

WEPAN Awards Nominations

Annual WEPAN Awards Honor Those Advancing Women in Engineering

WEPAN Awards honor accomplishments that underscore WEPAN's mission of advancing cultures of inclusion and diversity in engineering higher education and workplaces. A robust slate of awards recognizes key individuals, programs, and organizations who have enhanced the engineering profession.

About WEPAN Awards

The nomination deadline for the 2026 WEPAN awards is **December 1, 2025**.

To submit a nomination, complete the [WEPAN Awards nomination form](#). Self-nominations are encouraged!

The nomination form will ask for the following information:

- Award category*
- Nominee and Nominator
 - Name*
 - Institution or Organization*
 - Position Title*
 - Address
 - Email*
 - Phone Number*
- Nomination Rationale* - A brief (500 word max) statement describing the nominee's major qualifications and how they align with the award criteria.
- Supplemental documents such as letters of recommendation and other nomination materials dependent on the requirements for the specific award.

* = required fields

Learn more about each award requirements and selection criteria below. [View a list of past recipients.](#)

[Submit a Nomination](#)



Advocates and Allies Award



The Advocates and Allies Award honors a man or group of men for mentoring, supporting, sponsoring, and advocating for the success of women in engineering, or for climate and culture change that supports such success.

Selection criteria:

- Nominee must have an established record of active efforts at their academic institution, through professional organizations or other regional- or national-level initiatives, related to mentoring, supporting, sponsoring, and advocating for the success of women, or climate and culture change that supports such success.
- Nomination must include evidence of successful practices, programs, initiatives, etc., that facilitate the success of women in engineering or climate and culture change that supports such success.
- Nominees with a record of efforts that can serve as models for other individuals, groups or programs are of particular interest.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

Betty Vetter Award for Research



The Betty Vetter Award for Research recognizes notable achievement in research related to women in engineering. The award is named in memory of Betty M. Vetter, long time director of the Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology, who served as the first treasurer of WEPAN, Inc. and was a founding member of the Board of Directors. No more than one award will be given annually. Individuals are only eligible to receive this award once. This award includes the opportunity to serve on an experts' panel at the next WEPAN national conference.

Selection Criteria:

- Research has made a significant contribution to an understanding of issues related to women in engineering
- Research results have been published or presented at a professional conference (preference will be given to more recent research)
- Research has practical application value to WEPAN (preference will be given to research focused on women in engineering)
- Research has had an impact on policy and/or programs.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
 - In the nomination rationale statement, nominee should describe the research nominated and its significance to women in engineering as well as its impact on policy and/or programs.
- Include a **list of publications, presentations, and/or other means of dissemination** for this research (can include applied uses).
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** for the nomination.
 - Letters should address 1) the quality and 2) significance of the research, and 3) how the research has been utilized. Each letter does not necessarily need to address all three of these criteria, however together the letters should provide support for all three of these criteria.

NOTE: This award is decided by majority vote of members of the Research Committee. Therefore, active Research Committee members are not eligible to receive this award.

Bevlee A. Watford Inclusive Excellence Award



The Bevlee A. Watford Inclusive Excellence Award honors individuals or groups who actively and creatively support the success of women of color in engineering at the undergraduate, graduate, faculty, and/or administrative levels. The award is named in honor of past WEPAN President Dr. Bevlee A. Watford of Virginia Tech, who has served as a strong advocate for women of color in engineering, held a variety of engineering leadership roles in academia, as well as professional and governmental organizations, and been an effective mentor to numerous women in engineering.

Selection criteria:

- Nominee must have an established record of active efforts at their institution, through professional organizations or other regional- or national-level initiatives, which support the success of women of color at the undergraduate, graduate, faculty and/or administrative levels.
- Nomination must include evidence of successful practices, programs, initiatives, etc., that facilitate the full participation, and advancement of women of color in engineering.
- Nominees with a record of creative efforts that can serve as models for other individuals, groups or programs are of particular interest.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

NOTE: This award is decided by majority vote of the Board and therefore active board members are not eligible to receive this award.

Breakthrough Award



The Breakthrough Award honors a corporation for demonstrating best practices in their collaborative efforts with university or community partners to enhance engineering education for girls and/or women. The name of the award signifies the ability of an employer to support girls and women in "breaking through" the artificial barriers that may prevent girls and/or women from pursuing or flourishing in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Companies will be recognized for their excellence and innovation in one or both of the following areas:

- Collegiate and/or graduate level programs that support the recruitment, retention, and/or development of women studying engineering
- K-12 outreach programs that inspire girls' interest and pursuit of science, technology, engineering, and math

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee must serve as a model corporate partner for other companies interested in building community or university partnerships focused on the outreach, recruitment, retention, and/or development of girls and women in engineering.
- Nominee must provide an opportunity offering guidance and development to students (elementary, middle school, high school, or university students) and/or faculty seeking engineering and science as a career or profession.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from university and/or community partners, colleagues, and/or students.

Distinguished Service Award ×

The Distinguished Service Award recognizes WEPAN members whose individual service has made a significant impact on the organization. Nominations are made by WEPAN members. Committee chairs are encouraged to submit nominations. Individuals may only receive this award once. Previous Founders' Award recipients are ineligible.

Selection Criteria:

- WEPAN membership
- Significant individual service for WEPAN

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)

NOTE: This award is decided by majority vote of the Board and therefore active board members are not eligible to receive this award.

Educator's Award ×

The Educator's Award honors an engineering educator or a non-profit organization, council or consortium to STEM education for girls and/or women at the primary, secondary, university, or community level. Awardees will be recognized for their excellence and innovation in one or both of the following areas:

- Collegiate level programs that support the recruitment, retention, and/or development of women studying engineering
- K-12 outreach programs that inspire girls' interest and pursuit of science, technology, engineering, and math

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee must have a proven record of successfully increasing the awareness of opportunities in STEM to girls and women through programming at the primary, secondary, university, or community levels.
- Quantitative and/or qualitative data demonstrating impact of programming on target population.
- Nominee must serve as a model initiative for other education programs in areas such as outreach, recruitment, and retention of girls and women in engineering.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include 2 **letters of recommendation** from university and/or community partners, colleagues, and/or students.

Founders Award



The Founders Award honors a WEPAN member who exemplifies the spirit of the WEPAN founders through their individual service that has made a significant impact for the organization. As this award is reserved for individuals who have advanced the goals of the organization, it may not be awarded every year. Individuals may only receive this award once. The award is named for the three founders of WEPAN, Inc. - Suzanne G. Brainard, Jane Zimmer Daniels and Susan Staffin Metz.

Selection criteria:

- WEPAN membership
- Individual efforts significantly advanced the goals of WEPAN

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

NOTE: This award is decided by majority vote of the Board and therefore active board members are not eligible to receive this award.

Inclusive Culture and Equity Award



The Inclusive Culture and Equity Award honors an individual or group who has developed and implemented successful inclusive practices, policies, or initiatives that promote positive change with regard to the climate or culture for women in engineering fields at their institution. This award includes the opportunity to speak on an experts' panel at the next WEPAN conference.

Selection criteria:

- Nominee must be a catalyst for change at their institution with efforts demonstrating enhanced representation and success of women faculty and students within engineering
- Nominee must currently have or recently (within the last two years) have had a formal leadership role within his/her institution serving as an advocate for creating positive change within the institution's climate/culture for women in engineering.
- Nominee's institution must provide evidence of written policies or established practices that facilitate the full participation and career advancement of women faculty within engineering. These policies and practices should demonstrate the inclusion and success for women from diverse backgrounds, especially women belonging to minoritized groups (e.g., Black, Latina, or Native American) in engineering, who as a result are employed at many levels in the institution.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Nomination must provide quantitative or qualitative indicators of how the nominee's activities have contributed to a positive climate for women of all races and ethnicities in engineering at their institution. The specific indicators should be determined by the nominator.
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** that illustrate the breadth and/or significance of the nominee's impact on the career success of a diversity of women in engineering, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

Industry Trailblazer Award



The Industry Trailblazer Award recognizes and honors an employer or an individual or group of employees in industry who enhance the career success of women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) professionals, especially women identifying with minoritized groups (e.g., Black, Latina, or Native American). The award may recognize the employer or employee in industry for their exceptional volunteer contributions to the STEM education at the primary, secondary or collegiate levels, especially in reaching girls from minoritized groups in STEM fields. The name of the award signifies the ability of an employer or employee to "blaze a pathway" through the artificial barriers that prevent women in STEM professions of diverse backgrounds from attaining their full potential.

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee must provide evidence that they are a catalyst for change that enhances the success of women in STEM industry professionals representing diverse backgrounds, or have significantly contributed to the STEM education and inspiration of girls from diverse backgrounds.
- Nominee must provide evidence that women in STEM professionals representing diverse backgrounds, especially women belonging to minoritized groups in the STEM fields, are employed at many levels in the organization, or that industry-sponsored, education outreach programs or individual employee education initiatives reach many diverse girls in primary, secondary or collegiate levels.
- Nominee must provide evidence of written policies or established practices which facilitate the full participation and career advancement of women engineers representing diverse backgrounds, especially women belonging to minoritized groups in the STEM fields.
- For education initiatives, nominee must provide evidence of documented company support for the individual and education programs, including a statement about the length of time the program has been conducted.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

NOTE: This award is decided by majority vote of the Board and therefore active board members are not eligible to receive this award.

Leader in Engineering Education Award



The Leader in Engineering Education Award honors faculty, groups or individuals who have created new methods or approaches to enhance engineering education. The award encompasses pedagogical methods, creating course frameworks, and/or effective teaming practices to engage and create an inclusive environment for engineering undergraduate students. This award can be given to an individual or individuals.

Selection criteria:

- Nominee must have an established record of engineering educational efforts at their institution or national-level engagement in initiatives, which support the success of undergraduate students.
- Nomination must include evidence of successful practices, programs, initiatives, etc., that facilitate the full participation, and advancement of women and minoritized groups in engineering.
- Nominees with a record of creative efforts that can serve as models for other individuals, groups or programs are of particular interest.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN member.

Strategic Partner Award



The Strategic Partner Award recognizes a professional organization that has partnered to promote WEPAN's mission and work during the previous three years.

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee must have demonstrated proactive commitment to WEPAN's purpose, values and mission.
- Nominee organization must have a demonstrated track record of collaboration and partnership with WEPAN in promoting WEPAN's mission and work.
- This award will not necessarily be given every year.

Nomination Packet:*

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, including at least one from a WEPAN Board member or former Board member.

University Change Agent Award



The University Change Agent Award honors an individual who has had a positive impact within their academic institution with regard to the climate for women in science, technology, engineering, and math fields, with an emphasis on engineering.

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee must be a catalyst for change at their institution with their efforts demonstrating enhanced success of women faculty and students within the STEM fields that represent diverse backgrounds.
- Nominee currently has or recently (within the last five years) has had a formal leadership role within his/her institution serving as an advocate for creating positive change within the institution's climate/culture for women in the STEM fields.
- Nominee's institution must have evidence of written policies or established practices that facilitate the full participation and career advancement of women faculty within the STEM fields who represent diverse backgrounds, especially women belonging to groups severely underrepresented (e.g., Black, Latina, or Native American) in the STEM fields, are employed at many levels in the institution.
- Nominee's institution must have evidence of written policies or established practices that facilitate the recruitment, retention and graduation of women students within the STEM fields, especially women belonging to groups severely underrepresented (e.g., Black, Latina, or Native American) in the STEM fields.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **quantitative or qualitative indicators** of how the nominee's activities have contributed to a positive climate for women of all ethnicities in STEM fields at their institution. The specific indicators should be determined by the person submitting the nomination. **IMPORTANT:** Any supporting data provided should be linked to the nominee's contributions described in the Nomination Form. Examples of quantitative or qualitative indicators include (but are not limited to) statistical data on women of all ethnicities in STEM fields at different levels in the university, climate studies, and/or evidence of established policies and practices that support the participation and advancement of women in STEM fields.
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** that illustrate the breadth and/or significance of the nominee's impact on the career success of a diversity of women faculty in the STEM fields.

Women in Engineering Champion Award



The Women in Engineering Champion Award recognizes an individual employee in industry for their volunteer contributions to STEM education at the primary, secondary, or collegiate levels. Individuals will be recognized for their excellence and innovation in one or both of the following areas:

- Collegiate level programs that support the recruitment, retention, and/or development of women studying engineering
- K-12 outreach programs that inspire girls' interest and pursuit of science, technology, engineering, and math

Selection Criteria:

- Serves as model volunteer for other individuals in industry interested in making meaningful contributions to efforts focused on the outreach, recruitment, retention, and/or development of girls and women in engineering.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from university and/or community partners, colleagues, and/or students.

Women in Engineering Initiative Award



The Women in Engineering Initiative Award recognizes an outstanding project (examples include outreach activities, professional development seminars, conferences, etc.) or initiative (examples include mentoring initiatives for students or faculty, strategic contributions to faculty recruitment and retention plans, etc.) that may serve as a model for other institutions. To be considered, projects or initiatives should be in existence for at least 2 years. The nomination must include assessment data, which may include quantitative and qualitative data. No more than one award will be given annually. Institutions are limited to one award in a three-year period. This award includes the opportunity to speak on an experts' panel at the next WEPAN national conference.

Selection Criteria:

- Serves as a model initiative for other WIE programs in areas such as outreach, recruitment, and retention of girls and women in engineering
- Provides an opportunity offering guidance and development to students (elementary, middle school, high school, or university students) and/or faculty seeking engineering and science as a career or profession

Nomination Packet:*

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from colleagues, women engineers, industry and/or foundation representatives and **2 recommendation letters** from current or prospective women engineering students (or the parents, teachers, or counselors of primary or secondary students served by the initiative) or recent alumnae.
- Include **evaluation and assessment data and/or reports**, such as statistical information on the populations served by the initiative, summative pre/post data, etc.
- Include **copies of marketing and communications materials**, such as program/initiative announcements, brochures, agendas, or other promotional materials describing/marketing this initiative.

Women in Engineering Program Award ✕

The Women in Engineering Program Award recognizes an outstanding Women In Engineering (WIE) program that serves as a model for other institutions (examples include a Women in Engineering Office, Diversity Programs in Engineering Office, or ADVANCE Centers). To be considered, the program should be established (i.e., in existence for five or more years) and have assessment data included in the nomination. Assessment data should include pre/post data or long-term tracking to indicate how the program has made an impact. No more than one award will be given annually. Institutions are limited to one award in a three-year period.

Selection Criteria:

- Serves as a model for other WIE programs and actively shares experiences and materials with other programs.
- Serves as a model for WIE programming for formal pre-college or retention activities/projects. Demonstrates improvements in the educational environment for women in engineering.
- Provides programming that offers professional guidance to students and/or faculty who seek engineering and science as a career or profession.

Nomination Packet:

- [Nomination Form](#)
- Include **evaluation and assessment data and/or reports**, such as statistical information on the populations served by the program, summative pre/post data, longitudinal data, etc.
- Include **2 letters of recommendation** from sponsors, partners or administration and 2 recommendation letters from the target audience (for example, women engineering students and/or recent alumnae).
- Please **do not include** copies of program announcements, newsletters, etc. or information on activities not directly developed and/or implemented by the nominated WIE Program.

WEPAN AND DiscoverE GIRL DAY AWARD (NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK AWARD) ✕

The WEPAN and DiscoverE Girl Day Award (National Engineers Week Award) recognizes organizations and individuals who empower girls with information about opportunities in engineering.

Selection Criteria: This award is selected by DiscoverE.

WEPAN President's Award ✕

The WEPAN President's Award recognizes exemplary accomplishments by individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to WEPAN's goals and objectives.

Criteria: This award is selected by the WEPAN President's Team.