

Finance sector can seize opportunity to support female entrepreneurs

- new data suggests that the 100 firms signed up to joint government and industry initiative are more likely to invest in female-run businesses
- data shows that women and men are now equally successful at securing bank finance
- ministers call on more firms to follow suit to close gender gap in access to finance

New data suggests that the 100 signatories of the Investing in Women Code are more likely to invest in female-run businesses than other investors, improving access to finance for women.

Today's [report](#) – the first since the code's launch, shows that women and men were equally successful in applications for bank finance this year, albeit for smaller loans on average. All-female teams also had a higher success rate in being taken forward for further consideration by the angel investors who participated than all-male teams. The Government has committed is committed working with industry to better understand the causes of these discrepancies and finding solutions.

Ministers are urging more in the finance community to build on this success by signing up to the Code and sharing their data. By improving access to finance, we will create new opportunities for women right across the country.

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

Backing Britain's female entrepreneurs will create jobs and help us build back better.

I'm pleased to see so many of our major banks and venture capital firms taking action by supporting the Investing in Women Code.

And I call on others to follow suit and be part of a turning point in attitudes towards investing in female-led businesses.

The Exchequer Secretary Kemi Badenoch said:

A diverse and inclusive business environment is good for customers, jobs, entrepreneurs, and society.

I welcome today's findings and urge the finance community to build on the success of the code, sign up and help ensure that the innovation, creativity and drive of female entrepreneurs is fully realised through the next stages of our economic recovery.

CEO of NatWest Alison Rose said:

It has been fantastic to see the number of banks and institutions that have joined the Investing in Women code as signatories.

Access to finance was the number one disparity between female and male entrepreneurs identified in the Rose Review.

This area remains the single biggest opportunity for female entrepreneurs in the UK, particularly as we take the next steps towards sustainable economic recovery. We need continued action across the industry, and the commitment that many leading institutions has shown to date has been encouraging.

I'm proud to be driving the development of the Code, and I warmly welcome the publication of this report.

CEO of British Business Bank Catherine Le Torre said:

This report highlights positive signs of change but there is still much progress to be made.

I look forward to seeing more venture capital firms committing to the Investing in Women Code, and together building a valuable benchmark for our industry.

CEO of UK Business Angels Association Jenny Tooth said:

We are pleased that many members of our investment community have signed the Code and provided important new gender-related data.

There is still considerable progress to be made to create a more balanced gender base among angel investors.

The Code, launched in July 2019, is a commitment to support female entrepreneurship in the UK by improving women's access to the advice, resources and finance needed to build a business. The Code was set up after access to finance was identified as the number one disparity between female and male entrepreneurs by the independent Rose Review.

Member firms supply the data published today in the Code's annual progress report as part of a commitment to improve transparency and create an industry benchmark for investment in female entrepreneurs.

Signatories commit to nominating a member of the senior leadership team responsible for supporting equality in access to finance, increase the transparency of data concerning support for female entrepreneurs and adopt internal practices to improve the outlook for female entrepreneurs. These

actions will establish and promote good practice among financial services firms to improve access to finance, tools and resources for women.

Further information

- the [Investing in Women Code Annual Report](#) is published today
- the [Rose Review](#), carried out by Alison Rose, CEO of NatWest, shed light on the barriers faced by female entrepreneurs and made recommendations to government and industry ways to unlock this talent
- the [Investing in Women Code](#) is a commitment to support female entrepreneurs by improving their access to tools, resources and finance
- the data in today's report was collected between January and September 2020
- to date the Code has had 100 signatories sign up, these consist of banks, venture capital firms and angel investors
- of the 40 venture capital firms that provided data, 32% of teams that received funding were all-female or mixed gender, which is above market average
- of the 9 angel groups that provided data, only 16% of funding pitches were from all-female teams