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# business WOMEN 2017

in international trade



## WORKING TOGETHER: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SUCCESS



The Honourable  
François-Philippe  
Champagne

Minister of  
International Trade

The Business Women in International Trade (BWIT) program has so much to celebrate in 2017. Twenty years ago, the team travelled to Washington, D.C. on the first ever women-focused trade mission. Since then, the program has grown and innovated throughout the years, matching Canadian business women with countless commercial opportunities beyond Canada's borders.

Coming from a background of family businesses, and as a businessperson, lawyer and international trade specialist, I have had the pleasure of working with Canadian business women. I am pleased to see that you are more active and successful than ever.

Companies owned by women are the fastest-growing segment in Canada's small business sector. The Government of Canada recognizes your incredible potential and is taking steps to help ensure your continued success.

The BWIT team provides support to business women as you navigate through an ecosystem of exporting services, information and programs to do business abroad. This year's newsletter provides the guidance you need, highlights the program's successes, shares lessons from Canadian business women and offers valuable resources.

As exporters, importers and investors, you will also benefit from our ongoing work to open commercial opportunities with our partners worldwide. This encompasses Canada's close relationship with the United States and our other trading partners. The recently signed Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will bolster our position, giving Canadians preferential access to the European market.

New economic opportunities abroad translate into economic growth and more jobs. As we mark BWIT's 20th anniversary, may you continue to pursue your ambitions and achieve your international goals.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

I am delighted to celebrate the **20th anniversary** of Global Affairs Canada's Business Women in International Trade program. Empowering women in business and trade spurs innovation, promotes different ideas and perspectives, and acts as one of the best predictors of economic growth and prosperity. With the growing force of ambitious and inspirational Canadian women in the business sector, Canada has built a stronger, more prosperous, and more inclusive economy. The Government of Canada and I, as Prime Minister, are working to help women succeed in the global marketplace. We are committed to creating an economy of successful entrepreneurs and business people who have opportunities to invest and develop international ties regardless of their gender. I am thrilled the program has played an important role in this commitment over the last 20 years, and I look forward to even greater success in the future.

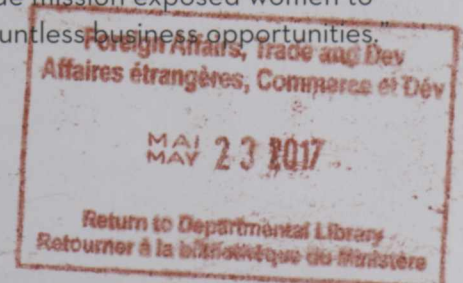
The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada

## BUSINESS WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE: ASSISTING CANADIAN WOMEN SINCE 1997

Twenty years ago, a group of high-impact women pooled their talents and connections to organize the very first Canadian business women's international trade mission. Together with the Government of Canada's support, they travelled to Washington, D.C. with 100 passionate entrepreneurs looking to access export opportunities south of the border. It was the start of something big.

"The first women-focused trade mission laid the foundation for the Government of Canada's support for business women," says Josie Mousseau, Deputy Director of the Business Women in International Trade program at Global Affairs Canada. "The trade mission exposed women to exporting and yielded countless business opportunities."

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