

The Company Catalyst Handbook – Best Practice Guide

Introduction

The Young Generation Network (YGN) is the young members' network for the Nuclear Institute (NI), covering the over 2000 members who are under 37 years old. The YGN aims to encourage, develop, and engage these early careers members for the benefit of the UK nuclear industry and for the members themselves.

The Company Catalyst scheme is a key part of this mission, designed to help the YGN maximise its impact at a local level across all the different organisations that members come from.

What is the Company Catalyst Scheme?

The Company Catalysts scheme is a network of over 150 YGN "Catalysts", spread across the nuclear industry. The Scheme aims to have at least one Catalyst at every organisation that's part of the YGN.

Each Catalyst supports the YGN by acting as a local point of contact, making our communications and outreach much more effective. Catalysts send out news and updates, gather feedback, and encourage more young people to get involved with the YGN.

The Scheme also hosts regular lunchtime calls for Catalysts as well in-person events, technical tours at different nuclear sites, and training and workshops specific to Catalysts.

What are the key responsibilities for a Company Catalyst?

Anyone in the YGN can sign up to be a Company Catalyst. We ask that all Catalysts are proactive and enthusiastic in supporting the YGN, but beyond this there are three key responsibilities that make up the Catalyst role: being a **Communicator**, an **Ambassador**, and a **Contributor**.

Communicator: Sharing opportunities at a local level for the YGN and NI

Ambassador: Acting as the first point of contact and an advocate for the YGN

Contributor: Collecting feedback and ideas, and taking part in the Catalyst community

What is this document?

This Handbook is meant to be a guide to how to be the most effective Catalyst you can be. It explains the different roles and responsibilities and includes practical tips and guides.

The Handbook is drawn from our experience of running the Catalyst Scheme and from feedback from the Catalysts themselves, but we are always open to new ideas and extra feedback from your own personal experience!

Communicator

Role Responsibility

As a **Communicator** for the YGN, your role is to quickly send out the updates the YGN committee will pass on to you via our mailing list, like news on upcoming events, requests for help, volunteering opportunities and more. This helps the YGN communicate much more directly with the young people at your company and is very effective for building awareness and engagement with the YGN.

Methods of Communication

When updates arrive from the committee, we ask you try and send them out as soon as possible, as often events or opportunities are time limited. Every organisation is different, and so different options for communication may work best. Below are the typical methods you could use:

- **Email** – this is the most common method. You could either use a blanket email across your company or use a more targeted mailing list. It's useful to have a clear style and explanation of why you're sending out these updates. You can often request a new mailing list to be set up through your IT services, or you can make your own contact group on outlook. Both options will need you to keep on top of adding new members.
- **Teams** – A popular channel for companies is on Teams (or Slack or other equivalents). You may find it useful to form your own teams' chats or channels, or find out if there are any existing that you could share updates on. This is generally a more personal form of update versus an email and so can be quite effective.
- **Intranet** – Most companies will have an existing internal communications channel, such as an intranet or news page. Consider sharing updates to the wider business for any large events or volunteering opportunities, or you could also set up a YGN specific area for more targeted updates. We would recommend getting in touch with your organisation comms team who typically manage this.
- **Networks** – Most organisations will have internal networks that you could use to share information. These could be D&I, Mental Health First Aiders, REACH, or general young group networks through apprentice or graduate schemes. These existing networks can be utilised to help support your regular updates to the wider business.
- **Social media** – If your company has corporate accounts, you could ask for updates to be shared if appropriate. You could also use your own professional platforms (i.e. Linked In) to promote the YGN, the Company Catalysts, and Opportunities available. The YGN has LinkedIn and Instagram accounts, which you can follow to get regular updates.

Regular Updates

Whilst we'll send you information and messages on a more ad-hoc basis, you could consider setting up some regular updates in parallel. The [NI/YGN Event Page](#) has all the information on upcoming events and opportunities, and new ones are regularly published. You could consider setting up a monthly reminder to share any Events, to help keep people engaged and up to date with the YGN.

Ambassador

Role Responsibility

As an **Ambassador** for the YGN, your role is to represent and showcase the YGN to the early-career professionals around you, to build engagement with the nuclear industry and the broader YGN community. This section provides practical guidance to help you build your presence.

Approaching Graduates, Apprentices & Cohort Leads

Building relationships with new starters in your organisation and their cohort leads is key part of raising awareness of the YGN. Consider introducing yourself as the YGN “Point of Contact” during welcome events or offering to deliver an overview of the YGN during any graduate or apprentice inductions. Collaboration with cohort leads (sometimes known as Head of Early Careers, typically working in HR) is highly effective. You could work with them to share YGN materials and promote upcoming events, ensuring that new starters are aware of the opportunities available at the YGN.

Key Benefits to Highlight

When engaging young professionals in your organisation, you can emphasise the unique advantages of joining the YGN. These include:

- Access to industry-wide networking and mentoring opportunities, which can accelerate professional growth.
- Members receive invitations to exclusive events such as the YGN Annual Seminar and site visits, providing valuable insights into the nuclear sector.
- Opportunities to develop soft skills through volunteering and committee roles, helping members build leadership and communication capabilities.
- A chance to shape the future of the nuclear industry and contribute to outreach initiative, an inspiring prospect for those passionate about making a difference.

Engaging Senior Leads

When growing the visibility of the YGN in your organisation, you could consider engaging with senior leaders to give the YGN credibility in the organisation. When looking for buy-in from seniors, the goal is to position YGN as a strategic enabler rather than an extra task. Most organisations are happy to support the professional development of their staff, particularly new starters and early careers, and the YGN is a well-established and visible way of doing so.

Building YGN Awareness

Some easy ways you could build awareness of the YGN include:

- Requesting a short slot during a company-wide town hall to introduce YGN and its benefits.
- Sharing any examples of how YGN has supported early-careers in your organisation.
- Highlighting upcoming YGN events and encourage participation and share links to YGN resources on internal platforms like Yammer or Teams.
- Asking senior leaders if they could talk about the benefits of YGN for visibility and credibility.

Contributor

Role Responsibility

As a **Contributor** to the YGN, your role is to take an active part in the Catalyst scheme and the wider YGN, helping to shape the direction and the projects and events the scheme runs, whilst building your own personal professional network. This section outlines how can you give and gather feedback, and how to get more involved in the Catalyst scheme.

Collecting Feedback

As a Company Catalyst, you are in a unique position to gather insights and ideas from colleagues at a local level. Some of the best suggestions for the YGN's programme of events come directly from our members, and your role helps ensure these ideas reach the committee. Here are some effective methods for receiving and sharing feedback:

- **Invite feedback regularly:** When sending out YGN updates, consider asking for suggestions or ideas for any new YGN projects. You could add this request to your email signature too.
- **Brainstorm your own ideas:** Get together with any other Catalysts at your organisation and think about what you want to get out of the scheme, or ways that it could be improved. Consider your top successes or challenges, or what lessons could help other Catalysts.
- **Survey:** If you have an interested community at your organisation such as graduate cohort, you could send a short survey asking for ideas or feedback for the scheme. Google Forms or Survey Monkey are easy and free to use survey tools.

Participate in the Catalyst Network

Taking part in meet-ups, workshops, and calls helps you connect with fellow Catalysts, builds a sense of community for the scheme, and is an integral part of the Catalyst role. By engaging with peers across the industry, you gain insight into other organisations and support your own personal and professional development. Here are some practical ways to be an active member of the scheme:

- Join the regular networking opportunities such as the Lunchtime Catch-ups, Site Tours, or the Catalyst In-Person Workshops. These are easy ways to get to know your fellow Catalysts, and we also invite Catalysts to present on their own organisation or career.
- Look out for and attend YGN and NI events, such as the Speaking Competition, Intro To series, and annual dinner, potentially representing your company there as a Catalyst.
- Try out some YGN volunteering – we regularly send out requests for help with projects or temporary initiatives, which is a great way to meet fellow Catalysts and the wider YGN committee.
- Make active use of the WhatsApp Channel, feel free to share your own ideas, updates or requests for help and connect with the other Catalysts on the scheme.

Useful Resources & FAQs

This section contains different resources and information you may find useful in your role.

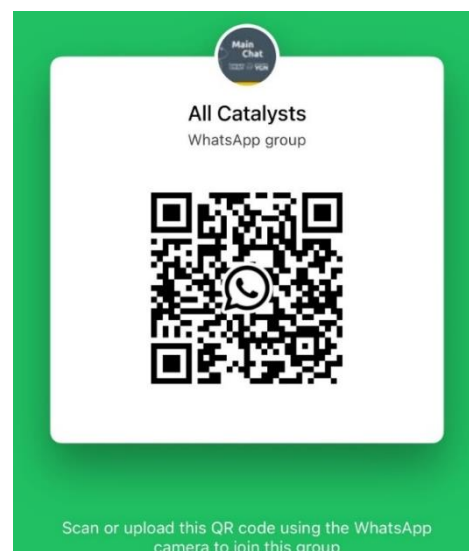
Catalyst WhatsApp Group

As we all fulfil this role as volunteers and often outside of working hours, we have a WhatsApp group that we frequently use to enable continued communication even outside of work. And where in some cases it may be challenging to reach other through email.

This group is used for the company catalyst team to present opportunities for everyone, but also for other committee chairs to share opportunities for yourselves and for you to share to your company.

This area can also be used for yourselves to ask any questions or to share anything you would like help with, or for any interesting events within your organisation that is open to external people.

To the right is a QR you can scan to join the group.



Business Case Guidance

As part of the Catalyst Scheme or through the wider YGN events series, you may have the opportunity to join in-person events. YGN events are typically free to attend, but the YGN cannot usually provide funding for travel and subsistence, which will need to come from your own organisation. Writing a good business is key to securing funding and allowing you to attend. In general, you should:

- Explain the basic details of the event or training (where, what, who with, how long etc) and any key agenda items like technical talks or workshops you can participate in
- Set out the ask clearly in terms of costs, travel and subsistence, and how many hours you'll need to book to go
- Explain the relevance of the event or training to your personal development, and any specific benefits you will gain from your attendance, such as building your skills, networking with other organisations, or representing your organisation.
- See if you can align this with your organisation's policies on learning and development
- Highlight how your company's support is a great way to help with the career development of young people in the nuclear sector.

Graphics and Style Guides for Communications

Below are various images and graphics you can use when promoting the YGN, sharing communications or as part of your own email signature:



[Check out our Events](#)

[Take a look at upcoming NI/YGN Events](#)



[Check out the Nuclear Institute!](#)

[Explore the NI website and all its benefits](#)



[Get in Touch](#)

[Get in contact with our support teams](#)



Example Email Signature

I am the YGN Company Catalyst for __Your Company__. If you have any questions about the YGN or want to get involved, please get in touch anytime!



To encourage, inspire and develop
the UK's young nuclear professionals



#NetZeroNeedsNuclear

Leaving the Scheme

We understand that roles and priorities change, so if you decide to step away from the Company Catalyst role, there are a few things you can do to help ensure a smooth transition for any new Catalysts taking over. We ask that you:

1. Let the Company Catalyst Organising Team know

This helps us keep our mailing list up to date, and we can keep track of which companies are represented by the scheme (and give our thanks for your support to the scheme!). We can also organise and induction for whoever is lined up to take over the role from you. This is also your chance to pass on any feedback on the scheme, any challenges, highlights or changes you would make!

2. Pass On Useful Resources and Access Information

Ensure the next Catalyst knows where to find Catalyst resources, the Induction Pack, this Best Practice Guide, YGN presentation materials, and any shared folders. If there are distribution lists, Teams channels, or hubs you used, please note them and confirm whether they need access to be set up.

3. Get in touch with Key Contacts and Internal Support

Share details of colleagues or teams you have worked closely with, such as Early Careers leads, HR, Communications, or apprenticeship/graduate coordinators. Identifying who has been supportive or essential is extremely helpful for the incoming Catalyst.

4. Share What Has Worked Well

Describe the methods, channels, or approaches that were effective for you in your particular organisation. This might include internal Teams channels, newsletters, early career induction sessions, cohort meetings, or informal engagement routes. Sharing this helps your successor keep momentum and maintain visibility. Any advice you wish you had when you began is particularly valuable.

Key Facts

You can use this section as a reference if asked about the role of the Nuclear Institute (NI), the Young Generation Network (YGN) or the YGN's Industrial Partner, Great British Energy – Nuclear (GBE-N).

The Nuclear Institute (NI)

The Nuclear Institute (NI) is the UK's professional membership body for the civil nuclear sector. It provides independent professional recognition, sets standards for competence and ethics, and acts as the home of nuclear professionalism in the UK. The NI brings together engineers, scientists, project professionals, operators, regulators, and early-career talent through its membership structure and regional branches. It is licensed by the Engineering Council to award professional registrations such as EngTech, IEng, and CEng, and also provides Chartered Scientist (CSci) status.

The Institute runs national events, publishes its journal *Nuclear Future*, and provides thought leadership on nuclear policy, safety culture, and industry development. Its activities include knowledge-sharing conferences, training, outreach to schools and universities, and wider public-engagement work aimed at informing society about nuclear energy's role. Crucially, the NI hosts the Young Generation Network (YGN), supporting its governance, events, and professional development efforts. Many UK companies (including GBE-N) partner with the NI to support staff development, sector-wide standards, and community building across the nuclear profession.

Key Facts

- The Nuclear Institute is the UK's professional membership body for the civil nuclear sector, representing over 5,000 professionals.
- It sets voluntary professional standards through the Nuclear Professionalism Standard® and offers routes to chartered status via the Engineering Council, Science Council and Society for the Environment.
- Formed in 2009 by the merger of the Institute of Nuclear Engineers and the British Nuclear Energy Society, though its origins date back over 60 years.
- NI delivers conferences, training, technical seminars, regional branch events, and publishes the *Nuclear Future* journal.
- The NI hosts the Young Generation Network (YGN) as its early-career community, supporting outreach, STEM engagement, and professional development

Young Generation Network (YGN)

The Young Generation Network (YGN) is the early-career branch of the UK's Nuclear Institute, created to support, develop, and connect people in the first stages of their nuclear careers. It aims to ensure a strong pipeline of future leaders for the sector by providing opportunities for professional growth, technical learning, and cross-industry networking. YGN operates nationwide through volunteers who organise technical seminars, plant tours, outreach events, policy roundtables, and national conferences. Its focus spans both technical understanding and broader skills such as leadership, communication, and industry awareness.

The YGN plays a major role in promoting STEM outreach, inspiring new entrants to the sector through school engagement, public events, and university partnerships. It also collaborates closely with industry employers to provide mentoring, career insights, and capability-building programmes.

In recent years, partnerships including the GBE-N x YGN Company Partnership have strengthened its ability to connect early-career professionals with strategic national programmes such as SMRs and new-build projects. The YGN remains a recognised and influential voice for early-career professionals across the UK nuclear landscape.

Key Facts

- The Young Generation Network (YGN) is the early-career arm of the UK Nuclear Institute, open to members under 37.
- Established in 1996, it supports professional development, networking, and knowledge transfer across the UK nuclear sector.
- Membership exceeds 2,000 early-career professionals, offering volunteering, site tours, speaking competitions, outreach and career-development opportunities.
- Its mission is to build a supportive community, enable networking, develop future leaders, and promote STEM engagement nationwide.
- YGN activity includes technical seminars, facility tours, outreach campaigns, international collaboration, and support for nuclear skills pipelines.

Great British Nuclear (GBE-N)

Great British Nuclear (GBE-N) is a UK government-owned public body established to accelerate the delivery of new nuclear projects and strengthen the UK's long-term energy-security strategy. Its central mission is to drive the deployment of new nuclear technologies, particularly Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), and ensure the UK has a reliable, low-carbon baseload power supply aligned with its net-zero commitments.

As an enabling organisation, GBE-N coordinates policy development, commercial processes, technology assessment, siting, investor engagement, and programme assurance across major national nuclear initiatives. It acts as a strategic integrator for government and industry, removing barriers to delivery and ensuring nuclear projects can progress at pace. GBE-N also plays a key role in shaping the future nuclear ecosystem by supporting skills development, capability building, and supply-chain readiness across the wider sector. GBE-N is headquartered across London and Warrington, with teams working in engineering, programme delivery, governance, HR, commercial strategy, early-careers development, and specialist technical disciplines. Its staff work closely with the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, regulators, SMR vendors, local authorities, and industry partners to bring forward new nuclear capacity.

Key Facts

- Officially Launched in 2023
- Great British Nuclear (GBN), now operating as Great British Energy – Nuclear (GBE-N), is the UK Government's body for delivering the long-term nuclear programme and expanding new nuclear capacity.
- Its first priority is running the government's Small Modular Reactor (SMR) competitive selection process.
- The organisation supports technology development, site access, supply-chain mobilisation, and community engagement around nationally significant nuclear projects.
- GBE-N is a government-owned, arm's-length body, headquartered in the UK, coordinating national nuclear strategy and sector investment.