



# Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance

## PRESS RELEASE

**GOVERNOR PRITZKER, MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON,  
WORLD BUSINESS CHICAGO & CHICAGOLAND BUSINESS LEADERS  
LAUNCH THE CHICAGOLAND CLIMATE INVESTMENT ALLIANCE TO  
DRIVE CLIMATE INNOVATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

CHICAGO (October 5, 2023) – In a groundbreaking announcement before a distinguished audience of national and regional business and civic leaders, founders, and investors at the Chicago Venture Summit Future-of-Climate-Tech event, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson introduced the Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance.

The Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance (the “Alliance”) represents a pivotal step forward in harnessing the strengths of the Chicagoland region and the broader Midwest, positioning it as a leading hub for climate innovation, economic development, and investment. The Alliance will support the commercialization of climate technologies and strengthen the region's innovation ecosystem to address climate challenges through technology and innovation.

“Here in Illinois, we’re proud to be a nation-leading hub of clean energy policy, investments, and innovation,” said Governor J.B. Pritzker. “The landmark Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance is another step forward that will propel our workforce, industries, and businesses toward an equitable, clean energy future. As the heart of the Midwest and the nation, we will continue to lead the charge with bold actions rooted in the highest levels of ethics, equity, and consumer protections.”

“I’m fully committed to working with organizers and frontline communities that have shouldered the burden of pollution, climate change and environmental justice for far too long,” said Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson. “Now is the time for transformative change, and together, we’ll build a more equitable city and region. I am confident that the Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance will help our city, state and the entire Midwest realize a more resilient and equitable future.”

Among the first orders of business for the Alliance is organizing a Midwest consortium led by the National Community Investment Fund to submit a \$1 billion proposal entitled “*Rust Belt to Green Belt Initiative*” to the EPA's Clean Communities Investment Accelerator, a central component of President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act. The proposed plan underscores the region's commitment to targeted decarbonization funds, symbolizing a distinct transformation from rust belt to a hub of sustainable climate innovation.

The Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance will:

- Forge an Interconnected Climate Innovation Ecosystem: Prioritizing cohesive and impactful programming across sectors, including agtech, clean energy, water, food, and recycling.
- Accelerate Local Startups: Providing support to innovative, eco-friendly solutions born throughout the Chicagoland region.
- Mobilize Substantial Climate Investments: Spurring job growth and economic development in Chicagoland and the Midwest, particularly in specialized sectors such as building decarbonization and materials-science innovations.
- Secure Federal Support: Seek federal backing and investment in green initiatives within the Midwest region, with a focus on climate-resilient technologies.
- Strengthen Climate Ecosystem Collaborations: Convening and collaborating with national, regional, and local ecosystem partners to fortify the climate economy, fostering innovation and growth within the Midwest region.

The founding members of the Alliance comprise a diverse group of public, private, and civic entities, including World Business Chicago, the State of Illinois, City of Chicago, Invenergy, ComEd, Nicor Gas, Jones Lang Lasalle, and Wanxiang America. Together these founding members have pledged \$2M in support to kick off the Alliance and ensure it serves as a catalytic driver of the Chicagoland economy.

“Invenergy is leading the clean energy transition from our headquarters in Chicago, and we are proud to be a founding member of the Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance,” said Michael Polsky, founder, and CEO of Invenergy. “Our support of the Alliance demonstrates our continued commitment to making Chicago the nation’s leader in climate investment and innovation.”

Additionally, the Alliance is securing a range of ecosystem partners for collaboration on programming, federal grants, and startup support, partners to date include P33, 1871, mHUB, Current, Dynamo Energy Hub, Evergreen Climate Innovations, Innovate Illinois, Portal Innovations, Illinois Science & Technology Coalition, Northwestern University’s Paula M. Trienens Institute for Sustainability and Energy, the Energy Policy Institute & the Polsky Center at the University of Chicago, the Kaplan Institute at the Illinois Institute of Technology, the University of Illinois System, and the Discovery Partners Institute. Together, these partners champion a unified vision and resolute dedication to spearheading the climate innovation vanguard.

World Business Chicago is spearheading this collaborative effort, uniting diverse stakeholders integral to this ambitious initiative. “The Chicagoland region’s built-in environment is an ideal one, as we have a diversity of industries, a vast variety of commercial real estate stock, world-renowned universities and research labs, the country’s largest food and agriculture production, and a large, open body of fresh water,” said Michael Fassnacht, President & CEO, World Business Chicago. “This gives us a significant advantage in shifting industry and business towards impactful climate application that will reverberate throughout the entire country.”

The launch of the Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance not only represents a commitment to eco-resilience but also marks the dawn of a transformative era characterized by synergy and pioneering ventures throughout the Midwest. The Alliance and Evergreen Climate Innovations will strategically co-locate at Fulton Labs (400 N. Aberdeen) alongside the new Chan-Zuckerberg Biohub and Portal Innovations, fostering a physical hub for regional collaboration.

“As a founding member of the Chicagoland Clean Energy Alliance, Nicor Gas is proud to be a part of this collaboration committed to taking bold steps to drive impactful and innovative solutions and partnerships to address climate challenges,” said Nicor Gas President and CEO, Wendell Dallas. “Natural gas and the infrastructure that transports it play a critical role in growing Illinois’ clean energy economy. By working together across sectors, we will pave the way for a greener, more resilient Chicagoland and Midwest region.”

“We are in an era where business operations and environmental stewardship intertwine. The compelling synergy of technology and sustainability is not a choice but a necessity,” said Pin Ni, President, Wanxiang America. “That is why partnerships like the Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance aren’t just commendable; they resonate with our core belief that the future of manufacturing and business, at its core, is green.”

“The Chicagoland Climate Investment Alliance represents a fantastic opportunity to leverage our resources – people, technology, and capital – for a brighter, more resilient future. Shared innovation is exactly what we need to put Chicago ahead of the curve for a clean energy transition,” Josephine Tucker, Managing Director, Clean Energy and Infrastructure Advisory, and Global Head of Sustainable Infrastructure, JLL.

“Lowering carbon emissions across transportation, buildings and industry is essential to combat climate change and to make our Illinois communities and businesses more sustainable and competitive for the future,” said Gil C. Quiniones, CEO of ComEd. “ComEd is proud to support the launch of the Alliance and to continue working with our city, state and regional partners to achieve the shared priorities highlighted in CEJA and the City’s Climate Action Plan, ensuring all of our communities’ benefit from the move to a clean energy economy.”

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Media contact:

Andrew Hayes, 312-823-4333

[ahayes@worldbusinesschicago.com](mailto:ahayes@worldbusinesschicago.com)