

Please use this form as the cover page for each submission (chapters can submit in two categories).

Outstanding Award Application

Chapter Name:	Idaho Public Purchasing Association
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List Program(s) that will be highlighted in application	Introduction to Public Procurement

Has your chapter submitted your Performance Standard SEAL?

Check the box for the Outstanding Chapter Award you are submitting:

- Outstanding Chapter Operations Award**
Does your chapter excel in its operating processes, including policies and procedures, budgeting, recognition of agencies and individuals and involvement with NIGP?
- Outstanding Chapter Membership Award**
Does your Chapter excel in membership benefits and resources and what are your methods for membership retention and growth?
- Outstanding Chapter Advocacy and Outreach Award**
Does your Chapter utilize best practices and operations that have been demonstrated to be an effective advocate for members and our profession?
- Outstanding Chapter Professional Development Award**
Does your chapter excel in providing educational resources and other opportunities to your membership?

1. PROGRAM (Worth 10 points)

a) Explain the program/event/best practice that you implemented in 2024 in detail.

In 2024, the professional development program implemented several changes. One significant adjustment was restructuring the Professional Development position into a co-chair position instead of one chair. Two of our board members share a passion for continual improvement of our professional development program. They met several times to discuss the potential change prior to bringing it to the Board for approval. Their focus is on empowering one another by leaning on their individual strengths in order to create efficiencies and drive strategic solutions for the Chapter.

This adjustment ensured responsibilities were shared, preventing the workload from falling on a single individual as well as providing a backup if one co-chair was unable to fulfill their duties. They share this workload by having one board member coordinate speakers and do most of the class setups and organize the schedule. While the other board member does the logistical planning and handles the day-of tasks for in-person classes. They continue to meet on a regular basis to ensure they are staying on track with goals.

IPPA has struggled to meet the attendance requirements required by NIGP for in-person instruction, but when membership is polled, in-person instruction is overwhelmingly the preference of our members. This led us to try out a new strategy; offering a handful of NIGP competencies in the virtual environment each year and bolstering our education component by offering in-person, Idaho-specific courses led by IPPA members. This has allowed us to generate a more substantive revenue – based on historical expectations and forecasting – while still promoting both IPPA locally and NIGP nationally. After two trial years, we are confident in this plan moving forward while maintaining an open mind about evolving this critical component of our association as internal and external factors continue changing.

One of classes created was an **Introduction to Public Procurement** class tailored specifically for Idaho agencies. This course featured a section on **Statutes Review**, which provided an overview of current regulations and highlighted upcoming changes to the Idaho Code.

The class was led by four facilitators from both the state and the City of Meridian. Having multiple facilitators allowed us to divide the material, with each presenter focusing on a specific section while the others supplemented with additional insights. This collaborative approach helped ensure that the course effectively reached state agencies and other political subdivisions.



Most of our current membership resides in the Treasure Valley, but in an effort to offer support to agencies throughout the state we decided to offer this class in Eastern Idaho to draw some of our members from that area and potentially gain new members. We were able to offer this class virtually as well so folks that were outside of the area could attend.

2. RESULTS (Worth 10 points)

- a) How did the program change from what happened before in your Chapter with data from 2024?
- a. Continued with our strategy of offering online NIGP-national competency courses and added in-person Idaho-specific offerings. In 2023, we offered 6 NIGP courses on various topics. As we shifted our educational offerings to include more Idaho specific classes, we changed to offering 3 NIGP courses and 2 Idaho specific courses.
 - b. IPPA had never had an Introduction to Public Procurement class that was hosted by IPPA, 2024 was our pilot class. The content was created by the facilitators with Idaho codes referenced.
- b) Was this program/event/best practice successful or not and why?
- a. The class was successful in a few different ways, and we will highlight three here:
 - i. The approach that was taken was to have the class be more of a discussion with four facilitators of different jurisdictions giving examples of what they have experienced in their procurement careers and offering tips and best practices for new procurement professionals. Another note is that all four facilitators were members of the IPPA Board. This helped to link Board members' names/faces to the IPPA organization and its mission.
 - ii. The presentation was crafted in light of the newest legislation and incorporated notes on recent rule changes. This review ensured the participants were getting the most timely/relevant information.
 - iii. We went to them! Idaho is an expansive state, but many of our IPPA activities occur in the southwest region due to the largest population centers and prevalence of staff offices. We made sure we were in "their neck of the woods" to emphasize our efforts to meet them where they are (both figuratively and literally)!
 - c) What did members say? Share outcomes and results.
 - a. We received surveys from the class and the consensus was that it was successful. When rating instructors one comment said, "Excellent – welcoming, kept class engaged! Not once did they make anyone feel 'less than'." While another comment was, "Good -enjoyed the training and the instructors. They peppered the dry topic with humor, anecdotes, and kept the class moving forward. Liked to see their rapport and history with each other. Can tell they've been doing this for a bit."

Regarding level of satisfaction with the course materials, topics covered, etc. one attendee said, "Very Satisfied – needed information! Looking forward to learning more and becoming a SME." Another commented "Satisfied – I think a high-level overview of procurement is what was necessary for this 'green' audience. The majority of attendees

sounded new to their departments and the procurement process. Thankful for useful documents that were shared by instructors and by fellow attendees.”

When surveyed about the learning environment and if it met expectations, a comment was, “Yes – In-person – after my experience, I plan on joining IPPA as a member!” We also asked if there was anything else they would like to comment on, and one survey said, “Yes, I am struggling with solicitations for my small county. If you have any templates to share, that would be greatly appreciated.”

Some suggestions for improvement also included going through an RFP scenario which we actually ended up using as a lunch-and-learn topic we completed later in the year.

- b. Networking! So many of our smaller (population) cities, counties, and districts don’t have opportunities to build support networks with other public procurement professionals. These types of offerings give participants an extensive support network to lean on for professional support and continued development.

The class generates money from Idaho public entities which then is directly invested into educational opportunities for Idaho entities! In an effort to make the Intro. to Procurement class accessible to all, the Board chose to charge \$200 for the class and we ended up collecting \$3,800. The money stays in the state with the sole purpose of providing more continuing public procurement education as well as other opportunities for IPPA’s membership.

3. DIFFERENTIALS (Worth 10 points)

- a) Explain what makes your program/event/best practice different than other Chapters or different than what your Chapter has done before?
 - a. The IPPA Board is committed to continual process improvement. For our chapter that means we seek feedback every chance we get and then find ways to implement that feedback. Our Board is very invested in its members. We offer surveys and talk to attendees during events to get a wide variety of opinions. The Board listens to the surveys and suggestions of the members and then acts because this association is focused on providing the best educational opportunities for the membership. That includes expanding our educational reach to more rural areas of the state. In 2024 that meant traveling four hours to Idaho Falls to make the Idaho-specific Introduction to Public Procurement course more accessible to that area.
- b) How did you come up with this idea?
 - a. As we reviewed past professional development surveys, new IPPA members gave us feedback that they were wanting education opportunities that focused on Idaho-specific

rules, legislation, and policy. We don't want our Idaho-specific courses to detract from the importance of national/international best practices, but to serve as specialty tools added to participants' procurement toolboxes. They need the foundation (NIGP courses and global best practices) to bolster their implementation of Idaho's laws.

- b. New procurement professionals in smaller agencies that haven't had the opportunities to apply Idaho code to projects were supported as we talked through potential hurdles between current agency practices, NIGP best practices, and which Idaho laws would come into play.
- c) How is the program/event/best practice different from anything you or others have done?
 - a. IPPA had offered panel discussions in the past but never constructed an instructional class around multiple instructors. This intentionality paid off as it relieved some of the stuffy nature of having a single person lecturing for an entire day; while also offering a great deal of flexibility in the room (i.e., the facilitators interacted with one another during presentations to help encourage class participation as well...giving the conversation legs).
 - b. The facilitators also made a point of calling on people representing different types of entities (e.g., schools, cities, counties, districts, etc.) throughout the day to ask open-ended questions about how they are doing things and why. This was a cornerstone to creating a learning environment as opposed to information download. Many of the participants noted they had ideas to actually take back to their entities excited to implement new processes or to refine ways their policies/procedures were not meeting the state's standards.

4. **LESSONS** (Worth 10 points)

- a) Indicate in detail what steps a Chapter or board must take to approve this idea.
 - a. The professional co-chairs presented the idea of teaching an Introduction to Public Procurement class during the Leadership Summit that the Board president hosts at the beginning of the year. The Board then approved moving forward with this class.
- b) Who must be communicated with before/during/after?
 - a. Before: The membership had been a huge part of the conversation before the idea was proposed and the IPPA Board had multiple discussions in support of creating this class.
 - b. During: The potential hosts for the class, the facilitators (developing curriculum and working out logistics), and direct contact with entities to advertise the offering and ensure participation.

- c. After: Class participants, as we requested their feedback. Presenting findings to the IPPA Board and deciding whether to tweak things or move forward with the same basic format in the future. Identifying a new partner in a different region of the state to host next year's offering!
- c) What worked with your program/event/best practice?
- a. Having four facilitators from different types of entities helped because this class was offered to all IPPA members who come from state agencies, cities, counties and other political subdivisions. Being able to discuss how to implement best practices from four different points of view was very valuable to attendees as they could more easily identify an agency similar to their own.
 - b. Offering the class as "hybrid." Some people just don't have the budget or time to travel to these classes, so having the option of attending virtually is extremely important, and with modern technology the virtual participants still feel ownership/inclusion as if they were in the room.
- d) What did not work, or would you change about the program/event/best practice?
- a. We need to do some fine tuning to restructure the topics so we flow in and out of breaks in a more seamless manner. An example is, the lunch break was too late in the day because of the attempt to tuck too many topics into the morning session.
 - b. The facilitators need to make even more of an effort to keep the energy level up, especially during segments like statute review or public records requests. The material may be dry but we don't have to be!
- e) Will your Chapter continue to do the program/event/best practice the same way? Different? As Often?
- a. We are offering this class again this year but changing the location to Northern Idaho. We hope to continue to offer this class once a year at rotating locations. We will continue to request feedback after each class and throughout the year, reviewing survey results in order to include new ideas in the curriculum.
 - b. We will also explore new/better ways of presenting the information to ensure optimum engagement and retention. We are focusing on hitting those three all-important aspects of comprehensive learning environments – visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.