

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Innovation Guelph receives \$225,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant *Funding will support pilot programs of Women's Economic Advancement Project*

April 9 (Guelph, ON) – Innovation Guelph is the recipient of an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$225,000 over 36 months. The grant will help to **enable the continuation of the Women's Economic Advancement (WEA) Project, which supports women entrepreneurs in the Guelph and Wellington County.**

"Innovation Guelph is reaching out to and supporting women to be contributing members of our community. **I am pleased that the Ontario Trillium Foundation will be helping to support this endeavour to further the business success and civic involvement of women in Guelph,**" said Liz Sandals, MPP for Guelph, who presented the grant at a press conference Thursday afternoon.

The **next phase of the Women's Economic Advancement project will include the design and delivery of women's entrepreneurship and business leadership programs in the region.** Over three years, Innovation Guelph will continue to engage women seeking to launch new or grow existing businesses, providing business education, mentorship, and financial resources so they can discover and explore their entrepreneurial power.

"Innovation Guelph is grateful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their support of our goal of growing women-owned businesses in Guelph and Wellington County to 30% by 2020," said Kristel Manes, Director Innovation Guelph and Women's Economic Advancement Project. **"This funding is critical to develop the pilot programs that will be the backbone of women's economic advancement in the region."**

The Women's Economic Advancement Project recently completed research among six key segments, which included existing women entrepreneurs, women in career or life transition, women living with low income, women in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors, women who have immigrated to Canada, and women living in rural communities. Information gathered from small group conversations in combination with an environmental scan of existing resources will assist in the development of creation of pilot programs.

Updates on the Women's Economic Advancement Project can be found at InnovationGuelph.ca.

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About the Ontario Trillium Foundation

A leading grant maker in Canada, the Ontario Trillium Foundation strengthens the capacity of the voluntary sector through investments in community-based initiatives. An agency of the Government of Ontario, OTF builds healthy and vibrant communities.

About Innovation Guelph

Innovation Guelph (IG) spearheads innovative approaches for prosperity and community wellbeing. Our goal is to be the Guelph regions' central institution for the support of entrepreneurship. Since launching in October 2010, Innovation Guelph has seen more than 500 companies come through its doors for business advisory services, and maintains about 80 clients monthly. IG has a team of business mentors who have played a part in the creation of more than 200 new jobs, and helped our clients retain an additional 300 jobs. IG has also helped to channel more than \$12 million into our client companies over the past five years. Visit www.innovationguelph.ca to learn more about how Innovation Guelph helps ideas start, grow, and thrive by cultivating entrepreneurs, developing powerful partnerships, and supporting innovative initiatives that transform the way we do things in business and in our community.



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