all involved.
- Information accessible to all participants
- A coordinator with responsibility for the day-to-day management of the program.
- Voluntary participation for both mentors and mentees.
- Regular feedback and some flexibility to adapt within the program

## **The process**

1. Establish a group of people with clear responsibilities to manage the mentoring program. Do some research and draft your program guidelines (eg. How this program will work, how to be a mentor, how to be a mentee) based on other programs.
2. An expression of interest or general call for mentees should be established. This can also be done for mentors, or program coordinators can specifically ask or otherwise nominate mentors.

OR

Local young surveyor networks can utilise these guidelines to support mentor programs, but ask mentees to find their own mentors. Networks could suggest methods to find a mentor, rather than directly facilitate the relationship.

3. Mentees should be matched to mentors. How this is done will depend on step 1, but should take into account the respective interests, needs and career stage of participants.
4. Where possible, simple training of mentors and mentees could be provided. At the very least, mentors and mentees should be encouraged to establish an agreed set of roles, expectations, responsibilities and a timeframe. These should be written down and signed by both parties to ensure agreement.
5. Mentees should be proactive in setting goals and meeting times and agendas. Meeting schedules should be agreed upon by both parties and may range from weekly through to monthly or ad hoc. Generally meetings
6. The relationship between the mentee and the mentor should be self-managed. The ongoing role for the program coordinator should be a supportive role only, assisting others to resolve disputes themselves, as they arise.

## **3.3 Suggested roles and responsibilities *within mentoring programs***

### **Role of the coordinating membership body:**

- Assist in methods to identify and achieve mentoring goals
- Assist in identifying appropriate mentors, and suggest methods of contact
- Assist in sharing mentoring experiences and 'do's and don'ts' for new mentoring relationships
- Support involvement in mentoring programs by accrediting and/or awarding professional development points (where these are a condition of membership)

### **Role of the mentee:**

- Commit to the program
- Respect the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, and do not abuse positions of trust
- Be honest with mentor
- Be proactive both in the mentoring relationship and own career. This means both scheduling meetings, goal setting, measuring progress towards goal and timely in providing feedback where necessary ... as well as not relying on mentor for everyday coaching.
- Review progress
- Raise issues directly with mentor, and seek assistance from coordinating body if issues remain unresolved.

### **Role of the mentor:**

*A mentor provides guidance based on long-term and broad career perspectives, taking into account the mentee's personal and professional needs.*

*In comparison to a workplace relationship with a supervisor, the mentoring relationship is generally less structured and less hierarchical. A mentor is not there to provide answers, but to assist a mentee to reflect, challenge and plan.*

- Be open and honest with mentee
- Be clear about availability of time and capacity to help
- Guide mentee, rather than give answers
- Confront issues and seek assistance if problems develop
- Do not abuse position of power
- Provide feedback on progress towards goals
- Listen actively
- Be prepared to share knowledge and experience
- Model the leadership values and behaviours of the surveying profession
- Keep items discussed in meetings confidential
- Be non-judgemental and accept differences
- Treat the mentee with respect

### **Principles that guide the mentoring relationship**

**1. Commitment**

*Successful mentoring requires the commitment of both parties to the program and to each other.*

**2. Clear goal setting.**

*Mentoring may assist careers, but it is not the only tool. Participation in a local surveying network, proactive career steps and self-study should also be pursued.*

**3. Responsibility.**

*Mentees should not approach mentors for answers, but rather use the relationship for guidance and support. Mentees are responsible for decisions and actions and should drive the knowledge-sharing relationship.*

**4. Confidentiality and trust.**

*To ensure and maximise benefits, mentors and mentees must feel safe about being open with each other. This means that what happens in a mentoring meeting must remain confidential and there should be no abuse of power within the mentoring relationship.*

**5. Openness and honesty.**

*Mentors and mentees should address any communication issues directly, or seek outside help where necessary from the coordinating body.*

**6. Respect should be the basis for mentoring relationships.**

## **4. Ideas and activities for young surveyor networks**

Young surveyor network activities may have a variety of goals – networking, socialising, raising the profile of young surveyors or the profession and so on.

Additional activity ideas and 'how-to' documents will gradually become available on the FIG YSN website – [www.fig.net/ys](http://www.fig.net/ys) - so feel free to add to these, or provide feedback on existing documents.

A preliminary list of activities that local young surveyor networks around the world have undertaken is listed below – email [fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com](mailto:fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com) if you need help in replicating any of these!

- Mentoring
  - Speed networking
  - Charity fundraisers
  - Sports events
  - Socialising events on a weekly or monthly basis
  - Workshops and master classes
  - Survey/GIS/Environment days
  - Map My Town
  - Young Surveyor afternoon conferences
  - 'How-to' sessions
- .... And many more!

## **5. Conclusion and contacts**

This document provides a brief introduction to the FIG and the FIG Young Surveyors Network.

Much, much more information is available online and there are several active forums and contact points which should be your first point of call for any questions, queries or to update or correct any information.

Please remember that the FIG Young Surveyors Network is just that – a network of young surveyors who are learning from each other. Such a network requires active contributors – so please contribute! Follow up on the links below if you are unsure how – Facebook and Email are perhaps the first step!

### **The International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)**

Website: [www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net)

Email: [fig@fig.net](mailto:fig@fig.net)

### **The FIG Young Surveyors Network**

Website: [www.fig.net/ys](http://www.fig.net/ys)

Email: [fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com](mailto:fig.youngsurveyors@gmail.com)

### **Social networking sites: Search “FIG Young Surveyors”**

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- LinkedIn: [www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)