MGS Len Threadgold Early Career Award – Invitation for Applications

We would like to invite applicants for the MGS Len Threadgold Early Career Award. This award is an opportunity for early career geotechnical professionals to showcase their work and early career progression.

The winner of the MGS Len Threadgold Early Career Award will be put forward on behalf of the Society to be considered in the national competition for sponsorship from the British Geotechnical Association (BGA) to attend the International Young Engineers Conference on Soil Mechanics the following year.

There will also be the following MGS prizes awarded:

- 1st place: £100
- 2nd place: £50
- 3rd place: £25
- 4th place: £10

Eligibility:

- Entrants must be a member of the Midland Geotechnical Society.
- The competition is open to all early career geotechnical engineers with up to 7 years of industry/research experience post receipt of a relevant BSc/BEng/MEng/MSc degree (Level 6 or 7 qualification), or up to 5 years if the entrant has completed a PhD degree, on 1st November in the year they are submitting their application. Career breaks and/or parental leave can be excluded from the 5-7 years of experience upon request, in which case a short, written explanation should be provided.
- Be available to present at the December MGS lecture if shortlisted.
- Be available to update their submitted abstract to meet the specific requirements of the upcoming International Young Engineers Conference on Soil Mechanics, if required.

To enter:

- Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words on a topic dealing with the engineering behaviour of the ground. This could be a description of an industrial design or construction project, a research paper or the development of a new piece of equipment. The abstract should focus on your personal contribution to the project.
- The top four entries as assessed anonymously by current MGS committee will be asked to give a 10 minute presentation at the MGS December meeting plus 5 minutes of questions.
- The nominees will be assessed on whether they demonstrate:
    - A clear understanding of their chosen subject material.
    - An ability to communicate effectively but succinctly through their synopsis.
    - An understanding of geotechnical engineering principles and practices.
    - An awareness of relevant project risks.
    - A clear statement of their personal contribution to the material under discussion with an acknowledgement of any relevant collaboration.

  Further details on the criteria can be found in Appendix A.

- The four finalists will be scored based on the quality and content of their abstract submission and presentation, by a panel of judges.
- The entrant must be the sole author of this presentation and synopsis.

Key dates:

- Closing date for entries is the last Friday before the November MGS meeting date.
- Top four entries will be informed within 7 days of the November MGS meeting date.
- 10 minute presentation for top four entries to be given at the MGS evening meeting in December.
- See http://midlandgeotechnicalsociety.org.uk/meetings.shtml for MGS meeting dates

Contact:

- Entries should be submitted to the Society's Chair by email with the subject title 'MGS Early Career Award – Application' : fiona.hughes@arup.com
- Any questions should also be directed to the same email address

Appendix A – Appraisal Matrix

Criterion	Further Information
Clear understanding of their chosen subject material	The abstract should demonstrate sound technical understanding and familiarity with the subject area. It should show awareness of project context, objectives, and the significance of findings or insights, avoiding superficial or generic discussion.
Ability to communicate effectively and succinctly through their synopsis	The abstract should be concise, well-structured, and engaging. Writing should be accessible to a technically literate audience, avoiding jargon and unnecessary detail. Demonstrates clarity, brevity, and logical flow.
Demonstrated understanding of geotechnical practices	The applicant should show awareness of how their work aligns with or advances geotechnical engineering principles and practice. Includes relevant methods, standards, or innovations.
Awareness of relevant project risks	All projects involve risks—technical, environmental, logistical, or health and safety (e.g. lab or fieldwork). The abstract should acknowledge these appropriately, demonstrating proportional understanding and mitigation.
Clear statement of personal contribution and acknowledgement of collaboration	The abstract should make the applicant's role explicit, distinguishing their personal input while recognising collaboration. Should show ownership of ideas and delivery with professional humility.