FAST COMPANY

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The most innovative companies in North America for 2026

Why Databricks, Harvey, Vaulted Deep, and JSX are among Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies of 2026.

By Julia Selinger

This year's most innovative companies in North America are adopting the region's best impulses and working to correct some of its greatest shortcomings. In the march towards progress and efficiency, automation solutions are leading the way, whether it is Arteris's AI-powered tech accelerating chip design, Warp optimizing logistics route-planning via machine learning, or Harvey harnessing AI to create increasingly essential legal tools. Other companies' achievements are more literal. Vaulted Deep is combating climate change by

injecting organic waste deep underground—and partnering with some of the country's biggest tech giants in the process.

Other winners are solving systemic, homegrown problems. OnMed's CareStations bring tech-enabled "clinics-in-a-box" to healthcare deserts and underserved areas, bridging the gap between telehealth and in-person care. And the North Carolina Biotechnology Center has become a critical source of research grant funding in the aftermath of devastating federal cuts to the sciences.

The winning companies proved that innovation can happen at any scale. Databricks, with a mammoth valuation of $134 billion, is at the forefront of AI and provides secure data storage for Fortune 500 companies. TIn Can, meanwhile, recognizes that building the next generation of innovators starts at home. Its child-friendly, WiFi enabled "landlines" are an investment in kids' social skills and independence.

1. DATABRICKS

For supplying organizations with ready-made AI agents, minus the hassle

Databricks, the San Francisco-based data analytics company, has long given Fortune 500 companies a secure place to host and make sense of their proprietary data. As the AI conversation increasingly moves towards agentic AI, Databricks answered with Agent Bricks, a new feature launched in June that automates the agent creation process. Using technologies developed by MosaicML, which Databricks acquired for $1.3 billion, Agent Bricks offers a way for customers to deploy agents based on their enterprise data. Customers define the agent's purpose, no matter their coding ability, and Databricks does the heavy lifting, optimizing the model based on user constraints to create secure, trustworthy outputs. The tech has been deployed by businesses like AstraZeneca and the London Stock Exchange Group.

Databricks is working to develop the next generation of data engineers and scientists. In June it announced a $100 million investment in data and AI education, plus the launch of Databricks Free Edition, which provides free access to the Databricks Data Intelligence Platform for students and aspiring professionals. In 2025, Databricks also made it easier than ever for enterprises to extract insights from their data by signing strategic, multi-year deals with both OpenAI and Anthropic to bring their models natively to its customers.

Read more about Databricks, No. 8 on Fast Company's list of the World's 50 Most Innovative Companies of 2026.

2. HARVEY

For equipping lawyers with the legal tools of the future

Harvey is redefining the way lawyers work, one upgrade at a time. In 2025, the legal AI company rolled out some 250 platform improvements that streamline its ability to help lawyers with contract analysis, drafting, and legal research. Those enhancements are intended to improve legal work for Harvey's impressive roster of users, which includes more than half of the 100 largest law firms in the U.S.

As part of its efforts to become an indispensable tool for big and boutique firms alike, Harvey launched a number of new products this past year. Workflow Builder allows users to develop custom systems unique to different firms' practices, and Shared Spaces lets clients and firms collaborate and share documents securely on a single platform. Indeed, Harvey has prioritized efficient legal workflows, introducing integrations with Microsoft and proprietary legal databases like LexisNexis. Harvey–which reached an $8 billion valuation in 2025–also recognizes the value in putting its tools in the hands of future lawyers. The company launched law school partnerships with top-tier schools (among them Stanford, Penn, and UChicago) to embed its technology into law school curriculums.

Read more about Harvey, honored as No. 17 on Fast Company's list of the World's 50 Most Innovative Companies of 2026.

3. VAULTED DEEP

For helping major corporations take the carbon removal fight underground

With emissions cuts not doing enough to curb the planet's warming, carbon removal is more essential than ever. Vaulted Deep, a startup focused on biomass carbon removal and storage (BiCRS), injects animal manure and sewage sludge thousands of feet underground to sequester CO2.

Vaulted Deep has piqued the interest of tech giants trying to shrink their carbon footprints, especially as they continue to invest in environmentally deleterious data centers. In July, Vaulted signed a deal with Microsoft pledging to remove up to 4.9 million tonnes of durable carbon dioxide over 12 years. It's one of the largest carbon removal deals to date. Google followed in September with a 50,000-tonne agreement.

The Houston-based company's mission solves two problems at once. For communities like Hutchinson, Kansas, where Vaulted Deep has a facility, the startup provides long-term disposal of excess organic waste and agricultural by-products from dairy farms and feedlots that would otherwise pollute local waterways and contaminate the air. More broadly, Vaulted Deep is a scalable way to combat climate change. Injecting the waste underground prevents methane and CO2 from decomposing and releasing greenhouse gasses, all while maintaining a safe distance from groundwater.

4. ARTERIS

For fast-tracking and democratizing chip design

AI, autonomous vehicles, data centers, and countless other industries are evolving faster than you can say "semiconductor." Arteris is helping hundreds of companies bring their technologies to market quickly and more efficiently with automation-driven solutions for system-on-chip (SoC) designs that address the demands of modern computing.

In February 2025 Arteris unveiled FlexGen, the semiconductor industry's first intelligent network-on-chip (NoC) IP. By utilizing AI-driven automation, FlexGen enables teams to accelerate chip design from the weeks or months-long timeline of manual development to days. In addition to FlexGen slashing chip development time, the product can reduce wire length by as much as 30% as well as latency, meaning fewer delays for your data to get from point A to point B. Arteris's NoC IP also empowers teams to develop chips without the

assistance of highly specialized engineers, allowing more companies across industries to dip their toes into SoC production.

Arteris's Flexgen technology is already being adopted across industries, as evidenced by partnerships with global semiconductor powerhouse AMD as well as NanoXplore for use in aerospace applications. For the German semiconductor chip design firm Dream Chip Technologies, FlexGen has shrunk the company's development timeline from weeks to days.

5. WARP

For dynamically figuring out the best routes for shipping goods

Since its founding in 2021, Warp has been working to make shipping supply chains as efficient as possible for its customers, a roster that includes HelloFresh, Walmart, and Gopuff. This past year the logistics company looked inward at its own warehouses to make those adjustments via automation and robotics.

In June, Warp secured $10 million in a fundraising round to scale its AI-powered systems and launch a robotic cross-dock—the logistics technique in which goods are transferred from inbound to outgoing vehicles. Warp's new proprietary scanner app lets third-party partners instantly sync data on pallet condition, weight, and routing, which further streamlines operations.

Warp's technological innovations are helping to modernize LTL systems (less-than-truckload; that is, combining freight from individual shippers into a single vehicle). In 2025, the company introduced machine learning technology to optimize routes and provide real-time visibility. By using models to predictively factor in traffic, carrier capacity, and weather, Warp streamlines delivery routes, improves delivery speed, minimizes emissions, and saves costs for customers. The numbers reflect the success of Warp's tech-forward approach: In 2025, the company grew revenue by more than 40% and shipment volume by more than 130%, with service expanding to total roughly 3,000 U.S. cities.

6. JSX

For adding regional turbojets to its all-business-class fleet

Due to increased delays and crowding, the perception of air travel in the United States has taken a nosedive. JSX is working to bring a premium air travel experience to the U.S. without the private price tag. Founded in 2016, JSX is a public charter airline that operates out of private terminals. As with private air travel, access is streamlined and frictionless, with guests only needing 20 minutes to get through the TSA-approved security program for domestic flights (45 minutes for international flights). JSX flights can accommodate 30 passengers with complimentary amenities. A new loyalty program, Club JSX, lets customers earn back 5% in rewards on applicable base fares.

The airline operates flights to 29 airports, most of which are in the western United States and Mexico. In 2025 JSX introduced a number of new routes, including flights between John Wayne Airport in Orange County, California and Salt Lake City International Airport. In January, the airline expanded its services in Southern California to include flights from

Santa Monica to Scottsdale and Las Vegas on an ATR 42-600 turboprop aircraft, starting at $215 one-way (prices may fluctuate).

With the introduction of ATR turboprop planes to its fleet, JSX can now fly short routes to airports whose short runways can't accommodate jets. ATRs are also more fuel efficient than jets and fly at a lower elevation, making them an ideal aircraft for JSX.

7. DIGITAL DOMAIN

For seamlessly translating nuanced facial performances of actors into VFX

It can be tough to strike the balance between acting, an organic and emotive discipline, with the steely and highly technical world of visual effects. A new innovation from Digital Domain—the VFX and digital production company with credits that include The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, Avengers: Endgame, and Dune—helps capture performances naturally without distracting and costly technology. Masquerade3, the latest iteration of Digital Domain's proprietary facial capture tech, eliminates the need for the dozens of small reflective markers traditionally used on film sets. Instead, Masquerade3 uses helmet mounted-cameras to capture minute facial motions and recreate the geographical contours of the actor's face.

Masquerade3 made its film debut in 2025's The Fantastic Four: First Steps, where the new technology transformed Ebon Moss-Bachrach into The Thing. By removing the need to stick dozens of dots on the actor's face every day—a labor that can take hours—Digital Domain's proprietary technology saved time and money on set without sacrificing the look of The Thing's signature rocky visage. Post-production was more efficient too, as the data from inconsistently placed facial markers over several days of shooting would typically need to be cleaned up. Not so with Masquerade3; marker cleanup and animation retargeting was reduced by 80%, with overall facial data acquisition time on set cut by 20%.

8. FLAGSHIP PIONEERING

For leveraging AI to reinvent the scientific discovery process

Flagship Pioneering is a key player in health and biotech innovation in the United States, building new platform companies across the spectrum of life sciences. In 2025, the venture capital firm added a number of new firms to its current slate of companies. Flagship's latest ventures embrace polyintelligence—a combination of human, natural, and machine intelligence—as the future of the global biotech industry.

Etiome is working to map out disease progression and develop preemptive medicines using multiomics data, AI, and electronic health records; Expedition Medicines is harnessing AI to unlock new solutions in drug design, including new therapies for prostate cancer in partnership with Pfizer; and Lila Sciences is developing what it calls "scientific superintelligence" via an advanced AI program trained on data, research, and the scientific method. The aim is an unprecedented tool that can autonomously design and run experiments parallel to human scientific exploration and generate its own knowledge.

The Nvidia-backed Lila has raised $550 million in overall capital and tops a $1.3 billion valuation. The company represents an increased demand for AI-driven platforms across materials, chemicals, and life sciences. The company has turned experiments into physical

results in months as opposed to years, including a new catalyst for green hydrogen production, and in September Lila partnered with Eli Lilly on the development of therapies for hard-to-treat tumors.

9. BOBBIE

For breaking the baby formula oligopoly

Bobbie, the mom-founded infant formula company, is still a relative David next to industry Goliaths like Abbott and Mead. That said, the five-year-old brand is swiftly transforming into a major player, hitting Walmart shelves and becoming Target's fastest-growing infant formula brand in 2025. A number of strategies are to thank, all of which Bobbie leaned into last year: an unwavering commitment to unprocessed ingredients, canny marketing, and a do-gooder approach.

In April the Ohio-based company launched Bobbie Organic Whole Milk Infant Formula, its fourth formula since the company's launch in 2021. The product is the first USDA Organic whole milk infant formula manufactured in the U.S. Like Bobbie's other offerings, the new formula is free of palm oil and other additives shunned in the "European style" formulas to which it aspires.

Beyond the ingredient list, Bobbie's messaging also centers advocacy for parental rights and demystifying and destigmatizing feeding choices. To that end, Bobbie's new online hub The Feeding Room serves as an education center—featuring pumping tips, feeding support, and expert-led tutorials—powered by the International Board Certified Lactation Consultants and nurses at NAPS (Newborn and Parenting Support). When circumstances this past year made formula difficult to access, Bobbie stepped in, donating 5,000 cans to local organizations during the LA wildfires. And during the government shutdown, Bobbie offered SNAP recipients steep discounts.

10. NORTH CAROLINA BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTER

For spurring life sciences development in North Carolina

Since last January, the Trump administration has stalled and disrupted scientific research in the United States, slashing the number of new grants issued by the NIH and NSF, eliminating fellowships, and scaling back the science workforce. North Carolina, home to one of the nation's most robust research environments, lost hundreds of millions of dollars in terminated NIH grant funding. As a result, demand for grants from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center ballooned to more than five times the amount of funding available. NCBiotech responded by distributing $2.1M in research grants to colleges and universities across the state. More broadly, the organization awarded 16 loans to startups across the life sciences spectrum, ranging from pharmaceuticals to agtech, a total of $5.3 million in funding.

As the life sciences sector continues to boom in North Carolina, NCBiotech is invested in recruiting new companies and expanding existing partnerships. This past year the organization worked with partners like Johnson & Johnson and Genentech on two dozen recruitment and expansion announcements totaling more than $5 billion in investments that will inject over 2,600 jobs into the local workforce.

11. HARBINGER

For making hybrid-electric recreational vehicles more than a pipe dream

Within the electric vehicle industry, medium-duty vehicles are an underrepresented market dwarfed by their smaller and larger compatriots: Class 1 passenger cars and Class 8 long-haul trucks. For EV company Harbinger, that medium class—which includes walk-in vans, box trucks, and recreational vehicles—is the proverbial Goldilocks with fewer competitors to boot. Harbinger has succeeded in the medium-duty market by building its own integrated electric powertrains, batteries, and other components in-house and selling them to other manufacturers. Vertically integrating batteries, drivetrains, and chassis components helps Harbinger cut costs and price its RVs competitively, an Achilles heel for predecessors in the industry.

In November, Harbinger raised $160 million in its Series C funding round, totaling its overall funds raised to $358 million. The latest round was co-led by FedEx, which also inked a deal for an initial order of 53 Harbinger EVs.

Harbinger's rolling electric chassis is a scalable blank slate for businesses to affix any body style they want on top. As part of a partnership with RV makers Thor Enterprises, Harbinger developed a plug-in hybrid chassis for the company's Embark—the world's first hybrid Class A motorhome. Powered by an electric motor, battery system, and gas generator, the hybrid RV has a range of 500 miles, more than twice the range of EV vans and trucks. Full production on the RVs is set to begin in 2026.

12. THE NANOSTRUCTURED MATERIALS LAB AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

For pioneering a new class of self-repairing plastics

At Texas A&M's Nanostructured Materials Lab, Dr. Mohammad Naraghi and his team explore new materials and their myriad applications. In 2025 they unveiled a "smart" plastic that can remember its original shape, repair cracks under heat, and even become stronger after multiple healing cycles. The carbon-fiber plastic composite is known as Aromatic Thermosetting Copolyester (ATSP). ATSP belongs to a class of materials called vitrimers, which can break and reform when they're heated and withstand multiple rounds of recycling, unlike traditional plastics which degrade. And unlike those plastics, ATSP is both flexible and durable. Reinforced with carbon fibers, ATSP is stronger than steel and lighter than aluminum.

ATSP has immense implications for aerospace, defense, and automotive applications. During automobile accidents, the material could restore dents and structural damage while protecting passengers. Researchers analyzed ATSP's self-healing abilities and strong chemical structure at extreme temperatures, demonstrating the material's potential for use in damaged aircrafts mid-service. ATSP has the potential to transform wide swaths of commercial industries, and given its durability and recyclability, it is a more sustainable option than traditional plastics.

13. SHOPMY

For letting influencers curate their own storefronts

In an era increasingly defined by algorithmic slop, ShopMy is doubling down on a personalized, curatorial approach—and it's putting creators at the center. In 2025 the e-commerce platform transformed its social media-inspired feeds into "storefronts" featuring content creators' recommended products. Along with the revamp, ShopMy launched Circles, its first retail platform. Rather than browsing individual pages, shoppers can add creators to their "circles" and view their favorite products in a single storefront. It creates the effect of having a digital boutique at one's fingertips, curated by a trusted line-up of tastemakers. The AI-powered tool also recommends other creators based on users' wishlists.

ShopMy harnesses affiliate marketing as an essential ecommerce tool. Its deep bench of creators—more than 185,000—have helped drive 200% year-over-year revenue growth, and a total of 1,200 brands use the platform, with J. Crew and Tory Burch among the bestsellers. In October, ShopMy raised $70 million in a Series B funding round, bringing its total valuation to $1.5 billion.

14 ONMED

For taking an out-of-the-box approach to telehealth

Healthcare deserts are a fast-growing problem in the United States, with more than 80% of counties lacking adequate healthcare access according to data from GoodRx. OnMed's patented CareStation could help rectify that problem. The "Clinic-in-a-box" bridges the gap between diagnostically inadequate telehealth visits and costly, geographically restrictive clinics.

When a patient enters the 8-by-ten foot pod, they press a button and are connected via a 65" video chat with a licensed clinician who walks them through taking their own blood pressure, weight, and other metrics with a number of diagnostic tools. The clinicians provide a treatment plan and, in many states, can write e-prescriptions. In areas where primary care physicians are few and far between, CareStations shift care out of overburdened emergency rooms.

Over the past year, OnMed has brought the CareStation from R&D to commercialization, deploying the product across seven states and Puerto Rico in a range of contexts. OnMed has partnered with universities like South Carolina State and Auburn to expand care in the area; in Connecticut, a CareStation set up shop at Bradley International Airport for weary travelers and employees; and in Florida, the stations can be found in a Miami youth center and a Tampa homeless shelter. In December, OnMed inked a deal with the nonprofit 22Beacon to expand its network to 30 charter schools.

15. TIN CAN

For giving kids a Wi-Fi-enabled—and social-media-free—"landline"

Seattle-based startup Tin Can is solving modern problems by looking backwards. Cofounder Chet Kittleson found himself commiserating with other parents about the challenges of fostering independence among their kids without prematurely introducing cell phones. Tin Can found an old-school solution in landlines designed specifically for kids. Tin Cans give parents some freedom back, too; with kids able to communicate sans parental intervention, parents need not be de facto secretaries for their children.

Outfitted in retro, colorful designs, the corded phones have smartphone-accessible parental controls to manage kids' contacts, schedule phone-free "quiet time," and check call logs. The original Tin Can with its stout, ribbed design is Wi-Fi-enabled and the Flashback, a more austere nod to '80s childhood, plugs into a home internet router, no phone jack required. Calls between Tin Cans are free, and for $9.99 a month, you can add unlimited external phone numbers.

Since its launch in 2024, Tin Can has sold tens of thousands of units with customers in all 50 states and Canada, with phones retailing at $75 a pop. And demand is growing. On Christmas Day, the young company was so overwhelmed with new business that its service briefly crashed. In December, Tin Can secured $12 million in additional funding to help scale production for its lengthy waitlist, bringing its overall funding to over $15 million.

Explore the full 2026 list of Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies, 720 honorees that are reshaping industries and culture. We've selected the companies making the biggest impact across 59 categories, including advertising, applied AI, biotech, retail, sustainability, and more.

The final deadline for Fast Company's Best Workplaces for Innovators is this Friday, March 27, at 11:59 p.m. PT. Apply today.