Conversation Guide

Technology and innovation

Chicago has been touted as the "Midwest's leading city for tech startup activity," but how accurate is that label? According to a 2018 Crain's Chicago Business article, "Chicago's emergence as a competitive innovation economy cannot come through a false insistence that this is in fact already happening."

Because of the universities and globally respected companies that call this region home, Chicago has a legitimate research and innovation heritage. Now, the city's challenge is to keep pace with the fast-changing technology sector and the benefits it has to offer.

Innovating Chicago: How Chicago competes in a tech-driven society

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In selecting this topic, your *Table* will discuss Chicago's position regarding technology and innovation. Here are some points to consider:

• Over the last 12 years, the Chicago tech venture capitalist market has supported 5 percent of the value of venture deals as seen in the Bay Area, 19 percent of those seen in New York, 21 percent of those seen in Boston, and about a third of those in Los Angeles.

• In 2016, 179 tech companies in the city raised around $1.7 billion, according to data compiled by Built In Chicago. That's more than a $1 billion increase since 2012, when tech companies raised $391 million.

Here are some *resources* to assist you as you prepare to discuss technology and innovation in the Chicago area.

- A short conversation about Chicago's technology and innovation sector
- A close look at Chicago position in the national big tech conversation
- A report on Chicago's startup economy
- Five predictions for Chicago's tech ecosystem in 2019

For additional information, visit onthetable.com.

Here are some *suggested questions* for your Table *discussion:*

1. Do you think Chicago is one of the leading tech cities in the U.S.? In the world?

2. What should the cIty of Chicago do to encourage more tech start-ups and innovation here?

3. How can the city play a role — with or separate from business itself — in ensuring that Chicago's tech community presents equitable opportunities for neighborhoods and residents?

4. What's the role of public-private partnerships in growing Chicago's tech scene?

5. How important is living in an innovation-driven city to you?

6. Would you be interested in having more big tech business come to Chicago?

7. True or False: Chicago's national and international standing depends on having a robust technology presence.