2021 Tekne Awards
16 Award Categories

Application deadline: **Tuesday, August 10, 2021**

Awards in this group recognize organizations leveraging technology to enable innovation and achieve business goals. This includes technology-driven initiatives that lead to greater productivity, optimize business processes, enable new opportunities, achieve scale and consistency, and enhance the ability to manage risk and compliance.

1. **AI/Machine Learning**
   Honors organizations developing and/or utilizing software systems that simulate human intelligence in innovative and impactful ways, including applications of machine learning where systems automatically learn and improve from experience. Examples include use cases in medical diagnosis, investment management, supply chain management, fraud detection, personal assistants, etc.

2. **Data Analytics**
   Recognizes innovation in the process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information in support of decision-making. Data analytics initiatives help businesses increase revenues, improve operational efficiencies, optimize marketing campaigns and customer service efforts, respond more quickly to emerging market trends, and gain a competitive edge over rivals -- all with the ultimate goal of boosting business performance.

3. **Data Security**
   Shines a spotlight on innovative products or services that safeguard businesses and enterprises from unintended or unauthorized access. Recognizes products or services that uphold digital ethics and ensure safe, ethical, and professional online communities. Examples include, but are not limited to: identity management products or services, trusted authentication, disaster recovery, secure data storage, computer forensics, verification processes, etc.

4. **Digital Marketing**
   Celebrates marketing initiatives leveraging digital technologies and channels to better connect with prospects and customers. Includes concepts and tools such as content marketing, SEO, social media, and email marketing to reach consumers and elevate brand awareness, as well as the use of AI and ML for increased personalization.

5. **Digital Transformation**
   Honors organizations using digital technologies to create new — or modify existing — business processes, culture, and customer experiences to meet changing business and market requirements. We look to recognize companies (and leaders) radically rethinking how their organization leverages technology, people, and processes to fundamentally change business performance.

6. **Edge Computing & IoT**
   Recognizes innovative approaches to making objects smarter through embedded technology and connections to a network. Edge computing is transforming the way data is being processed and communicated between millions of internet-connected devices. Fueled by faster networking technologies such as 5G wireless, edge computing systems are accelerating new applications in real-time analytics, autonomous vehicles, smart appliances, and robotics, to name a few.

INNOVATION in MINNESOTA'S LEADING INDUSTRIES

Awards in this group honor innovation within some of Minnesota's leading industries. The Bold North is a national leader in a wide variety of industries including advanced manufacturing, healthcare, renewable energy, food production, and retail technologies. Our impact on the world can be felt in the expertise and innovations these fields bring in making our lives healthier, safer, and fulfilled.

7. **Advanced Manufacturing**
   Celebrates innovation and pioneering efforts in the utilization of technology to more efficiently design and produce new products or improve processes for manufacturing existing products. Advanced manufacturing can include production activities that depend on information, automation, computation, software, sensing, and networking.

8. **Financial Services Technology**
   Honors technology innovation that improves the delivery and use of financial services to businesses or consumers. Examples include, but are not limited to, payment apps, smart contracts, insurance streamlining & simplification, compliance, budget apps, crowdfunding platforms, investment advice, and Blockchain.

9. **Healthcare Information Systems**
   Recognizes new approaches or advancements in digital systems that capture, process, transmit, report, or otherwise manage health data and activities. This includes electronic patient records and other data related to the activities of providers and health organizations, all with an eye towards improving patient outcomes, informing research, and influencing public policy and decision-making.

10. **Medical Technology & Devices**
    Shines a spotlight on significant achievements in medical product design and engineering that improve the quality of patient care and healthcare delivery. Examples include instruments, machines, implants, in vitro reagents, or other related products that are intended for the diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease or other medical conditions.

11. **Retail, Supply Chain, and Distribution**
    Recognizes application of technology to improve customer shopping experiences and the means by which products find their way to consumers. Includes automated vendor enablement, transportation and warehouse management, customer tracking tools, inventory optimization, augmented reality, and more.

12. **Sustainable Resources**
    Honors utilization of technology to more efficiently and sustainably manage resources related to energy, water, food, etc. Energy examples include solar or wind power, biofuels, green transportation, as well as water and waste recycling. Agricultural examples include technological advances in agricultural operations or food production that enhance productivity and efficiency, improve environmental sustainability, or contribute to food safety. Examples include real-time crop data sensors, plant/soil analytics, water management systems, aerial imagery, predictive analytics, grocery supply chain management, etc.

VIBRANT TECH ECOSYSTEM

Awards in this group reflect key players and programs that are essential to building a more vibrant and inclusive tech ecosystem in our state. They think outside the box to address the challenges we face in closing the tech talent gap. They collaborate and connect our community to make Minnesota a better place to work and live. They help fuel our collective prosperity and we celebrate their impact.

13. **Tech Talent – Corporate Initiative**
    Recognizes innovative approaches to hiring, developing, and retaining tech talent at an organization. Examples include novel approaches to talent recruitment, employee on-boarding, skills training, professional development, and impactful initiatives related to increased diversity, equity and inclusion.

14. **Tech Talent – Solution Provider**
    Highlights the important work being done by organizations helping to address our tech talent gap by recruiting, training, preparing, and optimizing the digitally fluent workforce Minnesota companies need for continued business success. This includes innovative programming, products, and services developed and implemented by nonprofits, for-profits, and educational institutions.

15. **Tech for Good**
    Recognizes novel implementations of technology to serve an unmet community need. Entries should demonstrate impact through a product or service innovation that assists underserved populations, enhances quality of life or safety, promotes interest in STEM, or generally helps our greater good.

16. **Technology Partnership**
    Honors the technology vendors and partnerships that corporate leaders rely on to power their systems and enable business transformations. Technology vendors must reference one or more of

their client partners and highlight an innovative collaboration resulting in demonstrable business value to the client/s.