

Here are the 2024 winners of the Chicago Innovation Awards

By [Pawan Naidu](#)



Credit: Chicago Innovation

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The Chicago Innovation Awards announced this year's winners at the UIC Forum — honoring 22 local businesses in the 23rd iteration of the ceremony.

The awards honor the most innovative companies in the Chicago area. This year the Innovation Awards received hundreds of nominations from organizations across the public, private and nonprofit sectors. A panel of 12 judges selected the winners from 100 finalists announced in September

"Across healthcare, environmental engineering, biomedicine, financial services and many other industries, the organizations honored at the Chicago Innovation Awards are focused on devoting cutting-edge technology and ideas to some of society's most endemic problems," Gov. JB Pritzker said in a statement. "I'm incredibly proud that these companies and organizations call Illinois home, and I look forward to seeing what they will create next."

One of the winners at the event last night was First Women's Bank, recognized for working to close the gender lending gap and empowering women's economic pursuits. The bank aims to create an environment that encourages women to seek funding and offers training on how capital can be used in different ways in their organizations, CEO Marianne Markowitz said.

"This is an incredible moment for the bank. . . .We are approaching lending in the women's economy in an entirely different way," she said. "The gender lending gap is a really damaging aspect that not enough people talk about. Over 42% of all small businesses are owned by women, and they're getting about 5% of the dollars lent."

Several winners were recognized for their efforts in sustainability including LanzaJet, which has developed a technology that converts ethanol into sustainable aviation fuel. The innovation reduces carbon emissions by 70%.

“We’re working hard to decarbonize a really tough sector, to decarbonize aviation. The work we’re doing is industry-impacting,” said LanzaJet CEO Jimmy Samartzis. “Chicago has a great sense of creating partnerships in order to get to an outcome. You don’t necessarily get that on the coast the same way you get that in Chicago.”

This year there were a total of 350 nominations, Chicago Innovation said in a press release.

Here's the full list of winners:

Main Category winners

- Medline Industries
- OpenMarkets
- First Women's Bank
- Valent BioSciences' ReMoa Tri
- The Center for Advancing Safety of Machine Intelligence (CASMI)
- Rapunzl

Accenture Corporate Innovator Award

- Abbott

Molex Creating Connections for Life Award

- Ascent Integrated Tech

Lessen Entrepreneurial Spirit Award

- High Definition Vehicle Insurance

Climate Champion Award

- LanzaJet

Up-and-Comer Award

- Springrose
- REACH Pathways
- Dimension Inx's CMFlex

Social Innovator Award

- Feeding America

- Disability Lead

Wintrust Chicago Neighborhood Award

- Cook County Bureau of Economic Development
- Chicago Chefs Cook
- True Star Foundation

Innovations for Older Adults Award

- Rush University System

Collaboration Award

- African American Heritage Water Trail
- United Way of Metro Chicago

People's Choice Award

- DeVry University

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