

FUNDING FORTY YEARS OF ROW EDUCATION



Reflection is a powerful tool. As individuals, reflecting on the past helps us gain perspective and insight on our priorities for the future. It is equally important for organizations to reflect on history and evaluate whether our original mission and objectives continue to be relevant today.

Expectations Shifting

The early 70s saw a dramatic shift in right of way work. Agents had previously been expected to be a jack of all trades, but expertise in individual fields was quickly becoming more desirable. After publication of *“The Principles of Right of Way”* in 1972, the then American Right of Way Association realized that specialized education would be an ongoing need for members. To support this pursuit, a funding mechanism would be necessary and in July of 1976 the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) was formed. Separate from the International Right of Way Association (IRWA), the non-profit Foundation’s core mission was to fund right of way education and professional development initiatives.

Expanding and Evolving

Forty years later, the right of way industry continues to expand and evolve – now at lightning speeds – creating more demand for specialized education and training. The IRWA has grown with new chapters and affiliates in 20 countries, fostering the need to serve a more global membership. Industry needs and personal lifestyles have changed too, insisting on instant access to education. The IRWA’s education program now has more than 60 courses to update and develops new courses as industry needs warrant. This aggressive program requires an ever-increasing financial commitment. For these reasons, the Foundation’s mission is more relevant than ever to the success of the IRWA and its members.

Funding

Through tax deductible donations from IRWA members, chapters and regions, as well as funds generated through our annual auction and golf tournament, the RWIEF has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars for education and professional development programs. The Foundation does not develop or update courses; that is the purview of the IRWA. As a separate non-profit, it safeguards and grows donations. When new funding proposals are received, a basic approach is used in evaluating each request. Projected donations are estimated, then funds already pledged and sunset dates for those funds are verified to confirm remaining, unpledged funds. Once the merit of a request is vetted, it is time for a vote of the Trustees. With this data in hand, approval or denial of any request is systematically evaluated.



Advancing Careers

The RWIEF applauds the efforts of right of way professionals to become better informed and specialized and we welcome the opportunity to review new funding proposals. Our goal is to allocate available dollars with an open mind toward the future of the profession and its professional development needs. We are very grateful for the continued support of IRWA members, individual and corporate, without whom funding the ever-expanding education needs of the profession would not be possible. It has been our privilege to serve the IRWA membership these forty years!