



2020 Tekne Award Application Information

About the Tekne Awards

The Tekne Awards recognize science and technology leaders in Minnesota's innovation economy. The awards celebrate the individuals and organizations that play a significant role in creating new technologies to educate and improve the lives of Minnesotans and people around the world. The Tekne Awards are celebrated annually and presented by the Minnesota Technology Association (MnTech).

Minnesota Technology Association
400 S 4th Street, #416
Minneapolis, MN 55415
www.tekneawards.org

2020 Key Dates

- May 20** – Applications open
- August 7** - Application deadline
- September 30** –Finalists announced. Up to four finalists per category
- November 18** – Tekne celebration and recipient awards

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Science or technology companies and organizations doing business in Minnesota, as well as non-profit, higher education and government institutions are eligible to apply.
- The majority of the work for the project, product or service and the team dedicated to the project, product or service for which the application is being submitted, must be Minnesota-based.
- Companies/Organizations do not have to be a member of MnTech to apply.
- There is no cost to apply.
- Previous Tekne Award recipients are not eligible to apply with the same initiative for which they previously received an award.
- Previous applicants or finalists not selected as a recipient may submit a new application for the same initiative. However, it must demonstrate specific, measurable growth and improvement over the past year.
- Maximum of two applications per organization per year. If submitting two applications in a given year, each must be for a different initiative. Limit of one submission per award category.
- Nominations for the COVID-19 Community Response award do not count toward the maximum noted above.
- The Minnesota Technology Association reserves the right to modify rules and eligibility.

CREATING AN ACCOUNT AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

- 1. Review this document** to familiarize yourself with 2020 Tekne Awards program, then gather necessary information to make your submission. Go to the “Apply” tab at www.tekneawards.org. The Tekne application form resides on a tool called SmarterSelect.
- 2. Create a SmarterSelect account** if you do not already have one. Go to <https://smr.to/p66279> to create your account. Be sure you have submission approval from your organization.
- 3. Preview the application.** You can begin an application, save it, then finish later. Be sure to submit before the deadline. Once submitted, editing is still possible until 11:59 p.m. on Friday, August 7, 2020.
- 4. Select award category.** Category descriptions begin on page 4 of this packet. Organizations may apply in no more than two categories. All submissions must be unique; separate form required for each. Refer to instructions on subsequent pages for category specific details and application requirements. Include specific, quantifiable information to help the selection committee make an informed decision. Applicants are asked to submit up to two links/attachments for each application that will provide additional context to your submission. Some examples include a white paper, case study, product/service brochure, photo, short video, stakeholder testimonial, etc.
- 5. All fields** in the application form must be completed to be considered for the award. Applications may be edited by you via the SmarterSelect tool until the deadline (August 7).
- 6. Applications will only be accepted online. APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2020.**

Questions? Contact Patty Carruth at 952-230-4554 | patty@mntech.org

2020 AWARD CATEGORIES

BUSINESS ENABLEMENT THRU TECHNOLOGY

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.

TEKNE APPLICATION CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

- First and last name of the person who should receive all Tekne communication from MnTech, including questions related to the application, event specifics and announcements
- Title
- Email
- Phone Number
- Organization name
- Address, City, State, Zip
- Organization Website

AWARD CATEGORY

Select 1 of 16 award categories.

Business Enablement thru Technology:

1. AI/Machine Learning
2. Data Analytics
3. Data Security
4. Digital Marketing
5. Digital Transformation
6. Edge Computing & IoT

Innovation in Minnesota's Leading Industries:

7. Advanced Manufacturing
8. Financial Services Technology
9. Healthcare Information Systems
10. Medical Technology & Devices
11. Retail, Supply Chain, and Distribution
12. Sustainable Resources

Vibrant Tech Ecosystem:

13. Tech Talent– Corporate Initiative
14. Tech Talent – Solution Provider
15. Tech for Good
16. Technology Partnership

AWARD APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Organization Description. (Up to 100 words.) Please provide a description of your organization. This will be published by the Minnesota Technology Association should your organization be selected as a Tekne finalist.

Project, Product or Service Description. (Up to 250 words.) Please provide a description of the project, product or service for which you are submitting this Tekne application. The description should include a key feature that makes it a standout in the marketplace. The Minnesota Technology Association will publish this information, should your organization be selected as a Tekne finalist.

Please include up to two attachments to materials that will provide additional context to your submission. (Required.) Some examples include a white paper, case study, product/service brochure, photo, short video, stakeholder testimonial, etc.

Links to additional materials can also be included in your response.

Award Category Alignment. Please advise why you chose this award category. Your response will provide more context to Tekne judges, especially if your project, product or service has synergy across multiple categories.

Project Contributors. Please list the names and titles of contributors (up to six) on this project, product or service.

AWARD APPLICATION DETAIL

Value Proposition/Business Impact

Point Value: **40 points**

Response: Up to 300 words

Describe the value proposition for your project, product or service. What problem/s does it mitigate or solve? What benefit/s does it deliver? How does it add value in the marketplace? Include supporting data in your response.

Innovation

Point Value: **30 points**

Response: Up to 300 words

Describe what makes your project, product or service innovative. How has this advanced the state of the art? What differentiates your project, product or service from your competition?

Outcomes & Important Accomplishments

Point Value: **20 points**

Response: Up to 300 words

Provide three outcomes or accomplishments that illustrate your success within the last year (e.g.: industry recognition, patents, program metrics, milestones achieved, committed partnerships, significant obstacles overcome, etc.). Include the evaluation criteria by which success is defined, measured and evaluated.

Judges Discretion

Point Value: **10 points**

Response: none

Tekne judges will award up to 10 points based on the perceived impact your project, product or service contributes to Minnesota's innovation economy.