



## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FROM FEDDEV ONTARIO

Article on page 6

 Société de développement communautaire  
**Prescott-Russell**  
Community Development Corporation  
Une Société d'aide au développement des collectivités  
A Community Futures Development Corporation

**Funded by:**  
Federal Economic Development  
Agency for Southern Ontario

**Financé par :**  
Agence fédérale de  
développement économique  
pour le Sud de l'Ontario

**Canada** 



# PREVIOUS EDITIONS

The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation continually supports SMEs throughout the Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario regions. The INFO Magazine for women entrepreneurs is one of the ways we like to promote local businesses by sharing their stories. We have met some amazing women! If you have missed any of the previous issues or would like to revisit any or all of them, simply click on the image or date of edition below. Enjoy!!!



## MAY 2022 EDITION

[Scrap en masse](#)

[Séguin Cabinets](#)

[Centre 1 pas pour soi](#)



## JULY 2022 EDITION

[Kyan Cuisine](#)

[Essie DH](#)

[Académie Shanthaly](#)



## SEPTEMBER 2022 EDITION

[Garden Path Homemade Soap](#)

[Ferme l'Artisan Farm](#)

[Assia Beauty Clinic](#)



## NOVEMBER 2022 EDITION

[Itty-Bitty Spoons](#)

[Le Conciliabule](#)

[Boutique JOMA](#)



You are a woman entrepreneur? You are contemplating making that leap from dream to reality? Or you are simply curious about local businesses, events and entrepreneurial information? We would love to hear from you!



You would like to share your business story and experience? You would like to promote your business, special events, specific promotion, offers and sales? We would love to hear from you!



You would like to offer suggestions for the next issue or would like to recommend a business you feel should be included? We would love to hear from you!



You are curious and would like to know more about the services and funding options offered by the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation? We would love to hear from you!



You would like to be added to our growing email list to receive future INFO Magazine editions, newsletters, current and future services and funding information? We would love to hear from you!



To keep in touch, you simply need to email us at [info@sdcp-prcdc.ca](mailto:info@sdcp-prcdc.ca) and we will gladly include you and your business to our list.



If you would like to include your business in future INFO Magazine editions, we ask that you take a few minutes to fill out a short questionnaire. Please click [HERE](#) to upload the form, fill out and submit. We will contact you shortly after reception.

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# A WORD FROM THE TEAM

## WELCOME TO THE SIXTH EDITION OF THE INFO MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Following a short pause after the Holiday Season Special Edition, the [Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation \(PRCDC\)](#) is happy to present the 6th edition of the INFO Magazine for women entrepreneurs. I sincerely wish to thank [Itty-Bitty Spoons](#), [Le Conciliabule](#) and [Boutique JOMA](#) who generously gave their valuable time in participating and promoting their products and services in the last edition.

Women entrepreneurs continue to play a crucial role in the economic and social development in Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario. We have just recently celebrated the International Women's Day, on March 8th, and I truly believe that the celebration should not stop there.

Following this unifying event, the PRCDC reiterates its commitment to eliminate or reduce barriers for women entrepreneurs and encourage their business development and growth in Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario.

The Women's Entrepreneur Strategy (WES) aims to promote entrepreneurship, to equip and increase the influence of women entrepreneurs, in economic and social decisions, while they hold an increasingly important place in the entrepreneurial world of the Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario communities.

We regularly hear about **new** overnight organizations, without experience, offering programs, funding, coaching and mentoring or other activities to help women at all stages of their business development. This has become a scourge

since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. We, at the PRCDC, have been contributing to the development of women entrepreneurs for almost 37 years. We are not newcomers and as they say ... YES already 37 years serving SMEs. In addition, we must not forget our EDISO financial support program which has invested more than 1.5 million dollars in SME throughout southern Ontario since 2015. Add to that the Women's Entrepreneur Strategy (WES), introduced in 2018, and which has injected several million dollars in the ecosystem for women entrepreneurs in Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario.

It is always easy to improvise as a leader in the development of SMEs, but when you look at the ongoing support, statistics, results, success stories, and commitments to women entrepreneurs and the ecosystem for women entrepreneurs, the PRCDC has always been and will always be the go-to choice in Prescott-Russell and southern Ontario when it comes to helping women attain the skills, networking, coaching, funding and management advice they need to grow as a business.



### ON BEHALF OF THE PRCDC TEAM

John Candie  
Kim Denis  
Pauline Chevrier  
Daniel Sigouin  
Karianne Simard  
Lilia Khodja

HAPPY READING!

# DESTINATION FEMPRENEURE



The [Southern Ontario Women Entrepreneur Initiative \(SOWEI\)](#) is a program implemented by the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation (PRCDC) with the support of the Government of Canada, through [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario \(FedDev Ontario\)](#). This program finances and supports women entrepreneurs in their business journey.

*A benchmark for Francophone and bilingual women entrepreneurs in Prescott-Russell and Southern Ontario*

Among the many services offered by the SOWEI program, the brand new **DESTINATION FEMPRENEURE** website will be available soon.

This website includes 3 main tabs:

01

**TOOLBOX:** Unlimited access to documents and videos in either digital and/or PDF versions, to answer the many questions in order to improve your business' performance. This includes topics such as Creating your Facebook page, Expressing leadership, Business plan, Digital tools for women entrepreneurs, Using Instagram to promote your business, Using video, Social medias, Momentum and the Human connection. A support portal with many organizations supporting women entrepreneurs in the area and how to access the INFO Magazine is also available in this tab.

02

**WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK:** One of the very interesting tools on this tab is the interactive map. This interactive tool allows you to find, in one place, a multitude of information on the majority of businesses run by women in Prescott-Russell and Southern Ontario. Whether it is a search for products, services or to find a networking location in the community, we are committed to helping you discover our devoted women entrepreneurs and to inform you about the businesses near you. You will also find upcoming events and a visual map of the areas served by SOWEI. And this list will continue to grow.

03

**FUNDING AND CONTRIBUTIONS:** This tab, last but not the least, has useful links from financial support organizations. The PRCDC has been supporting entrepreneurs and businesses for over 35 years. Several other organizations and agencies are included with related information and links to facilitate research.



## NEWS FROM FEDDEV ONTARIO

### FedDev Ontario to invest nearly \$40 million for Community Futures Development Corporations to provide targeted support to grow regional economies

Through the [Community Futures Program](#), this continued investment will allow the 36 CFDCs and three CFDC associations in southern Ontario to continue on their path of growth. These organizations offer expert knowledge and tailored on-the-ground support to the rural businesses, organizations and communities they serve. This includes providing business counselling and access to capital, as well as support for community economic development and strategic community planning. Supporting them ensures they can help rural businesses be the best they can be.

*"The support rural businesses and organizations receive from CFDCs is unparalleled. The tools they provide rural businesses drive the economic growth and create jobs which leads to more competitive rural communities. By continuing our support for CFDCs across southern Ontario, our Government is investing in the potential of rural communities and ensuring that they will continue to thrive."*

The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for FedDev Ontario

*"Many businesses in our region have benefitted greatly from the support offered by the Prescott-Russell CFDC. This continued investment in the Community Futures Program is great news for our community and communities across southern Ontario, ensuring that all businesses have access to the tools needed to thrive."*

Francis Drouin, MP for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell

*"The last three years have been very difficult and have required a lot of energy, creativity and adaptation both within our communities and businesses and within our organizations. Thanks to the Government of Canada for its continued support to the Community Futures Program, we will be able to deploy even more vigorously our support and our recognized expertise in business development and sustainable economic development."*

John Candie, Executive Director for the Prescott-Russell CFDC

*"When we opened the brewery eight years ago, we were met with tremendous demand and our growth through various markets was acute. Working closely with our local CFDC office, we were able to purchase additional equipment and hire a qualified workforce to respond to the demand and meet our sales goals. Over the years and as programs open up, we have been able to access additional financing and grants to help our continued success."*

Nicolas Malboeuf, Owner of Tuque de Broue Brewery Inc.



## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

On February 13th 2023, the Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario \(FedDev Ontario\)](#), along with Nancy Gardiner, President of the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and Francis Drouin, MP for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell visited [Tuque de Broue Brewery Inc.](#) to announce an investment of nearly \$40 million over the next three years for southern Ontario's trusted network of Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs).

Rural businesses, organizations and communities make a big impact on Canada's economy. In order to ensure they can meet challenges head on, the Government of Canada is providing access to the tools and support they need to succeed.



# AHOY ADVENTURES



It all began during the 2018 Christmas holidays when Danika Bourgeois-Desnoyers and Brigitte Lavergne-Besner planned a family outing at an amusement center in Ottawa. While keeping a watchful eye on their children, the moms began discussing how WOW it would be to have the same center in our region. Although this is their first entrepreneurial endeavor, they were well advised and supported by their family, who also served as their business models.

They **knew** they had the perfect location to build in Casselman. They **knew** they had the perfect business plan. They **knew** the right questions to ask. What they didn't know, they studied, they researched, they explored. Brigitte proposed and launched a market research poll on their "mom networks" to determine interest in the area. And so, armed with courage, determination and all the information they gathered, construction began at 64 Racine St. in Casselman. The ideal duo were accomplishing their entrepreneurial dream - **AHOY ADVENTURES!** Danika, specializing in the strategy, development and management while Brigitte executing, administering and delivering brilliantly.

Unusually huge challenges began from the very beginning of their project with the COVID-19 pandemic. AHOY Adventures, opened on February 1st, 2022, a little over a month before the closures began. They had to deviate from the original business plan and were able to transform, seize all opportunities and survive thanks to their resilience and creativity, all while juggling their respected careers, and family lives.

When asked "Why an amusement center?" Danika and Brigitte had 3 major points to share:

1. There was no family amusement center complete with a children's multi-sensory room in the region or within 50 km of the Prescott-Russell area.
2. They wanted a family center that stood out, with little details only moms would appreciate, such as Captain Jack and Coralia the Mermaid animating unforgettable parties. Parents could enjoy a café latte or delicious sangria at the Coffee Crisp while the children play or they could hop right into the adult accessible play area and be a kid again. In the summer of 2021, they even launched their tropical terrace which caught the attention of Narcity (a popular digital media channel) who ran a blog on their creative cocktails that created a huge success.
3. And last but not least, AHOY Adventures is home to the first and only recreational multi-sensory room in Ontario. Incorporating a sensory stimulation room for autistic children with developmental disabilities. This feature is very important to them.

For Brigitte and Danika, the secret to their success is resilience, perseverance, creativity AND the twinkle in the children's eyes when they visit. Surviving the pandemic, building an outstanding team and seeing the joy in the children and parents eyes (and sometimes tears when the day is over) brings them such inner pride, motivation and satisfaction.

And, of course, there are future plans. Along with introducing yearly innovative new play area concepts, they are currently researching and consulting on interactive games and developing a treasure hunt inside the structure with a point accumulation system. And this is just to name a few new projects.



**THEIR MISSION:** Each member of the family, on each visit, has an extraordinary experience with pirates and mermaids. Hours of fun for the children, paradise for the parents.

**THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL ADVICE:**  
*"Be ready to become problem-solving experts. Being in business is constantly finding solutions. Their biggest hurdle as women entrepreneurs is definitely balancing business, family and career. They have come to the conclusion that it is impossible! There are constant social pressures to perform, to be good mothers and to always prove yourselves to be taken seriously. Be proud and enjoy the small victories"*

**THEIR 3 PILLARS:**

- Learning is fun
- Creative and stimulating family activity
- Safety, inclusiveness and cleanliness

[www.ahoycasselman.com](http://www.ahoycasselman.com)





# MON PETIT UNIVERS

As a young woman, Dafenid Frédéric dabbled in entrepreneurship with her mother's wholesale food business. Trying her hand at retail with some of her mom's products, she built her self-confidence, taught herself budgeting and the art of negotiating. But Dafenid always felt a rapport with children. In 2010, she contemplated different ideas. Creating a children's clothing line or writing short stories for children. With a lot of market research, and paying special attention to the needs or shortcomings of parents and their children. She discovered that there are parents in the area who remain on a child care waiting list for more than 2 years. And there began her journey and what a journey it has been. Working full time, she dedicated her personal time in researching, planning and obtaining her daycare permit from the Scarborough city, which was not easy and an extremely long process.



With all this, she had to find the time for an important part of her project - recruiting clients. A typical day for Dafenid at the time was working until 5pm to then using public transportation to get to her appointments to meet potential clients. Add to this, the countless hours on the telephone, asking and answering questions and creating contacts and liaisons.

And she did it!!! In September 2015, Mon Petit Univers daycare opened for business as a french language commercial, licensed child care service in Scarborough. At the beginning of this endeavor, everything seemed too difficult, even impossible but today, Dafenid can proudly say with certainty that she made the right

decision not to give up. The children are fulfilled and happy, the parents are very grateful and satisfied of her services and that's all that matters.

She is so grateful to everyone who supported her. Her wonderful family, exceptional friends and superb acquaintances. Her community is also very important to her. Dafenid also takes time from her busy schedule to do volunteer work. She had dedicated at least one day a week to a local food bank, helping people in need and helps to distribute women personal hygiene products to schools in Haiti. This further contributes to her sense of accomplishments.

## What is an entrepreneur?

In Dafenid's opinion, being an entrepreneur is what gives you the freedom to exercise your passions.

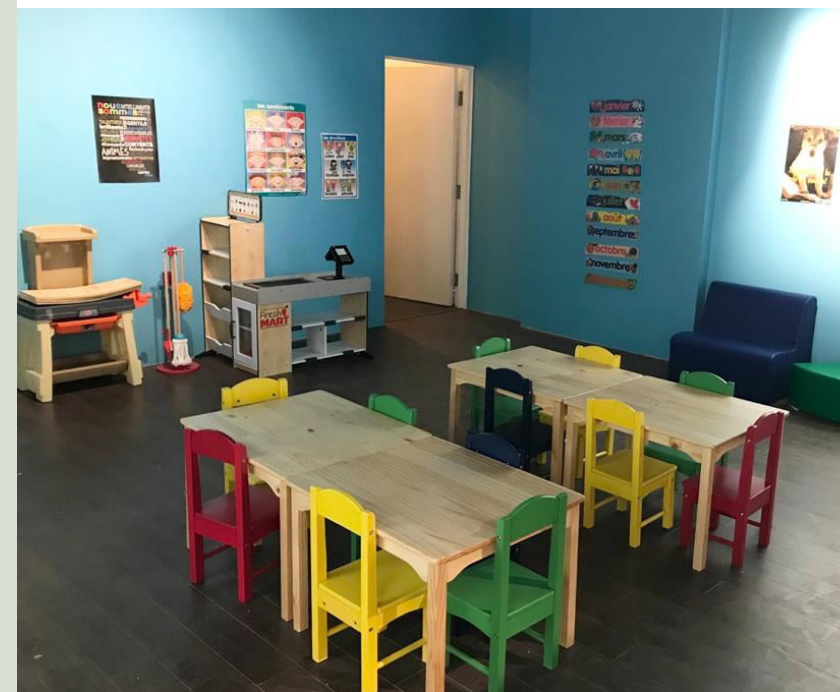
*"As humans, we have so many passions, so many things we want to explore and create and we are inspired by so many events, so having this opportunity to live my passion to the full is one of my reasons for being."*

Being an entrepreneur requires a lot of hard work, every day, all day. As a child care Director, this also means having your eyes on everything, everywhere at all times. On another aspect, there is nothing that gives as much joy as a toddler or a preschooler from an English-speaking background managing to express him/her self in French having spent only 2 or 3 months in her child care. Even counting to 15 or enjoying the structured activities while learning gives her the feeling of contributing something good in their lives and nourishes her soul.

**Dafenid's advice:** When you go into business, be sure to love and believe in what you want to do. Throughout this journey, things will not be easy, you will have doubts, you will make mistakes. However, if you believe in you and your project, this is the very foundation of a great entrepreneurial adventure!



*Mon Petit Univers*



## What is a woman entrepreneur?

The difference between a woman entrepreneur and a man entrepreneur is still open for debate. We haven't reached gender equality yet but we are making a lot of progress. To manage it, you must remain fixated on the targeted objective, express yourself, and above all, DARE. If we keep saying "It's a man's world" this will remain stuck in our minds and will become a handicap that will prevent us from making our own way and reaching our own goals.



# 8 WAYS TO DEVELOP ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

What skills do entrepreneurs need? Networking may well be your first answer. The ability to manage money and time. Strategic thinking. Unwavering curiosity. You will need a real mix of hard and soft skills. You don't have to be born with entrepreneurial skills. An entrepreneur skill comes with passion and discipline. You can discover a passion and you can learn and build self-discipline. What can you do to enhance your entrepreneurial skills?

## Refine your interpersonal skills

### Skill 1

Be confident, friendly and approachable - consistently. Practice these things daily and they will become habitual. Of course, everyone has their "off days". Yet, these interpersonal skills can help weather them.

## Connect with other entrepreneurs

### Skill 2

Social medias is a great place to start. Real-time platforms, they are perfect for eyeballing what others are up to and discovering key people. You can create lists that filter what you see and relevant topics to you. You can also create a list with the top entrepreneurs you admire and/or focusing on competitors.

## Join communities in your field

### Skill 3

Next, join an entrepreneur organization. Local Chambers of commerce are ideal. This way, you can connect with fellow entrepreneurs at the same stage in their work. They may even be trying to solve the same problems. But there are many types of organizations. Local events, workshops and conferences could be beneficial. You can even create or organize an event or workshop to meet and greet local entrepreneurs in your field or even in an unrelated fields. Never pass up the opportunity to learn all business types, strategies, successes and even hardships.

## Take a different path

### Skill 4

Creativity is the root of entrepreneurship. Creativity is the ability to see things differently and to provide solutions where there are gaps. To build your creativity skills, intentionally try something new. Read unusual books. Watch a movie in a different language. Travel to unexpected spots. Talk to people that are out of your circle of comfort.



*You only fail  
when you  
stop trying*

## Practice resilience

### Skill 5

Learn from things that don't work. Challenges happen, and if things don't go according to plan, you need to work out why so you don't experience the same thing twice. Regular retros where you look at what went well, what didn't go so well and come up with solutions that can help document and mitigate future risks or the same scenario. There is great nobleness in being able to stand up, dust yourself off and try again.

## Ring-fence time to de-stress

### Skill 6

Your learning rate as a proactive entrepreneur is going to rocket. With events to attend, talks to prepare, deadlines to meet, customers and suppliers to answer to, your entrepreneurial skills will improve. But work can easily take over your life. Sticking to that "running club" is important, but ... Catch a movie, take time to read a book, exercise, or visit. Be sure to make a personal list as well as a professional one.

## Keep your learning active

### Skill 7

Keep your learning and personal development active. The need for continuous learning is high as an entrepreneur. Look for courses in your field. Think about your strenghts and weaknesses to spot gaps. Whether it's attending conferences, workshops, seminars, events and meetups, spending time with other entrepreneurs will help you grow and offer easy ways to upskill and make new connections at the same time.

## Learn from a mentor

### Skill 8

The value of a mentor is priceless when it comes to building your entrepreneurial skills. Rather than making all the mistakes, why not learn from someone who has already made them? Mentors are not only great sounding boards for your ideas but they also can be fantastic cheerleaders when the going gets tough.





# STRIKEUP 2023



## STRIKEUP 2023

### DECIDE YOU WILL GROW IN 2023

StrikeUP together to advance women's economic empowerment and grow the number of women-owned Canadian businesses.

StrikeUP together to build capacity within the entrepreneurship ecosystem and close gaps in service and support for women entrepreneurs.

*"Women entrepreneurs are raising the bar, breaking glass ceilings, building new bridges and leading Canada's reopening, recovery and prosperity. StrikeUP is our platform to unite women entrepreneurship ecosystem to learn from one another, work together, and move forward with the united vision and approach for equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth for the future."*

Wendy Curtis, Executive Director  
Northumberland CFDC and StrikeUP Founder

In March of 2021, the inaugural StrikeUP conference for women entrepreneurs was launched. Founded by Wendy Curtis, Executive Director of the Northumberland CFDC and with the support of Fed Dev Ontario and the Government of Canada Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES). In just two short years, more than 10,000 women, from every region in Canada and from more than 30 countries, have participated in the conferences. The StrikeUP audience is full of women entrepreneurs, those who champion entrepreneurship and are committed to growth and moving Canada's women forward.

**STRIKEUP 2023** was held on March 2nd 2023 and was another huge success. More than 3000 participants in 37 countries, including every province and territory in Canada attended this year's digital conference for women entrepreneurs with 4 keynote speakers, over 30 growth panel and workshop speakers and 8 workshops and the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation team was thrilled to be part of it again this year.



The Hon. Filomena Tassi



Claudette Commanda

The conference began with opening remarks from the Hon. Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for FedDev Ontario and Claudette Commanda, Algonquin Elder Knowledge Keeper along with the Northumberland CFDC team.

The keynote speakers included Michele Romanow, Co-Founder of Clearco and a dragon on the CBC's Dragon Den, Amber Mac, President of Amber Mac Media Inc., Bobbie Racette, Founder and CEO of Virtual Gurus and Sheena Brady, Founder and CEO of Tease Tea and Founders Fund.

A fireside chat with inspiring and encouraging comments, advice, life experiences and reflections that helped end a wonderful day.



Michele Romanow



Amber Mac



Bobbie Racette



Sheena Brady

### WORKSHOPS

A wide array of workshops presented by representatives from ScotiaBank Women Initiatives, the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH), Export Development Canada, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association (NACCA), the Business Development of Canada (BDC), Innovative Solutions Canada, Safi Media and MNP with just about every topic and entrepreneur can think of, to elevate and maximise a business. Invaluable information, tips and tricks that will certainly make a difference to any entrepreneur that assisted.

## DID YOU KNOW?

333

referrals to the Prescott-Russell  
and southern Ontario regions

5000+

networking connections were  
made virtually and in person

94%

of registrants self  
identify as women

1,161

average number of people  
registered per workshop



# PRCDC FUNDING OPTIONS

The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation (PRCDC), sponsored by [FedDev Ontario](#), continues to deliver its mandate to encourage the development and diversification of local economy. We offer various funding options for all your entrepreneurial projects.



## INVESTMENT FUND LOAN

The Investment Fund loan provides a funding source up to a maximum of \$250,000 to new and existing businesses in the Prescott and Russell region. This source of financing is structured with flexible repayment terms and an assessment of your project's viability and assistance in obtaining realistic funding.



## YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR LOAN

The Young Entrepreneur loan has been created to reduce the out-migration of young people towards urban centers and aims at supporting young entrepreneurs from 18 to 35 years of age in the Prescott and Russell region with available funding from \$5,000 to \$30,000. This program promotes leadership in young people and values their social, cultural and economic engagement in our communities.



## EXPRESS LOAN

The Express loan is created to support the operational continuity of businesses in the Prescott and Russell region. Funding up to a maximum of \$15,000 for expenses such as leasehold improvements, increase inventory, help with working capital, improve or update equipment and marketing, to name a few. A decision could be transmitted within 72 business hours after receiving the application.



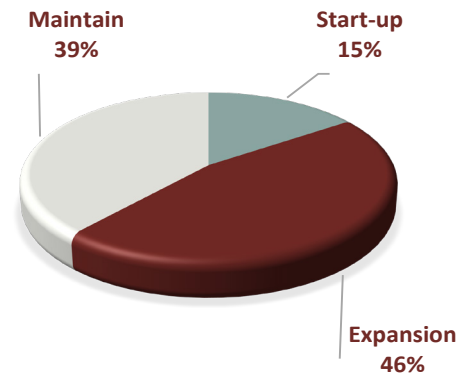
## EDISO LOAN

The Economic Development Initiative of Southern Ontario (EDISO) loan is dedicated to francophone and bilingual businesses in southern Ontario, including rural and urban areas. In partnership with the [Fondation franco-ontarienne](#), this program offers funding up to a maximum of \$30,000 and is designed to strengthen the foundation, sustainability and competitiveness in southern Ontario.

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation approved loans totaling more than \$1,548,000 in the Prescott-Russell region and \$120,000 in the southern Ontario area (EDISO funding) to help with start-up, maintain and expansion of local SMEs in Prescott-Russell and Southern Ontario.

## APPROVED LOANS PER PRESCOTT-RUSSELL REGION

- Township of Alfred and Plantagenet ..... 16%
- Municipality of Casselman ..... 1%
- Champlain Township ..... 0%
- City of Clarence-Rockland ..... 52%
- Town of Hawkesbury ..... 12%
- East Hawkesbury Township ..... 2%
- The Nation Municipality ..... 16%
- Russell Township ..... 0%



## In May 2022, a severe wind storm had devastating effects in the Prescott-Russell area.

The derecho had caused fallen powerlines and trees and extensive damage to houses, farms and businesses throughout the region. The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation (PRCDC) reacted as quickly as possible to set up a Regional Emergency Relief Fund to help businesses and entrepreneurs in Prescott-Russell deal with the damages by preparing a simplified form to help eligible businesses submit a request for assistance to repair and rebuild. Approved businesses benefitted from funding of \$30,000 with flexible terms and were usually approved within 72 hours of receiving the application. On June 28th 2022, the PRCDC had the privilege of receiving the President of FedDev Ontario, Nancy Gardiner and her team for a regional visit. Mr. Francis Drouin, MP of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell and Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin, MP of Provincial Parliament of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell joined the delegation at Hammond Hill Inc., where they could assess the extensive damage.



# WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP STRATEGY (WES)

The Women's Entrepreneur Strategy (WES) aims to increase women-owned businesses' access to financing, to a pool of talented people, to networks and to the expertise they need to start-up, expand and access new markets.

## FOUR PILLARS

The four pillars of the Strategy are:

1. Helping women-owned businesses grow
2. Increasing access to capital
3. Improving access to federal business innovation programming
4. Enhancing data and knowledge

The Strategy sets out a flexible approach to the delivery of nationally coordinated, regionally tailored programming that recognizes the varying needs of diverse women entrepreneurs across Canada.



## PARTNERS

Many thanks to all our partners who, through their loyal support, make the realization of the WES program possible. Their invaluable collaboration allow the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation to offer entrepreneurial skills support to the community of women in business and, above all, maintain it through strategic alliances, coaching, training and microcredit financing.



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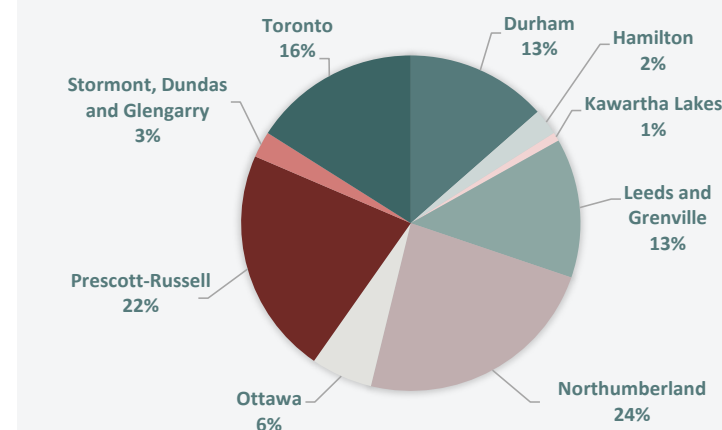


The Southern Ontario Women Entrepreneur Initiative (SOWEI) program's objective is to support the development of Francophone and bilingual women's entrepreneurial skills in Southern Ontario through strategic alliances, coaching, training, mentoring and microcredit financing.

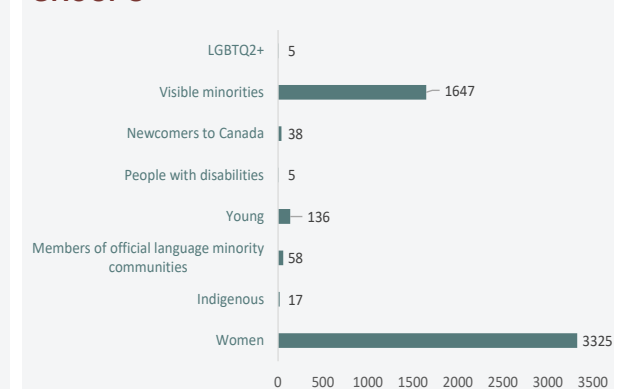
## STATISTICS

Since the establishment of the Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy in 2019, the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation (PRCDC) has taken the time to listen to the needs of women entrepreneurs and guide them with the best practices and essential tools for their business development. The SOWEI program has supported women entrepreneurs with a wide range of services and events for all entrepreneurial needs. The following statistics demonstrate the various forms of support to women entrepreneurs from 2019 to 2023:

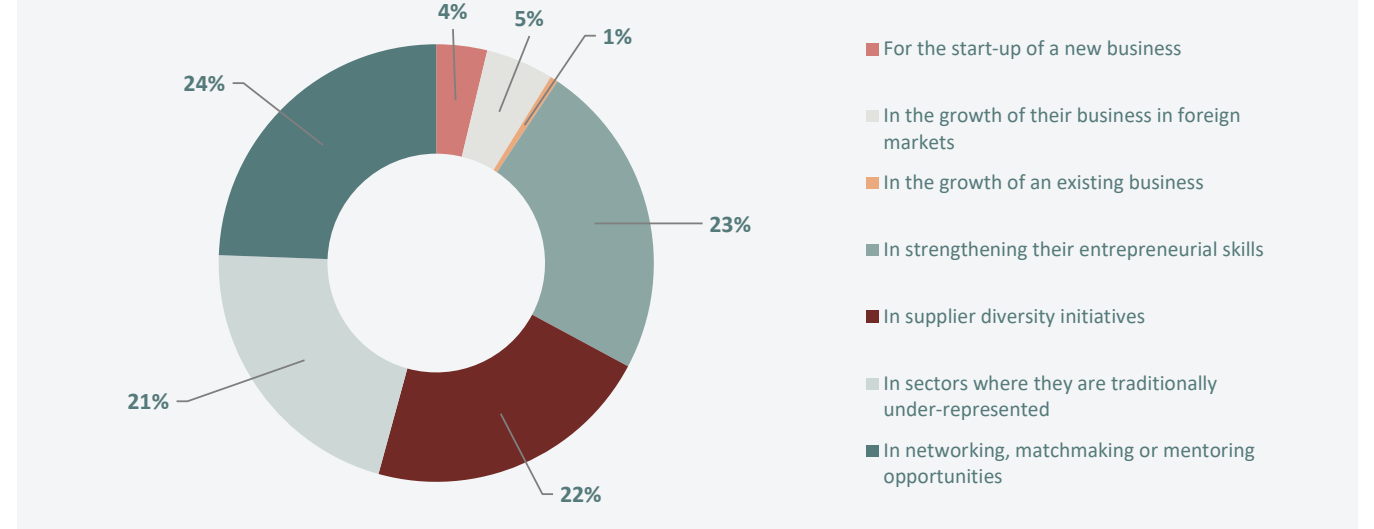
### SUPPORTED REGIONS



### SUPPORTED UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS



### SUPPORTED WOMEN





# WES EVENTS (2019-2023)

Directly affected by the pandemic, this crisis has had a significant impact on organizations, entrepreneurs and businesses in rural areas. The WES team had to adapt and revise the strategic plan in order to offer virtual and accessible events. Here are some of the 2019 to 2023 highlighted events and workshops along with our partners and collaborators.



## 2022 International Women's Day

In collaboration with



Participants

148



## Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce

In collaboration with



Participants

20



## Prescott-Russell Chamber of Commerce

In collaboration with



Participants

225



## Global Entrepreneurship Week

In collaboration with



Participants

40



## 2 Special networking events

In collaboration with



Participants

31

16



## Strike Up 2022

In collaboration with



Participants

3,700 +



## Women's Leadership Symposium

In collaboration with



Participants

150



## Entrepreneur's Ecosystem

In collaboration with



Participants

18



## Soirée Saphir

In collaboration with



Participants

120

# WES WORKSHOPS (2019-2023)

## Disjonction des affaires

The Unité entrepreneuriale de la Cité and the PRCDC collaborated to offer a series of networking and sharing workshops with women entrepreneurs in southern Ontario. **Participation: 180**

## Choosing the right legal structure for your business

A workshop for those who are confused with the different legal forms of a business and who wish clarifications. Tax advantages of a structure and other information. **Participation: 12**

## Funding available to help your business

A workshop with the PRCDC's business development advisor detailing the funding options and answering all questions. **Participation: 10**

## The ABCs of your business accounting

A workshop presented by an accountant with years of experience and specializing in business accounting. Topics included the basics of understanding business accounting and how to do it simply. **Participation: 15**

## 10 powerful ways for entrepreneurs to be more creative

A local entrepreneur shares her experiences with her business along with tips and tricks to boost your creative process. If you hope to succeed in the business world and diversify your offer, there is no other way to do it. **Participation: 14**

## How to use Storytelling to sell yourself

Storytelling expert shared her secrets and highlighting techniques to successful storytelling, to make yourself known and to attract new customers with targeted audiences. **Participation: 15**

## Mastermind Entrepreneurial Group

A study group that offered a combination of brainstorming, education, peer empowerment and support and to create a synergy of energy, commitment and enthusiasm among the participants. **Participation: 7**

## The right pricing strategy

A workshop to help find the right positioning for your products on the market, how to be competitive and have a good visibility strategy. **Participation: 12**

## Women entrepreneurs: Exchange and share your needs

A workshop with a round table discussion where each participant introduced herself and discussed her business, express her needs and receive personalized expertise. **Participation: 30**

## How to use social medias to sell your products

A workshop for entrepreneurs who wish to strengthen their online presence and use social media to promote their business and increase their sales. **Participation: 12**

## Stress, uncertainty and mental health

A workshop to discuss the difficult times that entrepreneurs are going through, to share and try to find solutions to better manage the pandemic with the support of a mental health expert. **Participation: 21**

## How to manage your business

Being an entrepreneur is wearing 6 hats. A new entrepreneur, just launching his/her business, has different roles in different fields. Founder/business development/sales/marketing/fundraising/staff hiring. What to do? **Participation: 8**

## Tips and tricks to making a successful business plan

Making a business plan is an important step in the life of an entrepreneur and it is important to do it correctly to see the viability of your business in the long run as well as to submit requests for financing. **Participation: 6**

## Task delegation

3 workshops to discover why delegation is an essential element to being a great leader. 1) When delegation is effective; 2) Delegation is a winning strategy and; 3) Delegation takes time and preparation. **Participation: 46**

## Reinventing yourself in a time of crisis

Virtual training to help entrepreneurs communicate with more impact. Topics such as the reset, management change, adaptation, the 20 year plan and why, the importance of personal branding and more. **Participation: 10**

## Growing your business after the pandemic

A workshop oriented towards the future and how to make your business survive. **Participation: 28**



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

## “Towards an inclusive and diverse leadership”

On March 8th 2023, the Southern Ontario Women Entrepreneur Initiative (SOWEI) team held a special celebration for the International Women's Day at the Vantage Venues in Toronto ON. This event was also offered by videoconference to accomodate all non-local entrepreneurs. The theme of the day was “Towards an inclusive and diverse leadership”. A successful day including Dr. Samantha Nutt offering a very interesting conference on women leadership followed by discussions with the 4 panelists. It was a rewarding and motivating day for the female audience. Cocktail was then served to allow the women to chat with the guests and celebrate their successes.

*“Our leadership - women's leadership - matters. Your ally-ship matters in supporting other women. Because without our participation, little will change. Instead of conforming to what exists, we can raise the standards. And especially for those of you who are entrepreneurs and business leaders, you can make strategic, conscious choices to lead differently, especially around who gets rewarded and promoted, and why, and what attributes are valued in employees to produce more inclusive and diverse workplace.” - Dr. Samantha Nutt*



Panel discussion:  
Left to right: Lilia Khodja, Sabine Soumare, Rokhaya Gueye and Dr. Samantha Nutt (Caroline Codsi top screen)



Lilia Khodja, Rokhaya Gueye and Sabine Soumare



John Candie, PRCDC's Executive Director and Richard Kempler, Executive Director of the Fédération des gens d'affaires francophones de l'Ontario



Caroline Codsi



Eastern Canada Vice-President and Exective Director of Cira Medical Services



Rokhaya Gueye



Coach-mentor, Co-founder and CEO of Global Connection Venture



Sabine Soumare



Executive Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub



Dr. Samantha Nutt



MD, founder and president of the international humanitarian organizations War Child USA and War Child Canada

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# THE 2023 STATE OF WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN CANADA



As part of her visit to Toronto on March 20, 2023, Minister Mary Ng joined the **Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH)** and ecosystem partners to celebrate the release of key findings from the 2023 State of Women's Entrepreneurship in Canada report. We know that, despite the obstacles they face in the ecosystem, women

entrepreneurs have a significant impact on economic growth and job creation, and they play a role in contributing to broader social and environmental goals. It is important that we keep celebrating our successes, supporting each other, and continue working together to build an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Women's Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub

The Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH) is a national network and accessible digital platform for sharing research and resources, and leading strategies. With 10 regional hubs and a network of more than 250 organizations, WEKH is designed to address the needs of diverse women entrepreneurs across regions and across sectors. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WEKH adopted an agitator role connecting women entrepreneurs and support organizations across the country, and led network calls and training sessions. WEKH's advanced technology platform, powered by Magnet, enhances the capacity of women entrepreneurs and the organizations who serve them by linking them to resources and best practices across the country. With the support of the Government of Canada, WEKH spreads its expertise from coast to coast, enabling service providers, academics, government and industry to enhance their support for women entrepreneurs. Toronto Metropolitan University's Diversity Institute, in collaboration with the Ted Rogers School of Management, is leading a team of researchers, business support organizations and key stakeholders to create a more inclusive and supportive environment to grow women's entrepreneurship in Canada.



Women Entrepreneurship  
Knowledge Hub

Portail de connaissances  
pour les femmes  
en entrepreneuriat

## REPORT

Based on reviewing recent research and data on women entrepreneurs in Canada, including majority owners of SMEs and self-employed women, the Women's Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH) has identified some overall trends. Here are just a few of their findings. Please click [HERE](#) to view full report.

Women-owned businesses focus more on innovation, as well as on improving organizational processes. The gender innovation gap has narrowed with women, who show the same rate of goods and services innovation as men at 14.5%.

Indigenous women face significant barriers when accessing western financial services due to systemic exclusion that prevents them from meeting basic approval criteria. Many Indigenous women entrepreneurs must also overcome barriers related to geographic isolation, systemic racism and lack of networking contacts.

Women-owned SMEs also focus on inclusivity by providing opportunities for equity-deserving groups such as women, Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized people, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

Averaging the quarterly Canadian Survey on Business Conditions reports, an estimated 18% of businesses, including small, medium and large businesses, are majority owned by women in Canada (small and medium-sized enterprises account for 99.8% of these).

The gap between men and women in reported ownership of established businesses also declined. The rate of businesses established by women increased from 68% of the men-established businesses rate to 77% of the men established businesses rate in 2022.

Despite their contribution to the arts and culture sector, self-employed women continue to face barriers unique to their gender identity that impedes their ability to fulfil their creative vision.

One of the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs is access to capital through financial institutions, because women are often discriminated against when attempting to access credit; moreover, women-owned businesses are among the least capitalized.

To continue to build momentum, we need to apply a gender and diversity lens to every dimension of the ecosystem. We need to continue to challenge assumptions and stereotypes, to spotlight successes, and to promote programs and policies that remove barriers and provide supports for diverse women.



*"Never be intimidated  
by what you don't  
know"*



**INFO**  
pour femmes entrepreneures  
for women entrepreneurs  
*Magazine*



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