**Canadian Women’s Foundation**

**Investment Readiness Program**

**Vision**

Women and 2SLGBTQ+ populations with diverse lived experiences develop greater economic and social prosperity.

**Goals**

To increase the presence and engagement of women-led, women-serving organizations in the social innovation/social finance (SI/SF) ecosystem by:

- Contributing to increased investment readiness and to building social finance/social enterprise assets
- Increasing women SPOs’ access to social finance through expert advice, information, and capacity to attract and utilize social finance
- Increasing the capacity of women-led, women-serving organizations to apply a gender and diversity lens, and identify and respond to emerging social innovation issues

**What Did the Program Offer?**

- Close to 50 expert service providers engaged, with wide-ranging expertise
- 75 SPO members engaged in community of practice on 70 applications received.
- 41 SPOs funded (urban, rural, 2SLGBTQ+, Indigenous, at all stages of investment readiness)
- 70% of them led by the community they serve.

**How Did SPOs Benefit?**

- Almost all (97%) had moderate to high increase in knowledge of social finance.
- Updated strategic plans to reflect social enterprise.
- Improved data collection and impact reporting.
- A more viable social business model.

100% of SPOs access capacity-building opportunities.

65% say quality of supports is excellent.

**How Did SPOs Increase Their Investment Readiness?**

- Almost all (95%) had moderate to high increase in knowledge of social finance.
- Updated strategic plans to reflect social enterprise.
- Improved data collection and impact reporting.
- A more viable social business model.

**Most SPOs report that program offerings:***

- Supported the development of investment readiness skills and competencies.
- Enhanced their effectiveness in delivering social/environmental impact.
- Contributed to progress towards their social innovation goals.

**Major Gains**

- Finance and money management:
  - More realistic revenue projections
  - Positive gains on most indicators

**Women-Serving SPOS are Increasing their Presence in the SI/SF Ecosystem**

- The connections we have made have helped us refine our pitch, enhance our revenue model, better understand the intricacies of mergers and acquisitions, and appreciate the realties of the current... market (SPO)
- 36% had increased their access to funding and/or partnerships beyond expected.
- 100% of grantees report that social finance will be important for their growth and sustainability in the next 3 years.
- 61% plan to apply for repayable financing.

**Key Assets of women-serving SPOS**

- Uniquely positioned to design innovations that put women and their diverse needs and assets at the center.
- ‘Relational investment’ practices, especially in Indigenious SPOS.
- Unique social change ideas rooted in strong understanding of community priorities.
- Passion and deep commitment to social change, which is reflected in the mission and goals of their social ventures.
- Strong reputation and brand in their communities.
- Resilience demonstrated during the pandemic: SPOs extending their reach, digitizing products and services, and partnering across regions.

**Vision**

Women and 2SLGBTQ+ populations with diverse lived experiences develop greater economic and social prosperity.

**Goals**

To increase the presence and engagement of women-led, women-serving organizations in the social innovation/social finance (SI/SF) ecosystem by:

- Contributing to increased investment readiness and to building social finance/social enterprise assets
- Increasing women SPOs’ access to social finance through expert advice, information, and capacity to attract and utilize social finance
- Increasing the capacity of women-led, women-serving organizations to apply a gender and diversity lens, and identify and respond to emerging social innovation issues

**What Did the Program Offer?**

- Close to 50 expert service providers engaged, with wide-ranging expertise
- 75 SPO members engaged in community of practice on 70 applications received.
- 41 SPOs funded (urban, rural, 2SLGBTQ+, Indigenous, at all stages of investment readiness)
- 70% of them led by the community they serve.

**How Did SPOs Benefit?**

- Almost all (97%) had moderate to high increase in knowledge of social finance.
- Updated strategic plans to reflect social enterprise.
- Improved data collection and impact reporting.
- A more viable social business model.

100% of SPOs access capacity-building opportunities.

65% say quality of supports is excellent.

**How Did SPOs Increase Their Investment Readiness?**

- Almost all (95%) had moderate to high increase in knowledge of social finance.
- Updated strategic plans to reflect social enterprise.
- Improved data collection and impact reporting.
- A more viable social business model.

**Major Gains**

- Finance and money management:
  - More realistic revenue projections
  - Positive gains on most indicators

**Women-Serving SPOS are Increasing their Presence in the SI/SF Ecosystem**

- The connections we have made have helped us refine our pitch, enhance our revenue model, better understand the intricacies of mergers and acquisitions, and appreciate the realties of the current... market (SPO)
- 36% had increased their access to funding and/or partnerships beyond expected.
- 100% of grantees report that social finance will be important for their growth and sustainability in the next 3 years.
- 61% plan to apply for repayable financing.

**Key Assets of women-serving SPOS**

- Uniquely positioned to design innovations that put women and their diverse needs and assets at the center.
- ‘Relational investment’ practices, especially in Indigenious SPOS.
- Unique social change ideas rooted in strong understanding of community priorities.
- Passion and deep commitment to social change, which is reflected in the mission and goals of their social ventures.
- Strong reputation and brand in their communities.
- Resilience demonstrated during the pandemic: SPOs extending their reach, digitizing products and services, and partnering across regions.