



A professional organization that supports the advancement of women in international trade by providing networking and educational opportunities.

OWIT-Ottawa Newsletter

Winter 2022, Vol. 12

In this issue

- Upcoming events
- A word from OWIT International President
- Message from Co-Presidents of OWIT-Ottawa
- Mandate Letter - Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic - Development
- OWIT Recommends
- Changes to our Board
- Looking back at our Holiday Social
- OWIT International

Greetings!

Greetings OWIT Ottawa,

We are pleased to share with you the first newsletter of 2022. It has been a challenging time for many in our City as we have struggled with the recent truck convoy occupation. And, as we prepare this message we would be remiss not to mention the global crisis that is currently underway in Ukraine. Whether it be a local or global crisis the impacts will no doubt be felt by our membership throughout the OWIT Chapter.

Our Volunteer Board are involved in a number of new initiatives and are actively preparing to hold a series of events both virtually and in person over the next year.

We have re-launched our [LinkedIn](#) page and encourage you all to follow-us as we strive to build a wider network. And, don't forget to follow-us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

We would also like to hear from you, our members. If you have ideas or stories to share, please reach out to our communications team at communications@owit-ottawa.ca

Sincerely,
OWIT-Ottawa

Contact Us

For any questions, comments or submissions, please contact us:
info@owit-ottawa.ca

Upcoming events

A number of events are taking place in March. Below are a few to mark in your calendar:

- March 2: Women Business Enterprises Canada Council is hosting Women's Day with WBE Canada. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.
- March 7: Women United is hosting Fearless Women. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.
- March 10:
 - Joint OWIT-Ottawa and OWIT-Toronto International Women's Day celebration. Stay tuned. For more details, follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).
 - EUCCAN, funded by the European Union, is hosting CETA's rules of origin explained. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.

A Word from our Presidents



FRIDA OWINGA

PRESIDENT OF OWIT INTERNATIONAL

Why do I love OWIT?

Considering we are in February, the month of love, sharing why I love OWIT seemed like a good fit.

I joined OWIT Nairobi in 2009 after relocating from Atlanta, GA, where I had lived for 10 years, and absolutely loved it. While it was great coming back home, a piece of me was still in Atlanta and as I looked around for networking opportunities I came across OWIT Nairobi Gala Dinner. I attended, became a member and I have been a member since. The promise of supporting women in business to access new markets through trade was exciting and challenging at the same time considering the fact that trading is not a straight line especially for women who had great products but little or no access to appropriate information and networks.

Joining OWIT presented an opportunity to be part of a community that was bridging that gap for women. Bridging the gap of access to information and networking through our robust programs and also bridging the gap between women in trade and policymakers by being their voice.

OWIT has preserved my love for people around the globe through the responsibility of participating in various roles. One of my favorite roles was VP of Chapter Development. In that role I had the privilege of supporting women leaders in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, St Louis, and the Dominican Republic to set up OWIT in their cities. Each geographical region has its set of highs and lows but together we overcame to bring OWIT in their cities to connect their communities with the globe through innovative collaboration. Together we can mitigate risks and overcome challenges to ensure trade delivers the promise of expanding women's role in economic development and decreasing diverse inequalities.

I have always considered myself a global citizen because I was born and raised in Kenya

and I have had the privilege to work with various nations. I have supplied handmade goods to Australia, the UK, the U.S.A, South Africa, and professional services in East Africa as well as hosted tourists from Japan in Kenya. I have always been fascinated by other cultures and OWIT continues to nurture my passion for diverse cultures and interests that are relevant to fostering international trade and the advancement of women in business.

OWIT is a great platform to contribute skills while accessing information and networking opportunities to expand women's role in strengthening our economies and reducing inequalities.

For your network to increase your net worth, you must put in the work and every good you put in will come back to you for sure.

I am grateful for all the opportunities and lessons OWIT has delivered to me and I remain committed to contributing value as best as I can for the good of all concerned.

Frida Owinga, the current president of OWIT International, is a people and business development professional who designs and delivers learning solutions that shift paradigms and catalyze transformation. She is a mum of 3 boys and grandma to one.



A message from OWIT-OTTAWA Co-Presidents Nathalie Bradbury and Tamaika Jumelle

OWIT-Ottawa in 2021



In 2021, with the continuation of the pandemic, we continued to support Ottawa women professionals and entrepreneurs in a virtual format, with online events. We were very pleased to close out our year with an in-person Holiday Social highlighting Nita Tandon, founder of award-winning DALCINI™ Stainless houseware, a line of durable, chemical-free stainless steel food containers. During the pandemic we also promoted the products and services of local businesses KIN Vineyards, Equator Coffee of Almonte, Stubbe Chocolates, Strawberry Blonde gluten-free bakery, as well as fashion and fabric specialists Capsule Creations and Bank & Vogue.

Our sister OWIT chapters around the world were also active, here are some examples:

- OWIT Toronto held a fascinating event in November on The Global Supply Chain Grinch that could Steal Christmas
- OWIT Nairobi participated in the African Women in Trade Conference, together with OWIT Nigeria and Zimbabwe
- Tampa Bay was able to hold its annual awards ceremony, as well as a winter wine-tasting event
- Washington DC held an event on music and digital trade in the Middle East, and their annual Gala, which included a how-to on making signature cocktails

- OWIT northern California held a December in-person event outside under a large tent

OWIT now has two new chapters, OWIT UK and OWIT Brussels. OWIT Ottawa is looking forward to co-hosting events with them and supporting them as they get established. As a reminder, membership in OWIT Ottawa provides membership in the OWIT International network, and to participate in events organized by OWIT chapters world-wide.

Partnerships and policy directions

Our partnerships outside the OWIT family have strengthened in several directions. Last year we were invited by the Trade Commissioner Service of Global Affairs Canada to join the CUSMA SME Counsellor Network Pilot Program to exchange information and best practices, develop partnerships and engage in joint activities, several of which are in the planning stages.

During the pandemic, the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH), produced two annual reports (2020, 2021) surveys the latest research on women entrepreneurs in Canada, – with particular emphasis on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on diverse women entrepreneurs, the inclusive innovation ecosystem, and emerging initiatives to support women entrepreneurs.

For The State of Women’s Entrepreneurship in Canada 2021 visit the following link: [WEKH | The State of Women’s Entrepreneurship in Canada 2021](#)

Our chapter has been privileged to participate in the global conversation on the status of women entrepreneurs and steps to take to overcome challenges they face.

In early January, Tamaïka and I were honoured to participate in the Ottawa conversation of the prestigious Reykjavik Global Forum hosted by the Ambassador of Iceland. We discussed women’s issues touching on equality, sustainability and creating humanitarian initiatives to advance the cause of women.

We also participated in the January launch of the report Gender Mainstreaming in Free Trade Agreements: A Regional Analysis and Good Practice Examples, by Dr. Amrita Bahri, funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and implemented by Cowater International, and OWIT Ottawa sponsor. The study examines gender-specific challenges in international trade and puts forward a series of recommendations for policymakers and trade professionals on how to advance gender-related issues in free trade agreements. Expert panelists from the WTO, UNCTAD and academics discussed the study’s findings with Dr Bahri, moderated by Don Stephenson, former Canadian Ambassador to the WTO.

During March celebrations for International Women’s Day, we will be holding a Mix and Mingle event, inviting women and men both new to international trade and enjoying established careers in this field, to share their experiences in small groups over a glass of wine, and to give people a taste of our upcoming mentorship program. Stay tuned over the next few weeks, as we determine whether the event will be in person or online.

One of our focusses this year will be examining how to plan for a post-pandemic world, as effects on trade and business continue, often in sudden and unexpected ways. We will be convening experts and partners who will delve into some of these questions and propose some innovative solutions. Events to be announced soon.

Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development

Mary Ng was first elected as Member of Parliament for Markham – Thornhill in 2017. She has previously served as Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade.

Her mandate outlines immediate priorities, such as:

- strengthening and securing critical supply chains
- advancing Canada’s export diversification strategy
- prioritizing efforts to ensure that small businesses and communities in every region of the country has the tools and supports they need to recover, to innovate and grow to create new jobs

Among other things, she is committed to continue to advance Canada’s global leadership on critical minerals by working with international partners and allies, including through the implementation of the Canada-U.S. Joint Action Plan on Critical Minerals Collaboration and the Canada-EU Strategic Partnership on Raw Materials.

[Click here to learn more about Mary NG's mandate](#)

OWIT Recommends

- Funded by *UK AID* and *Trade and Investment Advocacy Fund*, **Amrita Bahri** analyzes trade policy from a gender perspective. To read the study

***GENDER MAINSTREAMING
IN FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS:
A REGIONAL ANALYSIS AND GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES***

click [here](#)

- **Sheri R Hinish** is an advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion. She runs the podcast **SUPPLY CHAIN QUEEN**. To know more click [here](#)

Addition to our Board

Welcome to our new Board Member, Elizabeth Phelan

Elizabeth Phelan is a Growth Solutions Director in the Mid-Market



Segment team at Export Development Canada (EDC) in Ottawa. She manages a diverse portfolio of clients in a range of sectors across Canada. Elizabeth is passionate about helping Canadian companies become more internationally competitive, by providing market intel, risk mitigation solutions and trade finance services.

With over 20 years of experience, Elizabeth is a top-performing professional with sales and underwriting experience; adept at tailoring value proposition to client requirements; excellent interpersonal, communication and organizational abilities; an infectious positive outlook; strong and dedicated work ethic; enthusiastic advocate for her customers.

Her and her husband strive to maintain a healthy work life balance while raising four children. She is proud to be a consistent driver of growth and customer loyalty for EDC who believes that discipline, preparation, and hard work drive success.

She graduated with an Honours degree in Communication Management and Management Studies from the University of Waterloo. She holds certificates in Business Analysis, Six Sigma Green Belt and Banking & Credit Analysis

EDC is Canada's export credit agency, offering innovative commercial solutions to help Canadian exporters and investors expand their international business. EDC's knowledge and partnerships are used by more than 9,000 Canadian companies and their global customers in up to 200 markets worldwide each year. EDC is financially self-sustaining and is a recognized leader in financial reporting, economic analysis and has been recognized as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers for nine consecutive years.

A Special Thank You

We would like to thank our outgoing Board Members, **Susana Lee, Sarah Boucaud and Zenia Miner** for their tireless work on behalf of OWIT-Ottawa. They have contributed immeasurably to our chapter.



Susana Lee



Sarah Boucaud



Zenia Miner

Looking back at our holiday social!

*Our holiday social
took place on
December 10, 2021*



Our key note speaker
was
Nita Tandon

Founder of award-winning
DALCINI™ Stainless
houseware, a line of
durable, chemical-free
stainless steel food
containers.



Memberships

We were pleased to engage with so many of you, both virtually and in person, at our various events last year. We are grateful to you, our members, for your ongoing support of our volunteer-run activities.

Our team is already hard at work to bring you exciting events over the next few months. We hope you will consider a membership, which will enable us to continue organizing events that provide valuable networking and learning opportunities to our Ottawa trade community.

Reduced virtual membership rates will be available once again in 2022:

General Membership (Jan to Dec): \$50.00

Student Membership (Jan to Dec): \$30.00

Please visit our website for further details.

Visit our website

OWIT International



How to Access your OWIT International Member Benefits

Did you know that as a member of OWIT Ottawa, you are **AUTOMATICALLY** part of the OWIT International global network? Your complimentary OWIT International membership adds value to your local chapter membership by offering you added benefits and resources, including:

- Reciprocal benefits and member rate for events organized by any OWIT chapter worldwide;
- Member-discounted rate for OWIT International webinars and **FREE** participation in Members' Only webinars on professional development and special topics;
- Access to an expanded network of business and professional contacts;
- Free listing in OWIT International's searchable online membership directory and password to Members-Only section of OWIT International's website;
- Opportunities for professional growth through participation on OWIT International committees.

As a local chapter member, all you need to do is register your chapter membership on OWIT International's website <https://www.owit.org>. Create your free member profile today!

Below are links to a few webinars that might be of interest:

Successfully Navigating Southeast Asia

Potential Empowerment through Gender Mainstreaming

Did You Know...

We have OWIT chapters in:

- Arkansas
- Brussels
- Charleston
- Chicago
- Dominican Republic
- Greater Triangle NC
- Lake Geneva
- Los Angeles
- Mexico City
- Monterrey
- Nairobi
- New Jersey
- New York City
- Nigeria
- Northern California
- Peru
- South Florida
- St. Louis
- Tampa Bay
- Toronto
- Orange County
- Ottawa
- United Kingdom
- Virtual
- Washington, D.C.
- Zimbabwe

[BECOME A MEMBER](#)

[BECOME A PARTNER](#)

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