



OWIT-Ottawa Newsletter

Spring Edition, Vol. 7

In This Issue

[The Unsung Women Facilitating Global Trade](#)

[Invitation to Kenya](#)

[Interview: Gorana Filipovic](#)

OWIT International Webinars

For more details on the webinar program of OWIT International, [visit them online](#).

Our Next Event:

OWIT-Ottawa Annual
General Meeting
15 May 2018
5:30-7:30

Location:
Fasken
55 Metcalfe St
Ottawa

[Registration Open](#)

Quick Links



info@owit-ottawa.ca
www.owit-ottawa.ca

Greetings!

We thought this moment would never come, but Springtime has arrived!

In April, we were delighted to welcome so many of you to meet Dr. Ailish Campbell, Canada's Chief Trade Commissioner. Her remarks were candid and insightful. She welcomed all women in trade to leverage Canada's trade commissioner service and utilize programs developed to support international trade. Many thanks to Alexandra Logvin of Fasken for hosting this event - your hospitality was greatly appreciated!

In this edition of our newsletter, we share an article written by Susan Baka titled "The Unsung Women Facilitating Global Trade", invite you to Nairobi, Kenya and meet OWIT-Ottawa member Gorana Filipovic.

Our Annual General Meeting takes place on May 15th at Fasken. Members are encouraged to participate - we hope to see you there!

All our best,

Mila Pavlovic & Ainsley Butler
VPs Communications
[OWIT-Ottawa](#)

The Unsung Women Facilitating Global Trade By Susan Baka (OWIT-International, OWIT-Toronto)

From the United Nations to the World Trade Organization (WTO) to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, there is an increasing awareness of the significant potential to accelerate women's economic empowerment.

We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you for enabling us to win a Constant Contact All Star Award for excellence in communications for 2017. We were previously awarded this distinction in 2015.

We wanted to share this great news and express gratitude to our loyal members for helping us receive this award!

Our communications and events are planned with our members and other trade professionals in mind. Your engagement and interactions are important to us.

THANK YOU!



A 2015 study by the McKinsey Global Institute found that advancing women's equality could add \$12 trillion to global GDP by 2025. However, women are under-represented in international trade, with only one in five women involved in exporting. Among the barriers are a lack of access to international contacts, opportunities, financing, global supply chains, export promotion programs and role models. Efforts to encourage female business owners to export and to support them in expanding globally often focus on what governments can do. Most recently, these efforts have emphasized making trade more inclusive for women and removing the barriers to women's participation. These are laudable initiatives.

But what is less understood and appreciated is the role women themselves are taking.

Women's trade organizations and networks encourage and facilitate participation in the global marketplace immensely. The Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT), a non-profit body with 20 chapters in Canada, the United States, Latin America, Europe and Africa, is a great example. OWIT is dedicated to advancing global trade opportunities for women, whether they are business owners, professionals, executives or service providers. OWIT acts as a collective forum to address systemic barriers women face by actively supporting education, facilitating information exchange and networking, staying at the forefront of trade and technological developments, and building partnerships and alliances with peer organizations and associations to inform and advocate for change within the broader global community. Trade missions, new chapter mentoring, government education and student involvement are also among OWIT's efforts.

Most notable is that this work is done by volunteers - busy women with their own businesses or demanding careers, who are often raising children, as well.

As governments and multilateral bodies decide how to address women's economic empowerment, it's worth considering exactly why women are so invested in shaping their own economic future, as well. Some women work in a male-dominated field and are seeking a collegial network of like-minded women from whom to learn and draw inspiration. Many see the value in expanding their international contacts, which can lead to new business opportunities. Likewise, many members

attribute their path to success to having roots in the network.

Laura Ipsen, general manager and senior vice-president of Oracle Marketing Cloud and one of the original members of OWIT, encourages women to embrace OWIT as a community that is special: "It helped me understand international trade and brought some of the greatest opportunities in my career," she says. "And this was not just an organization about policies and regulations, but mostly about a community of women supporting other women."

Let's take a closer look at the influence such an organization can have in helping break down barriers:

Educating the Policy Makers

A trade delegation of 12 OWIT leaders attended the WTO Public Forum in Geneva in 2016 to meet with ambassadors and representatives of trade bodies, including the WTO, the International Trade Centre and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. They also presented a panel on active participation of small and medium-sized enterprises and women in global markets and hosted a booth, themed as "Hidden Faces of Trade," to showcase the wide range of OWIT-member careers and businesses.

This delegation raised the profile of OWIT on the international stage, created new alliances for the organization with policy-making bodies and showcased the impressive array of talent among its membership.

In meeting with the group, then US ambassador to the WTO, Michael Punke, lauded the organization for its booth theme and for illustrating the human element of trade at a time of escalating anti-globalization sentiment. He urged the women not to underestimate the power of their stories, any one of which, he said, was more compelling than a thousand statistics in support of trade. Perhaps no stronger testament to OWIT's influence can be stated.

Spearheading Trade Missions and Educational Events

OWIT facilitates trade in a very practical manner - this is exemplified by the letter of cooperation signed by OWIT-Toronto and OWIT-Monterrey in 2017 in the presence of Canada's minister of international trade. Two seminars were recently held in Monterrey to promote two-way trade between the countries: exporting to Canada for Mexican food producers and

exporting to the Monterrey aerospace cluster for the Canadian aerospace industry. The events were orchestrated by both OWIT chapters in partnership with the Trade Facilitation Office Canada and supported by the Canadian consulate. Some participants are already planning to travel to Canada to attend upcoming trade shows. An OWIT-Toronto trade mission to Mexico for women exporters in the Canadian auto, aerospace and information communication technology sectors will take place this fall to further promote two-way trade between these countries.

It's time for public and private sectors to step up and better support women's business organizations such as OWIT. Lip service and token financial assistance are not enough. Such organizations need meaningful support and sponsorships to complement the countless volunteer hours and efforts.

If their true economic potential is to be unleashed, women must be taken seriously in business, and so should women-led organizations such as OWIT. As demonstrated by their actions, such bodies know how to get the job done when it comes to moving the needle on women's economic empowerment and engagement in international trade.

This [article](#) was published by CIGI on 12 April 2018, as part of an essay series about [Reshaping Trade through Women's Economic Empowerment](#)

Invitation to the OWIT-International 18th Annual World Conference in Nairobi, Kenya



In response to global demand and burgeoning trends in trade modernization, OWIT International is bringing back its 18th Annual World Conference.

In recognition of Nairobi's vast potential to engage in global trade, OWIT International has selected its OWIT Chapter in Nairobi, Kenya as the host for this year's annual conference. On October 24-25, 2018, OWIT members around the globe will converge with supporters and experts in their field to empower both the local community and business leaders throughout the world.

Day One will be comprised of a capacity-building workshop for local women entrepreneurs seeking to take their business across borders.

Day Two is a conference for trade practitioners and policy makers from around the world for discussing best practices, what's next for the future of trade, and what women's roles should be in that future.

Learn more:

<http://www.owit.org/programs/nairobiconference>



INTERVIEW:

**Gorana Filipovic
Senior Associate
Strategic Alliances
Export Development Canada**

***Tell us about your
professional journey in trade***

After graduating from Telfer School of Management in International Trade, I was thrilled to start my career with an organization that's dedicated to helping Canadian companies succeed globally. Over the last nine years I have been a part of EDC teams that build solutions for our customers to help them understand and manage the risks they face in various international markets. I am currently a member of our Strategic Alliances team. We are building new relationships with organizations and companies that combined with EDC's strengths, make it easier for Canadian companies to do business internationally.

What are the key trends you are seeing in 2018 for Canadian exporters/trade developments?

I would highlight two key trends that could apply to all Canadian exporters.

Canada's global brand is very healthy. Canadian exporters have a well established reputation for being professional and reliable, with high standards for the products and services they sell internationally. It's a great competitive advantage, especially when entering a new market, and more of our businesses should leverage the Canadian brand!

Trade decisions have become increasingly data-driven, and at a time when new trade agreements present new risks and opportunities, Canadian exporters need to make sure they benefit from the technical advisory services and information offered by Canadian trade

experts like Export Development Canada, Trade Commissioner Service, Business Development Bank of Canada and other trade agencies. The right data can provide businesses with key insights into foreign markets and global trends, and help them make better informed decisions to build their networks abroad. I encourage you to visit EDC's TradeInsights to get the latest trade intelligence.

How can businesses engage with EDC?

You can get in touch with our trade advisors 1-800-229-0575 to learn how EDC can help you succeed internationally. We are also connected and available via all Social platforms.

What is your favorite trade story?

It's hard to pick only one! I love hearing about small and big success stories from Canadian companies. Some of the most interesting trade stories come from local shops, where they become exporters overnight! It is inspiring to hear their stories in navigating the world of trade and keeps my own focus on the True North - make it easier for Canadian entrepreneurs to bring more Canada to the rest of the world!

Would you like to partner with or sponsor OWIT-Ottawa?

If so, please contact us at info@owit-ottawa.ca

Join the OWIT-Ottawa conversation at...



www.owit-ottawa.ca

For any questions, comments or submissions, please contact us:

info@owit-ottawa.ca