



Venture-Capital
Ready

Investment Training for
Women Entrepreneurs

Comprendre
le Capital de Risque

Formation à l'investissement pour
les femmes entrepreneurs

A SMALL SCALE FOOD PROCESSOR ASSOCIATION INITIATIVE
UNE INITIATIVE DE SMALL SCALE FOOD PROCESSOR ASSOCIATION

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PRESS RELEASE

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SSFPA LAUNCHES VENTURE-CAPITAL READY: INVESTMENT TRAINING FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

[Nanaimo, BC] The [Small Scale Food Processor Association](#) (SSFPA) is pleased to announce the launch of [Venture-Capital Ready: Investment Training for Women Entrepreneurs](#). This new national training program is aimed at food industry women/intersectional entrepreneurs looking to scale up their businesses to meet market demand.

This two-year bilingual program, funded by the Government of Canada's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy's Inclusive Venture Capital Program, will empower participants with the skills and confidence to present themselves and their businesses for venture-capital investment.

"Despite recent advances, gender inequality is still an issue in the world of entrepreneurship. Just 16 percent of small and medium-sized businesses in Canada are majority owned by females," says non-profit Small Business BC. "Women face barriers in accessing capital, are less likely to seek debt and equity financing, and are more likely to be rejected or receive less money. The full and equal participation of women in the economy is essential to Canada's future competitiveness and prosperity."

With one-on-one coaching, investment readiness training through financial expert Dr. Ellen Farrell's *Investoready*© program, and the opportunity to practice their pitch to investors, women entrepreneurs will be ready to meet interested investors primed by SVX and Movement 51 to understand impact investment opportunities in the food industry.

Dr. Ellen Farrell's program will play a key part in elevating the impact that Venture-Capital Ready will have on the Canadian food industry.

"The leadership at SSFPA have undertaken an extremely important project-ensuring venture capital education specifically for women," she says. "Positioning *Investoready*© *Certified Trainers* across the country will benefit everyone by moving more private investment to key Canadian resource sectors."

By the end of the project in early 2025, the SSFPA is positioned to train 50 women/intersectional entrepreneurs, equipping them with the know-how to scale their businesses with

interested investors who themselves are concerned about the issues facing Canada's food system.

Pamela Baxter, President of the Board of the Small Scale Food Processor Association, is excited about what this program will bring to these women/intersectional entrepreneurs.

“Venture-Capital Ready is critical for women food entrepreneurs who are otherwise stymied and consigned to remain small,” says Baxter. “When these women with healthy innovative products are ready to grow, they need information, coaching and support to leap over the financing hurdle that has traditionally been almost impossible to surmount.”

The Venture-Capital Ready program has been funded in part through the Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy administered by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. The SSFPA is delivering the program with the support of the following partners:

- WeBC
- Territorial Agrifood Association (TAA)
- Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre
- PARO
- Innovation Guelph
- IGNITE Atlantic
- National Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship Ecosystem
- Northeast Alberta Food Marketers Association
- Manitoba Women in Agriculture and Food
- Collectif Récolte
- Fair Finance Fund
- Stephen Evans
- Canadian Women in Food
- FarmWorks
- SVX
- Movement51
- FarmFoodDrink

This program is offered free of charge for participants nationwide upon acceptance. Women/intersectional entrepreneurs are simply asked to agree to complete the program in its entirety. Applications open on September 18, 2023.

For more information on the program and application, visit the [Venture-Capital Ready website](#).

If you are an investor interested in learning more about the project, contact Sandy Mark, Project Manager, at WI@ssfpa.net.

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About the SSFPA

The Small Scale Food Processor Association is a national trade association of processors, growers, and suppliers of food and agricultural products. The SSFPA provides leadership, education, marketing, networking, and advocacy to foster success in a competitive global market. In 2018, the SSFPA launched their Women's Initiative, which seeks to mitigate the issues within the food processing industry that affect women entrepreneurs more deeply.

From coast to coast to coast, the SSFPA acknowledges the ancestral and unceded territory of the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people that call this land home. We gratefully acknowledge Indigenous peoples as the original caretakers of the lands, waters, and foodways. We believe that our mutual interest in food sovereignty contributes to reconciliation, healing, and our decolonizing journey.

D'un océan à l'autre et à l'autre, la SSFPA reconnaît les liens vitaux que les Inuits, les Métis et les Premières Nations entretiennent avec leurs territoires ancestraux et non cédés. C'est avec gratitude, que nous reconnaissons les peuples autochtones en tant que protecteurs originels de la terre, de l'eau et des systèmes alimentaires. Nous sommes convaincus que notre intérêt partagé pour la souveraineté alimentaire contribue à la réconciliation, la guérison et à notre processus de décolonisation.