

IPS Impact Awards 2026 Criteria

Award categories

Team of the Year
IPC practitioner of the Year
Volunteer of the year
Rising star (early career)
Innovation and Technology in IPC
Exceptional contribution to Research or Quality Improvement

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants are permitted to apply for or be nominated in one individual award category only; however, this does not preclude their inclusion as part of a separate team nomination.

Projects previously presented to IPS are not eligible for resubmission, regardless of whether they received an award.

Award Criteria

Team of the Year

The IPS Team of the Year award celebrates a group of professionals who have worked together to deliver exceptional infection prevention and control (IPC) outcomes. This award recognises a team that has worked together to make a real, demonstrable difference to infection prevention and patient safety.

A winning team demonstrates:

1. Collaboration at its core

- Evidence of working across disciplines, services, systems or organisations
- Evidence of strengthening collaboration to improve patient safety
- Demonstrating shared learning and supporting colleagues, patients and the public

2. Measurable impact on reducing infection risk

- Evidence of improved outcomes (e.g. reduced HCAs, improved compliance, improved patient and/or public safety, better patient and/ or staff experience)
- Demonstrate use of data, audit or quality improvement to drive change

3. Innovation and improvement

- Evidence of introducing new ways of working/or using evidence-based practice creatively
- Evidence of adapting to challenges with resilience and flexibility

4. Inspiring others

- Evidence of supporting the IPC or wider workforce
- Sharing best practice locally, regionally or nationally
- Demonstrate how the Team have contributed to a culture of safety and learning

Nominations will be judged against the following IPS values, alongside the specified criteria:

- Supports and empowers the workforce to deliver safe, high-quality care
- Improves evidence-based IPC practice, surveillance, and outcomes
- Engages diverse communities and promotes equitable access and inclusion
- Creates impact through leadership, education, collaboration, and policy influence

IPC practitioner of the year

IPC practitioner of the year award honours an individual who has made a measurable impact on the specialty of Infection prevention and control. It celebrates an individual who has advanced the speciality through their outstanding dedication, leadership and passion for infection prevention that makes a meaningful difference every day.

The recipient represents the values and purpose of the IPS, inspiring others through their commitment to quality, innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement

A successful nominee demonstrates:

1. Measurable impact

- Evidence of leadership or contribution to initiatives that result in measurable improvements in infection rates, outbreak prevention, hand hygiene compliance, antimicrobial stewardship, or other IPC measures
- Evidence of Use of data, audit or quality improvement to influence and drive positive change
- Demonstrates that they Place patients and service users safety at the centre of their practice

2. Leadership and Inspiring others

- Demonstrates leading by example and encourages colleagues to embrace infection prevention as everyone's responsibility.
- Evidence that the person builds positive and collaborative relationships across multidisciplinary teams to support continuous improvement.
- Evidence that the person acts as a role model, mentor, and advocate for best practice in IPC

3. Innovation and Improvement

- Evidence of introducing or supporting practical, evidence-based improvements that strengthen infection prevention practices and achieve measurable results.
- Demonstrates proactive responses and creativity to challenges, outbreaks, or emerging risks.

4. Commitment to IPC as a profession

- Evidence that the person is seen as someone who raises standards and motivates others through evidence via a testimonial by a line manager or senior professional who has seen their work
- Demonstrates how the person shares knowledge locally, regionally or nationally through teaching, mentoring, publications, conferences or professional networking.
- Evidence that the person promotes awareness, engagement and ongoing development in infection prevention principles and practice.

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Volunteer of the Year

The IPS Volunteer of the Year Award recognises an individual who has made an outstanding voluntary contribution to the IPS. This award celebrates those who give their time, energy and expertise to support the IPS community, helping to educate, connect, inspire others in line with the IPS mission and advancing infection prevention and control

This individual demonstrates a strong commitment to the IPS vision of a world where no person is harmed by a preventable infection, contributing beyond their formal role to strengthen the IPC community and improve outcomes for patients, service users and the public.

Evidence must be within a year of the application date.

A successful nominee demonstrates:

1. Commitment and contribution

- Active contribution of time and expertise to IPS activities (e.g. branches, SIGs, committees, events or projects)
- Evidence of going above and beyond to support IPS initiatives and members
- Demonstrates reliability, enthusiasm and dedication

2. Supporting inclusion and engagement

- Promotes inclusive participation across diverse professional groups
- Encourages collaboration and engagement within the IPS community
- Supports equitable access to knowledge, opportunities and networks

3. Making a meaningful impact

- Contributes to improvements in IPC practice, education, implementation or awareness

- Demonstrates how they support delivery of IPS strategic goals (Support, Improve, Engage, Impact)
- Demonstrates tangible outcomes or positive feedback from their contribution

4. Inspiring others

- Motivates colleagues to get involved in IPS activities
- Acts as a positive ambassador for IPS
- Shares knowledge and encouraging a culture of learning and improvement

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Rising star (early careers)

The IPS award for rising star in IPC recognises an IPC practitioner who is still relatively early in their career, but who is showing clear evidence of impact, leadership potential, innovation and influence.

Nominees must be within the first three years of working within the speciality of infection prevention and control.

A successful nominee demonstrates:

1: Demonstratable impact early in career

- Evidence of improvements in patient safety, infection reduction, AMS or staff compliance
- Evidence of measurable outcomes e.g reduced HCAs, improved hand hygiene compliance, reduced device related infections, improved education uptake, service efficiencies

2: Innovation and initiative

- Evidence of introducing new IPC approaches, pathways, education methods, digital tools, QI projects, or surveillance techniques.
- Evidence of not just “doing the role well,” but improving how IPC is delivered.

3: Leadership potential

- Influencing practice despite being early career.
- Evidence of leading projects, mentoring peers/students, chairing workstreams, or driving behavioural change.
- Acting as someone others already look to for guidance.

4: Collaboration and influence

- Evidence of strong multidisciplinary working.
- Demonstrates positive influence on frontline teams.

- Demonstrates ability to engage clinicians, estates, domestic teams, executives, and patients.

5: Professional behaviours (evidence via a testimonial by a line manager or senior professional who has seen their work)

- Demonstrates enthusiasm, resilience, credibility, initiative, curiosity, and reflective practice.
- Seen as someone who raises standards and motivates others.

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Innovation and technology in IPC

The IPS award for innovation and technology recognises individuals or teams which have used innovation, digital tools, technology, data, or novel processes to produce measurable improvements in infection prevention, safety, operational efficiency, or staff practice.

A successful nominee usually demonstrates

1: Innovation and originality

- Evidence of introducing a new technology, digital solution, process, or novel way of working which shows either originality, creativity, problem solving, or transformation of existing practice to be smarter or more efficient. Innovation may include implementation models, behavioural interventions, pathway redesign or practice transformation
- Demonstrate collaboration and stakeholder involvement and multidisciplinary working.

2: Demonstrable impact (one of these must be met) 1 point only

Evidence of measurable improvement/or contribution to, such as:

- Reduced infection rates
- Improved compliance
- Earlier outbreak detection
- Improved patient safety/quality of care
- Reduced transmission
- Improved efficiency
- Time savings
- Cost reduction
- Improved surveillance or reporting accuracy.
- Improved experience

3: Successful implementation

- Evidence of how the innovation was introduced

- Evidence of Staff engagement
- Evidence of training
- Demonstrate how barriers were overcome
- Evidence of adoption into routine practice.

4: Scalability and sustainability

- Evidence that the innovation can be continued long term
- Evidence it be replicated elsewhere
- Demonstrate Influence on wider healthcare systems.

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Exceptional contribution to Research and / or Quality Improvement

The IPS Research and/or Quality Improvement (QI) award celebrates an individual or a team who have worked to develop and implement exceptional infection prevention and control practices in research and/or quality improvement. This award recognises an individual or team that has worked to develop and implement research and/or quality improvement that has led to demonstrable positive outcomes for patients, improving infection prevention and control (IPC) compliance, knowledge and patient safety.

A winning individual / team demonstrates:

1. Collaboration and Vision

- Working across disciplines, services, systems or organisations
- Implementation of research / QI to address IPC challenges improving patient safety.
- Dissemination of research / QI outcomes to inform wider knowledge, understanding and application of IPC amongst colleagues, patients and the public.

2. Measurable Impact

- Evidence of improved outcomes (e.g. reduced HCAs, improved compliance, improved knowledge, improved patient and/or public safety, better patient and/or staff experience)
- Evidence of successful award of grant funding to support research / QI.
- Publication of research/QI findings to inform IPC practice.

3. Innovation and Improvement

- Evidence of Introducing of new approaches to addressing IPC research / QI challenges.

- Evidence of adapting to challenges with resilience and flexibility to project completion.

4. Influencing and Inspiring others

- Demonstrating excellence in research / QI IPC practice
- Sharing and disseminating findings of the research / QI project to inform IPC practice.
- Engaging with colleagues to support similar evidence-based projects to progress implementation of IPC.
- Evidence of contributing to a culture of safety and learning as a shared goal.

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Examples of evidence that will be accepted

Written evidence – Personal statements, reports, case studies, or reflections explaining achievements and impact, published works

Testimonials / references – Letters or statements from managers, peers, service users, or community members supporting the applicant.

Data / measurable evidence – Statistics, performance metrics, outcomes, surveys, or before-and-after results showing impact.

Creative / alternative evidence – Videos- no more than 5 minutes, audio recordings-no more than 5 minutes portfolios, photos- with explanation, infographics, posters, presentations or project samples/ assets created.

Public/Community impact evidence – Proof of events organised, partnerships documents, feedback, or engagement records/ social media engagement

Supporting evidence will need to be emailed to lynne.duncan@ips.uk.net with details confirming the submission it is connected to.

Larger files can be emailed via [WeTransfer](#).

Supporting documents should not be sent until the nomination has been submitted

Enquiries

Enquiries should be emailed to lynne.duncan@ips.uk.net

Dates to note

Deadline for nominations: Monday 10 August 2026, 9am (UK Time)
Nominators/Nominees to be notified: W/c 31 August 2026