



RBC Canadian Women
Entrepreneur Awards

Presented by:
**WOMEN OF
INFLUENCE**

2021 RBC CANADIAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR AWARD FINALISTS ANNOUNCED TODAY

TORONTO – Women of Influence announces the 2021 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards finalists. A record-breaking year for the program, Canadian women entrepreneurs were recognized by their colleagues and peers with over 10,000 nominations from across the country. After an intensive judging review, 21 finalists were selected across seven categories. An additional five recipients were chosen to receive the Ones to Watch Award, which recognizes entrepreneurs who have launched businesses that have made an incredible impact in fewer than three years.

The women in this exceptional, diverse, and resilient group of women were chosen for their accomplishments in a wide range of industries including media, venture capital management, apparel, construction, medical services, cybersecurity and beyond.

In recognition of the incredible growth of the overall program, the Social Change category has been expanded this year. This award has now grown to include two categories: Social Change: Regional Impact, which recognizes a leader of a registered charity, social enterprise or not-for-profit that is dedicated to their unique brand of social change at a local or regional level; and Social Change: National Impact, which recognizes those whose organization has national or global impact.

“This year we received a record-breaking number of applications and are honoured to celebrate the accomplishments of our 2021 award finalists,” says Alicia Skalin, Co-CEO, Women of Influence. “These entrepreneurs have demonstrated remarkable innovation in the face of adversity, and we couldn’t be more excited to showcase their stories across the country.”

The winners will be announced and celebrated at the 29th Annual Awards Gala, on Wednesday, November 17, where all attendees will be once again digitally transported into our Virtual Awards Gala. The Gala, which will be live streamed around the world, will shine a spotlight on all these amazing Canadian women entrepreneurs. Keynote remarks will be shared by Nadine Renaud-Tinker, Regional President Quebec, RBC.

The RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards recognize women business owners from across Canada who make impressive and substantial contributions to the local, Canadian, or global economy. Candidates share a strong entrepreneurial vision and a relentless passion in pursuing their dreams. These awards recognize businesswomen and leaders of non-profits from three major regions across Canada: East, Central, and West.

“We are honoured to celebrate the stories and accomplishments of our 2021 award finalists,” said Greg Grice, Executive Vice-President, Business Financial Services, RBC. “We’re excited to see a growing force of women entrepreneurs in Canada who are trailblazing industries, mentoring and creating opportunities for other women, and making significant contributions to our economy and communities through their leadership. Supporting their advancement and celebrating their achievements are critical to creating a more inclusive business community and inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs as we strive for greater growth and resilience in a post-pandemic economy.”



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All nominees are required to submit thorough applications, which are reviewed and judged by a panel of prominent business leaders and subject to a due diligence review performed by KPMG.

The 2021 Recipients of the Ones to Watch Award are:

Alison Duke and Ngardy Conteh George, OYA Media Group
Esther Vlessing, Canada Emergency Medical Manufacturers
Naomi Blackman and Mikayla Wujec, alder apparel
Marie-Claude Desjardins, Hardware Rebels
Julianna Tan and Shawnda Blacklock, The Little Market Box

The 2021 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Award Finalists are:

Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub Micro-Business Award

West: Evelyne Nyairo, Ellie Bianca

Central: Xenia Chen, Threads

East: Isabelle Dion, Boost Affaires Inc.

Start-Up Award

West: Nicole Janssen, AltaML

Central: Hyla Nayeri and Adrien Bettio, 437

East: Melinda Ponting-Moore, Craft Coast Canning Ltd.

RBC Momentum Award

West: Anna Sainsbury, GeoComply

Central: Robin Kovitz, Baskits Inc.

East: Isabelle Côté, Coffrages Synergy

Social Change Award: Regional Impact

West: Lourdes Juan, Leftovers Foundation

Central: Cindy Crowe, Blue Sky Community Healing Centre

East: Dr. Lloydetta Quaicoe, Sharing Our Cultures Incorporated

Social Change Award: National Impact

West: Sara Austin, Children First Canada

Central: Katherine Hay, Kids Help Phone

East: Carolann Harding, SmartICE Sea Ice Monitoring & Information Inc.



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Innovation Award

West: Connie Down-Cicoria, AERIUM Analytics Inc.

Central: Michele Romanow, Clearco

East: Charlene Brophy, Fonemed

Excellence Award

West: Ratana Stephens, Nature's Path Food Inc.

Central: Dr. Janét Aizenstros, Ahava Digital Group

East: Andrée-Lise Méthot, Cycle Capital Management

The 2021 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards are presented by Women of Influence. Award sponsors include RBC, Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub and our official Due Diligence partner, KPMG.

About the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards

The RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards are the pre-eminent national business awards recognizing the country's leading female entrepreneurs. The awards are an initiative of Women of Influence, an award-winning organization dedicated to advancing women globally.

About Women of Influence Worldwide Inc.

Women of Influence, now in its 27th year, is one of North America's leading organizations offering solutions for workplace gender equality and women's advancement. Through our global events, digital media, signature awards, and consulting, Women of Influence reaches a diverse community of professional women and men across Canada and internationally. Providing insights and inspiration, perspectives on key issues, and creating opportunities to connect — we are making change happen for women, today. Our signature programs include the Top 25 Women of Influence Awards and the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards. For more information, please visit www.womenofinfluence.com

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