



## Outstanding Chapter Award

### PURPOSE:

To recognize outstanding Chapter practices with the intent of sharing knowledge about them. All applications will be incorporated in the online Chapter Resource Library as we push the standards of practice for NIGP Chapters forward. The final goal is for these Best Practices to be documents that other chapters can read and replicate.

### AWARD CATEGORIES: (sample programs provided below for each category but not limited to)

- Chapter Operations: Board Transitions, Financial Planning, Strategic Planning, Auditing, Fundraising
- Chapter Membership: Scholarships, Member Recruitment and Retention, Mentorship, YP Programs
- Chapter Advocacy and Outreach: Reverse Trade Show, Career Days, Work with local schools or Univ.
- Chapter Professional Development: Conferences, Educational events for members or suppliers, certification study/review groups

### REQUIREMENTS:

- **NEW** – Can submit in all 4 categories, with 4 different programs, (can't not submit the same program in multiple categories)
- Chapters can be finalists in multiple categories but can only win one.
- Must have completed a Chapter Performance Standard SEAL Application.
- Must be in a Word or PDF document that is 4-5 pages in length (not including the cover page) and highlighting only 1-2 program/event/best practice.
- All pages can include text, photos, links, and embedded documents. Links should not replace detailed descriptive text but used as back-up or examples.
- All applications must be based on activities in **2024** and indicated on the submission.
- **DO NOT submit your Performance Standard Seal Application and Outstanding Award as one document. if you are applying for an Outstanding Award** in multiple categories, they must be in separate applications/documents.

**Winners will be announced and award during the Annual NIGP Forum**

**Application Due: May 2, 2024**

Submit application to: [Chapters@nigp.org](mailto:Chapters@nigp.org)

For Questions: Email or call Jennifer Steffan at [jsteffan@nigp.org](mailto:jsteffan@nigp.org) 703-429-2606



Please use this form as the cover page for each submission

## Outstanding Award Application

Chapter Name:	West Virginia Chapter of NIGP
Submitted By:	Kelly Vickers, Chapter President
Contact Information:	<a href="mailto:Kelly.k.vickers@wv.gov">Kelly.k.vickers@wv.gov</a> 304-888-5606
List Program(s) that will be highlighted in application	Chapter Operations – board transitions, financial and strategic planning, auditing, internal controls

Has your chapter submitted your Performance Standard SEAL? YES

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 early 2024, the West Virginia Chapter of NIGP found itself at a critical crossroads. The organization had suffered from years of instability, culminating in financial mismanagement that left the chapter bankrupt and disorganized. The board of directors was in complete disarray, with several seats left vacant due to a failure to follow established bylaws and no transition planning in place to guide new leadership. It was clear that a total rebuild was necessary—not only to restore credibility, but to create a sustainable foundation for the future.

When the newly installed board took office in 2024, we knew that we were not inheriting a functioning chapter—we were rebuilding one. From day one, we got to work. Our first priority was governance. We drafted and adopted a new set of bylaws that clearly defined board authority and organizational structure. To support these bylaws, we created detailed board and officer job descriptions, ensuring every member of leadership understood their role and responsibilities. This clarity was essential to establishing accountability and professionalism. Next, we addressed our finances. We implemented strict internal controls to safeguard chapter funds, introduced financial forecasting tools, and created our first working budget in years. To reinforce fiscal integrity, we developed policies and standardized procedures for reimbursements and financial transactions, supported by new, uniform documentation forms.

Transparency and communication became a cornerstone of our revitalization. We launched a new chapter website to serve as a public-facing hub for information, registrations, and fundraising. This platform not only promoted the chapter's activities but also housed our policies, financial reports, and governance documents—ensuring our commitment to openness and member trust.

By year's end, we had laid the groundwork for long-term success. We closed the year by developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the coming year, complete with a detailed, member-approved budget. This plan was shared openly with the chapter to ensure every member understood our goals and priorities—eliminating any room for uncertainty or confusion.

The transformation of the WV Chapter of NIGP has not been easy, but it has been driven by purpose, transparency, and a deep commitment to rebuilding a professional community our members can be proud of. What began as a rescue mission has become a model for resilience—and the foundation we've built in 2024 will serve our chapter for years to come.

2. **RESULTS (Worth 10 points)**

- a) How did the program change from what happened before in your Chapter with data from 2024?
- b) Was this program/event/best practice successful or not and why?
- c) What did members say? Share outcomes and results.

**a) How did the program change from what happened before in your Chapter with data from 2024?**

Prior to 2024, the West Virginia Chapter of NIGP was facing serious organizational challenges. The chapter had been financially mismanaged to the point of bankruptcy, board leadership was unstable and incomplete due to neglected bylaws, and there was no transition planning in place. There was little to no member engagement, no structure for operations, and no clear direction. In 2024, a new board was installed and immediately began rebuilding from the ground up. We implemented internal financial controls, created a working budget, launched a public-facing website for transparency and accountability, and adopted new bylaws and job descriptions. As a result, we became a financially stable chapter once again, capable of supporting professional development and growth. We also increased our membership by 40% in just one year and expanded the board by four new positions, all of which were quickly filled by eager volunteers.

**b) Was this program/event/best practice successful or not and why?**

Yes, the revitalization program was highly successful. The strategic changes we implemented brought both immediate structure and long-term sustainability to the chapter. By focusing on transparency, accountability, and member engagement, we created an environment where professionals felt welcomed, informed, and valued. Our success is evident not only in our financial recovery and membership growth, but also in the increased participation and enthusiasm from our members. We sent our largest delegation ever to the 2024 NIGP Forum, reinstated our chapter awards program, and submitted applications for national recognition. We've hosted elected officials and guest speakers, collaborated with statewide entities to promote public procurement, and begun building relationships with local colleges to recruit future professionals and develop innovative fundraising initiatives.

**c) What did members say? Share outcomes and results.**

Member feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have commented on how energized and cohesive the chapter feels, noting how much more active and engaged the board is in promoting education, networking, and professionalism. Members appreciate the transparency brought by the website and communications, and have expressed pride in seeing the chapter represented so strongly at national events. The revival of awards and professional recognition has sparked renewed enthusiasm, and members are especially excited about the partnerships with local colleges and new professional development opportunities. Participation is at an all-time high, and for the first time in many years, we have a full board—with new volunteers stepping up enthusiastically to lead and serve.

### 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?
- b) How did you come up with this idea?
- c) How is the program/event/best practice different from anything you or others have done?

#### **a) Explain what makes your program/event/best practice different than other Chapters or different than what your Chapter has done before?**

What makes our revitalization effort truly different is that it replaced *complete inaction* with strategic, intentional governance. Prior to 2024, our chapter had no history of structured planning, no financial forecasting, and very little outreach or engagement. There was no framework in place to support the chapter's mission or its members. Our best practice wasn't about tweaking or improving existing programs—it was about building from the ground up. We didn't just make improvements; we created a new foundation where none existed before. This transformation was not only a departure from our past—it set a new standard for what our chapter can and should be.

#### **b) How did you come up with this idea?**

The idea came from necessity and determination. We started by taking a hard look at everything that wasn't working—lack of financial controls, no planning, no member engagement, and no operational continuity. With a new board in place and support from a few committed members, we rolled up our sleeves and began rebuilding. We weren't following a script—we were responding to real challenges with practical solutions. We also leaned heavily on the support and guidance provided by NIGP national, whose resources and encouragement were instrumental in helping us shape a path forward.

#### **c) How is the program/event/best practice different from anything you or others have done?**

This effort was different because it wasn't a typical event or isolated program—it was a full-scale transformation. We didn't build on an existing framework or rebrand a working structure; we created new bylaws, financial policies, job descriptions, internal controls, and outreach strategies from scratch. We developed a website to manage everything from registrations to financial reporting. We implemented a strategic plan and shared it transparently with our members. This was not a simple refresh—it was a deliberate reinvention of our chapter's identity and operations, driven entirely by grassroots leadership and member dedication.

### 4. LESSONS (Worth 10 points)

- a) Indicate in detail what steps a Chapter or board must take to approve this idea.
- b) Who must be communicated with before/during/after?
- c) What worked with your program/event/best practice?
- d) What did not work, or would you change about the program/event/best practice?
- e) Will your Chapter continue to do the program/event/best practice the same way? Different? As Often?

**a) Indicate in detail what steps a Chapter or board must take to approve this idea.**

Our chapter follows a transparent, consensus-based process for decision-making. Every major initiative or policy begins with a discussion at a board meeting, where ideas are collaboratively reviewed and refined. Once a proposal is finalized, we determine whether the decision falls under board authority or requires a full chapter vote, based on our bylaws. In both cases, decisions are formally voted on, with clear documentation of approvals. Nothing is implemented in isolation—every step is reviewed collectively, ensuring that all actions are aligned with the chapter’s goals and values.

**b) Who must be communicated with before/during/after?**

Communication is critical at every stage. Before decisions are made, board members consult with relevant stakeholders, including committee chairs and subject matter experts within the chapter. During the process, we share proposals and updates with the full membership—often through meetings, our website, and email—inviting feedback and suggestions. After a decision is finalized, we communicate outcomes clearly to all members, ensuring transparency and accountability. For broader initiatives, we also coordinate with NIGP national to ensure alignment with best practices and available support.

**c) What worked with your program/event/best practice?**

Nearly everything we implemented worked exceptionally well. The focus on transparency, structure, and communication led to stronger member engagement and increased volunteerism. Clear financial policies, internal controls, and strategic planning created a stable foundation. The launch of our website improved accessibility and streamlined processes, while partnerships with external organizations and colleges opened doors to new opportunities. Member feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and engagement is at an all-time high.

**d) What did not work, or would you change about the program/event/best practice?**

While our approach has been very successful, we’ve learned that building from scratch requires ongoing flexibility. At times, we had to adjust our timelines or refine processes as new needs emerged. One lesson learned was to not overcomplicate procedures early on—sometimes simple solutions are the most effective during a rebuilding phase. In the future, we’ll continue to streamline wherever possible and remain adaptable to change.

**e) Will your Chapter continue to do the program/event/best practice the same way? Different? As Often?**

Yes, we will continue this approach, but with ongoing evaluation and refinement. As our chapter grows and evolves, we will reassess policies and practices regularly to ensure they continue to serve our members effectively. Some efforts, like strategic planning and financial forecasting, will be done annually, while others may be adapted based on feedback or emerging needs. Our commitment is to continuous improvement, not just maintaining the status quo.

