

# 5th Annual Canadian FinTech & AI Awards

November 18, 2019



**#CelebratingCanadianInnovation**

# ABOUT US

The Digital Finance Institute is one of the few think tanks founded by women. We have 3 pillars – financial inclusion, responsible innovation and support for women in FinTech. We also represent a strategic link in the digital finance ecosystem between the financial services industry, NGOs, academia, financial regulators and policy makers to promote financial innovation and vibrancy through thought leadership, engagement, advocacy, research and education.

Part of our mandate is to develop partnerships, support research, participate in emerging market areas, including climate finance and artificial intelligence for digital finance. We support growth and diversity in FinTech and AI, with a goal of building a community that is inclusive and supportive of start-ups with stakeholders and that provides networking and educational opportunities for ecosystem participants.

We are proud of our footprint in FinTech. At our inaugural event five years ago, we launched the first white paper on [Women in FinTech](#), powered by SWIFT's Inn Tribe and brought international speakers together to explore responsible innovation and technology in financial crime mitigation, as well as financial inclusion. Five years in, we continue to address financial inclusion and promote women in technology. Our Top 50 Women in FinTech list helps recognize some of Canada's FinTech leaders.

Part of the way we have helped to build a national FinTech and AI community is by convening national FinTech and AI conferences since 2015, such as the annual national [FinTech Canada Conference](#) in Toronto, and joining as founding members of SWIFT's Global FinTech Hubs Federation, representing Canada, an initiative that connected technology hubs around the world to promote FinTech and build alliances. And this year, we are helping to build momentum for a FinTech Week in Toronto on August 12 – 15, 2019. Our premier event, the annual [Canadian FinTech & AI Awards](#), launched 5 years ago, continues our tradition of celebrating Canadian innovation and innovators and bringing the financial services community together to recognize and pay tribute to you.

As we celebrate our fifth year, we are excited for the growth of technology innovation in Canada and look forward to engaging with you on Canada's journey to innovation leadership.

# THE AWARDS

**5****Years of  
Awards**

For 5 years, the Canadian FinTech & AI Awards have recognized and celebrated innovators, creators, leaders, companies and entrepreneurs in Canada who have been the most innovative in the FinTech & AI ecosystems.

**16****Award  
Categories**

The Awards highlight the resiliency and strength of the organizations and people who work every day to make Canada a tech and innovation leader. We are proud of our [previous Award winners](#) who supported the Institute with its vision to celebrate Canadian innovation with an Awards Gala Dinner.

**46****Past Award  
Winners**

**Know someone who deserves to be honoured for their achievements  
this year?**

## Nominate!

**#CelebratingCanadianInnovation**

For the past five years, we have had the chance to work with many global thought leaders in FinTech and AI on selecting Award winners. Judges contribute significantly to the success of the Awards. Our judges are selected from many of the leading companies including Google, Nvidia, Facebook, NASA, HSBC, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft, LinkedIn, Tesla, Rolls-Royce, Amazon, LG and many more.

At our Awards Gala Dinner celebration, we have had many prominent leaders in FinTech, AI, science and finance present Awards to winners on stage including Nobel Prize Winner Arthur B. McDonald, Kevin O’Leary, Jim Treliving, and Michael Wekerle.

# 16 Award Categories

1. CIBC – FinTech Startup of the Year
2. ICICI Bank – FinTech Company of the Year
3. ATB – AI Company of the Year
4. Payments Company of the Year
5. Blockchain Company of the Year
6. RegTech Solution of the Year
7. Canadian Bankers Association – Bank Innovator of the Year
8. Central 1 – Credit Union of the Year
10. Advisory Firm of the Year
11. Investment Firm of the Year
12. Accelerator/Incubator of the Year
13. VISA – Entrepreneur/Innovation Leader of the Year
14. Scotiabank – FemTech Leader of the Year
15. HSBC – Diversity & Inclusion in Innovation Award
16. Judge's Choice Award

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## HSBC Diversity & Inclusion in Innovation Award

This award is to recognize an organization, a company or a person who has demonstrated leadership in diversity and inclusion in Canada in the innovation space. The demonstration of diversity and inclusion must be measurable and transparent and constitute real support for inclusivity. This award is not open to a scheduled bank, a credit union or financial institution.

This award is sponsored by HSBC.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian person, or organization or entity
- Must demonstrate concrete leadership in diversity and inclusion
- Must be in innovation space
- Results must be visible and measurable
- Not intended for advisory firms but rather is to recognize tech innovators leading in diversity and inclusion
- Not open to banks, credit unions or financial institutions

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Canadian Bankers Association Bank Innovator of the Year

The Canadian Bankers Association – Bank Innovator of the Year Award is for a Canadian bank that has had a positive impact in FinTech in Canada, either by breaking down silos to support innovation internally, by creating innovating and novel FinTech for the financial institution, or by entering into partnerships that support for the development of FinTech. Judges also look for leadership measured by support for many different players in the ecosystems that demonstrates clear commitment to supporting Canadian innovation. This Award is not designed for financial institutions that adopt, deploy, or purchase FinTech created by third parties, but rather is designed to recognize internal innovative initiatives that engage employees and support innovation designed by Canadians.

This award is sponsored by the Canadian Bankers Association.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must be a scheduled bank
- Must be creating innovative Canadian technology
- Must have supported the Canadian innovation ecosystem inclusively

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## CIBC FinTech Startup of the Year

This Award is for a new, up-and-coming FinTech company in Canada that is less than four years old, as of December 31, 2019, and has shown the most entrepreneurial success in the past year in FinTech. Success is measured on a number of factors, including innovative technology, solving a technology need, capturing a new sector or market with FinTech, disruption of a service or market segment, novel application of a product or service, or traction in the international marketplace.

This award is sponsored by CIBC.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be under 4 years old (by December 31, 2019)
- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must have demonstrated tech innovation
- Must provide a financial product/service/technology
- Must have technology that is in use externally or by customers

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Scotiabank FemTech Leader of the Year

Tapping into our roots with the launch of the world's first Women in FinTech White Paper published in 2015 and powered by Innotribe at SWIFT that launched the popular [FemTechLeader](#) series, the Digital Finance Institute is celebrating the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Awards with a FemTech Leader of the Year Award. This Award is designed to recognize a woman who is a leader in technology in FinTech or AI, innovating within Canada. To be eligible, nominees must be leaders in the creation of technology or in a supervisory or oversight role of internal technology creation. This Award is intended to recognize a woman who supports financial technology in a hands-on manner, that benefits Canada and who is a technology innovator.

This award is sponsored by Scotiabank.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must work in Canada
- Must contribute to the Canadian tech industry
- Must have been in technology space for over 3 years
- Must have demonstrated leadership in tech
- Must be known to have supported others to move up the ladder



# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Central 1 Credit Union of the Year

This Award is new and designed to recognize the important role that credit unions play in the Canadian financial services landscape, often providing financial inclusion solutions and banking to niche sectors of customers in targeted areas of the country, and importantly to recognize the innovation in financial services they provide to their customer base. This Award is recognizing a credit union in Canada that is a leader in technology innovation, and that has designed and implemented technology to help customers bank better or to help the credit union improve its services to its customer base. Judges also look for leadership measured by support for many different players in the ecosystem that demonstrate clear commitment to supporting Canadian innovation.

This award is sponsored by Central 1.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must be a credit union
- Must have technology developed that is innovative
- Must have technology that is in use
- Must have demonstrated leadership
- Must have supported the Canadian innovative ecosystem inclusively

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## ICICI Bank FinTech Company of the Year

This Award is for an established FinTech company in Canada that has been providing financial products or services for over four years and is actively engaged in innovation creation. Success is measured by a number of factors, including partnerships with banks or providing services directly to consumers, significant growth or adoption, and name recognition or marketplace leadership.

This award is sponsored by ICICI Bank.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be over 4 years old
- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must have financial services or products for financial services
- Must have measurable external adoption of product or service
- Must have pattern of sustained growth
- Must demonstrate impact of company to ecosystem

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## ATB AI Company of the Year

This Award is for an AI company that has shown the most entrepreneurial success in the past year. Success is measured by a number of factors, including innovation, solving a technology problem with AI, disruption of a service or market segment, application of product or service and traction in, or ability to obtain traction in the international marketplace in AI.

This award is sponsored by ATB Financial.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must have demonstrated impact in AI technology
- Must have novel technology or application worthy of recognition
- Must have technology that is in use
- Open to AI companies in any sector, not only financial services

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## **VISA Entrepreneur / Innovation Leader of the Year**

This Award is for a Canadian person who has demonstrated the most leadership in innovation or entrepreneurship in technology, FinTech or AI. It recognizes the person who has had an impact in shaping the Canadian technology dialogue and supporting the innovation ecosystem. Leadership is measured on thought leadership, the advancement of commercial technology or investment in technology and support for ecosystem.

This award is sponsored by VISA Canada.

## **THE CRITERIA:**

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must work in Canada
- Must contribute to the Canadian tech industry
- Must be a person whose contributions have been impactful
- Must have been in technology space for over 3 years
- Must be able to demonstrate leadership through giving back or supporting others in tech

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Payments Company of the Year

This Award is new and is for the company that provides payment services, whatever the model or type, and that is a clear leader in the provision of payments as a service. The nominees must be a Canadian company or have a material part of its business in Canada in order to be eligible. Nominees must have technology that is operational and in use by third parties.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must have created payments innovation
- Must have technology that is impactful for its customers in a beneficial way
- Must have technology that is in use externally
- Must be leader in payments sector

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Blockchain Company of the Year

This Award is for a Blockchain distributed ledger technology or smart contracts development company, or a services company in the Blockchain space in Canada that has developed the most novel, practical or utilized technology for digital currencies, Blockchain or for the public. Success could include consumer traction, tech prowess, novel or globally impactful solutions. This Award is for technology in use.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must be related to Blockchain technology
- Must have created innovative technology
- Must have technology that is in use externally
- Must have solutions that are impactful to end users
- Not intended for advisory services, but rather companies creating technology

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## RegTech Solution of the Year

This Award is designed to recognize either a company, a team within an organization, including a bank, NGO or government agency, or a technology solution that has made a material impact with technology for regulatory compliance in Canada or for a Canadian organization related to financial services. The solution or team could be within a large financial institution and could include, for example, efforts to mitigate financial crime or anti-money laundering law, or could be a stand-alone technology solution designed for third party use. The emphasis of this Award is to recognize the important role that technology plays for responsible innovation and to recognize leadership for responsible innovation in Canada.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity, team or technology solution
- Must have technology that is in use
- Must be a solution related to regulatory compliance
- Must have demonstrated leadership of technology, the solution or as a company
- Must be considered novel, new, or in some way innovative
- Intended to recognize responsible innovation

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Law Firm of the Year

This Award is for a Canadian law firm that has been the most impactful in the FinTech or AI space. It recognizes a law firm that has been in the FinTech or AI space for a number of years and has been instrumental in helping to launch or grow FinTech or AI companies through legal advice.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian firm
- Must provide legal services to FinTechs or AI companies
- Must have demonstrated financing, M&As, or advice related to FinTech or AI
- Must have supported the Canadian innovation ecosystem inclusively



# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Advisory Firm of the Year

This Award is for a consulting or accounting firm in Canada that has been the most impactful in advisory services in the FinTech or AI space. It is for the firm that has been in the FinTech or AI startup space for a number of years, and impactful in helping to develop FinTech or AI companies, either through consulting or accounting services.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian firm
- Must have provided advising services to FinTech or AI companies
- Must have supported the Canadian innovation ecosystem inclusively

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Investment Firm of the Year

This Award is designed for the investment firm whose financial support has been sustained in Canada and has assisting many companies to launch, and that has helped to create innovative technologies or developed the FinTech or AI space the most in Canada.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must demonstrate impact of finance to ecosystem
- Must have demonstrated leadership in funding FinTech or startups
- Must have supported the Canadian innovation ecosystem inclusively
- Not intended for firms that primarily promoted

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Accelerator/ Incubator of the Year

This Award is for the accelerator or incubator that has demonstrated success in helping FinTech or AI startups to launch their business and develop technology, or work with others in the sector to develop the most impactful innovative product or service. This Award recognizes the importance of incubators and accelerators in fostering ecosystem support or other forms of support in Canada that drive and advance innovation inclusively.

## THE CRITERIA:

Nominees are judged on the following criteria:

- Must be a Canadian entity
- Must be in the FinTech or AI space
- Must demonstrate success of startups graduated from accelerator or incubator
- Must demonstrate supportive approach to Canadian innovation ecosystem inclusively

# HOW TO NOMINATE

## NOMINATE NOW!

Complete Online Nomination Form at  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/fintechawards2019>

## AWARDS DINNER PARTY

November 18, 2019

Fairmont Royal York Hotel

Toronto, Canada



# FAQs

## ELIGIBILITY

### **Who can be nominated for an Award?**

Any person or entity that meets the Award criteria can be nominated.

### **Is there a nomination fee?**

No.

### **May I nominate myself?**

Yes, we encourage self-nominations.

### **May I nominate someone in more than one category?**

Yes, as long as they meet the criteria.

### **May I nominate someone who is a previous Award winner?**

Yes.

### **Who judges the Awards?**

Judges from various sectors.

### **When is the nomination deadline?**

October 11, 2019.

### **Can I nominate more than once?**

Several nominations of the same company/individual slows down the process – it is better to submit one well drafted nomination.

# NOMINATION FAQs

## NOMINATION PACKAGE

### **Is a Nominee's privacy protected?**

We do not share or publish nominee information except those nominated or the winners.

### **What happens after I submit a nomination?**

You will receive a notification email confirming your nomination.

### **May I submit a nomination by email?**

No, the nomination must be submitted using our online form.

## JUDGING PROCESS

### **How do I know you have received my nomination?**

You will receive a notification email confirming your submission.

### **How are the Award winners chosen?**

Judges determine the winners in each category.

### **What is the role of the Awards Auditor?**

After the judging period is complete, scores from the Judges are sent to the auditor, who will determine the winners.

# NOMINATION FAQs

## AWARDS DINNER

### **Where is the Awards Gala Dinner?**

At the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

### **Is there a cocktail reception before?**

Yes.

### **Is the Awards Gala Dinner free?**

No, you must purchase a ticket to attend.

### **When is the Awards Gala Dinner?**

November 18, 2019.

### **How many people attend the Awards Gala Dinner?**

The cocktail reception attracts over 3,000 people from across Canada. The Awards Gala Dinner is attended by over 650 people.

### **Do winners get an actual award?**

Yes.

### **Do I have to attend the Awards to win if I am nominated?**

Yes, the Awards are a not-for-profit initiative, and your participation makes it possible for us to host the Awards on an annual basis. We believe participation and support are key factors to build a FinTech ecosystem.

### **Will the winners be contacted prior to the Awards?**

No, the winners are announced during the Awards Gala Dinner on November 18, 2019

# NOMINATION FAQs

## CONTACT

Questions? Email us at [awards@digitalfinanceinstitute.org](mailto:awards@digitalfinanceinstitute.org).

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