



2026 Cycle 2 Call for Proposals

Member Driven Initiative Program

Official Document of the 2026 Cycle 2 Member Driven Initiative program call for proposals
Version 30 March, 2026

1. Introduction

IEEE Signal Processing Society offers funding to SPS members and chapters to encourage volunteerism and society involvement in local activities. Typically, there are two Member Driven Initiative calls for proposals, reviewed on a semi-annual basis.

- **Cycle 1** initiatives are events held during **April-September**.
- **Cycle 2** Initiatives are events held during **October-March**.

Announcement and reminder emails are sent to the SPS membership for all currently open calls for proposal. Calls for Proposals are also available on the [Call for Proposals page](#) on the SPS website. All approved initiatives are advertised on the [Upcoming Events](#) page of the SPS website.

The Society offers funding and technical support opportunities via sub-programs under the Member Driven Initiatives Program. The type of initiative options are outlined below:

- **Seasonal Schools in Signal Processing (S3P) Program**
Seasonal schools are geared towards providing attendees with specialized background in select signal processing topics, professors and established practitioners work with attendees in virtual tutorials and applications, and building meaningful collaborative relationships. For more details, visit the [Seasonal Schools page](#).
- **Forum Program**
Aimed at networking events with topics of interest to industry members. Formats include panel sessions and presentations or lectures by industry experts. Content should be created based on interest to industry and cannot include papers for publication.
- **Regional Meeting Program**
Local high quality technical events (such as local workshops or small conferences) to serve the local or regional community. Events should target themes of interest to SPS members. Meetings can include conference paper publications.
- **Chapter Initiative Program**
Submitted by the local Chapter, these interactive events are designed to provide attendees with specialized background in select signal processing topics, chapter-centered events for practicing engineers, chapter meetings featuring industry executives, outreach to get students at primary schools interested in signal processing, design competitions, or other ideas.

Beginning in the SPS 2026 Cycle 2, the audience of the attendees will be confirmed based on the following categories: **Professional Engagement, Young Professional Engagement, Undergraduate/Graduate Student Engagement, K-12 SPS Project, Women in Signal Processing**. Proposals and projects focusing on engaging young professionals, practicing engineers from industry, and students are preferred.

2. Financial or Technical-Only Sponsorship

The Society offers two options for sponsorship of the initiative event: Technical Co-Sponsorship only or financial sponsorship.

- **Technical co-sponsorship** is defined as the initiative only receiving technical support and can use the IEEE SPS logo. There will be no financial support provided to technically co-sponsored initiative events.
- **Financial sponsorship** is defined as the initiative receiving sponsorship funding of the event. Upon approval of the proposal, the Society will award financial support up to US\$2,500 or US\$3,500 for fully virtual or fully in-person/hybrid events, respectively. SPS members and Chapters can request up to US \$2,500 for fully virtual events or up to \$3,500 for physical and hybrid events to help offset the cost of the initiative workshops and events. Approval of proposals is on an application basis, during the current call for proposal cycle. Proposals submitted outside of the current cycle deadlines will not be considered. Following a comprehensive review, approval decisions are made at the discretion of the Society and based on allotted funding. Upon approval of the proposal, the Society will support the initiative up to US\$2,500 or US\$3,500 for fully virtual and fully in-person/hybrid events, respectively. The amount requested may not be the amount awarded; the Society reserves the right to offer less funding than requested. The proposer will be notified via the primary contact email address provided in the proposal. *See full payment information in the [MDI Event Organizer Guidelines](#).*

3. Event Formats

- **Fully virtual** events are defined as events that do not have an in-person component. Fully virtual events are hosted and participated in virtually. These events should not have expenses for travel, food, space rental, or other in-person items as they are not allowed.
- **Fully in-person** events are defined as events that are held in a physical location accessible to the attendees in-person. Fully in-person events do not have any virtual component.
 - Event organizers are encouraged to provide hybrid accommodations for individuals who cannot attend physical events. Travel must adhere to the IEEE Travel Guidelines and to appropriate guidance from cognizant local public health authorities.
- **Hybrid** events are defined as events that have both a physical, in-person component as well as a virtual option so that attendees can participate in the event physically or remotely.

4. Budget

A detailed budget breakdown that shows expenses and revenues, including estimated revenue from registrations and other sponsorship contributions, as well as any SPS contribution requested, is required for all proposals. Budgets should also be prepared and provided for initiatives that are only Technical Sponsorship.

If the proposal budget includes any allotment of payments for travel support or honoraria, the Member Driven Initiative Detailed Honoraria Form must be filled out completely and submitted with your proposal. The Detailed Honoraria Form is located on the second tab of the Member Driven Initiative Detailed Budget Form. Careful attention to the budget and honoraria rules is important to avoid a reduction in sponsorship funding due to line items not allowed. *For full details regarding all budget and honoraria rules, refer to the [MDI Event Organizer Guidelines](#).*

The required Member Driven Initiative Detailed Budget and Detailed Honoraria Forms can be downloaded using the following link: [Download Excel version of the Detailed Budget and Honoraria Forms here](#). If you have trouble downloading the template, please contact sps-mdi@listserv.ieee.org.

4.1 Co-Sponsorship (Seasonal School proposals ONLY)

If the proposal is approved and the Seasonal School is within Asia or Europe, Seasonal Schools have the opportunity for **APSIPA OR EURASIP** to financially co-sponsor the school with SPS. If **APSIPA OR EURASIP** decides to be a financial co-sponsor, **APSIPA OR EURASIP** will equally co-sponsor the school for \$5,000. If you obtain financial co-sponsorship after the proposal has been approved by SPS, you must report this to SPS and provide an updated budget. If you are interested in the opportunity and want to learn more, email sps-mdi@listserv.ieee.org so you can be put in contact with the correct person. *If you plan to seek co-sponsorship from APSIPA or EURASIP at the time of proposal submission, this must be considered in the budget. You can submit two budgets, one with and one without the co-sponsorship funding and how it will be used.*

5. Eligibility

The following eligibility requirements must be met for the proposal to be considered.

- **Each SPS Chapter and SPS Student Branch Chapter can only submit a total of 4 proposals per year**, with up to 2 proposals per sub-program. The Chapters should be vetting all proposals to determine which proposals will be submitted to either the Cycle 1 or Cycle 2 call for proposal period.
- Student Branch Chapters (SBC) must submit a completed [SBC and Chapter Collaboration Acknowledgement form](#) that includes a signature from the local Chapter (non-SBC) endorsing the proposal. *If this form is not submitted for proposals submitted by SBCs, the proposal will not be considered.*
- All proposals must have a completed Member Driven Initiative Detailed Budget Form.
- All proposals containing any honoraria or travel support must have a completed Member Driven Initiative Detailed Honoraria Form.
- Organizers must agree to Reporting Requirements for approved proposals. *See Section 10*
 - Monthly updates must be submitted via the link in an email sent to the organizer.
 - Reports Final report must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the event following the instructions given in Section.

6. How to submit your proposal

Proposals that meet all eligibility requirements can be submitted using the following steps.

Proposal Submission Process

1. **Create your proposal.** Draft your proposal using the questions in the *MDI Proposal Information Document* listed below in Section 12 and in the [SPS MDI Proposal Submission Resources Dropbox folder](#)
2. **Submit your proposal draft to RDAL.** (*First Submission Phase*) Submit your drafted proposal to your local Regional-Director-at-Large via the following form: [MDI Proposal Submission to RDAL Form](#)
3. **Receive feedback.** Receive feedback from your Regional-Director-at-Large about your drafted proposal and obtain a recommendation to submit your proposal to the second phase. You will be provided with the appropriate link to submit our official proposal to the official submission system.

4. **Submit your proposal.** (*Second Submission Phase*) After receiving the positive recommendation from the RDALs to submit your official proposal (with any revisions suggested) to the official '2024 Cycle 2 MDI submission system,' you will need to complete the full proposal and submit before the deadline. *Exceptions and extensions will not be made for late submissions.*
5. **Notification of Decision.** Decisions for approved proposals and respective funding amounts will be sent to the organizers of proposals.

7. Important Dates

- **29 May 2026 - (First Submission Phase) Proposal Submission to RDAL Deadline:** Proposal submissions due to Regional-Director-at-Large: [Submit proposal to RDAL here](#)
- **10 July 2026 - (Second Submission Phase)** *Only if proposal is recommended to move forward by RDAL during the first proposal submission phase.*
- **28 August 2026** – Final Decisions Announced
- **Final Reporting** –
 - Provide periodic updates on the progress of your event leading up to the event.
 - Completed final report due 30 days after completion of event. *See Final Report in Section 10*

8. Funding, Payment, & Sponsorship Agreement Processes

- Payments for **Chapter Initiatives, Forums, and Regional Meetings** will be processed **after** the event and only when a detailed invoice and accompanying receipts are submitted. *Funding is not provided in advance.*
- Payments for **Seasonal Schools** are made in advance of the event.
- Funding cannot be paid to an individual or individual's account.
- Funding is subject to any current OFAC restrictions.
- All approved proposals will be required to provide the name and banking information of the local IEEE SPS Chapter/Section or entity receiving the funding. Please note, the name on the Chapter/Section Tax Form and the Bank Account name receiving the Wire Transfer must be the same.
 - Any payment being made to a non-IEEE account for a third-party entity (such as a university) requires a sponsorship agreement and payment cannot be made until the sponsorship agreement is fully executed. If your proposal is approved and funding will be going to a non-IEEE account, additional information and instructions on this process will be provided to you via email. You will need to provide the name and email address of the person with signing authority on behalf of the entity. This person must have signing authority and will be responsible for completing the Supplier Add process and signing the sponsorship agreement on behalf the entity.

9. Recording

As a reminder, presentations are highly recommended to be recorded and uploaded to the [SPS Resource Center](#) and additional information can be found in Section 4.3 of the Membership Event Organizer Guidelines document. For your convenience, you can find the following documents linked: [Resource Center Event Content Capture Guidelines](#), IEEE Copyright and Consent Form ([events with published papers](#)) or ([without published papers](#)). Please contact sp.ed.sigview@ieee.org if you need any assistance or have questions regarding the Resource Center, how to record, and upload the talks.

10. Reporting Requirements

10.1 Monthly Updates

Monthly update requests will be sent to organizers via email in which the organizers need to provide updates on the planning leading up to the event. The timeline provided in the proposal should reflect key points to measure and track the progress of the initiative event being planned.

10.2 Final Report

Within 30 days following the successful completion of your event, you will need to submit an official final report using the [Final Report Form](#) in order to begin the payment process. The survey and more information on this can be found in Member Driven Initiatives Organizer Guidelines document. Please note, submitting a final report via email will not be accepted. You will receive an email update request that you can save to fill out later, or you can submit your report using the [Final Report Form](#). The final report **must** include the [MDI Detailed Budget](#), including the [Detailed Honoraria Form](#) (if any honoraria was given), detailing all the expenses along with an invoice and receipts.

- Final Report must include a completed, final version of the Detailed Budget, with actual numbers. (Estimations are not allowed) All information mentioned in Section 4 of this document apply.
- As part of the Final Report, any recordings must be submitted following the instructions detailed in [Section 4.3 of the Member Driven Initiative Organizer Guidelines](#).
- The Final Report will not be considered complete until the event's registrant list is appropriately submitted. Full details on how to submit this information is located in [Section 5 of the Member Driven Initiative Organizer Guidelines](#).

11. Contacts and Resources

- ❖ Questions about the SPS Member Driven Initiative program or Seasonal Schools? Visit the [Organize Local Events & Member Driven Initiatives page](#) for more information.
- ❖ Issues accessing any linked documents or forms, or any other inquiries regarding the Member Driven Initiative program can be emailed to sps-mdi@listserv.ieee.org.
- ❖ Interested in the current call for proposal? Check back on the or the [Call for Proposals](#) page.
- ❖ Upcoming initiative events and conferences can be found on the [Upcoming Events page](#).
- ❖ All forms and templates related to MDI proposals can be downloaded from the [SPS MDI Proposal Submission Resources folder in Dropbox](#)
 - Download the [SPS Proposal Draft Information](#) document
 - Download the [Proposal Submission Checklist](#) document
 - Download the [Detailed Budget Form](#)
 - Download the [Detailed Honoraria Form](#) (if applicable)
 - Download the [Banking Information Form](#)
 - [Student Branch Chapters] Download the [SBC and Chapter Collaboration Acknowledgement](#)

- ❖ Your initiative proposal can be submitted to the Regional-Directors-at-Large [via Smartsheet here](#).
- ❖ Your Final Report for an approved proposal can be submitted [here](#) (Please note, you should have received an email with an 'update request' that you can enter your final report into as well.)

12. Information to Draft a Proposal

Use the following information to build your proposal draft and submit to the Regional Activities Committee via the [MDI Proposal Submission to RDAL Form](#) by the deadline given on the Call for Proposals. **Failure to submit your proposal to the Regional-Director-at-Large via the [Submission Form](#) will result in your proposal not being considered!**

Helpful links:

[Download the SPS Member Driven Initiative Proposal Information document here.](#)
[SUBMIT your drafted proposal to the RDALs here.](#)

Information that should be provided on your proposal (All initiative types)

- 1) Where will this event take place? *Please include the City, State, Territory, etc. and Country*
- 2) Has this event been held before?
Example: if your event would be the second (or later) edition of the event or an event that is held annually. Please note, prior editions do not have to be sponsored by SPS.
- 3) What is the event's website?
If you do not have the website yet, please update as soon as it is available so that we can advertise it.
- 4) List the key organizers of this event and their qualifications.
- 5) Technical Description
- 6) Please provide an outline of the topics to be covered.
- 7) Please describe how the SPS Chapter and/or Regional-Director-at-Large are involved, if applicable:
Type N/A if not applicable.
- 8) List other committed or anticipated sources of funding, if any.
Amount of funding must be in USD equivalent.
- 9) Describe if other organizations are involved through funding or implementation.
If none, please input: N/A
- 10) Lecturers/Speakers
*List all of the lecturers/speakers that have been confirmed.
 Indicate those that are IEEE Members and include their member grade.*

- 11) How will this event develop SPS Membership?
- 12) Who is the targeted audience for this event?
Example: students/academics vs. professionals/industry, which level of students (pre-university, university, PhD students).
- 13) What special activities or initiatives will enhance the impact of the event?
- 14) Have you organized a similar event before that was financially sponsored by the SPS Member Driven Initiative program?
If an organizing team with the same or similar topic was financially supported by the SPS Member Driven Initiative program before, please provide the membership achievement of their previous school event.
- 15) What are the proposed registration fees for your event?
A significantly higher rate is suggested for non-SPS members and non-students.
- 16) What recorded resources will be shared with IEEE SPS?
(Primarily for the IEEE SPS Resource Center or SigPort online document archive.)
- 17) Describe your plan to record lectures and sessions, including budget considerations, vendors, and recording process.
All recordings will be made available in the SPS Resource Center.
- 18) Provide a detailed timeline (with dates) for the execution and implementation of this event. *Include measurable tracking points to be consistent with reporting requirements.*
- 19) What type of support is being requested from SPS?
 - a) Technical Co-Sponsorship Only – no financial support will be provided, but Seasonal School can use the IEEE SPS logo.
 - b) Financial Sponsorship - Upon approval, up to US\$3,500 for physical/hybrid or \$2,500 for virtual events may be awarded.
- 20) What amount of financial support is being requested? (Amount in USD only) Up to US\$3,500 for physical events or \$2,500 for virtual events can be provided by IEEE SPS. *The amount you request may not be the amount that is awarded.* For events requesting technical support only, please answer N/A.
- 21) Explain how the funds will support the initiative or seasonal school, if awarded.

12.2 Additional questions based on the type of initiative:

These questions are specific to the type of initiative your proposal is for. Please complete all questions that are under your respective initiative's type. *You do not need to complete the other initiative type's questions.*

CHAPTER INITIATIVE:

- 1) Confirm that this proposal is being submitted by the active Chapter Chair
- 2) Please elaborate on the Chapter's activity with this initiative. This type of proposal requires active involvement from the SPS Chapter.
- 3) If proposal is being submitted by a Student Branch Chapter, describe how the local SPS Chapter will be involved. ([SPS Student Branch Chapter and SPS Chapter Collaboration Acknowledgement Form required](#))
- 4) List details performance metrics that will be used to assess this initiative. Examples could be increased membership, student retention, establishment of student branches, etc.
- 5) Explain how the funds will support the initiative or seasonal school, if awarded.

FORUM:

- 1) How will this forum obtain industry sponsorship and who are the potential sponsors? Indicate confirmed sponsors.
- 2) How will industry participate in this forum?
- 3) What industry panels do you plan to organize?
- 4) Which industry speakers are confirmed? Please provide name and IEEE Membership grade, if applicable.
- 5) Describe the communications plan and how you plan to engage media.
- 6) Confirm that this Forum will not accept or intend to publish any papers into IEEE Xplore.

REGIONAL MEETING:

- 1) List all meeting sponsors, who are responsible for risk, and will obtain surplus. For-profit organizations cannot be sponsors. IEEE SPS must be at least a 25% financial sponsor, but can be up to 100%.
- 2) Describe the process for technical program review.
- 3) How will high technical quality be insured?
- 4) Do you plan on creating a proceedings of peer reviewed papers for this event?

SEASONAL SCHOOL:

- 1) What is the cost to students for living arrangements? *This question is applicable only for hybrid/in-person events. Living arrangements should not be provided for fully virtual events.
- 2) Are free dorm accommodations available for students? Please explain. *This question is applicable only for hybrid/in-person events. Dorm accommodations should not be provided for fully virtual events.
- 3) Will students be accommodated under low/free housing? Please explain. This question is applicable only for hybrid/in-person events. Accommodations should not be provided for fully virtual events.
- 4) Will lunches be provided? If yes, please indicate type of lunch, i.e. box lunch. *This question is applicable only for hybrid/in-person events. Food should not be provided for fully virtual events.
- 5) Will a travel grant program be offered? If yes, please explain. *This question is applicable only for hybrid/in-person events. Travel grants should not be provided for fully virtual events.