

POLICY PRIORITIES

The National Women’s Business Council (NWBC) is a non-partisan federal advisory committee created to serve as an independent source of advise and policy recommendations to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) on economic issues of importance to women business owners and entrepreneurs.

NWBC brings together women business owners and leaders from across the country and across industries as well as representatives of women’s business organizations, policymakers, and key stakeholders to identify some of the most pressing challenges female entrepreneurs face today.

NWBC’s **policy priorities for 2020** will continue to focus on three major issue areas for women business owners: **Access to Capital and Opportunity, Women in STEM, and Rural Women’s Entrepreneurship.**



INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL & OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

- Advocate for, monitor, and build on the Council’s 2019 policy recommendations, particularly those focused on improving access to diverse funding streams to improve female founders’ and women business owners’ positioning to better compete in the federal and private markets. More specifically, identify and support existing programs, federal policies, and proposed legislation aimed at expanding the pool of investors—including both “Angel” and VC investing in women-owned enterprises.
- Raise awareness about relevant financial literacy issues and existing curriculum, programs, and initiatives dedicated to ‘teaching women entrepreneurs the language of capital,’ which may be amplified to help women build personal and business credit, build wealth, and achieve financial security.



ENGAGE MORE WOMEN IN STEM EDUCATION AND BUSINESS

- NWBC will produce a report on “Women-Owned Participation in SBIR and STTR Programs” with SBA’s Office of Investment and Innovation (OII), which will address the percentage of women-owned firms engaged in the SBIR/STTR Program.
- The Council will remain engaged with federal agency resource partners such as the United States Patent and Trademark Office to identify some of the major challenges faced by women in the patenting and trademark process, specifically focusing on the top factors contributing to patent denial for women inventors.
- NWBC will identify best practices and programs that provide resources, funding opportunities, as well as increased access to STEM role models and mentorship opportunities, specifically for female scientists, women business owners, and students in K-12, undergraduate, and graduate STEM education. The Council will also continue to monitor reporting on the impact of the recently passed “Building Blocks of STEM Act.”



INCREASE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

- The Council will continue its public engagement efforts and explore additional topics related to sources of isolation in rural communities, including broadband access, the lack of reliable childcare, and workforce shortages.
- The Council will explore alternative lending options specifically tailored or best suited for rural women entrepreneurs seeking capital to start, grow, or scale their business.
- Explore and identify programmatic, policy and legislative proposals aimed at increasing the presence of Women’s Business Centers, other SBA resources partners, economic development resources, and access to capital in rural communities.