



# Program Guide

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## **Program Overview**

The RISE Awards are MPI's annual recognition program for its members as well as its chapters and clubs. MPI launched the **R**ecognize **I**ndustry **S**uccess and **E**xcellence (RISE) Award Program in 2009.

The program has 4 award categories for chapters or clubs and 3 award categories for members.

Award recipients are selected based on the criteria of influence, transferability, and innovation.

## **Process**

In the fall, RISE Award nominations and applications open. Nominations are required for all RISE Award candidates. To nominate a member, chapter, or club, visit the RISE Awards website on the MPI homepage to place a nomination. Within a week from the nomination date, the nominee will be contacted with the application link. The nominee will need to complete their own application in order to be considered for a RISE Award. For members, the application will include questions about the applicant's overall professional trajectory, with a special emphasis on the preceding year. For chapters or clubs, the application will include questions about the specific initiatives and achievements relevant to the award category.

Candidates who complete their application for a RISE Award within the posted deadlines are vetted for eligibility, with every eligible candidate assessed numerically by the RISE Awards Committee. Top ranking applicants receive an interview with committee members, and all information provided is then considered by the committee. The committee's award selection

slate is subject to ratification by MPI's International Board of Directors and celebrated at the following WEC event.

### 2026 Awards Timeline

| Date                      | Opportunity                                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 10, 2025        | RISE Award Nominations & Applications Open                  |
| November 1, 2025          | Nominations Close                                           |
| December 10, 2025         | Applications Close                                          |
| December 2025 – Feb. 2026 | RISE Awards Committee reviews eligible applicants           |
| February 2026             | Applicants notified of status; Finalists receive interviews |
| March 2026                | 2026 Recipients are selected & ratified                     |
| April 2026                | Award Notifications to all Finalists                        |
| May 5, 2026               | Finalists announced at MPI's GMID Broadcast                 |
| June 1-4, 2026            | RISE Award recipients announced at WEC26 San Antonio        |

### Award Categories

There are seven award categories.

Four categories pertain to MPI Chapters and Clubs: Marketplace Excellence, Membership Achievement, Social Impact, and Innovative Educational Programming.

Three categories pertain to MPI members: Young Professional Achievement, Member of the Year, and Meeting Industry Leadership.

## **COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CATEGORIES**

### ***Innovative Educational Programming***

This award recognizes an MPI Chapter or Club for achievement in advancing the education and professional development of its members through innovative programming.

#### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Program(s) must have been completed with evaluation data available at time of application.

#### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

##### **Influence**

- The programs meet members' professional development needs and interests.
- The programs measurably encourage participation and commitment by local members.
- Creates value for members and stakeholders.

##### **Transferability**

- Impact of contributions and achievements has a global reach.
- Strategic tools used may be accessed and used by others within MPI and/or the meeting and event industry.
- Upholds values and principles useful to people across the industry.

##### **Transferability**

- Creates and implements inventive and original educational programs for MPI members.
- Uses technology to increase the impact of educational programming.

## ***Social Impact***

This award honors an MPI Chapter or Club for exceptional efforts in advancing social responsibility within the meeting and event industry. It recognizes a product or service initiative such as:

- promoting inclusivity,
- diversifying leadership,
- implementing EDI training,
- sustainability,
- amplifying marginalized voices,
- raising awareness of human rights issues, such as human trafficking.

Nominees should demonstrate a strong commitment to embedding social responsibility into their everyday operations.

### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Program(s) must have been completed with evaluation data available at time of application.
- Provide data-driven insights as to accomplishments and increased awareness of initiative or program.

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

#### **Influence**

- The impact of the nominated chapter's or club's efforts should extend beyond their immediate community.
- Their initiatives should influence the broader meeting and event industry, setting new standards and inspiring others to prioritize social responsibility.
- The candidate should demonstrate efforts completed or implemented in leading and/or mentoring the industry.

#### **Innovation**

- This award seeks chapters or clubs that have introduced unique and effective approaches or solutions that have substantial social impact within their operations, be it through training programs, events, or collaborations.
- Programs should expand, improve, or enhance initiatives on social responsibility topics or relevant causes.

#### **Transferability**

- The initiatives undertaken by the nominated chapters or clubs should serve as a blueprint for other entities within the MPI community. Their strategies and programs should be replicable, allowing other chapters to adopt and adapt them to their specific contexts.
- A commitment to embedding social responsibility into daily operations, as reflected in their mission, vision, or core values.

## ***Membership Achievement***

This award recognizes an MPI Chapter, Club, or Student Club for achievement in membership growth, engagement, and retention. Chapters and clubs must demonstrate the impact of their campaigns, programming, overall membership numbers, and involvement in chapter/club activities and/or improvement in retention.

### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Nominated program(s) must have been completed with evaluation data available at time of application.

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

#### **Influence**

- Uses campaigns and programs to boost growth, involvement, and/or retention of membership.
- Membership confirms satisfaction through local participation in chapter events and volunteerism, positive responses on surveys, and retention.

#### **Innovation**

- Creates and implements new and inventive programs that encourage advancement of the chapter, club, or student club.
- Uses technology and other cutting-edge tools to increase the impact of membership campaigns.

#### **Transferability**

- Contributions and achievements have a global reach.
- Programs can be implemented by other MPI Chapters, Clubs, or Student Clubs and/or the meeting and event industry.

## ***Marketplace Excellence***

This award recognizes an MPI Chapter, Club, or Student Club for developing an exceptional program (event, website or other business exchange) for members. Chapters will have launched an innovative program that offers valuable opportunities for members to market their services.

### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Nominated program(s) must have been completed with evaluation data available at time of application.

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

#### **Influence**

- Creates a new program, or significantly enhances an existing program, that provides business-to-business marketing opportunities for its members.
- Program has achieved market recognition and makes a measurable impact on the community through business opportunities; and feedback data which demonstrate that the program has driven collaboration and communication between MPI members and others within the meeting and event industry.

#### **Innovation**

- Program is original and unique. Although many MPI Chapters develop reliable programs, this award recognizes innovation.
- Innovation can be demonstrated either through the successful delivery of a novel program concept, or a novel and significant adaptation to an existing program format.

#### **Transferability**

- Program can be transferred to other MPI Chapters for implementation, using planning practices such as marketing, green practices, cost-saving measures, or removing geographic boundaries.

## **INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CATEGORIES**

### ***Meeting Industry Leadership***

This award honors those rare individuals who by visionary hard work and creative insight have positively changed the global meeting and event industry. It recognizes sustained commitment and substantial contributions to the meeting and event community.

#### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Must be an MPI member in good standing.
- MPI Global volunteers who currently serve on the MPI International Board of Directors, the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees, or the RISE Awards Committee are not eligible.

#### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

##### **Influence**

- Creates or implements projects and initiatives that enhance MPI and the meeting and event industry.
- Actively promotes MPI and/or the industry.
- Displays passion and commitment to industry-related issues by championing and supporting those issues with targeted projects, communications, and strategic initiatives which produce measurable impact.
- Demonstrates commitment to MPI and the industry through leadership roles or other civic involvement within MPI or external industry organizations.

##### **Innovation**

- Creates or implements original projects and ideas that enhance MPI and the industry.
- Displays creative problem-solving and thinking.

##### **Transferability**

- Contributions and achievements have a global reach.
- Upholds values and principles useful to people across the industry.
- Contributions have relevance to the broader community and can be applied by others within the MPI and the meeting and event industry.

## ***Member of the Year***

This award is given to an exceptional MPI member who through volunteer efforts has made outstanding grassroots contributions and demonstrated unparalleled commitment to the advancement of a chapter, club, community, or region.

### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Must be an MPI member for five (5) or more continuous years based on membership anniversary date and is active in their local MPI Chapter or Club and/or in a community leadership role.
- MPI Global volunteers who currently serve on the MPI International Board of Directors, the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees, or the RISE Awards Committee are not eligible.

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

#### **Influence**

- Collaborates with community leaders resulting in the advancement of MPI and/or the industry.
- Supports the Mission and Vision of MPI through individual grassroots efforts.
- Demonstrates commitment to MPI and the industry through leadership roles or other civic involvement within MPI and/or external industry organizations.

#### **Innovation**

- Creates and implements initiatives that spark change and growth within the community.
- Creates a legacy through original programs that support the Mission and Vision of MPI.
- Inspires peers with enthusiasm, originality, or creative thinking.

#### **Transferability**

- Contributions and achievements have a global reach.
- Encourages participation and helps to develop new leaders in MPI or the industry at large.
- Upholds values and principles useful to people across the industry.

## ***Young Professional Achievement***

This award recognizes an individual 35 years of age or younger with a minimum of 1 year's professional experience in the meeting and event industry who has made outstanding contributions to MPI and/or the meeting and event industry.

### **AWARD ELIGIBILITY:**

- Thirty-five (35) of years of age or younger at some point in the year of submitting the award application.
- 1 year minimum of professional experience in the meeting and event industry at the time of applying.
- Must be an MPI member in good standing.
- MPI Global volunteers who currently serve on the MPI International Board of Directors, the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees, or the RISE Awards Committee are not eligible.

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

#### **Influence**

- Makes a measurable impact on the industry through the development and implementation of projects and initiatives.
- Cultivates new leaders and collaborates with current leaders.
- Sparks interest in the industry and brings awareness of it to a broader audience.
- Demonstrates commitment to MPI and the industry through leadership roles or civic engagement within MPI or other industry organizations.

#### **Innovation**

- Creates and implements original projects or concepts that have helped to further enhance MPI and/or the industry.
- Inspires colleagues and peers with enthusiasm and creative thinking.

#### **Transferability**

- Contributions and achievements have a global reach.
- Upholds values and principles useful to people across the industry.
- Contributions have relevance to the broader community and can be applied by others within MPI and the meeting and event industry.



## **Common Questions**

### ***If I want to apply for a RISE Award, what do I have to do?***

Eligibility for awards vary by award category; please review each award in detail to determine your eligibility. Then, visit the MPI RISE Awards website to access the nomination form and complete a nomination for yourself. You will be emailed the application link. Place your application within the appropriate deadlines to be considered.

### ***Are nominations required this year?***

In the 2025-2026 awards cycle, nominations are required prior to completing an application.

### ***How do I submit a nomination or an application?***

Visit the MPI RISE Awards website to find links to the nomination form.

### ***Do I have to be a member of MPI to place a nomination or application?***

Nominations may be submitted by anyone, regardless of affiliation with MPI. Applicants must be members of MPI to be eligible for an award.

### ***May I submit more than one nomination or application?***

Yes.

### ***Can an individual who won an award in the past be eligible for a RISE nomination?***

Yes.

### ***Can chapters submit an application based on a program we implemented a few years ago?***

Chapter applications should highlight the standout achievements of the past year. While it's acceptable to mention how programs have built upon previous initiatives, the focus should remain on the most recent year since the last RISE Awards application period.

### ***Can I mail MPI Global any hard copies of application materials?***

No. All materials should be shared in the online application.

### ***Do I need to be nominated for an award before I can apply for an award?***

Yes. You may nominate yourself as well.

### ***How will I know my application was submitted?***

You will receive an application confirmation through the RISE application system. Please be sure to check your clutter, junk, or spam folders and add the mailer to your safe sender or approved email address list.

### ***I have submitted a complete RISE Awards application. What are the next steps?***

Applicants will be notified in the spring regarding their status in the program.

**Additional Questions: Email [riseawards@mpi.org](mailto:riseawards@mpi.org)**