

A YEAR OF PROGRESS

2019-2020



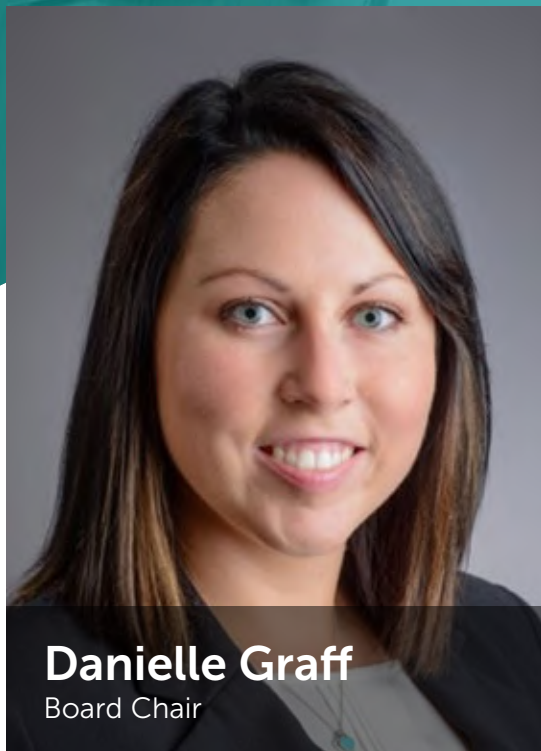
Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on the Gender Entrepreneurship Gap

Table of Contents

2	Message from the Board Chair	13	Celebration of Achievement and Entrepreneur Awards
3	Message from the CEO	14	Experience (Small Business Conference)
4	WESK's Response to COVID-19	15	Provincial Statistics
5	Saskatchewan Advisory Committee	16	Advising & Support
7	WESK Program The Exchange	18	Financing
8	WESK Program Founders Table	19	Training
9	WESK Program Matchstick	20	Getting Social
10	Events	22	Meet the People Behind WESK
11	Signature WESK Events	23	WESK Supporting the Community

Message from the

Board Chair



Danielle Graff

Board Chair

As I write this report in March 2020, I am so proud of and inspired by the initiatives that WESK has launched this fiscal year to further its mission to close the gender entrepreneurship gap and support businesses in scaling up. In addition, I am proud of how WESK has pivoted to provide support to members, supporters and the business community in response to the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19.

"Regardless of the challenges presented, WESK is a leader in seizing opportunities and finding solutions,..."

Regardless of the challenges presented, WESK is a leader in seizing opportunities and finding solutions, and I have no doubt that WESK's work has and will continue to have a transformational impact on the Saskatchewan business ecosystem.

Building on the momentum created by WESK in the last couple of years, a few of the highlights from 2019/2020 include:

- The May 2019 announcement by Minister Beaudry-Mellor, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, of the creation of an advisory committee to examine the gender entrepreneurship gap in Saskatchewan. The committee members were later announced at a press conference in September 2019.



- The July 2019 announcement by Minister Goodale, on behalf of the Government of Canada, of \$1.56 million to launch a new program (The Exchange) to scale up growth-oriented women-led businesses.
- The September 2019 launch of the work of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee to advise on actionable strategies to close the gap;

It has been an incredible honour to serve as board chair this year alongside a group of incredible directors who continue to work hard to set a strategic direction for WESK which will result in closing the gap. On behalf of the board, I want to thank the WESK team for their commitment – their enthusiasm and embodiment of the WESK values are essential to WESK's role as a change-maker.

Looking ahead, even as things are currently uncertain, I know that WESK has lots more in store,...

Looking ahead, even as things are currently uncertain, I know that WESK has lots more in store, from hosting the 25th Anniversary Conference, to launching The Exchange, to working with government agencies and other partners to turn the recommendations from the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee report into action. Regardless of the challenges presented, I am confident that WESK will respond with the same enthusiasm for finding solutions and effecting change as always – challenges accepted.

Message from the CEO



Prabha Mitchell

Chief Executive Officer, WESK

Vision

All Saskatchewan entrepreneurs have an equal opportunity to achieve success and recognition.

Women entrepreneurs contributed \$148 billion to our national GDP in 2012, and \$23.1 billion to our local Saskatchewan economy in 2019. We have the potential to increase Canada's GDP by \$150 to \$420 billion by 2026 through advancing gender equality in the creation of economic activity.

Supporting women entrepreneurship is not only a gender equity issue, it's also an economic policy issue.

Did you know that women entrepreneurs are starting businesses at a greater rate than their male counterparts? Unfortunately, they are not achieving scale to the same extent, despite expressing growth intentions that are on par or above men-led businesses.

This discrepancy is what creates the gender entrepreneurship gap and the ensuing gender economic gap. You are probably wondering – why does this gap exist?

Women entrepreneurs encounter unique barriers, such as access to financing, networks, and mentors. To put it simply, women are lacking the financial and human capital needed to be successful. By understanding and addressing these barriers, we can enhance opportunities to scale businesses and boost economic growth in our province.

As I've said before, we did not want to talk, but act. WESK is walking the talk.

- In May 2019, the Honourable Tina Beaudry-Mellor announced the creation of a WESK-led Saskatchewan Advisory Committee to examine and address the gender entrepreneurship gap in our province. The committee commenced in September 2019 and will conclude in June 2020 with a report of final recommendations.



- In partnership with Economic Development Regina, WESK launched and completed the first cohort of Founders Table, a Women in Tech mastermind group helping female entrepreneurs take their tech business and management skills to the next level.
- We delivered on our promise to help women not only start but also to grow and scale their businesses. We began recruitment for The Exchange, a business program developed to drive profitability for established female entrepreneurs.

Lives were altered almost overnight in our province, our country, and globally as we began to comprehend the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Programs such as The Exchange were paused as WESK shifted focus from supporting women to scale their businesses to helping our stakeholders survive the crisis and navigate a path towards economic recovery.

Saskatchewan can lead the nation. We must seize the opportunity to close the gap and boost economic growth. Investing in women entrepreneurs isn't just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do.

"Investing in women entrepreneurs isn't just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do."

To our members and the WESK community, WESK is committed to being the voice for women entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan. Whether you're starting your business journey, or looking for opportunities to scale and conquer, we are here for you.

WESK's

Response to COVID-19



In March 2020, the gravity and impact of COVID-19 compelled organizations to rapidly adjust how they conducted business. While we closed the WESK offices and shifted to working remotely, we remained open for business. The WESK team was and will continue to support our members and all Saskatchewan women entrepreneurs during this period of uncertainty.



1

Waived our annual membership fee for April and May of 2020, enabling anyone to join our community and meet with a business advisor for free

2

New payment solutions for our loan clients

3

Free weekly webinars, virtual workshops, and virtual networking events

4

A COVID-19 webpage that includes up-to-date information, resources, and tips for small business owners

5

Executed an advocacy strategy for women entrepreneurs to both the provincial and federal governments to ensure that small businesses and solo entrepreneurs receive relief measures that are applicable and relevant



Saskatchewan

Advisory Committee



During the past year, WESK has been actively advocating to move the needle for women entrepreneurs in our province. Our advocacy efforts were supported and endorsed with funding from the Government of Saskatchewan, Status of Women office to create a Saskatchewan Advisory Committee tasked with developing strategy, policy and activity to level the gender gap in entrepreneurship in the province.

The Committee's expertise is reflected in the leadership of the following members:

- **Adele Buettner**, Founder and President, AgriBiz Communications Corp.
- **Adrienne Ivey**, Co-owner, Evergreen Cattle Co.; Owner, View from the Ranch Porch
- **Alicia Soulier**, Founder, SalonScale Technology Inc.
- **Christine Hrudka**, Owner, Pharmacy First (Eighth Street) and Pharmacy First (Lifebridge)
- **Eric Clark**, COO & Partner, PFM Capital Inc.
- **Janis Dubreuil**, Partner, Allan Construction
- **JoeAnne Hardy**, President and Partner, WBM Technologies Inc.
- **Kimberly Parent**, Owner and Artistic Director, Saskatoon Salsa Dance Company
- **Mary Weimer**, Chief Member Experience Officer, Conexus Credit Union
- **Murad Al-Katib**, President and CEO, AGT Food and Ingredients Inc.
- **Natasha Vandenhurk**, CEO, Three Farmers Foods Inc.
- **Rachel Mielke**, CEO and Founder, Hillberg & Berk

The work of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee was undertaken with the support and sponsorship of the following:

- **Government of Saskatchewan, Status of Women Office**
- **WESK**
- **Circle of Builders**

The financial support received from the Circle of Builders was pivotal in enabling the work of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee and helping shape the business climate of the future for women entrepreneurs. Thank you to:

- **Eric Clark**, COO & Partner, PFM Capital Inc.
- **Jason Drummond**, President, Drummond Group
- **Greg Yuel**, President & CEO, PIC Investment Group Inc.



The twelve-member committee's work in understanding and addressing the unique barriers that women entrepreneurs encounter will advance opportunities to scale businesses and boost economic growth.

The Committee members met five times from September 2019 to March 2020 to adjust sub-committee work in three pillars: enabling access to capital, influencing policy, and creating awareness.



All Saskatchewan entrepreneurs
have an equal opportunity to
achieve success and recognition.



WESK Program

The Exchange



In May 2019, WESK was awarded \$1.56 million to develop a new program to scale up growth-oriented women-led businesses. This program was made possible through funding received from the Government of Canada as part of the creation of the Women Entrepreneurship Fund and Women Entrepreneurship Strategy Ecosystem Fund.

Given the impact of the pandemic on small businesses in Saskatchewan, WESK has pivoted The Exchange to be responsive and relevant to the needs emerging from the current environment.



Introducing The Exchange: Rebound Edition

While remaining a three-year program, the first year will focus on economic recovery of businesses and ensuring women entrepreneurs have the tools and peer support to survive and rebound.

The Exchange will be launched on July 22, 2020 by bringing all applicants together for a virtual retreat to hear from reputable entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan who will provide guidance on working together to get through these difficult and unknown times.

In September 2020, applicants will be grouped into cohorts with other peers who own businesses with a similar number of employees and who encounter similar challenges. These cohorts will be led by a Chair and will meet monthly to discuss recovery, rebound and sustainability strategies.

the
exchange

Rebound
and Conquer

May 2019



In 2019, The Exchange project team worked diligently on the format, content, topics, and selection of guest experts and participant recruitment, to create a business program that would help drive profitability for female entrepreneurs.

March 2020

Recruitment sessions were held in both Regina and Saskatoon, resulting in the initial group of applications from entrepreneurs to be a part of program.



May 2020

The Exchange was to launch in May 2020 but due to COVID-19, the launch date was postponed.

June 2020

The Exchange: Rebound Edition is designed and applications open.

July 2020

This redesigned program will launch virtually in July 2020.



WESK Program

Founders Table



WESK is proud to have launched Founders Table, a female-focused program for tech company founders. Funded by Innovation Saskatchewan and in partnership with Economic Development Regina, the group was facilitated by Katrina German and gained skills from various experts in the industry.



One of the most successful sessions was bringing together **six investors** from Saskatchewan in a “speed-networking” event.



We were also joined by Minister Tina Beaudry-Mellor, Minister of Advanced Education, Minister responsible for Innovation Saskatchewan, and Minister responsible for the Status of Women Office, for one of the sessions.

“ This was a completely unique experience, and to have a female founders group in Saskatchewan was incredible. You will see the ripples from this for years

”



Connecting Women in Technology



“ As a non-tech CEO, being able to be surrounded by other tech founders was attractive. I was on my own and this was an opportunity to learn from other CEOs.

”

Some of the milestones reached due to Founders Table include:

- **100%** of the founders changed their product due to the knowledge they gained.
- **80%** of the founders are employing more people than when they started.
- **100%** of the founders feel more confident as a technology company leader.
- **70%** of the founders are having ongoing angel/venture capital funding conversations directly from the speed networking session.
- **60%** of the companies are in conversations or have received funding from NRC-IRAP.
- **80%** report being far clearer on their product marketing.

The women developed relationships that will be maintained through the next few years of technology development.

WESK Program

Matchstick



The Matchstick initiative was introduced to WESK's programming in 2017-2018 to support Indigenous women entrepreneurs with culturally relevant business training, advising, and financing.

In 2019-2020, Matchstick fostered the entrepreneurial journey reaching over 300 Indigenous women through business planning workshops and mentoring circles. Entrepreneurs in the communities of North Battleford, Prince Albert, Onion Lake Cree Nation, Regina, Saskatoon, Fort Qu'Appelle, and Yorkton learned about the components of a business plan. Mentoring circles in Saskatoon and Regina offered additional assistance and support in the business areas of financing, micro-loans, and individualized business advising. The format of a mentoring circle cultivated increased business knowledge, skills and confidence in leadership abilities.



What Matchstick participants are saying about the program

On business development:

"... made me think and get a clearer idea of my business goals."

On building confidence:

"... I don't have a business background, so all of this information I am learning is all crucial and I am very grateful."

"I am thankful that I was able to network with and bounce ideas off other Indigenous entrepreneurs through WESK's Matchstick program. The program was very beneficial as there aren't many networking opportunities for Indigenous women entrepreneurs."
– Destinee Peters, Tangles Hair & Beauty Salon



Thank you to our Advisory Council partner representatives for their assistance, advice and insights: Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation (SIEF), First Nation University of Canada, Onion Lake Cree Nation, SheNative Goods Inc. and FHQ Developments.



In 2018

Roundtables were held in four communities with **32 Indigenous women attending** to identify the barriers, concerns, supports and gaps in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In 2019

- **31** business planning training sessions with 301 participants
- **9 mentoring circle sessions** in Saskatoon and Regina with 49 participants
- **4** Indigenous women trained as facilitators
- **51** Matchstick membership were provided for Indigenous women to access Matchstick and WESK business advisory, loans and mentoring services
- **46** business advisory appointments provided by Indigenous women business owners
- **3** Matchstick loans disbursed

WESK

Events



New Decade, New Beginnings

In January 2020, WESK and EY hosted an engaging conversation on how advancing gender equality through entrepreneurial activity can boost economic growth. The panel discussion explored how creating a strong sense of belonging and inclusivity in an organization can help drive business performance, enhance innovation, and create the highest performing teams.



Thank you to EY Tax Partner Alison Jackson for moderating the panel discussion, and to our panelists below for sharing their experiences, perspectives and practical ideas on harnessing the power of diversity and inclusion:

- Prabha Mitchell, CEO, WESK
- Greg Yuel, CEO, PIC Investment Group
- Alicia Soulier, Founder & CEO, SalonScale Technologies Inc.
- Scott Banda, CEO, Federated Co-operatives Limited

New Decades Event
Prabha Mitchell Speaking



International Women's Day

Better the balance, better the world

On March 8, 2020, WESK and Miller Thomson LLP hosted an International Women's Day event to celebrate women and girls around the world. The event consisted of a networking brunch, followed by a panel discussion and a screening of the Girl Rising documentary.

The panel discussion was moderated by Jordyn Allan, Associate at Miller Thomson, and featured three local Saskatoon entrepreneurs, including Veronique Loewen, Owner of Verolingo Communications; Kara Firman, Owner of Guide Hair Salon; and Ryan Quiring, CEO of SafetyTek.

All proceeds raised from the event went directly to Saskatoon Interval House, a temporary shelter for women and their children fleeing domestic violence in need of safe accommodation.

Thank you to everyone who participated and attended. Because of you, we were able to **donate \$1,480 to the Saskatoon Interval House!**



Kara Firman
Owner of Guide Hair
Salon



Ryan Quiring
CEO of SafetyTek



Veronique Loewen
Owner of Verolingo
Communications

Signature WESK Events



The past year saw a powerful line up of speakers at both Shaken with a Twist in Saskatoon and Uncorked in Regina. Each month, a respected entrepreneur or business professional was put in the spotlight and interviewed by a moderator. Their honest and candid reflections of their entrepreneurial journey, usually filled with lots of laughs, was motivating and inspiring.

Thank you to our
Uncorked 2019-2020
season sponsors



Thank you to our Shaken
with a Twist 2019-2020
season sponsors



Signature WESK Events



Thank you to Lisa Peters and Janet Lee for moderating discussions and to our knowledgeable and engaging speakers!

- **Jess Tetu**, Founder and Owner, Just For You Day Spas; Founder and CEO, Lia Reese Canada; Founder and CEO, 4SeventyOne Recovery Resources
- **Carla Carlson**, Nimegeers Carlson Law Firm, Author: Everyday Grace: Finding Your Extraordinary in Ordinary Everyday Life.
- **Honourable Tina Beaudry-Mellor**, Minister Responsible for Status of Women Office
- **Danielle Graff**, WESK Board Chair and Partner, MLT Aikens and **Prabha Mitchell**, CEO, WESK
- **Frances Olson**, Former Real Estate Mogul
- **Lisa Peters**, Owner, Eye Inspire Events and Host, Access 7 TV
- **Mary Weimer**, Chief Member Experience Officer, Conexus Credit Union and Member of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee and **Eric Dillon**, Chief Executive Officer, Conexus Credit Union
- **Candyce Fiessel**, Founder, Shear Escape Salon & Spa, Founder, My Life Planner, Director, Operations and Partner, The Style Academy



Thank you to Shawna Nelson for moderating the discussions and to our knowledgeable and engaging speakers!

- **Katrina German**, Founder, KatrinaGerman.com and **Stephanie Yong**, Principal, Stephanie Yong Consulting
- **Devon Fiddler**, Founder and Chief Changemaker, SheNative Goods Inc.
- **Jess Tetu**, Founder and Owner, Just For You Day Spas; Founder and CEO, Lia Reese Canada; Founder and CEO, 4SeventyOne Recovery Resources
- **Rachel Mielke**, CEO and Founder, Hillberg & Berk and **Prabha Mitchell**, CEO, WESK
- **Alisha Esmail**, CEO, Road Coffee and **Jordan Dutchak**, Executive Director, Co.Labs
- **Jacqueline Cook**, Chief Strategy Officer, Vendasta
- **Pam Klein**, President, Phoenix Group
- **JoeAnne Hardy**, President and Partner, WBM Technologies Inc.
- **Andrea Hansen**, Benefits Advisor and **Tim Hansen**, Wealth Advisor, Sutton Benefits & Pension

Celebration of Achievement and

Entrepreneur Awards



WESK believes that extraordinary women deserve to be celebrated. On May 22, 2019, WESK presented five outstanding female entrepreneurs with awards at its annual Celebration of Achievement and Entrepreneur Awards Gala, presented by Conexus Credit Union.

WESK's Celebration of Achievement Award pays tribute to an exceptional female entrepreneur who has built a business in Saskatchewan with a significant impact on the economy and the community. In 2019, this award was presented to Jess Tetu, sole owner of four Just For You Day Spas in Saskatchewan and Alberta, the Founder and CEO, Lia Reese Canada, (Saskatchewan's Beauty Brand), and Co-Founder, E306 Business Consulting.

Presented by **conexus**
Credit Union



Jess Tetu

Owner of four
Just For You Day Spas

Four additional entrepreneur awards were presented in the following categories:

**Community
Involvement Award**
sponsored by Nutrien



Shelley Gordon,
Uniglass Plus Ziebart,
6th Avenue Carwash

Innovation Award
sponsored by RBC



Alisha Esmail,
Road Coffee

**Growth &
Expansion Award**
sponsored by ISC



Colleen Haussecker,
Canadian Organic Spice
& Herb Co.

**Indigenous
Entrepreneur of
the Year Award**
sponsored by SIGA



Kimberly Parent,
Saskatoon Salsa
Dance Company



**Thank you to our sponsors for
making this event possible!**

Small Business Conference

Experience

Presented by 



Traditionally known as WESK's Small Business Conference, Experience was specifically designed to engage attendees in the latest practices in digital marketing, social media, content, user experience and design, advertising, SEO and more.

With the theme "Strategies and Technologies in the Digital World", the full-day conference included **seven** exciting workshops, a powerful **keynote** address by Manjit Minhas (Co-Founder of Minhas Breweries & Distillery and Judge on CBC's Dragons' Den), and a stimulating **expert forum** with our workshop facilitators, moderated by Katrina German.



Workshop topics included:



The Art and Science of Marketing

Presented by
Ryan Townend,
William Joseph
Communications



Looking at a Brand as An Ecosystem

Presented by Frank
Collins, Danger
Dynamite

Understanding
& Shaping Your
Customer Journey

Presented by
Jacqueline Cook,
Vendasta

Branding & SEO,
A Co-Dependent
Relationship

Presented by Lauren
Knox, Agency Ally

Email Marketing
Must-Do's!

Presented by Kelly
Doody, The Social
School

Social & Digital
Marketing Strategy

Presented by Kelly
Doody, The Social
School

Creating Apps - How to Not
Get Lost In The Underwear
Section When Looking For
Long Pants

Presented by Colleen
Patterson, Territorial



Provincial Statistics



Over the past 24 years, WESK has grown from a six-member organization to a credible and successful organization with more than 600 members who have made a significant impact on the Saskatchewan economy. Our membership is diverse with members located all over our province in a variety of industries.

“ WESK has a big place in my heart for supporting me in the start-up of my women-led business, Brain Snacks Co. The WESK events I attended early in my journey motivated me to take action on my dream of opening my business. I would recommend any woman entrepreneur to invest in a WESK membership. It's a great way to accelerate your business success and support our community of women entrepreneurs. ”

– Donna Crooks, Brain Snacks Co.



53,668

women have contacted
the WESK offices for
information since 1995



2,616

information requests were received this year



Advising & Support



How often do you have someone who takes the time to understand your business; guide you through creating your business plan; or go beyond your expectations by being with you during all the stages of your business journey? Over the past year, WESK business advisors have been busy doing exactly that!



7,491

women have accessed our Business Advising Program since 1995



1,445

business advising appointments this year



183

new clients this year

“ Not having a business background was very intimidating when walking into my first appointment at WESK. My business advisor was great at making our conversation easy and we quickly got into making a plan of action for my business. They have been readily available for questions and concerns and were extremely knowledgeable in the guidance provided to me. My advisor was more than just an advisor but was my cheering section as well. Joining WESK has been an asset in my journey of becoming an entrepreneur. ”

– Haley Holowachuk, Fynesse Cosmetic Injection Studio



All Access Expert Advice

The All Access Expert Advice Program marked its second year for providing services to members in 2019. Through valuable partnerships, WESK expanded the program to include experts from the marketing, legal, human resources, operations, and accounting fields.

Thank you to all our partners and specialized experts – without your generous commitment to the All Access Expert Advice Program, many of our members may not have access to the services you provide.

“ The All Access Expert Advice Program through WESK is such an incredible offering. As a new business owner, I was so pleased that the access to so many industry professionals was made available and organized for me. One less thing to take care of in the list of all the new business owner duties! ”

– Deanna Fahlman, Artfully Designed Wellness Corporation



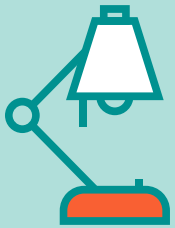
“ What a great resource for women entrepreneurs! When starting a business, you don't have cash to spare. This program gives us ways to get expert advice and make new business connections on a budget. ”

– Donna Crooks, Brain Snacks Co.





Businesses have received a total of **\$38.8 million** through our financing program



WESK

Financing



We understand that attaining business capital can be hard - particularly for women.

With loans of up to \$150,000, WESK is dedicated to helping women launch and grow sustainable businesses that fuel Saskatchewan's prosperity. If your business is majority woman-owned and controlled (51%), come talk to our friendly business advisors to see how a loan could help you grow your business.

“ I walked into the WESK office and was greeted warmly, I felt truly welcome. My business advisor talked with me, gave me ideas, tools to use, links to explore, hope, support, encouragement, but importantly, she believed. ”



– Lynn Seguin, Hub City Boxing

We've been supporting women entrepreneurs for 25 years! Since 1995



749 loans have been disbursed for women entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan



Businesses have received a total of **\$38.8 million** through our financing program

Over \$30.9 million has been leveraged as a result of our financing



Western Economic Diversification Canada provided a total of \$5M, which WESK has **grown to \$7.7M**

1,685 jobs have been created through the financing program

#CloseTheGap

In 2019-2020



22 new loans, totaling \$1.3 million and 97 current loans, **totaling \$5.6 M**



14% of our members have outstanding loans

Our loan fund created **132 FTE jobs** in our province this year

Our average loan this year was **\$55,975**



17 new business startup loans, 4 expansion loans, and 1 existing business purchased

John & Bernice Williams and North Prairie Developments Equity Investment Fund, managed by WESK, has disbursed a total of 11 Equity Investment Loans – totaling \$76,450 – since its inception in 2012.

WESK Training



Women entrepreneurs realize quickly that there is more work to do than there are hours in the day! The same goes for learning all the aspects of operating a business.



Our Business Growth Luncheon Series was presented monthly and covered a variety of topics relevant to small business owners. This workshop is offered in partnership with Economic Development Regina and the NSBA.



We offered three full-day workshops: Learning Day with Deloitte, Let's Grow, and Marketing Madness. These workshops provided small business owners with information in the areas of accounting, business sustainability, and marketing, respectively. We are pleased that many of these workshops sold out!



For our rural members or for those who look to learn from the comfort of their own home, WESK offered free webinars and blog posts every month.

WESK's signature workshop, Business Plan Basics, is a three-hour course to teach first-time entrepreneurs the strategies for moving their business idea out of their heads and onto the pages of a business plan. Sometimes the skills, connections, and coaching from a training workshop can inspire an entrepreneur with the confidence to believe their business idea can be successful.



Last year, we implemented several changes to Business Plan Basics including:

1. Increasing the frequency of the workshop from twice a quarter to once a month (alternating between Saskatoon and Regina)
2. Integrating our online business plan and cash flow templates into the workshop
3. Allowing participants to work on their business plan during the workshop



45 people

In 2019-2020, a total of 45 people attended our Business Plan Basics workshop.



1,826 entrepreneurs participated in 105 workshops this year



25,619

entrepreneurs have attended WESK workshops since 1995

Getting

Social

Top Social Posts
May 2019

@WESK306



wesk306 Minister Tina Beaudry-Mellor (Minister responsible for the Status of Women Office) and Prabha Mitchell (WESK CEO) as the Government of Saskatchewan announced the creation of the WESK-led Saskatchewan Advisory Committee. [#ClosetheGap](#) [#2019](#)



wesk306 Rachel Mielke (Founder and CEO, Hillberg and Berk) and Prabha Mitchell (WESK CEO) were featured guests at WESK's Season Kickoff of Shaken with a Twist. Over 110 people were in attendance! [#ShakenWithaTwist](#) [#ClosetheGap](#)

[#ClosetheGap](#)

 **4,510** Facebook Followers

 **3,299** On LinkedIn

 **2,239** Instagram Followers



We are passionate about
WESK's vision and boldly act
on our purpose of closing the
gender entrepreneurship gap.



— **Prabha Mitchell**
Chief Executive Officer, WESK

Meet

The People Behind Wesk



This past fiscal year has been very busy at WESK with an increase in several new initiatives. We want to thank our members and partners for the trust you placed in WESK to assist in helping to meet your business goals.

We are grateful to the board members for their insights and direction. Thank you to our board, staff, and partners for a widely successful year.

Our Board

Danielle Graff | Chair
Jill Poulton | Past Chair
Aimee Schulhauser
Kelly Bannister
Leigh Kaufmann
Marcia Mirasty
Leanne Johson
Colleen Yates

Our Team

Saskatoon Office

Prabha Mitchell | Chief Executive Officer
Lori Jestin-Knaus | Regional Manager North
Danielle Grimes | Business Advisor
Grace Lam | Lending Advisor
Nick Kochar | Program Advisor
Colleen Gnyp | Matchstick Administrator
Kaurie May | Manager of Finance & Administration
Boniffer Regier | Office Administrator
Jodi Macmillan | Financial Analyst
Josie Fries | Marketing Advisor
Carly Beckman | Program Intern

Regina Office

Mona Bates | Regional Manager South
Diane Souillet | Training & Office Coordinator
Brittany Scott | The Exchange Project Coordinator
Gaurav Thakur | Business Advisor

WESK

Supporting the Community



WESK is actively involved in the Saskatoon and Regina communities and supports programs and initiatives of partner organizations. Over the past year, we collaborated with partners to deliver learning and connecting opportunities for our members and the community. We look forward to working with our partners, community, and members in the future to deliver timely and relevant programs.

BDC
Community
Futures
Saskatchewan

Conexus
Credit Union

Economic
Development
Regina

Edwards
School of
Business,
University of
Saskatchewan

EY

Federation
of Sovereign
Indigenous
Nations (FSIN)

FHQ
Developments

First Nations
University of
Canada

Hill and
Levene
Schools of
Business,
University of
Regina

Innovation
Saskatchewan

Miller
Thomson

NSBA

Path Cowork

RBC

Regina
Chamber of
Commerce

Saskatchewan
Chamber of
Commerce

Saskatchewan
Indian Equity
Foundation
(SIEF)

Saskatoon
Chamber of
Commerce

Saskatoon
Regional
Economic
Development
Authority
(SREDA)

Virtus Group

Women
Entrepreneurs
Knowledge
Hub

WESK is proud to be affiliated with the Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC). Committed to the growth of women's entrepreneurship, WEOC works with women's enterprise support organizations, like WESK, to champion innovation, broaden expertise, and enhance collaboration.



WESK is proudly supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada



#CloseTheGap

WESK empowers business owners with opportunities, resources, and a community to scale up their business.

We create change that impacts the world of business.



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