



INFORMER

Official Newsletter for the Innovation DuPage Community

Showcase Your Products at the Chicago Toy & Game Fair: November 7 & 8

Innovation DuPage along with ID member, People of Play, is offering a free opportunity to showcase and sell your products at this year's **Chicago Toy & Game Fair** on November 7th & 8th at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont. The show attracts 30,000 annual attendees and is perfect for retail companies to showcase products ahead of the holiday season.

If you're interested in learning more, please email Joe Barron at joe@graymattersgames.com.

Business Certification Workshop

Innovation DuPage is exploring member interest in hosting a workshop series designed to help pursue and obtain diversity certifications that can open doors to new corporate, government, and supplier diversity contracting opportunities. The series would provide guidance on eligibility requirements, application processes, and ongoing support to successfully secure certification.

Which certification would be of most interest to you?

Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certification

Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification

Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE) certification

Persons with Disabilities Business Enterprise (PBE) certification

Other

Coming Up

CECI Workshop: Grant Preparation with Jess Wain



Grant Preparation with Jess Wain



Jess Wain

Wednesday, August 26th, 2026
In-Person: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Jess Wain will be leading a grant preparation workshop that will follow this agenda:

- Grant prep essentials: materials, storytelling, financials, and impact of company changes
- Live Q&A: 30 minutes of member questions
- 1:1 guidance: personalized workshoping for member companies

535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Room 138 - ID Event Space



Open to all Innovation DuPage members, this workshop hosted by the CECI team gives you a structured path through grant preparation, from the fundamentals to your own materials. Jess Wain, Innovation DuPage's grant writer for ID members and co-founder of Hobbs & Wain Advancement Partners, will lead a 30-minute presentation on grant materials, storytelling, financial statements, and how partnership or company changes can affect your applications, followed by 30 minutes of Q&A and 30 minutes of one-on-one workshoping and in-person guidance tailored to your company.

Register through the member portal today!

Movie Premiere with ID Member Noel Thompson

Movie Premiere with Noel Thompson of Nakamakula Productions



Noel Thompson

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

Time: 5:00 PM

Join us for a special movie premiere featuring ID member Noel Thompson's original short films, *Psychomanteum* and *Snow Drift*.

535 Duane St, Glen Ellyn 60137



Innovation DuPage is celebrating the work of ID member Noel Thompson of Nakamakula Productions with a special movie premiere featuring two of her short films, *Psychomanteum* and *Snow Drift*. The screening is free and open to ID members.

Register through the member portal today!



The next Member Meetup will be on September 2 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

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

Member Spotlight: Pat Barry of AI Consulting Partners, LLC

Member Resource: Philip Bormet of Glen Ellyn Public Library

Following the Member Meetup, there will be a Marketing cluster meeting.

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

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

Opportunities

NIU | Executive MBA Business Plan Creation

Northern Illinois University's MBA Capstone Program offers an exciting opportunity for ID Members to receive comprehensive strategic business plans developed by Executive MBA student teams. Over 15 member companies have already taken advantage of this opportunity in the past!

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. If your company is interested in having an MBA team develop a business plan, please contact Ed at ed.buckley@allqualityinc.com or (847) 778-6960.

ID Office Space Available

We have office space available for members looking for a more permanent home base to work from — beyond our short-term reservable spaces. If you're interested in learning more, reach out to [Dan Facchini](#), Managing Director, to discuss options.

ID Golf Outing Sponsorship

Innovation DuPage's golf outing returns this September at Arrowhead Golf Club, and sponsorship spots are open now. It's a great way to showcase your business, connect with fellow members and partners, and support ID's mission. Member sponsorships start at just \$200, with multiple levels available. Marketing deadline is Friday, September 4, to be included in event materials.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Get Your Company Listed on Pitchbook

Pitchbook is a leading private market database used by investors, VCs, and strategic partners to discover and research early-stage companies. Innovation DuPage is now offering all members the opportunity to be listed under ID's profile — giving your company added visibility and third-party validation as a program participant. This is an opt-in benefit available to all active members.

Interested? Reach out to [Elina Conley](#) to get started.

ID Member Industry Clusters

Innovation DuPage's Industry Clusters are designed to connect ID Members working in the same industry. Industry Clusters 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 meet 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in our event space, right after our regular Member Meetups (9:30-10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays). You're welcome to attend both! Here's the schedule for the next quarter:

- September 2 - Marketing
- September 16 - Technology, Software, AI & Data Analytics
- September 30 - Consumer Goods & Services
- October 28 - Commercial Goods & Services
- November 11 - Female Founders
- December 9 - Marketing

Proudly sponsored by the Bank of America.



Questions? Reach out to [Elina Conley](#), ID's Entrepreneur in Residence.

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](#)

Resources

Innovation DuPage now has a **Member Request Form** in the Member Portal dashboard! Log into your portal and fill out the form to submit requests directly to ID. If you have any trouble accessing your portal, reach out to IT Project Manager [Anushka Verma](#) for assistance.

The ID Mentoring Program is a flexible, high-impact program that connects ID members with vetted industry experts for 1:1 mentorship tailored to their needs. Whether you're seeking a one-time conversation or an ongoing relationship, mentors provide guidance, insight, connections, and encouragement while helping you stay accountable to your goals.

Support areas include business development, funding and loans, legal guidance, business planning, marketing, government contracting, and more. The program is designed to be adaptable and collaborative, allowing you and your mentor to co-create a structure that best fits your journey and level of support needed.

To Get Connected to a Mentor

Grant writing and proposal development support is available to member companies through **Jessica Wain, Co-founder of Hobbs & Wain Advancement Partners**. Jessica helps companies identify, pursue, and secure funding opportunities that can accelerate growth and scalability.

To Book Time with Jessica

Just upstairs from Innovation DuPage is the **Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**, part of College of DuPage's Business Development Center. SBDC advisors provide confidential guidance, training, and resources to start-up and existing small businesses, helping with everything from securing business capital and marketing to commercializing new ideas and developing innovative products and services. Client projects range from early-stage, pre-revenue concepts to established business operations.

To Learn More

Allies for Community Business provides capital, coaching, and connections to help entrepreneurs grow businesses that create jobs and wealth in their communities. Allies for Community Business offers loans up to \$500,000 to support community businesses.

To Schedule a Session

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](#).

Sign Up to Present at a Member Meetup



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!



Innovation DuPage | 535 Duane St. | Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 US

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