



OWIT-TORONTO SUMMER ISSUE 2020



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We promote our members on our website as "Featured Members". Log in, upload your photograph, and enter your information to be one of them!

Do not forget to change your privacy settings to make your profile visible as much as you wish!

FEATURED MEMBERS



Paulette Haynes
Haynes Law Firm



Maria Marchyshyn
University of Toronto, G7 and G20 Research Groups



Priti Ruparel
Toronto Business Development Centre

From the President's Desk





As the world continues to grapple with COVID-19, we hope you and your family are keeping well and healthy.

The past five months have been challenging. We're all learning how to work from home, with constant and welcome disruptions and distractions, like children and laundry, while delivering on deadlines. We have had to pivot to accommodate our new reality. OWIT-Toronto is now delivering all of our educational seminars on-line via webinars. In April, we started off with guidance from Shieh-Chi Chen, Founder of [2Sisters Consulting Inc. and the Prosperity Cafe](#) on thriving in the age of a pandemic, and tips were shared with an audience of women entrepreneurs.

It is an opportune time for international market research. CUSMA and CETA offer lots of opportunities to women exporters, as we learned from our two webinars, in June, sponsored by [Global Affairs Canada](#), the [Ontario Government](#) and the [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub \(WEKH\)](#). These webinars attracted a maximum capacity, fulfilling our goal of helping our members think about positive developments to get beyond COVID-19. You can read the take-aways in this issue. I was thrilled to finish up in 19th place out of 21 in a Spanish quiz, offered by Language Advantage Inc., in our joint webinar in July, on accessing the Hispanic Export Markets. It was also a great time to launch our new website. Keep an eye on [the video and webinars section](#) for recordings of our educational webinars. Our website also has a dedicated area with member offers and business opportunities exclusively available to only our members.

Conferencing technology has made it easier to meet, with our monthly Board meetings now virtual. This may be the way forward, with quarterly meetings in-person. We are currently planning a very exciting fall season including a webinar on digital transformation and international trade, as well as opportunities available through the Africa Free Trade Area to Canadian women entrepreneurs. We are planning our Virtual Export Awards for November 2020. Nominations for Women's Trade Advocate, Woman Exporter of the Year, Student of International Trade, and Excellence in Leadership in International Trade can be sent to me at helen@hemmingsen.com. Stay tuned for more on <http://www.owit-toronto.ca/>.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, supporters and members, for their on-going enthusiasm for our volunteer organization. And a big welcome to our new members.

Stay safe.

Helen Hemmingsen

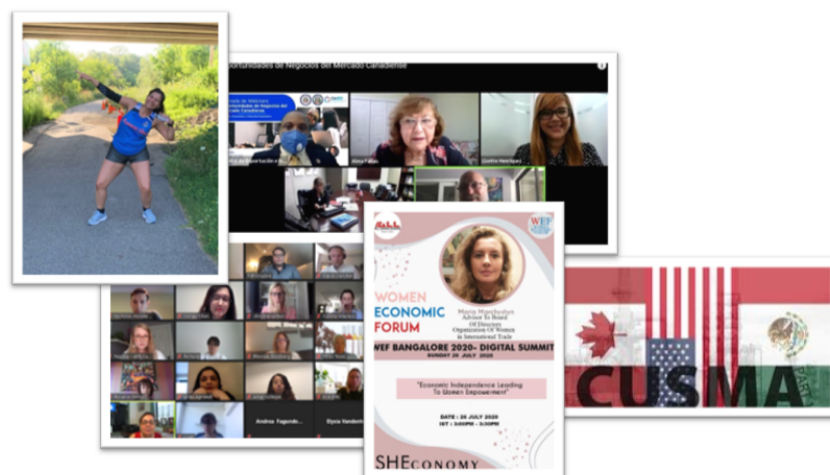
August 4, 2020

OWIT webinars present FTA opportunities

OWIT-Toronto hosted webinars in June on two of Canada's major free trade agreements (FTAs) in order to help members better understand how to take advantage of them. Supported by [Global Affairs Canada](#) and the [Ontario government](#), the first one focused on the [Canada-US-Mexico Trade Agreement \(CUSMA\)](#), often referred to as the new NAFTA, and was held prior to its official entry into force on July 1. It featured senior Canadian trade officials based in the three countries, who outlined key changes in the agreement and opportunities for Canadian companies. The second webinar – sponsored by the [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub](#) - highlighted specific opportunities for women exporters flowing from Canada's FTA with the European Union - the [Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement \(CETA\)](#) and the experiences of two women entrepreneurs successfully exporting there.

[Check out the take-aways.](#)

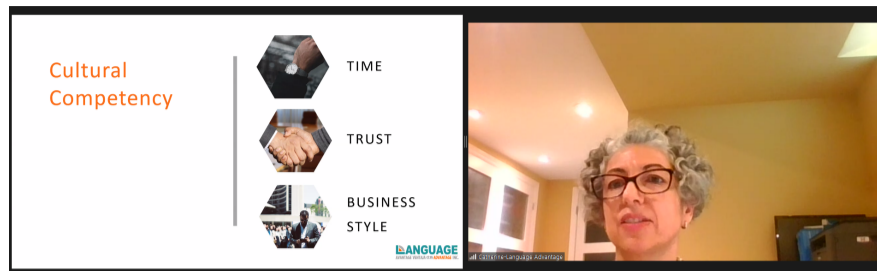
OWIT-Toronto Members in Action



July has been an active virtual month for OWIT-Toronto members, from providing guidance to Dominican Republic exporters to access Canadian markets, to participating in a virtual Asian trade mission, addressing the Women Economic Forum in India, participating in a CUSMA stakeholder call as well as presenting a digital marketing webinar, to running for a social innovative cause in support of Mexican farmers in Canada. Check out what some of our members have been up to virtually... as we remain OWIT-Toronto strong and proud!

[Read more.](#)

Language and Culture: Gateway and Tips to Hispanic Export Markets



OWIT-Toronto in partnership with [Language Advantage Inc.](#) organized a webinar focused on the importance of speaking the client's language when developing export plans in Hispanic Markets. Moderated by OWIT-Toronto Board Director Alma Farias of Trade Partners, the webinar provided strategies on accessing the Hispanic export markets through engagement and cultural awareness, and through language the most common characteristic of Hispanic culture.

[Read more.](#)

Member Spotlight: ISR leads on innovative safety clothing



Lyse Moreau has continued the strong legacy and tradition of a woman-owned firm thriving in the Niagara region. Following in her mother's footsteps, Lyse made positive changes to get [International Sew Right \(ISR\)](#) export ready in 2001, before becoming a sole owner in 2006 and, in 2011, ISR became a 100% woman-owned manufacturing facility. With the COVID-19 pandemic, Lyse has been able to adapt with speed and agility, steering her company to pivot and respond to the pandemic through making masks and a variety of other medical supplies which has resulted in greater manufacturing success.

[Read more.](#)

Canada's Deputy Prime Minister to be featured in Awards celebration



OWIT International will host a fireside chat on August 19, 2020 (12 noon EST), for its annual celebration to honour the 2019 OWIT International Award winners. This includes the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, who was selected as OWIT Woman of the Year.

[Register here.](#)

Women's Global Trade Empowerment Forum begins



The 2020 Inaugural [Women's Global Trade Empowerment Forum](#) presented by the US Commercial Service under the key theme "Expanding Trade in North America & Beyond" was kickstarted on Tuesday July 28. The six-part digital series is a must-attend event for women entrepreneurs in Canada, the US and Mexico who wish to boldly grow their business into new markets.

[Read more.](#)

Pandemic pivots shared



Listen to our members' shared experiences about doing business during the COVID-19 pandemic. These interviews were conducted by the Toronto Region Board of Trade and the World Trade Centre Toronto.

- Anita Agrawal, CEO, Best Bargains Jewellery – [Take Advantage of the Situation and Just Do It](#)

Listen to how Anita and her team are finding innovative ways to connect with new and existing customers amid economic uncertainty.

- Lyse Moreau, Owner, International Sew Right – [How You Can Contribute](#)

Learn how Lyse started manufacturing and donating medical masks to fight against COVID-19.

New Sharing Platform for women entrepreneurs



Women Entrepreneurship
Knowledge Hub

Portail de connaissances
pour les femmes
en entrepreneuriat

The [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub \(WEKH\)](#), in partnership with the [Forum for Women Entrepreneurs \(FWE\)](#), launched a new sharing intuitive platform built by [SheEO](#). The platform provides a support system and network for women entrepreneurs to overcome the challenges and impact of COVID-19 on their businesses. It also helps to sustain the great strides women entrepreneurs in Canada have made and continues to encourage and empower those entering the field for the first time.

The WEKH/FWE Sharing Platform allows members of the women entrepreneurship ecosystem to draw from the knowledge and reach of the community and share their own learnings to access business opportunities and collaboratively tackle challenges. Through the platform, if you have a specific need, post an Ask that someone who can help may respond to. If you can share something beneficial with another member of the community, offer a Give.

Facilitated Ask/Give sessions are running each Thursday in August from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. EST. [Join the community](#) and learn more about the platform and how you can use it to connect with your members and clients, and women entrepreneurs across Canada.

Institute receives grant to strengthen inclusive entrepreneurship



The prestigious Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Grant of over \$2.4 million was recently awarded to the [Diversity Institute](#). The grant money will be used to undertake a research project over six years examining the barriers faced by women and diverse groups such as immigrants, racialized people, indigenous people and persons with disabilities. It will also lead on strategies to strengthen an inclusive innovative and entrepreneurship ecosystem. The project has a goal of engaging more than 1000 stakeholder organizations and 100,000 entrepreneurs.

The Diversity Institute bid was supported by OWIT-Toronto. The grant is quite timely to help bring to light a gender and diversity lens to entrepreneurship, identify barriers and, more importantly, recommend practices to overcome these barriers in order to drive forward an inclusive economic recovery. The research project will leverage work being done by the [Future Skills Centre](#) and the [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub](#).

“We know that women and diverse groups continue to face systemic barriers,” says Prof Wendy Cukier, Founder Diversity Institute, Ted Rogers School of Management and Professor of Entrepreneurship, Ryerson University. “As Canada responds to the pandemic, preliminary research shows that women and diverse groups are disproportionately impacted and there is a risk that we will lose the traction we have gained on gender and diversity.”

Canada's State of Trade 2020



Canada's 2020 State of Trade Report released in July provides a comprehensive analysis of Canada's Trade performance in 2019. The Report also includes important insights into the impact of COVID-19 on Canada's International Trade, highlighting industries that have been most and least vulnerable to disruptions in the global supply chains. It also reflects Canadian innovation and resilience that has allowed businesses to continue to compete in the global marketplace and government's commitment in supporting trade through turbulent times.

[Read the full report.](#)

Non-repayable grants available for women

The *Rebuild Reopen Revive Initiative (R3)* was launched by FedDev Ontario to support women entrepreneurs across Southern Ontario. The program administered through Northumberland CFDC and WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation will offer women-led small and medium sized enterprises non-repayable contributions of up to \$5000 to support businesses as the economy reopens to adapt operations and position themselves for a successful post-pandemic economic recovery.

To apply, visit [Northumberland CFDC](#) (eastern Ontario businesses) or [WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation](#) (southwestern Ontario businesses).

Info to maintain cross-border supply chains

Cross-border supply chains are vital to ensure the continued flow of goods, including food and medical supplies for all Canadians. The government is committed to ensuring that commercial traffic is not impeded, by providing resources for businesses about border measures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, visit the government page at [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Border information for business](#).

Post-pandemic business resources created

To enable Ontario businesses to get back to work safely as the Government starts to lift the COVID-19 emergency measures ban, the [Workplace Safety & Prevention Services \(WSPS\)](#) has created a [Post-Pandemic Business Playbook](#) that lays out processes to raise awareness of new health and well-being protocols. The Playbook provides an overview of the potential hazards posed in the workplace due to COVID-19 and is intended for informational purposes. The WSPS has also created a series of additional resources per industry sector to help businesses on the road to recovery.

All resources and additional support are available on the new [WSPS COVID-19 website](#).

Canada-led Ottawa Group meets on WTO reform



Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, concluded a successful Canada-led Ottawa Group meeting in June 2020 on strengthening rules-based trade and keeping supply chains open amid COVID-19 and beyond.

[Read more.](#)

The TCS Family: Opening doors in Mexico

As the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) celebrates its 125th anniversary, the dedication of its staff throughout the years and around the world continues to be its greatest strength. [This article here](#) is part of a series profiling some of the 1,000 members of today's TCS Family.

New Global Trade and Gender Arrangement signed



Minister Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, hosted a virtual meeting with the members of the [Inclusive Trade Action Group \(ITAG\)](#): Andrés Allamand, Chile's Minister of Foreign Affairs; Rodrigo Yañez, Chile's Vice Minister of Trade; and David Parker, New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Export Growth.

The ministers signed [a new Global Trade and Gender Arrangement](#), under which Canada, Chile, and New Zealand will work together to share best practices and promote gender equality, including in international organizations such as the World Trade Organization. The arrangement lays out clear steps to making sure the benefits of trade and investment are more broadly shared among people in Canada and around the world.

[Read the press brief.](#)

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EDC - Export Development Canada: <https://www.edc.ca/>

EP - The Entrepreneurs Point: <https://www.entrepreneurspoint.com/>

FITT - Forum for International Trade Training: <https://fittfortrade.com/>

Jewels4Ever: <https://www.jewels4ever.ca/>

TBDC - Toronto Business Development Centre: <https://tbdc.com/>

The Ontario Government: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/government>

WEKH - Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub: <https://wekh.ca/>

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OWIT - Toronto Chapter

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