

# WBE Canada Releases Groundbreaking 'Fast Track to Supply Chains' Report to Empower Women-Owned Businesses in Procurement

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA,  
September 18, 2024 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- Women Business Enterprises Canada Council (WBE Canada) has unveiled a comprehensive report detailing the results of its “Fast Track to Supply Chains” research initiative. This year-long project, funded by the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada ([ISED](#)), addresses the significant barriers women-owned businesses face in accessing supply chains and procurement opportunities.

The initiative aimed to support corporate members and drive development within the professional services sector by identifying key obstacles to growth for women-owned suppliers. WBE Canada commissioned a series of national research studies that included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Four separate research studies were conducted in 2023: specifically, two studies were designed and implemented by Jack D. Kulchitsky, Ph.D. at the University of Calgary, in collaboration with Paul D. Larson, Ph.D. at the University of Manitoba, while two additional studies were designed and implemented by Narrative Research led by their CEO - Margaret Brigley.

Key objectives of the research included:



Fast Track to Supply Chains Banner



Fast Track to Supply Chains Event Toronto March 2024



- Exploring the concept of certification and how capabilities are currently being assessed;
- Understanding buyer practices related to diversity in procurement (e.g., if/how buyers seek out diverse suppliers and what barriers, if any, are encountered in this process);
- Identifying key gaps encountered by buyers when looking for, and selecting, diverse suppliers, including what may be preventing diverse suppliers from getting contracts;
- Understanding what changes are needed to better support diverse supplier selection.

[The full report](#) is now available in both official languages, and further insights will be shared at WBE Canada's [2024 National Conference & Expo](#), taking place on November 13-14 in Toronto. Margaret Brigley, CEO of Narrative Research, will join the WBE Canada team to present the findings and discuss the next steps.

"This research initiative represents a critical step forward in understanding the unique challenges faced by women-owned businesses in the professional services sector. By identifying the barriers and gaps in procurement practices, we are paving the way for more inclusive and diverse supply chains. WBE Canada is committed to taking actionable steps based on these findings to support our corporate members and ensure that women-owned businesses have the opportunities they deserve to thrive in the marketplace." said Charli Law-Jury, Interim CEO of WBE Canada.

#### About Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) is the federal government department responsible for fostering innovation and economic growth in Canada. Through strategic investments, policy development, and collaboration, ISED supports Canadian businesses, research institutions, and communities in driving a competitive and inclusive economy.

#### About WES Ecosystem

The WES Ecosystem Fund supports projects that deliver business support to women entrepreneurs and contribute to their business development and growth. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) collaborates with Canadians across all sectors of the economy and regions of the country to foster investment, enhance innovation, increase Canada's global trade presence, and establish a fair, efficient, and competitive marketplace.

#### About Women Business Enterprises Canada Council (WBE Canada)

Women Business Enterprises Canada Council (WBE Canada) is a Canadian nonprofit organization with a mandate to empower and facilitate the success of women-owned businesses with equitable access within supply chains to drive innovation, social value and economic growth in communities across Canada. WBE Canada's activities include accelerating supplier diversity, development and maintenance of the Canadian WBE database and empowerment of women-owned businesses. We have a fast-growing network of over 500 certified Canadian Women Business Enterprises (WBEs) and 70 Corporate Members – organizations that are committed to supplier diversity. Our network represents women-owned businesses of all sizes, backgrounds,



categories, industries and intersectionalities (BIPOC, 2sLGBTQ+, etc.) across Canada. We connect WBEs to companies and organizations in automotive, construction, finance, food & beverage, government, tech, telecom and other sectors.

Alexandra Roy

WBE Canada

+1 647-360-9855

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