

## Annual 1Awards looking for this year's local business contenders

*Applications are now open for a chance to share in \$100,000 in cash and in-kind services*

**Niagara, ON, March 26, 2019** – FirstOntario Credit Union and its community partners are back for the fourth annual 1Awards competition. The event, which includes Niagara area businesses, was designed to support local entrepreneurs.

A group of finalists will be chosen from the list of applicants to present a 15-minute pitch to judges in June. Winners will share \$20,000 in cash and \$ 80,000 worth of in-kind, professional services to help them execute future plans. Prizes are based on needs and while everyone can use cash, the judges determine how the prizes will be allocated following the presentations.

In four years, FirstOntario and 1Awards partners have invested close to \$500,000 into its business communities. Partners include Niagara College, Form & Affect, KPMG, Lancaster, Brooks and Welch LLP, Niagara Dailies, Brock University and Giant Shoe Creative. Last year's winners include Hometown Ice Cream, Thorpe Concepts, Stathletes and Hamill Machine Company.

To be eligible for the 1Awards, businesses must have 50 employees or less and have been in business for at least 24 months. The business must demonstrate "measureable growth", such as workforce expansion, innovation and community impact. Submissions are now open. Eligible candidates must apply before **Friday, May 3, 2019**.

For more details and to fill out an application online, visit [1AwardsNiagara.ca](http://1AwardsNiagara.ca) or stop by any FirstOntario location in the Niagara Region.

### **About FirstOntario Credit Union**

FirstOntario has been serving Members in the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario since 1939. Our credit union now has over 126,000 Members and more than \$5.4 billion in assets under management. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits including our award winning student nutrition program. Learn more about us today at [FirstOntario.com](http://FirstOntario.com).

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