



INFORMER

Official Newsletter for the Innovation DuPage Community

Staff Update

Bill Payne has concluded his work with Innovation DuPage, and we wish him the very best in his future endeavors. For any questions related to the Clean Energy Incubator Program, please contact Ricardo Magallon, CEI Program Manager.

Opportunities

New Resource for ID Members: PitchBook

Innovation DuPage is excited to announce that PitchBook is now available as a research and fundraising resource for our members. Entrepreneurs seeking angel investment, venture capital, or strategic partnerships can now tap into PitchBook's extensive data on investors, deals, and emerging market trends to support their growth. Anyone interested in accessing this resource should be in touch with Ricardo Magallon, Mike Varon or Dan Facchini.

ID Member Industry Clusters

Innovation DuPage has launched a new meeting series, designed to connect ID Members working in the same industry. Industry Clusters will give you the opportunity to:

- Network with peers in your field
- Share resources and tools
- Discuss trends and challenges
- Request future speakers and programming

Clusters will meet 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. in our event space, right after our regular Member Meetups (9:30–10:30 p.m. on Wednesdays). You're welcome to attend both! Here's the schedule for the next quarter:

- Jan 7 – Technology
- Jan 21 – Consumer Goods & Services
- Feb 4 – EdTech & Education
- Mar 18 – Marketing

More details and invitations coming soon. Questions? Reach out to [Elina Conley](#), ID's Entrepreneur in Residence.

CPS Seeks Solar Vendors for Green Schools Program

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Green Schools Solar Program, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower energy costs through the adoption of renewable energy. The program seeks to pre-qualify vendors to provide turnkey engineering, procurement, construction, maintenance, and operations services for solar projects across CPS facilities. This initiative aligns with CPS's mission to advance sustainability across its building portfolio.

The RFQ is open to all potential firms—whether you are a new, current, or former vendor.

How to Apply:

1. [Visit the CPS Procurement page](#)
2. Select "Open to the Public" Current Contracts.
3. Search for Project Name or Ref # 25-1124.
4. Register via Bonfire if you don't already have an account.

Energy Efficiency Rebates Available for Illinois Small Businesses

The [Illinois Green Business Association](#) (IGBA) has partnered with [Intuit](#), the maker of Quickbooks, and the [Green Business Engagement National Network](#)

(GBENN) to offer energy efficiency and electrification grants up to \$1,000 for 30 businesses in Illinois!

This is a practical opportunity to reduce utility costs, lower your energy use and emissions, and gain recognition for your environmental efforts.

To qualify, your business must:

- Be located in Illinois
- Have fewer than 100 employees or ≤\$2.5M annual revenue
- Participate in the Illinois Green Business Program (free for applicants)
- Complete projects by May 30, 2025

[Apply here by February 21](#)

NIU MBA Capstone Program



Northern Illinois University
Your Future. Our Focus.

Northern Illinois University's MBA Capstone Program offers an exciting opportunity for local companies to receive comprehensive strategic business plans developed by Executive MBA student teams. Under the guidance of Professor Ed Buckley, these teams integrate their expertise in sales, marketing, finance, operations, and technology to create value for participating organizations. More than 15 Innovation DuPage member companies have participated in and benefited from this program. If your company is interested in having an MBA team develop a business plan, please contact Ed Buckley by **February 28th** at ed.buckley@allqualityinc.com or **(847) 778-6960**.

Seeking Clean Tech Companies!



Innovation DuPage is actively looking for startups and small businesses working in the clean energy or clean technology industry - or referrals to companies that could benefit from our targeted support.

[To Learn More](#)

Coming Up



Join biweekly Member Meetups at Innovation DuPage! Network, enjoy bagels & coffee, and learn from spotlight members & resource experts.

The next Member Meetup will be on February 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. followed by the EdTech & Education Cluster Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Member Spotlight: Natalia Serrano of Ceyba Holistic Nourishment
Member Resource: Dorian Dickinson of Funding Hope

If you can't make it in person, attend virtually through our [Zoom Link](#)

[Sign up](#) to present at a future Member Meetup

ID January Workshop: Present with FOCUS



**Present with FOCUS:
A public speaking workshop for small business leaders**



Scott Hubbard

Wednesday, January 28th, 2026

In-Person: 5:30 – 7:00 PM

- Learn how to engage a group in person
- Project confidence to your clients, prospective investors, and your team
- Reduce nervousness and distracting behavior
- Modify your message for different audiences
- Gain buy-in through clarity and preparation

535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137



The way you communicate can make or break critical moments in your business. Join us January 28 as Scott Hubbard from Hubbard Communication teaches his framework for presenting with confidence. You'll learn how to engage audiences, reduce nervousness, and deliver clear, compelling messages.

[To Learn More and Register](#)

Female Founders: Vision, Mindset & Strategy Night



Female Founders: Vision, Mindset & Strategy Night



Jules Wilhelm

Thursday, February 5th, 2026

In-Person: 5:30 – 7:00 PM

- Where do you want to be this time next year—personally, professionally, and financially?
- What vision is calling you forward when you remove self-imposed limits around growth, income, and impact?
- Which strategic actions will move you there?

535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137



Join fellow female founders for an evening of reflection, planning, and connection led by Jules Wilhelm, Innovation DuPage member and founder of EQ-Niversity. We'll create space to think bigger, examine the mindset patterns that shape your decisions, and map out the future you actually want to build. You'll leave with a clear vision for 2026, aligned goals, actionable next steps, and a network of supportive women who understand the entrepreneurial journey.

Wine and cheese included.

[ID Members Register Here](#)

The 2nd Annual Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit



College of DuPage and Innovation DuPage Present
The Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit

**Thursday
Feb. 26
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**
Social hour with refreshments

Jack H. Turner Conference Center
Student Resource Center
(SRC 2000)

Free attendance
Lunch and refreshments
provided

Learn more and register
<http://bit.ly/47R686Z>



AI, Quantum and the Future of Work

The Midwest is famous for getting things done. Since the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the Chicago area has been a hub of innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurs.

Join College of DuPage President Dr. Muddassir Siddiqi, along with a host of thought leaders and experts, for the second annual Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit. Moderated by Jon Hansen of WGN Radio, the summit will explore emerging markets with industry trailblazers from organizations including Intel, Lenovo and more.

Featured Sessions

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Future of Work
- Critical Resources to Build Your Entrepreneurial Team
- Practical Strategies for Funding Your Startup
- Emerging Markets: Quantum, Fintech, Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Energy
- Inspirational Success Stories from Successful Entrepreneurs



For ADA accommodations, please email access@cod.edu with the event title in the subject line and your accommodation request. Please email two weeks in advance.
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[Register Here](#)

Let us help you share your success with the ID community!
Share a recent win – big or small. It could be featured in our next letter! Email your accomplishment to [Hannah Macey](#).

Resources

[Clean Energy Incubator Program](#)

[Member Portal Login Page](#)

[Member Meetup Signup Sheet](#)



Reminder: Innovation DuPage is open for members as a coworking space 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

Keep up with Innovation DuPage on social media!





Try email & social marketing for free!