Southern Integrated Pest Management Center
Call for Nominations

Friends of IPM Awards 2027
Professional Awards

Submission Deadline:
6:00 PM Eastern Time on Friday, October 16, 2026

The Southern IPM Center (SIPMC) is pleased to release this call for nominations for the 2027 Friends of IPM Awards.

The mission of the SIPMC is to expand the region's capacity to develop, coordinate, communicate, and implement effective IPM programs. Since 2003, SIPMC has worked with USDA, Land Grant universities, Extension, and many other partners in promoting and facilitating the development and implementation of IPM across the South. SIPMC also engages broadly with stakeholders to identify and address regional pest priorities.

Since 2008, the Southern IPM Center has honored individuals and teams who demonstrate outstanding leadership, innovation, or promise in advancing integrated pest management across the Southern region. The Friends of IPM awards program recognizes those who make exceptional contributions to IPM research, extension, education, or implementation. Awardees are celebrated for their dedication, impact, and commitment to strengthening IPM in the Southern region.

This specific RFA is for professionals. For outstanding Master's and Ph.D. students, we have a separate award: the Friends of IPM Graduate Student Awards. We also have a travel grant award for those bringing IPM Awareness to new audiences: the IPM Ambassador Travel Grant. These RFAs can be found on the Friends of IPM Awards page within the Grant Management System.

Friends of IPM Awards 2027
Professional Awards

The Prize:

The program provides recognition to award winners; each winner will receive a plaque to be presented at an appropriate venue before an audience of their peers.

Eligibility:

- Any person or group whose work is primarily in the Southern region is eligible for an award. The Southern region is defined by USDA-NIFA and includes 13 states and two territories as follows: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, the U. S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia.
- Nominees should be based in the Southern region. The work upon which the nomination is based must demonstrate significant benefits to the Southern region.
- Anyone may submit a nomination for any person or group. Self-nominations are acceptable.
- The work for which the nomination is made must be IPM-related.

Award Categories:

There are seven categories in the Friends of IPM Professional Awards:

- Bright Idea
- IPM Implementer
- IPM Educator
- IPM Communicator
- Pulling Together
- Future Leader
- IPM Hall of Fame

We will present only one award per category for Bright Idea, IPM Implementer, IPM Educator, IPM Communicator, Pulling Together, and Future Leader. For the IPM Hall of Fame award, SIPMC will present awards to all nominees who meet the award criteria as determined by the review panel.

Friends of IPM Award Categories, Nomination Information, and Evaluation Criteria:
Nominees will be evaluated based on the answers to the required questions in the nomination form in the Grants Management System (see below). **There is no need to submit a separate nomination letter.**

Nominations must be submitted in the Grants Management System and require completing the following sections:

1. **General information:**
    1. What is the name, title, affiliation and contact information (email, phone, mailing address) for the *nominee*?
    2. What is the name, title, affiliation, and contact information (email, phone) for the *nominator*?
    3. What state is the nominee from/affiliated with?
    4. What is the nominee's field or area of specialization? (Please list any specific crops or settings, pests, or diseases that the nominee works with).

2. **Nomination Questions:**
   Please refer to the specific questions underneath each award category (see below). There may be additional guidance for each question within the Grants Management System. Please note that **there is no need to submit a nomination letter**, but you may upload additional supporting documentation under the 'Additional Information' question.

3. **Nominee's CV:**
   This is only required for the Future Leader and IPM Hall of Fame award categories. Please do not include this for nominations in other categories.

Award category information: Bright Idea

Bright Idea: This is an award for an invention, innovation, or 'start-up' in IPM. The bright idea can consist of groups, inventions, tools, or even data that has or will significantly improve IPM research, education, communication, or implementation in the field.

Examples of a bright idea include:

- A new tool that helps IPM users manage pests, diseases, or weeds more effectively and reduces the need for pesticides.
- A new method of implementing an IPM tactic such as scouting, monitoring, or identification.
- A tool that facilitates communication or otherwise makes researching, teaching, or implementing IPM easier or more efficient.
- A research innovation that improves IPM strategies in the field.

Nominees for this category can be groups or individuals.

Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. How is the 'bright idea' innovative? (25%)
    - Briefly describe the research, invention, tool, or group being nominated and why it is innovative.
2. How does the bright idea have potential or realized potential for significantly improving IPM research, education, communication, or implementation? (25%)
    - What potential does this bright idea have for improving IPM research, education, communication, or implementation? Has this potential been realized yet? If not, what steps have been taken towards turning this potential into demonstrable impacts?
3. How does the bright idea lead to IPM implementation? (25%)
    - Please describe how the 'bright idea' directly or indirectly promotes, fosters, or enables IPM implementation in the field, among IPM professionals and students, and/or among the general public.
4. How does the bright idea have potential or realized potential for significant impact on IPM in terms of the National IPM Roadmap? (25%)
    - Please describe how these impacts align with the National IPM Roadmap.

*Nomination for this category **does not** require a CV; please do not include one.

Award category information: IPM Implementer

IPM Implementer: This is an award for the "on the ground" implementation of IPM. Nominees in this category can be growers, managers, school IPM coordinators, Extension agents, and consultants, among others. Nominees in this category must show that they **practice** IPM in the field, either in a public or private setting such as a school, forest, garden, recreation area, office or building. Nominees do not need to have extensive research backgrounds; this is a practitioner award, so the nomination should focus on the **practice** of IPM rather than the research or even teaching of it.

Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. How is the nominee an "on the ground" implementer of IPM? (25%)
    - Briefly describe the nominee's role as an IPM implementer and the setting in which the nominee implements IPM practices.
2. How does the nominee effectively use IPM practices in either a public or private setting to manage or control pests? (25%)
    - What IPM techniques does the nominee use to manage or control pests? How have these techniques been effective?
3. Does the nominee effectively use or integrate multiple IPM practices to prevent resistance to a single tactic? (25%)
    - If so, please provide example(s) of how the nominee uses/integrates multiple IPM practices to prevent resistance.
4. How does the nominee have potential or realized potential for significant impact on IPM in terms of the National IPM Roadmap? (25%)
    - Describe how the nominee's impacts are aligned with National IPM Roadmap goals.

*Nomination for this category **does not** require a CV; please do not include one.

Award category information: IPM Educator

IPM Educator: This is an award for teaching IPM. Nominees in this category can be anyone who teaches IPM, including but not limited to university faculty, Extension specialists, Extension agents, school IPM coordinators, public or private school teachers, Master gardeners, members of community organizations, etc. Nominees can be involved in research, but the nomination should focus on the person's **teaching** activities rather than their research projects. Nominations should focus on how the individual uses teaching to inspire others to practice IPM.

Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. How does the nominee teach IPM techniques (to students, growers, or other stakeholders) that lead to the future implementation of IPM practices? (25%)
    - Briefly describe the nominee's teaching efforts. Who is their audience (e.g., growers in a certain county, students at their university, etc.) and what IPM techniques/courses/seminars do they teach? Provide any specific examples of how their teaching efforts have led to greater IPM implementation.
2. Has the nominee developed, led, or taught successful education programs that inspire students to pass the information on to others (e.g., "train the trainer" programs)? (25%)
    - Provide details on these programs and any specific examples of how the information they teach has been passed along.
3. Has the nominee authored educational articles or marketing materials about IPM? (25%)
    - If so, please summarize their relevant publication history and highlight significant publication achievements.
4. How does the nominee have potential or realized potential for significant impact on IPM in terms of the National IPM Roadmap? (25%)
    - Please describe how these impacts align with the National IPM Roadmap.

*Nomination for this category **does not** require a CV; please do not include one.

Award category information: IPM Communicator

IPM Communicator: This is an award for any professional that effectively communicates about IPM in either a formal or informal setting. Nominees in this category can be anyone who actively engages in communication about IPM (e.g., practitioners, pesticide safety educators, Extension specialists or agents, school IPM coordinators, public or private school teachers, communication specialists, etc.). Communication can be multimodal, including in-person and online seminars/workshops, social media, publications, videos, trade shows, podcasts, articles/newsletters, field days, and general outreach, among others. Nominations should demonstrate increased awareness about the importance and effectiveness of IPM within the nominee's audience.

<u>Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:</u>

1. Who is the nominee's primary audience and how have they been impacted by the nominee's communication efforts? (20%)
    - Please provide specific examples.
2. How has the nominee created awareness and understanding of IPM programs through the creative use of communication? (20%)
    - Please provide specific examples. Have they created or implemented new communication methods or channels to do this?
3. Has the nominee spotlighted successful IPM programs and practices in the Southern region? (20%)
    - Please provide specific examples that attest to this.
4. Has the nominee authored any IPM publications or created other resources (apps, blogs, podcasts, etc.) that communicate IPM-related topics? (20%)
    - Please summarize any relevant details on these publications or resources.
5. How have the nominee's communication efforts fostered a multi-directional flow of pest management information by expanding existing or developing new collaborative relationships? (20%)
    - Please provide specific examples of how the nominee's communication efforts have strengthened relationships or networks.

*Nomination for this category **does not** require a CV; please do not include one.

Award category information: Pulling Together

Pulling Together: This is an award for success by a group in any aspect of developing, promoting, teaching about, or implementing IPM. **Only groups are eligible for this category.** Nominations should be based on the management of a high-priority pest (such as an invasive or pesticide-resistant pest), and should demonstrate how the team has made a positive impact where that pest is found. Preferably, groups should be multidisciplinary or multi-state in their composition.

Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. Is the group composed of individuals from multiple disciplines and/or multiple states? (10%)
    - Please provide the disciplines and states that are represented within the group.
2. How does the team work together to develop, promote, educate about, or implement IPM for the management of a high-priority pest? (30%)
    - Please provide evidence on the quality and strength of the group and their teamwork.
3. What are the impacts of the team (either realized or potential) on stakeholders or in the area being affected by the pest? (30%)
4. How has the group influenced stakeholder implementation of IPM in the state or Southern region as a whole? (30%)
    - Please provide specific information about the group's impacts or expected future impacts to stakeholder implementation of IPM.

*Nomination for this category **does not** require a CV; please do not include one.

Award category information: Future Leader

Future Leader: This award recognizes extraordinary potential and promise in IPM leadership for professionals in the early stages of their career. Nominees should be in the early stages (i.e., first 7 years) of their career, although age is not a factor for this award. Nominees can include faculty, researchers, educators, extension specialists or agents, industry professionals, consultants, or administrators. Nominations should show that the individual has already had impacts on IPM in their state or the Southern region and has already taken leadership roles within the field of IPM.

Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. Is the nominee in the early stages of their career in an IPM-related field or discipline? (Non-scoring)
    - Briefly describe the nominee's career role(s), the approximate length of time they have been in these roles, and how these roles relate to IPM.
2. How does the nominee demonstrate strong potential for providing leadership in some aspect of IPM (e.g., research, extension, teaching)? (40%)
    - Provide specific examples of the nominee's leadership efforts/potential.
3. Has the nominee authored peer-reviewed IPM research publications, IPM extension publications, or other IPM resources (apps, blogs, etc.)? (20%)
    - Please summarize the evidence from their CV and highlight specific career achievements.
4. Has the nominee contributed to IPM education through teaching (courses, seminars, workshops, etc.) or training (grower workshops and seminars, training or mentoring students, etc.)? (20%)
    - Provide specific evidence of the nominee's impacts through teaching, mentoring, or training.
5. Has the nominee contributed to the dissemination and communication of IPM information through the delivery of presentations (including conference presentations, workshops, seminars, etc.)? (20%)
    - Please summarize presentation/workshop information from their CV and highlight any specific career achievements.
6. Why does this nominee deserve to be recognized?
    - Please highlight the specific achievements or traits of the nominee that have led to your nomination of this individual. This question isn't scored, but helps reviewers get a holistic view of the nominee and their career-spanning impacts.
7. Additional information (Optional). Supporting materials may be submitted as a single, combined PDF. These might include letters of support or illustrative examples of the nominee's work.
    - While this is optional, the strongest nominations for the Future Leader category will include at least one additional letter of support that demonstrates their impact or leadership in IPM.

    *Please include a CV in the nomination packet.

Award category information: IPM Hall of Fame

IPM Hall of Fame: This award recognizes individuals who have contributed to any important aspect of IPM in the Southern region over the lifetime of their career. Nominees can include faculty, researchers, educators, extension specialists or agents, consultants, industry professionals, or administrators. Nominations should highlight the history of achievements of the individual, including ways that the person's activities or involvement have impacted IPM. Nominations will be evaluated based on the nominator's ability to show how the nominee has improved IPM over the lifetime of the nominee's career.

All nominees who demonstrate a significant contribution to IPM in the Southern region as determined by the review panel will be eligible to receive this award and will be inducted into the Southern IPM Hall of Fame.

Please note that this is a lifetime achievement award; nominees should be in the end stage of their career. Retirees are also eligible to be nominated for this award.

<u>Nominees will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:</u>

1. Is the nominee an IPM faculty member, researcher, educator, extension specialist or agent, consultant, industry professional, or administrator who is in the later stages of their career, or who has retired? (non-scoring)
    - Briefly describe the nominee's career role(s), the approximate length of time they have/had been in these roles, and how these roles are related to IPM. This question does not factor into the review scoring, but checks their eligibility for the award.
2. How has the nominee positively impacted IPM over the lifetime of their career? (40%)
    - Describe the impact the nominee has had on IPM and their history of career achievements.
3. Has the nominee contributed to IPM through the authorship of IPM research publications (including papers, manuals, books, etc.) or Extension publications (including articles, newsletters, manuals, etc.)? (20%)
    - Please summarize the evidence from their CV and highlight specific career achievements.
4. Has the nominee contributed to IPM education through teaching (courses, seminars, workshops, etc.) or training (grower workshops and seminars, training or mentoring students, etc.)? (20%)
    - Please summarize the evidence from their CV and highlight specific career achievements.
5. Has the nominee contributed to the dissemination and communication of IPM information through the delivery of presentations (including conference presentations, workshops, seminars, etc.)? (20%)
    - Please summarize the evidence from their CV and highlight specific career achievements.
6. Why does this nominee deserve to be recognized? (non-scoring)

- Briefly synthesize and highlight the specific achievements or traits of the nominee that have led to your nomination of this individual. This question isn't scored, but helps reviewers get a holistic view of the nominee and their career-spanning impacts.

7. Additional information (Optional). Supporting materials may be submitted as a single, combined PDF. These might include letters of support or illustrative examples of the nominee's work.
    - While this is optional, the strongest nominations for the IPM Hall of Fame category will include at least one additional letter of support.

*Please include a CV in the nomination packet.

Evaluation Criteria:

Nominees are not required to fit every single criterion in a given category in order to qualify. Evaluation criteria will be used to score and compare submitted nominations during the panel selection. Nominations will only be compared to others within the same category.

Submission of Nominations:

All proposals must be submitted in electronic format through the online Grants Management System by **6:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, October 16, 2026.**

To submit a nomination, see the following instructions:

1. Visit the Friends of IPM Awards page within the Grants Management System (GMS). There you will find links to each awards category as well as the Professional and Student RFA.
2. Click on the appropriate award category to begin a nomination submission.
3. Follow the prompt to login or create an account.
4. Confirm that the nomination form title lists the correct award category and click "Begin a new proposal".
5. Click "Edit title". **Use the name of the nominee as the project title**. Click "Save".
6. Complete each nomination section, located at the bottom left side of your screen. Note that there are 2-3 required sections of the nomination: General Information, Nomination Questions, and CV Upload (if applicable).
7. To answer a question within a section, choose "edit answer" and enter the information. As you finish each question, please click save before moving on.
8. Once you have successfully finished a section, a check mark will appear.

   Note: You may leave the nomination form at any time and return to it later by logging into GMS.
9. After completing all the required questions in all sections in the online GMS, you will then have the option to submit your application. (If there is an asterisk next to a section, there is a required question that is missing information.)
10. Click "Submit Application" by the deadline for your nominee to be considered for a Friends of IPM Award.
11. Once you submit your nomination, an email acknowledgement of receipt will be sent.

    Note: If you do not receive an email submission receipt, then an error may have occurred. Please reach out to the Program Manager to check the status of your submission.

Video tutorials are also available on how to create an account, edit your account information, and create and submit your proposal.

Selection Process:

- Nominations will be reviewed and recommendations for awards will be made by a selection committee. The SIPMC Steering Committee will approve the final list of awards.

Award Presentations:

- SIPMC staff will notify the winners and nominators once the winners are selected.
- Awards will be presented at a venue mutually agreed upon by the award winner and SIPMC staff, preferably in front of the winner's peers. SIPMC typically attends major regional conferences (i.e., Entomological Society of America's Southeastern and Southwestern Branch meetings, Southern Division of the American Phytopathological Society annual meeting, and the Southern Weed Science Society annual meeting). Award winners may be asked to assist with obtaining approval for inclusion in certain venues and/or setting up local arrangements.
- SIPMC staff will contact the awardees to write an article about their IPM work and will be given an option to be a guest on the *This is IPM* podcast.

Contact Information:
If you have any questions, please contact:

Dr. Lauren Quevillon, Friends of IPM Program Manager
Email: lequevil@ncsu.edu

Kayla Watson, Communication Director
Email: knpack@ncsu.edu

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