After engaging with several IEC committee members and stepping into the world of standardization through my role at Ohmium, I am excited to express my interest in joining the USNC’s Young and Emerging Professionals (YEP) program. I have recently taken over committee responsibilities from Kirsten Burpee as she prepares for retirement, and I see the YEP initiative as a natural and vital next step in deepening my involvement in this field. My goal is to help shape standards that ensure the safety, reliability, and quality of technologies that affect lives across industries and communities.

In a time of rapid technological evolution and increasingly complex global supply chains, the need for robust, well-maintained standards is more urgent than ever. From the smartphones in our pockets to the renewable energy systems powering our grids, consumers deserve confidence in the safety and performance of the products they rely on daily. A clear, trusted framework of standards allows for this confidence. It ensures consistency, reduces risk, and enables global interoperability—especially in high-stakes sectors like industrial machinery, energy infrastructure, and smart technologies.

My own appreciation for the power of clear standards was shaped by my experience in the U.S. Navy’s nuclear program. Onboard floating nuclear reactors—aircraft carriers—procedural integrity was not optional; it was mission-critical. Maintenance and casualty procedures had to be clear, concise, and executable under stress, even by junior personnel. Any ambiguity could jeopardize operational readiness or national security. That mindset directly informs how I now approach product standards: the documentation must be readable, unambiguous, and crafted for use in real-world scenarios, not just compliance checklists.

Today’s challenge is that while technology is advancing at a breakneck pace, regulatory and standardization frameworks often struggle to keep up. Government oversight can be slow or inconsistent, making it all the more important for the standards community to lead proactively. Whether it’s hydrogen electrolyzers, AI-powered systems, or emerging digital infrastructure, we need both adaptation of existing standards and the creation of new ones. These must account for performance, safety, interoperability, and lifecycle impact.

To do this effectively, we should leverage cutting-edge tools like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and digital twin modeling to support faster, smarter conformity assessment processes. These technologies can help close the gap between innovation and certification, allowing standards to evolve with, rather than lag behind, market demands.

But even as we adopt these tools, we must also rethink how the standards community engages new professionals. My generation brings diverse experiences and technical fluency but needs an accessible entry point into this complex ecosystem. The YEP program is uniquely positioned to help bridge this gap, not only by providing mentorship and exposure but by encouraging young professionals to act as thought leaders. We must approach these opportunities with an open mind and a forward-looking vision, embracing the innovation that new voices bring instead of holding onto outdated norms.

Leadership in standards development requires more than technical competence; it demands collaboration, curiosity, and a willingness to challenge the status quo in pursuit of better outcomes for industry and society. By investing in early-career professionals and embracing rapid, responsible innovation, the standards and conformity assessment community can remain a powerful force for progress and safety.