



2021 InBIA Awards Nomination Materials

Nomination Deadline: January 31, 2021

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2021 InBIA Awards

Each year, the International Business Innovation Association (InBIA) honors entrepreneurship centers and their clients that exemplify the best of the industry. These organizations and their outstanding companies have made important industry contributions through their products, services, programs, and examples. These awards are about the heart of entrepreneurial support and innovation. Urban or rural, specialized, or mixed-use, wherever they're located, the InBIA Awards recognize models of industry leadership and best practices.

This guide contains detailed information on what information you should prepare for your application(s) and what judges look for in each of the award categories. Please read the sections relevant to the award(s) for which you plan to apply carefully.

The 2021 InBIA Awards include:

Entrepreneurship Center of the Year Awards:

- [Technology/Science](#)
- [Mixed-Use](#)
- [Sector-Focused](#)
- [Rural](#)

Specialty Awards:

- [Most Innovative Program](#)
- [Excellence in Communications \(new\)](#)
- [Soft Landings \(new\)](#)
- [Outstanding Client](#)

Premiere Awards:

- [Dinah Adkins Award](#)
- [Randall M. Whaley Award](#)

Entrepreneurship Center of the Year Awards

InBIA's entrepreneurship center of the year awards recognize entrepreneurship centers that have developed and implemented "best in class" practices to better serve their clients and accomplish their missions. The following information applies to all of the application forms in the following categories:

Categories:

- Technology/Science
- Mixed-Use
- Sector-Focused (food, software, life sciences, fashion, arts, makerspaces, etc.)
- Rural (population of less than 50,000 people within 50 miles of location)

Application Form Information

Before you start the online application form, you may want to prepare the information you are planning to submit. The following information provides insights on what you need to have on hand and what the judges will be assessing in their review.

– Basic Information

- Contact information:
 - Center contact information (contact name, phone number, email address, physical address, website)
 - Shipping information (awards will be shipped to the designated recipients address)
- Center overview details:
 - Date of inception
 - Number of employees
 - Gross square footage
 - Contact information for a member of your Board of Directors
- Center mission and operations details
 - Description of how your center integrates into the broader ecosystem
 - Center mission
 - Center goals
 - Types of business services and programming offered
 - Types of events hosted
 - Industries served
 - Client demographics
 - Presence of graduation policies
 - Existence of mentoring programs

Program Details

The application form also includes sections in which you will describe different aspects of the programs and services you offer. The associated questions explore:

1. **Program Impact**: Describe the impact your center is having on regional economic development and the broader community. Includes what systems and methods you use to track and measure this impact. Explain the measures the staff use to evaluate programmatic success, including facts and figures to document outcomes. Also, cite specific examples of when the programs and services have helped clients. This could include stories of improved company or organizational growth, viability, financial resources, visibility, marketing, etc.
2. **Creativity**: Describe what is creative about your program, particularly in terms of the programs and services you offer. Provide details about these programs, including what inspired them, if they are modeled off of other programs, and how they are designed to fit your center's needs. Also discuss any barriers your center has encountered to ensuring they continue.
3. **Financial Management**: The application form includes requests for financial information such as how many companies your center served, how many jobs have been created, how the center developed, what the current revenue streams are, and if your center has a financial sustainability plan. You will have to submit All financial figures must be in U.S. dollars.
4. **Case Studies**: Please provide two case studies of client companies your center has served. Describe how the center's services contributed to the companies' success and include statistics as appropriate to show company revenues, success of products, etc.

Attachment: Extra Information

There is space in the application form to submit up to four (4) documents to help illustrate your programs and services or their impact, such as a marketing brochure, newsletter, client information packet, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) scanned news clippings, award/recognition materials, etc. The materials must be in English.

Scoring

Impact	30
Creativity	30
Financial Management	25
Extra Information	15
Total Points	100

Eligibility:

- Entrepreneurship center must have **created and implemented** an **innovative project, program or activity** of short or long duration.
- Entrepreneurship center must have **implemented the innovation for at least one fiscal year** at the time of the nomination and have evaluated and demonstrated the innovation's success. Projects may be ongoing or may occur one or more times per year.

Finalist are required to attend the virtual ICBI35 conference and provide a 5-minute presentation of the application.

Recognition: *Award winners will receive a plaque with their center name and award date in addition to social media, and their organization featured on the InBIA Awards page.*

SPECIALITY AWARDS

InBIA awards in the Specialty Category honor specific activities and accomplishments of entrepreneurship centers to improve their organizations or to better serve their ecosystems, communities and clients. This section of the guide provides separate instructions for each of the following categories:

Categories

- Most Innovative Program
- Excellence in Communications (new)
- Soft Landings (new)
- Outstanding client

Most Innovative Program

Business incubators and other types of entrepreneurship centers began as an innovative way to foster small business growth and success. Today, as entrepreneurship centers evaluate and improve the ways they assist startups and carry out their missions, innovation is embedded in their growth process. An entrepreneurship center's specific innovative activity may be an expansion of normal services or a new way to implement an existing idea. This award honors the entrepreneurship centers that think outside of the box to implement creative programs.

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 - Center goals
 - Types of business services and programming offered

- Types of events hosted
- Industries served
- Client demographics
- Presence of graduation policies
- Existence of mentoring programs

Program Details

The application form also includes sections in which you will describe different aspects of the programs and services you offer. The associated questions explore:

1. Program Impact: Discuss the impact your center is having on regional economic development and the broader community. Includes what systems and methods you use to track and measure this impact. Explain the measures the staff use to evaluate the innovation's success, facts and figures to document outcomes. Also, cite specific examples of whom the innovation has helped and in what ways. This could include stories of how the innovation improved company or organizational growth, viability, financial resources, visibility, marketing, etc.
2. Creativity: Describe what is creative about the innovation you are highlighting with this application. Provide any relevant creative details, including what inspired this initiative, if it is modeled off other programs, and how it is designed to fit your center's needs. Also discuss any barriers your center has encountered to ensuring this initiative continues.
3. Financial Management: : The application form includes requests for financial information such as how many companies your center served, how many jobs have been created, how the center developed, what the current revenue streams are, and if your center has a financial sustainability plan. You will have to submit. All financial figures must be in U.S. dollars.
4. Case Studies: Please provide two case studies of client companies your center has served. Describe how the center's services contributed to the companies' success and include statistics as appropriate to show company revenues, success of products, etc.

Attachment: Extra Information

There is space in the application form to attach up to four (4) documents to help illustrate the innovation or its impact, such as an electronic marketing brochure, newsletter, client information packet, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) scanned news clippings, award/recognition materials, etc. The materials must be in English.

Innovative Program Information

Please prepare and provide three pieces explaining your innovative program:

1. Give an overview of the innovative program you would like the judges to consider. Include the purpose of the program, the people it serves, and what factors led to its conception, design and implementation. What makes it innovative? What aspects are most unique?
2. Please provide up to three goals and/or expectations of the innovative program.
3. Describe the logistical details of the innovative program and how it is implemented, including who carries it out, which clients it affects, how it helps your entrepreneurship center, what modifications or improvements have been made since the program started, how the innovative program can be used by other centers, and other relevant details.

Scoring

Impact	30
Creativity	40
Financial Management	25
Extra Information	5
Total Points	100

Eligibility:

Eligible centers must:

- Have **created and implemented** an **innovative project, program or activity** of short or long duration.
- Have **implemented the innovation for at least one fiscal year** at the time of the nomination and have evaluated and demonstrated the innovation's success. Projects may be ongoing or may occur one or more times per year.

Finalist are required to attend the virtual ICBI35 conference and provide a 5-minute presentation of the application.

Recognition: *Award winners will receive a plaque with their center name and award date in addition to social media, and their organization featured on the InBIA Awards page.*

Excellence in Communications

This award recognizes entrepreneurship centers that have designed and executed exemplary communications, marketing and storytelling initiatives since January 2019. Initiatives for recognition include annual reports, economic impact reports, brochures, infographics, website redesigns, blog/vlog/podcast series, social media campaigns, media kits, mobile apps and other creative works that highlight the importance and impact of entrepreneurship centers.

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Program Details

The application form also includes sections in which you will describe different aspects of the programs and services you offer. The associated questions explore:

1. Program Impact: Discuss the impact your center is having on regional economic development and the broader community. Includes what systems and methods you use to track and measure this impact. Explain the measures the staff use to evaluate the innovation's success, facts and figures to document outcomes. Also, cite specific examples of whom the innovation

has helped and in what ways. This could include stories of how the innovation improved company or organizational growth, viability, financial resources, visibility, marketing, etc.

2. Financial Management: The application form includes requests for financial information such as how many companies your center served, how many jobs have been created, how the center developed, what the current revenue streams are, and if your center has a financial sustainability plan. You will have to submit. All financial figures must be in U.S. dollars.
3. Creativity: Describe what is creative about the communications initiative you are highlighting with this application. Provide any relevant creative details, including what inspired this initiative, if it is modeled off other programs, and how it is designed to fit your center's needs. Also discuss any barriers your center has encountered to ensuring this initiative continues.
3. Case Studies: Please provide two case studies of client companies your center has served. Describe how the center's services contributed to the companies' success and include statistics as appropriate to show company revenues, success of products, etc.

Attachment: Extra Information

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Communications Information to submit

1. Summary of Initiative: What is the purpose of the initiative? Who is the target audience? What factors led to the design and execution of the initiative? How are you implementing creativity in the initiative? What is unique about the initiative?
2. Description of Specific Goals and Expectations: How does the initiative support the entrepreneurship center's overall business strategy? What were the measures of success?
3. Assessment of Effectiveness: Did it achieve the desired marketing goals? What methods and media communications strategies were used? What challenges were encountered and addressed during the design and execution of the initiative? What actions did members of the target audience take as a result of the initiative? What led to the initiative's success? Please share evidence of effectiveness and reach.
4. Description of Required Resources (staff, funding, software, special expertise, etc.): How easy would it be for other entrepreneurship centers to replicate this initiative?
5. Diversity Goals: Please describe how this initiative supports a diverse and inclusive culture at your entrepreneurship center.

6. Examples of the creative work:

- a. If possible, provide url to digital work product
 - i. For video, YouTube, Vimeo or another link to view in browser is preferred
 - ii. if required, provide a username and/or password
- b. File uploads are supported for the following file types: png, gif, jpg, jpeg, doc, xls, docx, xlsx, pdf, txt, mov, mp3, mp4
- c. Please limit file sizes to 50 MB per submission
- d. Please limit videos to a maximum length of 5 minutes
- e. 72 dpi is the preferred resolution for digital files of print media. High resolution not required.

***Please note: There is a permissions release that must be completed in your application. By granting InBIA the right to display your works these pieces will be featured across our virtual event platform, website, and social media channels.

Scoring

Creativity	45
Effectiveness	35
Replicability	20
Total Points	100

Eligibility: Any entrepreneurship center that has marketing and communications initiatives can apply for this award. Entrepreneurship centers can submit unlimited applications. The application fee of \$250.00 per application is waived for InBIA member organizations

Recognition: *Award winners will receive a plaque with their center name and award date in addition to social media, and their organization featured on the InBIA Awards page.*

Soft Landings

The InBIA Soft Landings designation is available to any entrepreneurship center that clearly demonstrates resources and programming to meet the needs of foreign/non-domestic companies that want to enter their markets. This award is for a Soft Landings designee excels in providing companies with various services. Ultimately, Soft Landings designees ensure that foreign companies experience a “soft landing” when entering a new country or market. Soft Landings programs may vary based on the service area of the center, sector(s) served, or the goals of the program, but many Soft Landings programs offer a mixture of the following services:

- Sector specific services and coaching
- Translation services
- Language training
- Domestic market research and entry assistance
- Access to capital and potential investors
- Intellectual property protection assistance
- Help meeting government regulations
- Import/export support
- Patent assistance
- Cultural training
- Immigration and visa assistance
- Housing assistance

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Program Details

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2. **Financial Management:** : The application form includes requests for financial information such as how many companies your center served, how many jobs have been created, how the center developed, what the current revenue streams are, and if your center has a financial sustainability plan. You will have to submit. All financial figures must be in U.S. dollars.
3. **Case Studies:** Please provide two case studies of client companies your center has served. Describe how the center's services contributed to the companies' success and include statistics as appropriate to show company revenues, success of products, etc.

Attachment: Extra Information

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Information to submit

1. **Program Impact:** Based on the list of possible services at the beginning of this section, please provide data showing how well your center provides these essentials to clients and any steps you have taken to increase your offerings in your Soft Landings program.

2. **Creativity:** In an effort to leverage your ecosystem, what have you done to extend the reach of your program? Describe any partnerships you have created to provide your Soft Landings clients with additional resources and support.
 - a. Marketing campaigns: provide copies of promotions, offering and outreach utilized to bring in additional clients or partnership geared towards your soft landings' initiative.
 - i. Attachment: (maximum of 2 pages) Data indicating that an increase in your program's participation/ interest increased due to advertisements, promotional outreaches, or partnerships.

3. **Additional attachments:** (15 possible points) You may provide up to three letters from current or past companies indicating the how your center and program has benefited or supported their growth.

Scoring

Impact	60
Creativity	25
Other	15
Total Points	100

Eligibility: Entrepreneurship centers with an active Soft Landings designation are eligible to submit an application.

Recognition: Award winners will receive a plaque with their center name and award date in addition to social media, and their organization featured on the InBIA Awards page.

Outstanding Client

All entrepreneurship center managers have clients of which they are particularly proud. The InBIA Outstanding Client award provides the opportunity to showcase these clients to the entrepreneurship community worldwide as well as the broader public.

Application Form Information

Before you start the online application form, you may want to prepare the information you are planning to submit. The following information provides insights on what you need to have on hand and what the judges will be assessing in their review.

Basic Information

- Contact information:
 - Center contact information (contact name, phone number, email address, physical address, website)
 - Shipping information (awards will be shipped to the designated recipients address)
- Client company contact information: name, address, and website
- Year the company was founded and the founders' names
- Month/year the company entered your entrepreneurship center
- Company's total revenue* in its first year within your entrepreneurship center and in its most recent fiscal year (specify the beginning and end dates of the company's fiscal year)
- Total investments* by others (grants, angels, venture capitalist, etc.) in the most recent complete fiscal year
- A paragraph describing, in layman's terms, the company's product or services, what market need(s) it addresses and the company's business plan to capitalize the market

*Our judges represent several countries, so for accurate comparisons, please provide financial information in U.S. dollars

Program Details

Provide the following information about the client company in the submission form. Description for each area is limited to 4000 characters.

1. Company Accomplishments: Describe the company's accomplishments and explain why the company should be considered for this award. Relevant factors include, but are not limited to, rapid growth, important clients, investments, obtained, achievement goals, awards or grants obtained, overcoming significant obstacles, and development of a unique technology, product,

or service.

2. **Business Development Help:** Describe specific business development services the entrepreneurship center currently provides or has provided within the past year to the company and explain how these programs have helped the firm grow and professionalize operations. List all relevant help; examples could include help with or linkages to services such as mentors, legal assistance, marketing strategy, professional services, regulatory compliance, cash flow management, personal skills development, debt and equity financing, or intellectual property management.

Attachment: Extra Information You may attach up to four (4) informative documents such as an electronic company brochure, company profile, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) scanned news clippings and/or award/recognition materials. Materials be in English or have an English translation included.

Scoring

Company Accomplishments	50
Business Development Help	40
Extra Information	10
Total Points	100

Eligibility

1. Client companies that have participated only in a stand-alone program (microloan borrower, seminar open to the public, etc.) are **not** eligible to be nominated for this award.
2. Nominated company cannot have been purchased by another company.

Recognition: *Award winners will receive a plaque with their center name and award date in addition to social media, and their organization featured on the InBIA Awards page.*

Premiere Awards

InBIA's most prestigious awards honor member entrepreneurship center programs that exemplify the association's principles and practices of successful business incubation and entrepreneurship center management. The winners of these awards will be chosen from the selected entrepreneurship centers of the year. InBIA staff will notify winners in advance and they must attend the virtual ICBI35 conference to receive the awards as part of the event.

Categories

The Dinah Adkins Award will be given to a mixed-use of sector-focused center. This includes entrepreneurship centers that serve a wide range of client types or serve clients primarily in a non-technology industries. These centers can include mixed-use, manufacturing, arts, service, kitchen, or other sector-focused, non-technology incubation programs.

The Randall M. Whaley Award will be given to a center that focuses on technology companies. These centers can include general technology, internet, biotechnology, communications, software design, information technology, environmental technology, and other types of technologies.

Recognition: Dinah Adkins and Randall M. Whaley award winners *will receive \$1,000, an award and promotion at ICBI35 and InBIA social media and website channels.*

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why should I apply for an InBIA Entrepreneurship Award?

Winning an InBIA award generates national and community recognition of the excellence of your entrepreneurship center. Winning programs will be profiled on InBIA's website, in our e-Newsletter, as part of InBIA's international conference and via news releases. Winning the award also could bring you state and local media attention, and the consequent recognition of your program's excellence could be instrumental in helping you gain additional stakeholder support.

2. Does presentation matter?

While the information you provide is more important than appearance, your submission form and the attachments you upload should be as neat and complete as possible. The requested descriptions should be clear and concise, providing specific information in response to the requests in the nomination materials.

3. How long will it take to complete an application?

If you use this guide to prepare all the pieces in advance of starting the online form, completing the survey itself should take 20 to 30 minutes.

4. May I apply for more than one category?

Yes, you can apply for multiple categories. Please note that all nonmember applicants are required to submit a fee of \$250.00 per application of the Entrepreneurship Center of the Year or Specialty Awards. **The Dinah Adkins and Randall M. Whaley Awards will be chosen from the following categories:**

Technology/Science

Mixed-Use

Sector-Focused

Rural Entrepreneurship

Most Innovative Program

5. When will I receive notification of the results of the awards judging?

An InBIA staff member will contact the finalists by March 15, 2021.

6. I am not sure which awards I should submit nominations for.

Consider the category in which you are strongest and then choose. For example, to win an Entrepreneurship Center of the Year award, your program should have sufficient experience to compete with other mature programs that have strong track records of graduating successful companies. If your program is less mature, you may wish to nominate one of your innovative programs. Although the innovative program you nominate must be excellent, a relatively lengthy incubator track record is not required to win this award.

7. What are some common qualities of past winning entries?

- All the requested information is provided.
- All information is easy to read and understand.
- The descriptions are clear and concise.
- There is solid information on how the program has helped successful clients or graduates excel.

8. I represent a small entrepreneurship center. How could our program expect to win when other entrepreneurship centers are broader in scope and have greater resources?

It isn't the size of your entrepreneurship center that matters to the InBIA judges. It is your incubator's quality of service and how your clients have succeeded in relation to the resources you have available.

9. How are the nominations judged?

Nominations are scored by panels of InBIA member entrepreneurial support professionals with extensive industry experience as either entrepreneurship center managers or industry consultants.

10. Who has won InBIA awards in the past?

See past winners in the InBIA Awards Showcase at <http://www.inbia.org/success-stories/inbia-awards>

11. Are prior winners allowed to submit again?

Yes! If you have seen new successes, we want to hear about it and want you to submit!

2021 Timeline:

January 11 th	Applications opened	
January 31 st	Applications closed	
March 15 th	Finalists selected	Headshot and summary of finalists' submissions required
April 26-30 th	Finalists to deliver 5-minute presentation at ICBI35	Presentation guidelines will be provided
April 26-30 th	Fireside chat with winners of the Premiere awards	