

Participate in  
ATHENA<sup>PowerLink</sup><sup>®</sup>

### Business Owners

Read about how to apply at the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center's website at: [www.chicagolandec.org/athena](http://www.chicagolandec.org/athena).

### Advisory Panelists

Complete a short informational survey at:  
[www.chicagolandec.org/athena](http://www.chicagolandec.org/athena).

### Contact

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The Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center (CEC) is a nonprofit affiliate of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce that seeks to make a perceptible and lasting economic impact on the Chicagoland region by providing a comprehensive support network for entrepreneurs through sales and client development; financing; support resources; strategic advisory programs; and community development. For more information, please visit: [www.chicagolandec.org](http://www.chicagolandec.org).



# IS SHE YOU?

ARE YOU **S**UCCESSFUL? **H**IGH-ENERGY?  
**E**NTREPRENEURIAL? THEN **SHE** IS YOU!



Helping Women Business Owners  
Fully Realize the **SHE** Inside

## What Is ATHENAPowerLink®?

ATHENAPowerLink® guides women business owners in achieving strategic goals by providing them with access to volunteer advisory panels of industry experts for 12 months. Each advisory panel is hand-selected to match the needs of each woman business owner. **Business owners benefit from teaming with a dedicated circle of five to seven independent advisors, who are collectively focused on helping them to maximize the growth and profitability of their businesses.**

ATHENAPowerLink® is a program of ATHENA International. ATHENA International is dedicated to creating leadership opportunities for women.

## How Does the Program Work?

The business owner and her advisory panel meet for one orientation session and four strategic planning sessions, which are typically held quarterly. During these meetings, the panel may review the company's business plan, marketing plan, and/or financial statements and advise the owner on a variety of business issues. The business owner directs the activities of her panel in accordance with her specific advisory needs, and the volunteer panelists help her to focus, chart and track progress toward her objectives.

## Who Runs the Program?

ATHENAPowerLink® - Chicago Area is offered through the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center at the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, with financial support from the law firm of Foley & Lardner LLP and National City Bank, and in partnership with the National Association of Women Business Owners - Chicago Area Chapter, the Women's Business Development Center, and the Women Presidents' Organization Chicago Chapter.

ATHENAPowerLink® is advised by a governing body composed of prominent local professionals committed to helping women business owners. The role of the governing body is to oversee the selection of participants and volunteer advisors, the assembly of panels, and panel outcomes.

## Requirements for Business Owner Participation

**To qualify, a business must meet the following minimum criteria:**

- It must be 51 percent owned and actively managed by a woman or women
- It must have been in operation for a minimum of two years
- It must have at least two full-time employees, including the business owner
- Annual revenues must be at least \$250,000 for a retail or manufacturing business or \$100,000 for a service business
- The owner must have clearly defined strategic objectives and specific reasons for seeking an advisory panel

## Benefits of Advisory Panelist Participation

ATHENAPowerLink® also recruits volunteer advisors among seasoned entrepreneurs and top-notch professionals, especially those with expertise in strategy, sales, marketing, accounting, human resources and operations. Advisory panelist opportunities are **open to both professional men and women** dedicated to providing consistent guidance to a women business owner over one year. The approximate total time commitment for a volunteer advisor is 12 to 14 hours over one year.

**ATHENAPowerLink® volunteer advisors benefit from:**

- Experiences that can enhance readiness for board memberships/independent director roles
- Expanded business networks created through advisory panel teams
- Opportunities to apply expertise toward positioning women-owned businesses for revenue growth and job creation