



WE FOR SHE

Stepping it up for Gender Equality

2018 Call to Action

WE FOR SHE is a movement to grow the economic impact of women by increasing equality in senior leadership, on boards, as entrepreneurs, and in non-traditional jobs.

On November 17, 2017, 900 students in grades 10-12 joined with 500 business leaders, women's organizations, companies, experts, politicians, advocates and teachers to shift the dial on gender equality in BC.

They shared their input, experiences and visions for gender equity to set priorities for advancing women in our province.

This call to action is built on several years of activity, advocacy and action in British Columbia. Inside is a poster you can hang up to remind yourself of the business case and what actions everyone needs to take to address gender inequality. Together we can close the gap!

– Jill Earthy and Lois Nahirney, WE FOR SHE Co-Chairs





Stepping it up for Gender Equality 2018 Call to Action

Gender diversity is an international priority and a profitable business strategy that could increase British Columbia's GDP by \$20 billion[†]. Yet, based on today's progress, gender equality isn't expected until 2234[†]. This Call to Action is a collaboration of BC youth, business owners, professionals, senior leaders and government to focus in on the strategies that will create change in our province.

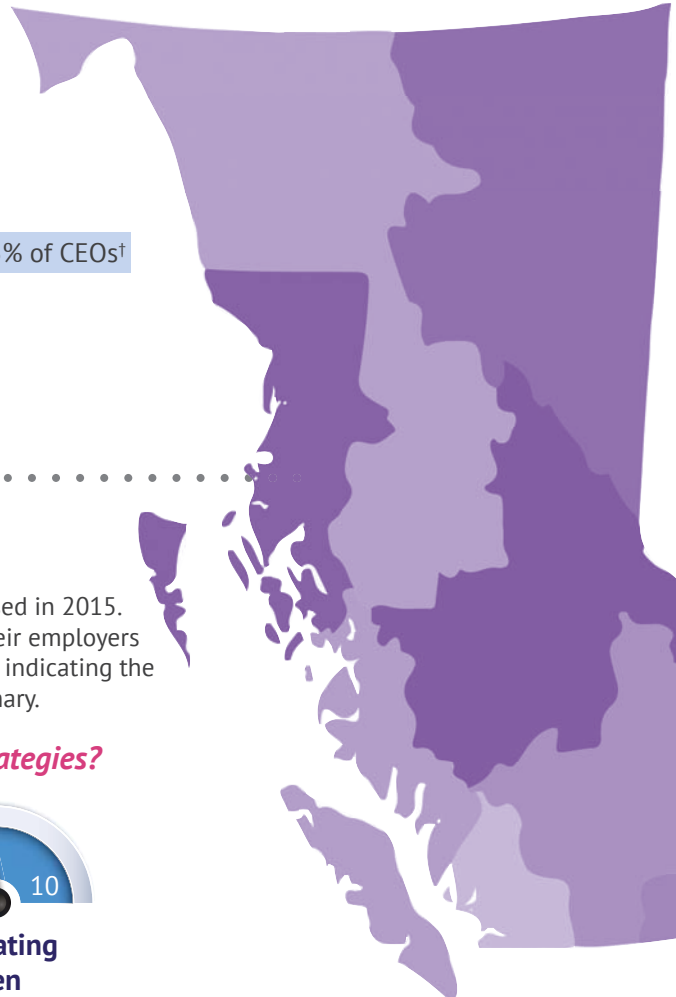
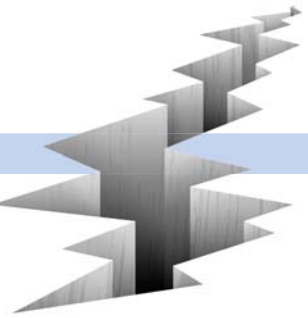
Bad News: We're Not There Yet in BC

BC women...

Comprise 55.7% of post-secondary graduates[†]
Represent 47.3% of the workforce[†]
Own 37% of small businesses[†] in the province

Yet, they...

Get paid 22.6% less than men[†]
Make up 3% of trades[†], 20% of tech[†] and 5.3% of CEOs[†]
Receive less than 4% of venture capital[†]



Good News: We're Making Progress

We surveyed the 2017 WE FOR SHE Event Champions to gauge our progress on the original WE FOR SHE Action Plan released in 2015. According to the survey, women think they have taken many of the necessary steps to create change in our province, and their employers are following suit. Yet, they rank the progress of the BC business environment lowest on all four strategies, as shown below, indicating the corporate culture in BC needs to change. View the full survey results in the Event Summary at weforshe.ca/2017EventSummary.

How much progress has been made in the BC business environment toward each of these four strategies?



Championing Women



Promoting and Advocating Diversity



Creating Positive Mindsets



Activating Men

[†] View sources in the 2017 WE FOR SHE Full Event Summary at weforshe.ca/2017EventSummary



2018 WE FOR SHE BC Action Plan

Attendees and Event Champions of the 2017 WE FOR SHE Forum shared where they believe the focus needs to be in our province, and we have new priorities for 2018. According to the Event Champions, we have made significant progress in creating positive mindsets and promoting and advocating diversity, and the greatest opportunity to take the next step towards change is to activate men.



1 Activate Men

- a. Engage men as active participants and critical partners in conversation and action, to collectively shift the dial.
- b. Demonstrate the economic and societal benefits of gender equity to men.
- c. Redefine societal roles and create inclusive business practices that benefit both genders equally, e.g. parental leave, work/life balance.
- d. Encourage male business leaders to lead by example.
- e. Offer men guidance on concrete actions they can take to improve gender diversity.



2 Champion Women

- a. Take charge of your career and education, and learn to negotiate.
- b. Act as a champion, mentor, and role model for women in your life and workplace.
- c. Develop champions, advisors, and sponsors for women to advance their careers and business ventures.
- d. Invest in women-owned businesses and help them access capital and markets, including corporate supply chains.
- e. Build a professional network and personal support system, and reach out to them for help.



3 Promote & Advocate Diversity

- a. Be an advocate for diversity and inclusion. Speak up! Step up! Act up!
- b. Implement diversity policies in your organization and update talent management systems to recruit and develop a pipeline of women.
- c. Develop flexible work practices and policies to support women, families, and employees.
- d. Incorporate a diversity focus in our schools, and encourage girls to pursue careers in business, entrepreneurship, trades, and STEM.
- e. Create a safe environment where everyone has an equal voice.
- f. Have tough conversations respectfully and without falling into polarized positions.



4 Create Positive Mindsets

- a. Adopt a positive mindset and be confident in your abilities.
- b. Encourage family, friends, colleagues and organizations to address stereotypes and practices that hold many women back.
- c. Recognize and call out unconscious bias that may limit opportunities for women.
- d. Promote different examples of female leadership to help visualize and normalize women leaders.
- e. Take risks and overcome challenges.



5 Measure Progress

- a. Assess your current diversity and inclusion policies and create a benchmark in your organization.
- b. Track key metrics, such as leadership demographics and compensation.
- c. Share progress, including the strategies that work and those that don't.
- d. Share your goals throughout your organization to stay accountable.
- e. Invite feedback on your actions.
- f. Celebrate your achievements!

Take Action Now | weforshe.ca/TakeAction

We have compiled some key tools from the international gender diversity movement and local examples of diversity programs to help BC step up as individuals, as organizations and as a society.

WE FOR SHE Organizing Partners



2017 WE FOR SHE Event Summary

The WE FOR SHE movement began focusing on the next generation in 2016, to give students a greater understanding of their career options and potential, expand their confidence in what they can achieve, and give them a chance to meet dynamic and successful role models. The 2017 event included inspirational keynotes, breakout sessions for business leaders, students and teachers, and discussions about the top issues facing gender equity.

Attendees Vote: The Top 5 Ways to...



Encourage Girls and Women to Be Bold in Their Careers

1. Be confident, step up, work hard, find your passion, take risks and overcome adversity.
2. Empower, encourage and support other women.
3. Be or find a mentor, sponsor or role model and build a support system and network.
4. Create a safe, respectful and inclusive work environment, educational system and society so girls and women can speak up.
5. Increase awareness of career options and encourage women to explore non-traditional paths.



Activate Men and Boys

1. Involve men in the conversation and provide a space for open dialogue.
2. Start discussing gender equality at a young age.
3. Redefine societal roles and create inclusive practices that benefit both genders equally – e.g., normalize parental leave, promote work/life balance for men.
4. Take action within organizations and use a top-down, data-driven approach to lead change.
5. Address unconscious bias.



Promote and Advocate for Gender Equality in Pay and on Boards

1. Teach women how to negotiate and remove the stigma around talking about money.
2. Ask questions, gather data and measure progress.
3. Women need to take charge of their careers and encourage others to do the same.
4. Redefine what leadership looks like.
5. Build strong networks that include female role models and mentor/sponsor relationships between genders.

Workshop Recap

Create Positive Mindsets: Tackling Unconscious Bias

Siri Uotila, Research Fellow in the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School, led an interactive workshop to help attendees recognize and counteract unconscious bias.

The unconscious mind is susceptible to pattern-based thinking. This is an important process that helps us to develop shortcuts based on past experience, beliefs and environments so the brain doesn't get overloaded.

Unconscious bias is hard-wired, so we can't change that brain process. Instead, we need to tackle the symbols and environments we live in to enable our minds to make better decisions. For the unconscious mind, "symbols, role models and language are incredibly powerful."

5 Ways You Can Tackle Unconscious Bias

1. **Beware of gendered language.** Using words that are associated with either gender can influence who applies for a job, for example.
2. **Harness the power of symbols.** Visual cues trigger our brain to jump to conclusions. By changing the symbols around us, we can mitigate unconscious bias.
3. **Challenge processes, ask questions.** When there is a gender gap in the outcomes, this indicates there is gender bias in the process.
4. **Become a norm entrepreneur.** Work to change the social norms that are perpetuating gender inequality.
5. **Hold your organization accountable to implement unbiased practices.** Share your aspirations, successes and failures to find what works.

Visit weforshe.ca to view the full Event Summary and watch videos of the keynotes.