



The Forum, Canada’s leader in mentorship for women entrepreneurs, seeks mentors to fulfill increased demand

National organization calling on business experts, professional leaders and seasoned entrepreneurs who want to make an impact in supporting the next generation of women-led businesses

The Scotiabank Women Initiative® joins as Mentor Program presenting sponsor.

Vancouver, BC, June 8, 2022 – As more women in Canada continue to turn to entrepreneurship, there is a critical need for access to resources, capital and networks to support their business growth. [The Forum](#), a Canadian charity that has supported over 10,000 women entrepreneurs since 2002, is answering the call with the expansion of its mentorship programming accessible to self-identified women business owners across the country.

“In the last five years we’ve seen a 200 percent increase in demand for our mentorship programming and we expect this number to continue to grow,” says Paulina Cameron, CEO of The Forum. “In our current climate, it’s not easy being a small business owner – and mentors can be the missing link to one entrepreneur’s business success as they recover, become more resilient and scale. We’re looking for a diverse range of mentors to join us in an effort to leave no woman entrepreneur behind, no matter where they are on their journey. We thank The Scotiabank Women Initiative, a community that believes in the power of mentorship, for joining us as our presenting sponsor and supporting us in this work.”

The percentage of majority women-owned, small and medium sized businesses hit an all time high in 2020 and the number of unicorn start-ups in Canada with women founders has almost doubled since 2019. However, significant barriers still exist. Women founders are less likely than their male counterparts to receive venture capital funding and the pandemic has hit women-owned businesses harder. More women-owned businesses ceased being fully operational during the first quarter of 2021 compared to other businesses and 38.5 percent of women-owned businesses underwent layoffs. (source: The State of Women’s Entrepreneurship 2022)

“By supporting The Forum, we are enabling women entrepreneurs to share and gain first-hand insight into experienced business practices,” says Sloane Muldoon, Senior Vice President, Retail Performance and Co-Chair of The Scotiabank Women Initiative. “This information exchange helps women business leaders gain the confidence and guidance needed to kickstart and grow their business.”

Open call for mentors

The mentorship program is The Forum’s longest running initiative and has supported over 2,000 mentor and mentee pairings to date. The program connects women entrepreneurs with the guidance, knowledge and community they need to thrive in business.

Leaders and seasoned entrepreneurs who are interested in mentoring Canadian women entrepreneurs are invited to [apply](#) to the 2022/2023 The Forum Mentor Program presented by The Scotiabank Women Initiative®. The program curates pairings based on business needs and the mentor’s areas of expertise, and provides an online platform to elevate and guide the mentorship experience.

“Participating in The Forum mentor program is an extremely rewarding experience that I truly cherish,” says Joanna Track, VP, Executive Publisher Media Platform & Content at Venturepark Voice. “Taking all of my lessons learned and being able to pay them forward to other budding entrepreneurs makes them all the more worthwhile and I have learned as much as I've taught working with different women and learning about their industries and areas of expertise.”

The Forum welcomes mentors of all gender identities and industries across Canada. Mentors and mentees connect in-person or virtually once a month for 12 months to discuss challenges, find solutions and seize business opportunities. To learn more, please visit <https://www.theforum.ca/mentor-program> or contact mentor@theforum.ca.

About The Forum

The Forum is a national, registered Canadian charity with a mission to help women entrepreneurs access the resources and community they need to thrive in business. As The Forum celebrates its 20th anniversary year, the organization continues to see a rise in the need for programming across the country as more women turn towards building businesses. In the last three years, program participant numbers have grown 345 percent. The Forum is now serving 1,900+ women from 193 unique communities across 11 provinces annually through its programming.

To date, the charity has supported over 10,000 women entrepreneurs across Canada through its programs and events including [The Forum Pitch](#), [The Forum Mentor Program](#), [The Forum E-Series program](#) and more. Visit theforum.ca for more and follow on social @theforumca.

About The Scotiabank Women Initiative

The Scotiabank Women Initiative is a signature program designed to increase economic opportunity for our clients who identify as women or non-binary to be successful, now and in the future. This globally expanding, unique offering helps thousands of women pursue their best professional and financial futures by providing unbiased access to capital and tailored solutions, bespoke specialized education, holistic advisory services and mentorship. Whether supporting women to take their careers and businesses further, collaborating with inclusion-focused leaders and companies, providing women-owned and women-led businesses with equitable access to funding or helping women take charge of their finances, The Scotiabank Women Initiative breaks down barriers to empower women to succeed on their own terms. For more information, visit scotiabankwomeninitiative.com.

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