# 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:**

- Can submit in all 4 categories, with 4 different programs, (Cannot 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 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 **2025** and indicated on the submission.
- **DO NOT submit your Performance 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 awarded during the Annual NIGP Forum

# Application Due: May 29, 2026

Submit application to: Chapters@nigp.org

For Questions: Email or call Jennifer Steffan at jsteffan@nigp.org 703-429-2606

Please use this form as the cover page for each submission

# Outstanding Award Application

| | |
|---|---|
| Chapter Name: | Central Florida Chapter of NIGP |
| Submitted By: | Luis Aviles, Chapter President |
| Contact Information: | President@cfcnigp.org |
| List Program(s) that will be highlighted in application | Central Florida Chapter of NIGP Reorganization Task Force |

☒ 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 2025 in detail.**

In 2025, the Central Florida Chapter of NIGP implemented a comprehensive Reorganization Task Force initiative designed to modernize governance, strengthen leadership succession, and improve overall operational effectiveness. This initiative represents a proactive and strategic approach to addressing long-standing operational challenges while positioning the Chapter for sustainable growth and alignment with NIGP best practices.

The Task Force was formally established in January 2025 and included 21 members representing a diverse cross-section of the Chapter's membership, including local governments, school districts, utilities, and higher education institutions. The group was co-chaired by Lisa Kesecker and Zulay Millan and met consistently from January through April 2025 to evaluate and recommend a new operational framework.

The purpose of the Task Force was to address key challenges, including unclear role definitions, centralized leadership responsibilities, limited succession planning, and opportunities to improve member engagement. Rather than addressing these issues individually, the Chapter implemented a holistic and structured initiative to transform its governance model.

The program focused on four primary components:

(1) Board Restructuring

The Task Force developed a new Board structure modeled after NIGP National, transitioning from a centralized leadership model to a distributed leadership framework. This model ensures that each Board member has clearly defined responsibilities, improving accountability and operational efficiency.

New leadership roles were introduced to support key strategic priorities. A summary table at the end of this section reflects these updates.

- Member Council Chair - focused on member engagement and satisfaction
- Talent Council Chair - focused on recruitment and retention
- Fundraising Council Chair - focused on revenue generation and events

(2) Committee Realignment

Committees were reorganized to align directly with Board roles. Previously, all committees reported to the President, creating an imbalance in workload and limiting leadership development. Under the new structure, oversight is distributed across Board members, enhancing accountability and encouraging broader member participation.

(3) Policy Enhancements

The Task Force introduced updates to scholarship point allocation to incentivize participation while maintaining fairness and transparency. These changes promote active recruitment and equitable distribution of opportunities across the membership.

(4) Implementation Plan

The initiative included a clear and structured implementation roadmap, including bylaws updates scheduled for completion by September 30, 2025; recruitment aligned with the new structure; and full implementation beginning with the January 2026 Board installation.

The program was presented to membership during official meetings, including the May 23, 2025, Membership Meeting, where the Reorganization Task Force and Bylaws updates were formally introduced and discussed, ensuring transparency and member engagement throughout the process.

| Board of Directors | Focus | Oversight |
|---|---|---|
| President | Strategic Direction | Oversees daily operations, Board of Directors; develops/monitors budget; supervises Governance/Parliamentary, Community Services, Awards, Chapter Seal, and Audit Task Force. |
| Vice- President | Programming | Assists President, stands in as needed, coordinates meeting/workshop speakers, oversees Professional Development, Scholarship, Legislative, and Study Group/Certification Committees. |
| Treasurer | Finance | Manages finances (deposits, checks, ledger, statements to Chapter/National), coordinates IRS filings with CPA, oversees Web/Technology Committee. |
| Secretary | Operating | Records meeting minutes, uploads agendas/minutes/documentation/newsletters, oversees Newsletter, Catering, and Audio Visual Committees. |
| Presidential Advisor | Advisory | Past Chapter President (appointed by President), advisory to Chapter President, oversees Boot Camp Initiatives. |
| Member Council Chair **(NEW)** | Membership Representation | Focused on member satisfaction, provides representation to the membership, and oversees the Welcome Committee, Needs Analysis Task Force, Focus Groups, Marketing, and Mentoring. |
| Talent Council Chair **(NEW)** | Recruitment and Retention | Human Resources branch for volunteer recruitment, nominating, volunteer evaluation, position advertisements, and student initiatives. |
| Fundraising Council Chair **(NEW)** | Fundraising Event Management | Oversees the Reverse Trade Show, identifies new fundraising opportunities, and manages RTS committees, fundraising efforts, and community service. |

## 2. RESULTS (Worth 10 points)

### a) How did the program change from what happened before in your Chapter with data from 2025?

Prior to 2025, the Chapter operated under a structure where most committees reported directly to the President, resulting in limited distribution of responsibilities and fewer opportunities for leadership development. Succession planning was a combination of formal and informal approaches, and engagement in governance activities was limited to a smaller group of members.

Following the implementation of the Reorganization Task Force:

- Governance responsibilities are now distributed across multiple Board members, improving accountability and efficiency
- New leadership roles directly address critical areas such as member engagement, recruitment, and fundraising
- The Chapter structure is aligned with NIGP National standards, enhancing consistency and professionalism

Additionally, the formation of a 21-member Task Force reflects a significant increase in member participation and engagement in Chapter operations.

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

Yes, the program was highly successful. It resulted in a clear and sustainable governance framework that supports long-term growth and leadership continuity. The initiative was structured, inclusive, and strategic, ensuring that recommendations were well-developed and supported by the membership.

The success of the program is demonstrated by:

- Strong participation from a diverse group of members
- Development of clear, actionable recommendations
- Adoption of a governance model aligned with national best practices
- A defined implementation plan that ensures continuity and accountability

Engagement metrics include:

- 6.4% of Full Members participated in the Task Force
- A 37.5% increase in Board size, expanding from five (5) to eight (8) members through the addition of three (3) new positions

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

Members responded positively to the initiative, particularly appreciating the increased transparency and inclusiveness of the process. Feedback indicated that members valued the opportunity to contribute ideas and participate in shaping the future of the Chapter.

Outcomes included:

- Increased engagement in governance discussions
- Greater awareness of leadership opportunities
- Improved clarity regarding roles, responsibilities, and pathways for involvement

The level of participation in the Task Force and discussions during membership meetings reflects strong member support and confidence in the initiative.

**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?**

This initiative is unique because it represents a comprehensive, member-driven transformation rather than a simple operational adjustment. It combines governance restructuring, member engagement, and strategic alignment into a single coordinated effort.

Unlike traditional approaches, this program:

- Engaged a large and diverse group of 21 members in the decision-making process
- Utilized a structured and standardized proposal process for evaluating options
- Benchmarked against NIGP National governance models

A key differentiator was the use of a structured evaluation model based on public procurement practices. Task Force members were required to submit reorganization proposals using a standardized template, similar to a formal solicitation process. This allowed for side-by-side comparison using consistent evaluation criteria, ensuring fairness, transparency, and objectivity.

This approach leveraged the core competencies of public procurement professionals: evaluation, analysis, and competitive review. Rather than relying on informal discussion alone, the Task Force applied a disciplined methodology and scoring method similar to an RFP evaluation process, strengthening both the credibility and quality of the final recommendations.

Through a series of collaborative meetings, proposals were reviewed, discussed, and refined. This structured process ensured that all ideas were evaluated on their merits and that the final recommendations reflected a thoughtful, data-informed decision-making approach.

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

The idea for the Reorganization Task Force emerged through a combination of leadership reflection, member feedback, and the professional lens that public procurement practitioners naturally bring to problem-solving.

Over time, Chapter leadership recognized recurring operational challenges, including uneven workload distribution among Board members, limited clarity in roles and responsibilities, and the need for stronger succession planning. These issues were not unique or isolated; they surfaced through informal conversations, leadership transitions, and observations of how engagement opportunities could be expanded for members.

At the same time, as public procurement professionals, Chapter leaders are trained to approach complex challenges using structured, analytical methods. Rather than addressing individual issues in isolation, the Chapter recognized an opportunity to take a more strategic and comprehensive approach, similar to how a large-scale procurement or organizational assessment would be conducted.

The idea evolved into forming a Task Force that would function much like an evaluation committee. Drawing from core procurement principles, the Chapter intentionally designed a process that would:

- Gather diverse stakeholder input
- Encourage multiple solution proposals
- Evaluate options using consistent, objective criteria
- Select the best overall solution based on collective analysis

Additionally, the Chapter looked outward to benchmark against NIGP National's governance structure, recognizing that alignment with an established, high-performing model would strengthen both credibility and effectiveness. This benchmark, combined with internal feedback, helped shape the direction and scope of the initiative.

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

This program stands apart due to its forward-thinking and structured approach, including:

- Implementation of a distributed leadership model at the Chapter level
- Creation of new council-based leadership roles focused on strategic priorities
- Integration of governance, recruitment, and engagement into a single initiative
- A transparent evaluation process that allowed for comparison of multiple proposals

This initiative establishes a scalable and replicable model that other Chapters can adopt to improve their operations.

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

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

Implementing a reorganization of this scale requires intentional planning and strong leadership alignment. For the Central Florida Chapter, the process began with honest internal reflection. Chapter leadership first identified operational gaps through member feedback related to workload distribution, succession planning, and engagement.

Once the need for change was clearly defined, the Board formally approved the creation of a Reorganization Task Force. This step was critical, as it established both legitimacy and accountability for the initiative. Rather than limiting participation to current leadership, the Chapter intentionally recruited a diverse group of members to serve on the Task Force. This ensured that the recommendations reflected the broader membership, not just the Board's perspective.

The Task Force was given clear goals, defined timelines, and structured processes, which helped maintain momentum and focus. Members were asked to submit ideas using a standardized format, allowing for consistent evaluation and meaningful comparison of proposals. Through a series of collaborative meetings, the group analyzed options, discussed trade-offs, and ultimately developed a set of recommendations that balanced innovation with practicality.

Final recommendations were presented first to the Board and then to the general membership for transparency and buy-in. The approval process included not only discussion but also a clear implementation plan, including required bylaw updates and a defined transition timeline. This structured, step-by-step approach ensured that the initiative moved from concept to execution in a thoughtful and sustainable way

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

During the process, consistent communication with Task Force members was critical to maintain alignment and momentum. Equally important was keeping the general membership informed. The Chapter ensured transparency by providing updates during membership meetings and creating opportunities for members to understand and engage with the proposed changes.

In addition, collaboration with key functional groups such as the Governance/Bylaws Committee and the Nominating Committee was necessary to ensure that recommendations could be implemented effectively. Past Presidents also played an important role, offering historical context and helping to ensure that changes respected the Chapter's legacy while moving it forward.

After the recommendations were finalized, communication shifted toward implementation—ensuring that all members understood what changes were being made, why they were important, and how they would impact the Chapter moving forward.

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

One of the most impactful elements of this initiative was the intentional inclusion of a large and diverse Task Force. By bringing together 21 members from different agencies, experience levels, and perspectives, the Chapter was able to develop recommendations that were both comprehensive and representative of the membership as a whole.

Another key success factor was the structured nature of the process. Establishing clear goals, timelines, and expectations helped keep the group focused and productive. The use of standardized proposal formats allowed for fair and consistent evaluation, while open discussion fostered collaboration and innovation.

Alignment with NIGP National standards also contributed to the program's success. By benchmarking against an established and respected governance model, the Chapter ensured that its recommendations were grounded in best practices while still tailored to local needs.

Finally, transparency throughout the process built trust and engagement. Members appreciated being informed and included, which increased buy-in and support for the final recommendations.

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

While successful, the large size of the Task Force created scheduling and coordination challenges. Managing input required additional facilitation to maintain efficiency while ensuring that all voices were heard.

These lessons have provided valuable insight into how to balance inclusivity with efficiency in future initiatives.

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

The governance structure developed through this process was implemented beginning in 2026 and will be continuously evaluated to ensure it remains effective and responsive to member needs. The Chapter is committed to ongoing improvement and views this initiative not as a one-time effort, but as the beginning of a more strategic and sustainable approach to operations.

The Central Florida Chapter fully intends to continue using this model as a foundation for future strategic initiatives, with some refinements based on lessons learned. The core elements: broad member engagement, structured evaluation, and alignment with best practices, will remain central to the Chapter's approach.