ILLINOIS MUSLIM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Woman Entrepreneur of the Year

Nomination Guidelines

The Illinois Muslim Chamber of Commerce is recognizing a woman entrepreneur in Illinois at **Honoring Her** on **Sunday, November 8, 2026**. We are looking for a woman building something worth celebrating. She does not need to run the largest business or the best known one. **Nominations are open to any woman entrepreneur in Illinois, whether or not she is an ILMCC member, and anyone may submit a nomination.** Nominations close **Tuesday, October 20, 2026**.

WHO CAN BE NOMINATED

- She owns at least 51% of the business, or is a founder actively leading it
- The business is based in Illinois or primarily serves Illinois
- The business is legally registered and in good standing
- The business has been operating for at least two years
- She does not need to be an ILMCC member
- She consents to being nominated and recognized publicly

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE

- Current ILMCC board members and members of the selection committee
- Past recipients, for three years following their award

HOW WE CHOOSE

1. **Business results.** Growth, stability, or staying power. Not only revenue.
2. **Distinctiveness.** What she built that did not exist, or does differently.
3. **Resilience.** Obstacles faced, and what she did about them.
4. **Community impact.** How the business serves her community and Illinois.
5. **Lifting others.** Mentoring, hiring, teaching, opening doors for women.

Each criterion is weighted equally and scored by a review committee.

WHAT THE FORM ASKS

Alongside basic details about the nominee and her business, you will be asked to write the following. Limits are enforced on the form, so aim for the spirit of the question rather than the word count.

Why are you nominating her?	**150 words**
What has she built, and what makes it distinctive?	**200 words**
What obstacle has she faced, and what did she do about it?	**150 words**
How has she supported her community, or opened doors for other women?	**150 words**
Anything else we should know?	**100 words, optional**

You may also attach a photo of the nominee and a link to press coverage or a letter of support. Neither is required.

HOW TO NOMINATE

Submit online at **Nominate here**, or scan the code. The form takes about ten minutes. **Self-nominations are welcome, and we encourage them.** Nominations close **Tuesday, October 20, 2026**.

Questions: samina@ilmchamber.org, lien@ilmchamber.org or contact@ilmchamber.org