

2023

Leaders in Lending

PRESENTED BY



Royal Bank of Canada

About

The Canadian Lenders Association (CLA) supports the growth of bank and non-bank companies that are in the business of lending. We represent and advocate for over 250 companies across Canada that participate in the SMB, BNPL, unsecured consumer, home improvement, automotive, and mortgage sectors. Our members effectively and responsibly use innovative underwriting technology and business practices to address the financial needs of Canadians and support their ability to improve their credit rating.

The CLA is proud to announce its list of finalists for the “Leaders in Lending Awards,” presented by RBC. The nominees on this list were selected on the basis of being world-class innovators and leaders of their respective industries. Finalists are eligible to receive awards offered in previous years such as, “Fintech Innovator of the Year,” as well as new awards such as the “Buy Now Pay Later of the Year,” and the “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award.”

Winners must act in accordance with the [values and goals](#) of the CLA as we work to advance the growth of all aspects of Canada’s lending ecosystem including policy, advocacy, standards, innovation, and the adherence to and promotion of best practices as well as commitment to safe and ethical lending standards.



AWARD

Executive of the Year

The executive of the year award is for the leaders of bank and non bank companies who innovated most in the lending space.

SPONSOR



With more than \$3 billion home improvement loans to over 500,000 Canadians, Simply Group provides consumers with industry leading, high-efficiency, home comfort equipment and financing solutions, to modernize their residential properties.



Michael Walkinshaw Montfort Capital

Michael has a wealth of experience in revenue finance, venture, and debt investing for technology and energy companies. His global network and successful investment track record are some of his most important assets as the CEO of TIMIA Capital. As an entrepreneur and organization builder himself, his focus is on creating new fund vehicles that address the needs of both investors and entrepreneurs.



Cody Green Canada Drives

Cody Green founded Canada Drives in 2010 and serves as Co-CEO focusing on technology and customer experience. Prior to founding Canada Drives, Cody spent a great portion of his professional life working in dealerships across Western Canada. Cody was recognized as 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year for Fintech (Pacific) by Ernst and Young and recognized by Caldwell Partners in 2017 as Canada's Top 40 under 40.



Tate Hackert ZayZoon

Co-Founder and President of ZayZoon, Tate Hackert, was born in Kitchener Waterloo, Ontario and sees himself as a British Columbian at heart since his family moved to Vancouver Island when he was younger. He attended the University of Victoria to study Economics and finished the final semester at the City University of Hong Kong. Tate is the brain behind ZayZoon, developing the idea of providing access to funds before payday, in 2013. He feels gratified knowing "we get to improve the financial health of people each and every day.



Matthew Spoke Moves

Matthew Spoke is the CEO of Moves, the Digital Credit Union of the gig economy. Matt is considered a leader on the cutting edge of future-defining technologies and has spoken at dozens of tech conferences and written for Forbes.com, FastCompany.com, Coindesk.com, Financial Post, TechCrunch. Matt is a strong advocate for the social benefits of decentralized technologies and created the Open Foundation, a not-for-profit focused on advancing blockchain technologies. In addition, he's served as an advisor to governments on the regulatory implications of new technologies like blockchain on the future world of finance. Matt participates in a wide variety of industry groups including, Board of Directors of the Enterprise Ethereum Alliance, Faculty member with Singularity University, Investment Committee of Portal Asset Management, Founding Director, the Blockchain Technology Coalition of Canada.



Hashem Aboulhosn Rocket Mortgage Canada

Hashem Aboulhosn is a long time Canadian mortgage industry leader, founding and recently selling digital brokerage Edison Financial to America's largest mortgage lender, Rocket Mortgage.

AWARD

Risk Officer of the Year

This individual award is awarded to Chief Risk Officers, Data Scientists, Senior Risk Analysts, Senior Underwriters, heads of lending product lines who have demonstrated innovation either through use of advanced underwriting techniques, machine learning, or by inclusion of non-traditional data in their credit modeling.

**Christian Rosati** Neo Financial

Christian Rosati is the Director in Risk Analysis and Credit Decisioning at Neo Financial. Christian has been at Neo Financial for almost two years, spending four years at CIBC prior.

**Neil Thompson** Merchant Growth

Neil Thompson is the Vice President of Risk Management at Merchant Growth. Neil has been at Merchant Growth for four years. He is exceptionally skilled in the field of commercial lending and financial analysis.

**Andrew Bowgen** Simply Group

Andrew Bowgen is the Chief Risk Officer at Simply Group. Andrew is highly skilled in risk management, and has worked at Simply Group for over four years, prior to which he was a Director at Flexiti.

**Rahim Abbasli** Driven

Rahim is an experienced Risk Manager who is well-versed in market risk, credit risk and portfolio management, quantitative methodologies, risk models and tools. He is renowned for being a proactive team player with excellent communication skills.

**Jason Appel** goeasy

Jason is goeasy's current Executive Vice President and Chief Risk Officer, having joined goeasy in January 2013. Jason was previously Senior Vice President, Decision Management, with Citigroup from 2006 to 2012, and prior to that held senior positions in the mortgages and lending division of CIBC. Jason holds a Master of Business Administration from the Schulich School of Business and a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Toronto.

AWARD

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Award

Due to the hard work of leaders in DE&I, Canadian fintech has become more inclusive and able to meet the needs of diverse populations. The CLA wants to recognize the most outstanding leaders in DE&I who made the greatest impact in the past year.



Margaret Adekunle

City Lending Centers

Margaret is a Diversity and Inclusion Strategist and the Founder of ATB Black team members Network. She founded the Black team members network to advance the Inclusion of Black team members by providing development opportunities and creating diverse talents throughout the organization. Her vision is to create a pathway to leadership for all underrepresented groups.



Randeep Purewal

Divercial Group

Randeep Purewal, MBA is the CEO and Founder of Divercial. Divercial is a B2B SaaS Tool helping organizations build inclusive cultures and diversifying talent management. The work of Divercial advocates for objective and unbiased hiring practices to level the playing field for all candidates while optimizing an engaging employee experience. As workplace dynamics continue to evolve, Divercial provides innovative and disruptive solutions for the Future of Work.



Theodora (Theo) Lau

Unconventional Ventures

Theo is a public speaker, writer, and advisor, who work seeks to spark innovation in the public and private sectors for the benefits of the forgotten demographics and to create a more inclusive society. She is the founder of Unconventional Ventures, which focuses on developing and growing an ecosystem of financial institutions, corporations, startups, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and accelerators to better address the unmet needs of consumers, with keen interests in women and underrepresented founders. As part of her work, she regularly mentors and advises startups in the financial services space.



Susan Henry

Alterna Savings

Susan is an innovative and socially conscious Intrapreneur and Community Impact Leader offering 20+ years of experience in the social finance, microfinance and social enterprise arena with emphasis on program development, product design, revenue growth, member and community engagement, as well as community outreach, budgeting, strategic planning and staff management. She has been recognized for working towards delivering positive social impacts on society through expertise in niche market of microfinance serving on various business panels and advisory boards.

AWARD

Auto Lender of the Year

A Covid induced microchip shortage combined with an uptick in demand for driving distance travel has led to an explosion of innovation in the auto lending sector. These nominees have all contributed to advancement in the digitization of the car financing experience and expansion of access to credit for everyday Canadians.



Iceberg Finance

Iceberg Finance is a FinTech company offering alternative financing solutions in the automotive, insurance products, extended warranties and personal loans sectors. Iceberg Finance is distinguished by its innovative financing programs, its state-of-the-art loan platform and its professional customer service. The company also stands out in the personal loan market by offering a simple, fast and transparent financing solution for borrowers. Our IF Xpress program thus meets an important need for our dealer and merchant partners.



Source One

Source One is a Technology-first Commodity Distribution company. Based on High-end Market Intel, GST Inputs, Deep Partnerships with FIs, Stockists and Transporters, it has streamlined the \$30bn Petrochemicals Distribution space, and on a mission to replicate the same in other similar Value-chains, both within and outside Chemicals space. Source One has upended the Pet-chem space by creating a PAN-India network of Stockists and Processors, Transporters and FIs, and is now one of the Largest Distributors in the space. It has been well-covered across the Media space, both national and international. It was covered as a case-study by Facebooks, and also featured in Indian publications like Business Standard, ANI, VCcircle.



Rentugo

RentUgo offers a simple, fast and complete personalized service regardless of credit situation and budget. RentUgo finds solutions and vehicles that will meet everyone's needs. They offer extended warranty financing solutions and customized protection plans for all types of vehicles. RentUgo is a fast, personalized and complete service to address all your needs.



Auto Capital Canada (ACC)

AutoCapital Canada is a national auto finance company that works with dealer partners across Canada to help clients finance the purchase of new and used vehicles. Their flexible lending programs are designed to serve customers whose specific auto loan needs are not met by many traditional financial institutions. They are focused on providing exceptional service by understanding and adapting to the changing needs of their dealer partners and clients. Their team is passionate about providing innovative solutions to many unique borrowing needs.



NorthLake Financial

Northlake Financial specializes in the acquisition and servicing of prime and subprime automotive, marine, powersport and recreational financing contracts. With decades of combined industry experience and a dedication to excellence Northlake offers a full spectrum of financing rates ranging from 4.9% – 32.99% and terms of up to 84 months.

AWARD

Consumer Lender of the Year

This past year, Canadian lenders provided consumers essential loans to service their needs through increasingly fast and digital means. These companies have been selected for going above and beyond this year.



Peoples Group

Peoples Group has been providing tailored financial services to the Canadian marketplace for more than 35 years. Since 1985 their focus has been on exceptional customer service, solidly rooted in extensive product knowledge and experience. Over the years, they've thoughtfully expanded their product and service offerings based on customer needs. They expect to continue this successful journey in the years to come.



Propel Holdings

Propel Holdings Inc. an innovative, online financial technology ("fintech") company, committed to credit inclusion by providing fair, fast and transparent access to credit with exceptional service using its proprietary online lending platform. Through its operating brands, MoneyKey and CreditFresh, Propel is focused on providing access to credit to the over 60 million underserved U.S. consumers who struggle to access credit from mainstream credit providers. Propel's revenue growth and profitability have accelerated significantly over the past two years as Propel has been able to facilitate access to credit for an increasing number of consumers, helping them move forward in their credit journeys.



Spring Financial

Spring Financial is a leading financial technology company that provides all Canadians with simplified money solutions to help build credit, save money, and borrow responsibly. Their mission is to democratize access to better credit with an industry-leading suite of financial solutions that provide better opportunities for Canadians to build credit, save money, and access premium loan products. Their industry-leading product set—including signature credit-building products, mortgage solutions, and personal lending—have allowed hundreds of thousands of Canadians to access financing online, via text, or over the phone – all from the comfort of their own home. Since our launch in 2014, they have become one of the largest fintech companies in Canada with over a million applicants and 250,000 product originations.



Symple Loans

Founded in January 2021, Symple Loans is one of Canada's fastest growing FinTech companies. At Symple, they are in the business of helping hard working individuals who deserve and would benefit the most from access to better, faster and more affordable personal loan options. They strive to be the most respected provider of personal lending solutions globally and to grow our company through an unwavering commitment to our customers. They have built Symple from the ground up, by drawing on years of local and global experience to help better meet the personal lending needs of Canadians.



Goeasy

goeasy Ltd. is a leading Canadian financial services company that provides non-prime leasing and lending services through our easyhome, easyfinancial and LendCare brands. goeasy has generated over 4000% shareholder return since 2001 and has provided over 1 million Canadians access to the credit they need today, when banks weren't an option. They offer a wide variety of financial products and services including lease-to-own merchandise, unsecured and secured instalment loans, direct to consumer auto loans and point-of-sale financing to over 4,000 merchants in the powersports, automotive, retail, home improvement and health sectors.

AWARD

Mortgage Lender of the Year

Canada's mortgage market grew at its fastest pace in over 10 years in the first half of 2021, according to data from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This year also saw the fastest monthly increase in loans borrowed for real-estate purchases since 2007. In such a hot year for the sector, the CLA looks forward to recognizing the most innovative companies.



Pine

Pine transforms the outdated (and complicated) home financing process to create a simpler, faster, and better experience with innovative technology and talented, understanding people. While they are new mortgage company, this isn't their first rodeo. They've carefully curated a team of engineers, experienced mortgage experts and product innovators from fintechs, brokerages and big banks. They know exactly what is broken with the current experience and know how to fix it, build it and scale it. They're ready to disrupt in a big way and have already started by helping new customers obtain mortgages with Pine every day.



Nesto

nesto is on a mission to offer a positive, empowering and transparent property financing experience, simplified from start to finish. Powered by the most advanced technology, we screen the whole market in seconds to find the most affordable mortgage while our commission-free experts provide you with unbiased support along the process.



Equitable Bank

EQB Inc. serves over 360,000 Canadians through its wholly owned subsidiary Equitable Bank, Canada's Challenger Bank™. Equitable Bank has grown to become the country's eighth largest independent Schedule I bank with a clear mandate to drive real change in Canadian banking to enrich people's lives. Founded over 50 years ago, Equitable Bank provides diversified personal and commercial banking and through its EQ Bank platform, which has been named #1 Bank in Canada on the 2022 Forbes World's Best Banks list for the second year in a row.



Perch

Perch is a technology-driven commerce company that acquires and operates great brands at scale. They have acquired and operate over 100 brands, and have raised over \$900M from investors such as SoftBank and Spark Capital. Perch has a unique combination of Amazon, eCommerce, technology, and supply chain expertise, with their CEO having previously designed and built the Wayfair Delivery Network - taking large parcel deliveries from ~1 month down to 2 days.



CMI Financial Group

As a leader in the private lending market since 2005, Canadian Mortgages Inc. (CMI) has established an industry reputation for transparency, professionalism and always treating our customers and broker partners with the utmost care and respect. Fuelled by innovation, they strive to provide both consumers and mortgage brokers with access to non-bank private mortgage funds. Having successfully funded over \$500 million in private mortgages across Canada, they are proud to be one of the country's fastest-growing alternative lending firms.

AWARD

Buy Now Pay Later of the Year

BNPL has been a breakout growth category in consumer lending this past year thanks to the rapid rise of e-commerce. The product itself has redefined how lenders think about purchase finance and changed the way many consumers think about credit itself. There is so much innovation bubbling up in this category and we are pleased to shine a light on some of it.



Afterpay

Founded seven years ago in Sydney, Australia, Afterpay has millions of active customers globally and is offered at the world's best retailers around the world including Anthropologie, Revolve, DSW, GOAT, Finish Line, Levi's, Mac Cosmetics, Ray-Ban and many others. Afterpay is on a mission to power an economy in which everyone wins.



Affirm / PayBright

At Affirm, they are using today's technology to bring significant disruptive innovation to the financial industry. They focus on improving the lives of consumers by delivering simple, honest and transparent financial products.



Uplift

Uplift is an enterprise Buy Now, Pay Later solution solving the complex requirements of the world's leading travel, hospitality, retail, and ecommerce brands. Through an omni-channel payment platform that seamlessly integrates into partners' checkout flow and payment processes, Uplift helps consumers take control of their budget and experience the travel they deserve. Uplift's ML-powered offer engine matches consumers with the right payment plan at the right time, helping brands drive higher conversion and more sales. Uplift's flexible payment solutions are offered by leading brands throughout the United States and Canada.



Flexiti

Flexiti is a Canadian sales financing company founded in 2013. Their mission is to become the leading provider of point-of-sale financing and payment solutions for businesses across Canada. Their vision is to help their partners in the retail, health and home improvement sectors offer flexible sales financing solutions and enable them to sell more, develop and grow, while helping consumers enjoy the things they need and want sooner.



Tabit

Tabit provides a win-win solution for both buyers and sellers. Buyers (small businesses) get the same payment perks as large businesses which improves their cash flow and allows them to buy more. Sellers grow their sales conversion and AOV while eliminating administration as well as fraud and credit risk.

AWARD

Fintech Innovator of the Year

One in every five dollars of venture capital goes into fintech. Lending is one of the largest drivers of fintech innovation in Canada. This award celebrates the many fintech enablers that power the lending industry and help credit providers achieve incredible scale and meet the needs of millions of everyday Canadian consumers and businesses.



Trust Science

At Trust Science®, their mission is to deliver analytics to create trust insights and enable deserving people to access fair credit. They have over 30 patents in twelve countries enabling them to collect, analyze and apply artificial intelligence and machine learning to publicly available digital information and consent-based mobile data. The result is the SIXSCORE, a powerful, robust and dynamic scoring model to accurately assess the trustworthiness of individuals.



Homewise

Homewise is a national end-to-end homeownership platform, centered around its digital mortgage experience that uses data intelligence to match and secure clients with their best mortgage from 30+ banks and lenders in minutes. Homewise then connects clients to their in-house Real Estate solution (Homewise Real Estate) and partners at each step of the process from there, such as insurance and real estate law. Homewise sets the goal of saving Canadian home buyers and owners time, confusion, and a lot of money.



Brim

Beyond their full suite of consumer and business credit cards including buy-now pay-later capabilities, Brim's Platform as a Service enables banks, fintechs, credit unions and large companies to innovate with flexibility and speed. Leveraging their end-to-end digital platform, suite of credit cards, financial products and embedded global rewards enables their B2B partners to launch a turnkey white labeled or co-branded platform in weeks.



MiQ

MiQ is a programmatic media partner for marketers and agencies. Their better connected approach to programmatic advertising means they can connect data, discover insights and activate them in high-performance campaigns to deliver real business outcomes for their clients in an increasingly divided world.



Zenbase

Zenbase, a financial health solution, is the first to offer flexible rent payments in Canada and is committed to economic inclusion that fosters financial empowerment for renters. Their solutions improve the financial wellness of renters while improving operational efficiency for property managers. Rent is usually due on the 1st of the month but that doesn't align with most people's bi-monthly pay cycle. They have fixed that misalignment and provide other financial tools to help level the playing field.

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