

Women in Business National Conference and Business Fair

Purpose:

- Increase trade and investment opportunities for Canadian women-owned small-and-medium enterprises.
- Create opportunities for Canadian business women looking to do business with American corporations.
- Increase awareness and understanding of supplier diversity programs available from American Fortune 500 and other firms.

Partners:

- **Government:** DFAIT's Business Women in International Trade Portfolio (BWIT), Trade Commissioner Service in Philadelphia and Washington, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Status of Women Canada (SWC), Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED), and Business Development Bank (BDC).
- **Women's Organizations:** WEConnect Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE), Centre for Women in Business (Mount Saint Vincent University), Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

Project components:

- **Education:**
 - Provide advice and guidance to participants on U.S. market potential, including through supplier diversity procurement opportunities.
 - Secure one-on-one meetings with potential buyers (Washington lead).
 - Activities will include: thematic seminars, training sessions, a business fair, workshops, roundtable discussions, networking opportunities.
- **Matchmaking:**
 - Canadian *WEConnect Canada* certified companies will be paired with American WBENC certified companies who will share their experience working with U.S. supplier diversity programs.
 - Last year's Canadian conference attendees will be matched with new attendees to provide direction and support through the event proceedings.
 - Businesswomen who are new to exporting will be provided support from delegation.
 - Delegate information will be shared with participants to facilitate cross-promotion.
- **Evaluation:**
 - An evaluation/debrief session will be held at the conclusion of the event in Baltimore to determine the effectiveness of the mission and identify any changes or adjustments that should be brought to future like missions.
 - Follow-up will be done on a regular basis (every three months) following the event to determine the value and impact of the Department's participation.

Recruitment criteria:

- The business must be at least 51% owned, managed and controlled by a woman, or women.
- There will be three levels of businesswomen participating in the trade mission:
 - Businesswomen who are new to exporting
 - Businesswomen who are currently exporting
 - *WEConnect Canada* certified businesswomen

Partner contacts:

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