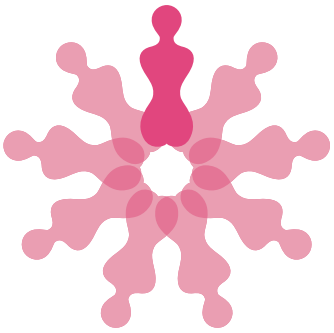

Women's Business
Initiative
International

SHARPENING OUR FOCUS

THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018

WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBII)

Women's Business Initiative International

SHARPENING OUR FOCUS

2018 Annual Report of the Women's Business Initiative International (WBII)

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LETTER FROM CHARLENE LAMBERT, INTERIM PRESIDENT, WBII

Dear Members, Sponsors, Partners, and friends of WBII,

When I helped Suzy Ogé 14 years ago to find funding to launch the WBII, little did I know that I would become so actively involved in the organization! But over the years, the WBII has provided me with a platform that guided me into fascinating new directions, opening doors into entrepreneurship and association management, and helping me to understand and appreciate the significance and impact of women's entrepreneurship. I am so grateful for these incredible opportunities, for this journey, and for the new friendships I have made.

And little did we know when 2018 started that so many changes would be taking place at the WBII over the coming year, and in such a short time! Throughout the year, and in spite of the changes, it was clear that thanks to the support of the Board working together with members who stepped up, by listening to our community, and by reaching out, we were able to continue to keep WBII going strong, and even find new, interesting directions that needed to be explored. For example, contacts with students, and bringing younger women on board were considered to be of high importance. The WBII's more 'seasoned' entrepreneurs could pass on our advice and guidance, and be role models for younger women entrepreneurs looking to begin. Millennials, on the other hand, have fresh viewpoints and digital skills that they can share. Together, we can make winning teams! We sharpened our focus, and zoomed in on some key areas that we wanted to develop.

While the internet provides relatively easy links to like-minded individuals, a registered membership association such as the WBII, with a 'bricks-and-mortar' address, and a proven and recognized profile in the community, offers permanent and ongoing face-to-face contacts, role-models, and professional support that are so important for business success, especially in a new country. Also, thanks to our registered non-profit status, we are able to officially partner with organizations, such as the Digital Leadership Institute, Webster University, and Google, to deliver special programmes to our members, including the Digital Starters Week-end that you will read about in this report. We intend to explore more partnering opportunities like this in the future.

For some women new to the Netherlands, the WBII is a beacon of hope in a country where it may be difficult for them to find work. For others, the WBII offers fresh, opportunities and creative avenues to develop and use their education, skills, and professional talents. As an organization that has successfully been running for 13 years, we recognize the continued need for a community such as WBII, and want to ensure that the WBII platform and network will always be available. We embrace

women of all ages and backgrounds, including those who have just arrived in The Netherlands, or who have been here already for a number of years. This diverse group of women, who are looking to use their own entrepreneurial talents to develop a wide variety of businesses, all have in common that they want to take part in our society, and contribute to their families and to the local economy.

The entrepreneurial spirit guides us, not only in our individual businesses, but also in our persistence to find new ways to ensure that the WBII continues to thrive. We are so pleased that once again we can tell our story in this 2018 Annual Report.

With kind regards,

Charlene Lambert
Interim President
January 2019

WHAT IS THE WBII?

The WBII continues to be a one-stop-shop for women running or wanting to start a business, providing information, training, support, networks, and the motivation to succeed. Since its establishment and registration as a Dutch 'Stichting' (non-profit foundation) in 2006, over 700 women entrepreneurs from all walks of life, and some men, and coming from countries all over the world, have actively participated in, and benefited from, this initiative, generating incomes, creating jobs, and for many, translating their passion into businesses.

WHAT WE DO

The main purpose of the association is to empower women entrepreneurs to achieve their business goals through several channels:

Learning and Development

Start Your Own Business Seminars are a fantastic opportunity for anyone who is considering setting up a business in the Netherlands, exiting an organisation, or considering working as a freelancer to gather information and get started. The seminar consists of three 45-minute workshops in which attendees can learn about a variety of topics relevant to starting up a business. These events are open to everyone (men and women).

The WBII also holds **monthly networking events** featuring a guest speaker around a business theme, providing information and a variety of practical tools and tips to help grow our business. An informal networking period provides an opportunity to get to know other members and share information. One member is in the 'spotlight' every month.

Members have the opportunity to join a **Mastermind Group**. Members get together in small groups on a regular basis to share advice and ideas, and to set and meet realistic goals, holding each other accountable.

Peer Support

The WBII is a vibrant organisation representing a diverse community of entrepreneurial women at different stages of their business. It offers an invaluable resource for starters and small business owners, providing access to peers, best practices and networks. Through active cooperation, WBII members create a **professional platform for**

entrepreneurs to promote their businesses, seek business advice and exchange knowledge and experience.

Events and Activities

The WBII regularly offers a variety of opportunities for members to meet, exchange ideas, and improve their professional skills. On top of the regular networking events, in February, we organize a **Lunch Meeting**, and a **Festive Lunch** in December with an inspirational speaker. WBII is actively represented in local **fairs and events**, such as the 'I am not a Tourist Fair' in Amsterdam, and the 'Feel at Home in The Hague' fair, generating business contacts and leads.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

WBII reaches out into the Dutch and international communities, and in 2018, was actively involved in and a member of a number of groups and organizations.

- ACCESS - international community network
- MKB - Small and Medium Business Organization
- NVR - Nederlands Vrouwenraad (Dutch Women's Council)
- WEP - European Women Entrepreneurship Platform
- Shell Outpost

HANDOVER LETTER FROM JULIE KENNEDY, WBII PRESIDENT 2015-2018

Dear friends,

My active years at WBII started a few months after becoming a member in 2013, half a year after arriving in the Netherlands. I was looking to launch in the Netherlands the business I had started in 2009 in Berlin, and was searching for a network to support, guide and encourage me. I loved the WBII vibes right from the start and when I heard the board was looking for help running the networking events, I eagerly stood up.

Organizing and presenting the monthly events was a fantastic opportunity for me to get to know the members better, feel purposeful, meet inspiring speakers, soak up their knowledge, and also get visibility. Before long, I joined the board and in September 2015, stepped in as President until April 2018 when a full-time job just made it impossible to continue.

I am extremely grateful for having had the opportunity to represent such a diverse, vibrant group of women entrepreneurs, determined to make their goals reality and contribute to society in their unique way. For me personally it was also the opportunity to put the experience acquired during my 4 years as President of the Dakar Women's Group (250 members) to good use and build on that experience in a different setting. I still maintain that of all my professional positions, this is the one where I learnt the most about business, about others, teams and motivation, and about myself.

As all organizations, during my tenure as President of WBII, we had our highs and our fair share of obstacles to overcome, which I believe made us stronger and closer to our core values as Association. I am particularly proud of the wide choice of self-development topics we offered our members, the Start your Own Business workshops which enabled so many to see whether this was what they wanted, our 10th Anniversary celebration, which attracted so many inspiring speakers, joining the MKB and the input, intelligence, energy and generosity put in by every one of our members which makes the WBII what it is.

Whatever state of mind I was in before a WBII meeting, I always emerged uplifted, positive and purposeful and that, added to the very many comments received from visitors over the years over the warm spirit of our group, reinforce my conviction that the WBII is very much a force for good in the international community in the area.

I am profoundly grateful for having been allowed to represent such a group and the purpose it gave me, also for the contacts and recognition I got as President and for the wealth it brought me as a person. The more I advance in years, the more I feel that true happiness comes from serving a purpose that goes beyond one's self.

Many of the board members have served for a long period, or gone and returned. They are all exceptional women who taught me a lot. I thank every one of them for their dedication and commitment, and left knowing I was leaving the organisation in very capable hands and that the legacy and vision of the WBII would live on, changing and adapting as society does, always focused on creating value for our members and for society.

With kindest regards,

Julie Kennedy
www.kennedy-coaching.com

THE WBII BOARD IN 2018

In June, 2018, the WBII consisted of:

Charlene Lambert – Interim President
Dymphna Elsink- Vice President
Lisa Hall – Treasurer
Nira Satguru – Board Member
Emma England – Board Member.

With the departure in June of our amazing 'President Kennedy', we had to look for a new President. Emma England joined the Board, with the view of becoming President, but according to our statutes, had to be a member of the board for one year until she could take on the responsibilities. In the end, due to family reasons, and when her own work suddenly took off, Emma had to step down in the autumn of 2018. We would like to thank Emma, and appreciate her jumping in just at the right moment to guide us through our members' survey. We're also pleased that Emma's own work is going well, and wish her all the best.

In the end, Charlene Lambert, who has been on the WBII Board for the past 7 years, took on the role of Interim President and Dymphna Elsink, who has been a WBII volunteer for a number of years, became the Vice President.

In 2018, the Board also determined that in order to expedite matters, and taking into considerations the time constraints that we all have, a smaller 'Board of Control', consisting of Lisa, Dymphna, and Charlene would handle day-to-day operations, with Nira stepping in for the more important decisions and guidance.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

A number of organizations and individuals have been especially helpful in supporting WBII over the past year, offering both financial and in-kind support. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following organizations:

- **Carlton Ambassador Hotel** - for so professionally hosting our networking meetings in their beautiful meeting rooms.
- **The World Trade Centre**, for the use of their excellent meeting facilities for our Start Your Own Business seminars.
- **Lemonberry and Jouw Assistente**, Lisa Hall and Dymphna Elsink –for so expertly managing our office administration and finances;
- **A Hand in The Hague**, Deborah Valentine — special thanks for her excellent support with The Wise Newsletter over the past years.
- **Write in Right**, Jane Pocock – for her professional writing and editing skills and managing The Wise Newsletter;
- **ZJHT Risk & Insurance Specialists** - and Inge Zweerts de Jong for their ongoing support;
- **Webster University** – for their collaboration with the Move It Forward Digital Starters Week-end, including Dr. Yang Fan – Business & Management Department, and Director Dr. J.P. van Marissing;
- **Tpbeo** - Sinead Hewson, for guiding the board with strategic decisions and support with 'Start Your Own Business' seminars;
- **Taste** – Nira Satgugru, for her support with our 'Start Your Own Business' seminars, speakers' gifts, and more.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

A number of members and others have supported WBII over the past year, in a wide variety of ways, and we would like to recognize and thank them for their outstanding efforts and contributions. The WBII would not be able to function, let alone prosper, without them, and we are so grateful for all that they have done, and continue to do.

- Alexandra Arshanskaya (Arshanskaya)
- Aleyda Santos (Jikiden reiki station)
- Anne Bybjerg Møller (Image & Style)
- Arwa Lokhandwala (Tulip Web Solutions)
- Bieneke Braat (Legaltree IT Law)
- Caroline Orthlieb (Caroline Orthlieb Business and Tax consultancy)
- Charlene Lambert (MLMC)
- Darina Veen-Kassova (Feng Shui Design)
- Deborah Valentine (a hand in The Hague)
- Dovile Corrigan (Dove Coaching)
- Dymphna Elsink (Jouw Assistente)
- Ebere Akadiri (Ataro Global Food Services)
- Emma England (England Lifestyle Management Services)
- Heleniq Argyrou (Aha Intelligence)
- Inge Zweerts de Jong (ZJHT Risk and Insurance Specialists BV)
- Jane Pocock (Write it Right)
- Jet Sichterman (Embracing Horizons)
- Julie Kennedy (Kennedy Personal Coaching & Consultancy)
- Lisa Hall (Lemonberry)
- Natach Villedieu-Silvestre
- Nira Satguru (Future Of Learning)
- Sinéad Hewson (TpEBO)
- Teresa Moynihan (Moynihan Consulting)
- Vinita Salomé (Vinita Salomé Photography)

In addition, in 2018 we had help from several student interns including Akanksha Menon (Webster University Leiden) and Teresa Solberg (University of Wisconsin-River Falls). With their new ideas and enthusiastic support, it was great to have them on board!

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

In 2018, our office was, and continues to be, expertly managed by Board Members Dyphna Elsink (Vice-President), and Lisa Hall (Treasurer). We are so pleased that Lisa and Dympha were able to step up to take on these tasks on a volunteer basis. Not only do they handle the day-to-day office tasks, but they are also there to meet and greet the guests and members at our monthly networking events. Thanks to their loyal efforts, we have an expertly run organization.

Because our office managers are working more from home, the decision was made in 2018 to revamp and adapt the office so that we can have a space our members can use for small meetings. Members will be able to use our office, located at Nassauplein 20 in The Hague, for meetings lasting up to 90 minutes for their company or services, to practice their pitch, discuss business, and engage with a small group in a pleasant, central location.

THE WISE – WBII MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The WISE is sent out to over 2000 addresses, and could be an added source of marketing collateral for our members. We reinforce messages from The Wise in our other social media, and at all WBII networking events, newsletter deadlines and reminders are shared. A huge thanks goes to Deborah Valentine (A Hand in The Hague), the Editor of the WISE for the last 4 years, who stepped down from this position in 2018. We were delighted when Jane Pocock (Write it Right) almost immediately stepped up and offered to take it on! The Wise is going strong, thanks to their contributions.

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS SEMINARS

The Hague is a very international city. With some 115 embassies and consulates, over 30 international and European organizations, and many international companies, the international community easily comprises over 35,000 people, or about 10% or the population, and it is growing. Internationals moving to The Hague may be seeking employment, and WBII recognizes the need to provide some guidance to them. To this end, over the past 4 years, we have been offering a 'Start Your Own Business' seminar in English to international men and women who may be interested in becoming an entrepreneur. The WBII took on this project several years ago when the Dutch Chamber of Commerce was reorganized and decided to discontinue delivering programmes in English. Permanent full-time employment positions are less common now, and work is more frequently available through contract positions. Other opportunities exist to bring new products and services on the market, and to develop a new business idea. For all of these reasons, having a small business can help lead to employment.

After 4 years of offering this important starters programme, WBII is in the process of seeking organizations that would like to partner with us to deliver this programme, and guide internationals with their entrepreneurial activities. In 2018, we actively contacted organizations, and opened discussions with them, and with their support, we are confident that we will be able to offer an even better programme in the future. In 2018, WBII held one successful 'Start Your Own Business' seminar in April.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

To go into more depth on certain topics, the WBII organizes Professional Development workshops. In 2018, we had a special meeting on the topic of LinkedIn, with the goal of helping members to power their business by exploiting communication and digital media at another level. The successful seminar – 'Nailing that first impression with LinkedIn'' by Petra Fisher – reminded us that with today's technologies, we have only one chance to make a 1st impression with someone before we've even met. This happens with our online presence. The Netherlands also has the highest per capita number of LinkedIn users in the world. If we want to do business in this country, we need a profile that truly represents who we are. The topics discussed included:

- How to set out your profile so it resonates with your ideal client;
- How to move different parts of your profile to your liking;
- How to enhance your profile through use of media;
- What settings should not be overlooked.

Our second session was on the topic of: "Is **Crowdfunding** the way to go?" with Marije Lutgendorff, owner of the agency crowdlokaal. Marije advises entrepreneurs with their strategy to crowdfund successfully. Startups, projects, and good causes may be considering crowdfunding, but Marije maintains that online funding requires a different type of interaction with investors and with their community. During her workshop, we learned that you need to be well prepared before you post your pitch online, and that crowdfunding is anything but easy money! All the successful campaigns have one thing in common: They were very well prepared. During her two and half hour interactive workshop, she gave us a clear idea of what it takes to build a successful campaign. She also inspired us with stories of successful and less successful crowdfunding campaigns and challenged us with examples. Crowdfunding is all about communication and in many cases about community building.

MEMBER SURVEY

In May 2018, we decided to take the pulse of our organization to ensure that we were on track, and to take advantage of new opportunities. Emma England guided us through this process, and we were able to capture a good deal of valuable information through a survey of our members and others. All members were contacted and invited to complete a survey, and Board Members interviewed a number of members individually. From the study, one of the most important points that we learned was that although a majority of respondents ranked the WBII positively

when it came to cost/value, we needed to clarify our image and what we could offer our members. In essence, we needed to find and sharpen our focus. We have been working on this over the last 6 months of the year, and have made some important progress.

COLLABORATING WITH OTHER NETWORKS AND WITH PURPOSE

There are many reasons to collaborate, in life and business. At the WBII we have had several collaborations in the past, and took steps to strengthen them in 2018. We are confident that these will serve our members as well as those with whom we will be collaborating. Our motivation? To extend to the members of the groups with which we have planned the events below a wider network of connections and knowledge, and an opportunity to share their own experiences with the future generation of young, female leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals.

Women in Innovation and Leadership (W.I.L) is a Hague-based female student association of University College Leiden. WBII attended two events in 2018, and based on the successful fist joint event, where Petra Fisher shared her tips about using LinkedIn, we planned several more events in 2019.

As a result of our focus on bringing younger members into WBII, we decided to revise our Student membership fee which we hope will encourage more young women to join, and learn from the WBII. In 2019 the student membership fee will go down to €25/year and their contribution to our monthly events will be €10/event. We trust our current members will welcome these new attendees at our events, and members to our group – and support them as they evolve in their professions and careers. Imagine what you would have learnt had you had this network when you were a young woman? We can DO that for them – and at the same time be inspired by their own knowledge and creativity.

CONNECTIONS WITH HAAGSE BRUG AND THE HAGUE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE (THIC)

WBII's main point of contact with the City of The Hague administration over the last years has been with the Haagse Brug. Now that there is the new The Hague International Centre (THIC), we also have a new point of contact. We would like to thank Haagse Brug and especially Hannelore Taal who has always been there when we needed information or support. We were so pleased that she was able to join us for our Festive Lunch, and understand that she will continue to be involved in international topics. We look forward to keeping in touch!

MONTHLY NETWORKING EVENTS SUMMARY

Networking events were held nearly every month on the 4th Thursday of the month from 7 – 10 p.m. at the Carlton Ambassador Hotel in The Hague. The evenings consist of a registration and welcome period, a short introduction to the WBII and our guests, and a speaker on a business-related theme. After the speaker, there is a Q&A and member's announcements. We then enjoy general networking and refreshments.

A new feature that was added in 2018 is the opportunity for a member to have a table at the networking event and to make a 10-minute pitch.

January	Luba Fateeva	Using Instagram for Business and 6 Steps to get Started
February	Informal lunch meeting at Sushi MORIKAWA	
March	Petra Fisher Petra Fisher Consulting	LinkedIn –First impressions are made online.
April	Bieneke Braat Legal Tree	An introduction to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
May	Ruchika Handa LABONI	Are you CONSCIOUSLY present with your business?)
June	Dovile Corrigan Dove Coaching	Leveraging your Talent for Business Success
July	Summer Holiday	
August	Heleniq Argyrou Aha Intelligence	Ultimate Peak Performance
September	Special collaboration with member Ebere Akadiri and the first annual **Rise & Lead Summit**	
October	Ria van Doorn Feminine Success Coaching & Training	Become Crystal Clear on what is holding you back to thrive
November	Somaye Dehban Your Funding Network	It is about the network!
December	Mandy Soonieus Manager The Hague International Centre	The Hague International Centre FESTIVE LUNCH at Restaurant Suzie Q

MASTERMIND GROUPS

WBII offers the possibility for members to join or form a Mastermind Group. Members of these groups meet together on a regular basis. Two groups are currently going, including a group of coaches, who share ideas and information relative to their sector.

WBII Coaching group

Our small, but powerful, coaching group consists of 5 members. We see it now more as an Intervision group, rather than mastermind.

We continue to inspire and support each other by discussing case studies, business questions/advice, client referrals. We share tips on new tools and techniques, books to read and self-development issues.

Still meeting every 6 weeks at the V d Valk, Wassenaar.

Members:

Teresa Moynihan
Anita Paalvast
Manuela Damant
Annette Flottmann-Nilsson
Dovile Corrigan
Karine Ponting Mundere

Mastermind Eclipse

We started 2018 with 5 members, meeting every 6 weeks to learn skills and run through exercises with the intention to improve our business and support each other to grow. During the year Katharina moved on to a full time position, which brought us to 4 members.

Katharina Andrés
Anne Bybjerg Møller
Dymphna Elsink
Nancy Mayer
Lisa Hall

TRADE FAIRS – 2018

WBII regularly selects and attends trade fairs that are of interest to the international community. We usually have our own stand, and volunteer if possible to give a seminar on a topic of interest to entrepreneurs. Usually our members join us and help us to staff the stand, while at the same time, promoting their own businesses. The fairs have been shown to be an excellent way for us to inform the international community in particular about our organization and generate interest in our work.

WBII member Darina Veen (www.Feng-Shui-Design.nl) is our Fair Coordinator, and she has done an amazing job of identifying which fairs we should attend, organizing the volunteer members to staff the stand, coordinating speakers, and transporting banners, flyers, and other materials to and from the fairs. Special thanks to Darina for her valuable contributions! WBII attended the following fairs in 2018:

Fair Name	Month	Other information
Feel at Home in The Hague Fair	January	Starting a Business workshop: Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre and Sinead Hewson, two successful WBII entrepreneurs, ran a 30-minute interactive workshop to share their experience with attendees
I am not a tourist in Amsterdam	October	Caroline Orthlieb gave a seminar on The Dutch income tax system & tips for starting a business
Garba	October	Evening Fair of the Indian Community
Outpost	November	Shell.Darina Veen and Dymphna Elsink presented information about the WBII.

RISE & LEAD SUMMIT

Instead of our standard networking event in September at the Carlton Ambassador, we collaborated with our member Ebere Akadiri (www.atarofoods.com) for the first Rise & Lead Women Summit 2018 – whose purpose was to Empower Women in Business for Leadership and Impact.

This one-day business leadership event focused on visibility and female empowerment, with keynote speakers who shared their stories and expertise on subjects ranging from personal branding and corporate storytelling to negotiation strategy, executive presence and self-confidence. Female entrepreneurs, business executives, and specialists spoke at, and attended the conference, and provided an opportunity in which to connect, learn new skills and share with fellow businesswomen.

Rise & Lead Women summit host, **Ebere Akadiri**, said: *"The Rise and Lead Women summit was borne out of the need to see more women take the lead in the workplace and marketplace and close the gender gap. I'm so excited to have the opportunity to bring so many inspirational women together. My aim is for everyone to come away wiser, enthused and armed with lots of new business tools and winning strategies."*

MOVE IT FORWARD – FEMALE DIGITAL STARTERS WEEK-END

On November 10 and 11, the WBII, in collaboration with the Digital Leadership Institute (DLI) in Brussels, Webster Leiden Campus, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (Brussels), Google, Ataro Food & Spices, and many other partners and friends, were so pleased to hold a first in the Netherlands — a digital skills event for female starters. Some 30 women students and professionals participated in the Move It Forward – Female Digital Starter Weekend workshops, a week-end learning how to launch an e-business in the cloud, build a website and app, and hone their skills in Search Engine Optimization and e-marketing. In addition, over 10 professionals, including trainers, coaches, jury members, and support staff, and a crew of 4 outstanding students, ensured that all aspects of the event were covered. During the intensive 2-day week-end programme, the participants generated a record number of business ideas, and of these, 6 were selected on which to move forward. Three projects won Awards, namely:

- **Menocompass** – a project to provide support for women going through menopause — Overall Best.
- **Recipes Abroad** – startup to provide expats with information about spices and ingredients — Most impact.
- **Here-She-Is** – a project to support deeper and more meaningful connections between women — Most innovative.

Keynote Speaker and WBII Member Ebere Akadiri, reflected on her own efforts to launch her website and connect with her audience by using social media. She eloquently encouraged the participants to first identify their passion and vision when building their business idea, and look for what makes themselves special. Ebere also sponsored the delicious Saturday evening dinner, which featured dishes prepared from recipes in her West African cuisine cookbook.

20€
REGISTRATION
FEE
FREE FOR
WEBSTER
STUDENTS
MOVE IT FORWARD
FEMALE DIGITAL
STARTER WEEKEND
WOMEN-FOOD-NUTRITION-HEALTH
UPDATE YOUR IT SKILLS &
TEST YOUR BUSINESS IDEAS
App
Development
Wordpress
Website
Launch Your
Business in the
Cloud
Date: 10 & 11 November
Location: Webster Leiden Campus
SIGN UP @ https://bit.ly/2D3No7V
Webster
LEIDEN CAMPUS
Women's Business
Initiative
International
wep
ATARO

We were thrilled to have Google Trainer Carina van Selling, who took us in her workshop through the ins-and-outs of Google advertising and Search Engine Optimization. She also met with the teams and advised them on their projects, and she did all of this on a Sunday morning, starting at 8:30 a.m. She only left in the afternoon once she had met with all of the teams individually. Other speakers prepared the participants on how to pitch their project.

In the end, the Move It Forward Female Digital Starters Week-end was a resounding success.

FESTIVE LUNCH

On December 6, we had a wonderful holiday lunch together with many WBII members and friends at Restaurant Suzie Q in Scheveningen. It was a great opportunity to celebrate the season and our achievements. At the lunch, we were so pleased to have as our special guest speaker Mandy Soonieus, Manager of The Hague's new International Centre (THIC), a full-service expat centre assisting over 5000 expats every year. The local government has invested heavily in reorganizing and funding their new International Centre, and in her talk, Mandy shared with us how they want to use their resources to connect with the international community. These include their new website, monthly newsletter, and through projects and seminars to make internationals feel at home. The WBII wishes Mandy and her colleagues at the THIC all the best, and we look forward to our continued collaboration.

During the lunch, we also recognized and gave a special 'Thank You' to two of our members who have made an extra effort to support the WBII over the past year. Darina Veen, WBII Fair Coordinator, and Caroline Orthlieb, who assisted us on a number of occasions, were recognized for their initiative.

MEMBERS' TESTIMONIALS

Darina Veen - Feng Shui Design

"I am happy and proud to be a member of WBII. Starting my own business it was valuable for my motivation and determination to succeed, to share ideas, expertise, experienced and knowledge with likeminded women of WBII.

Being supported by a group of authentic women entrepreneurs, being able to expose my feelings, fears and hesitations; and the same time supporting others in their goals and contributing to the WBII community is so very empowering. I am an active member and a Fair Coordinator. Through my activities with WBII I gained many new contacts and clients and I learned the necessary networking skills in a short time.

I am running my own business Feng Shui Interior Design successfully in Delft www.feng-shui-design.nl"

Aleyda Santos - Jikidenreiki-station

"My story

I had worked in Holland for 9 1/2 years, and raised 2 sons. In 2004 I left to work and travel in West Africa and South East Asia, and after 13 years of field missions, I decided I needed to make a change and come closer to my sons in The Hague. Despite my familiarity with The Hague, I was feeling like a fish out of water. Not only did I need to connect with people, but also I had to find a job and create financial stability. Career-wise, I had left a secure job to bring about a career change, and although it was a good opportunity to do it, I did not know how, but I was determined to try.

I came across an announcement regarding a 'Start Your Own Business' seminar organized by the Women's Business International Initiative (WBII). I did not know anyone, was being cautious about my expenses, and was wondering if it was worth it to spend the money. However, I decided to push myself out of my comfort zone and to go to the seminar. And to this day, I still can say that this money was well invested.

The day of the seminar, I meet a bunch of internationals, expat women like me who had lived many years in Holland and who had family-related ties to The Hague as I did. Yet they had something different in that they were here to stay, they were here to thrive in their own light, to occupy their niche in the business world they were creating. Some were very well established in their profession and in Holland. They spoke Dutch fluently, and were experienced with the Dutch system. Basically, they were the light and inspiration I needed to connect with this society I wanted to live in, in spite of my language barriers.

And this is how my life as an entrepreneur started: learning from other businesswomen about their knowledge and experience. This triggered my thoughts, and keeps motivating me for a way forward.

I won't forget, for instance when Ute gave us tips on how to use your communication skills to network. I felt so uncomfortable, I felt awkward about talking to somebody I did not know, and yet now, 2 years down the line, I am doing it. I still feel uncomfortable, but I also feel more confident in exchanging information. From Sinead we received a very comprehensive explanation and guidelines on how to register your own business, on the brainstorming we needed to do before establishing our practice, and more. To this date, I keep Sinead's guidelines always at hand for any clarification. We also had a lawyer who gave us legal advice on how to proceed to protect our name and/or product. And finally, we heard testimonials of success stories, that showed us how despite the hurdles, persistence delivers successful results. As I write this, during the last two days I have been attending entrepreneurial presentations in Amsterdam. I felt proud to be a member of the WBII, proud to be one of these Business Women who dare be themselves, even if sometimes it feels uncomfortable to be out of your comfort zone. However, now I do engage in networking conversation and enjoy it very much.

All in all, the WBII network organization, including the Start Your Own Business seminar, is a great place to start from when considering establishing your own business. It has taught me a lot, and hope it will inspire others to become a successful Business Women."

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF WBII MEMBERS IN 2018

List of WBII Members [A-Z]:

Adenike Alade	Nissi trust international
Akkie Okma	Okma Advies
Alexandra Arshanskaya	Arshanskaya
Alexandra Lavrador	My Gym Den Haag
Aleyda Santos	Jikidenreiki-station
Anita Paalvast	Aikido@work
Anja Vreeburg	FLOWENTLY
Anne Bybjerg	Image & Style
Annette Flottmann-Nilsson	aLive Life Coaching
Anouk Dominguez Prado	Corpo Natura
Arwa Lokhandwala	Tulip Web Solutions
Beatrice Betley	The Expat Weddingplanner
Bianca Wijnstekers-Handy	Tupelo Translations
Bieneke Braat	Legal Tree
Caroline Kube	KUBE Art & Design
Caroline Ortlieb	Caroline Orthlieb Business and Tax consultancy
Ceci Wong	Chiropractie Noordzee
Charlene Lambert	MLMC International Marketing
Christine Dahl	Dahl International Tax Law
Christy Aikhorin	UnikBlends
Clare Summerfield	Elliot Lloyd Wealth Management
Colleen Reichrath-Smith	CJS Career Consulting
Darina Veen-Kassova	Feng Shui Design
Deborah Valentine	a hand in The Hague
Désirée Looten	Looten Advocatuur en Mediation
Dina Bedewy	
Dovile Corrigan	Dove Coaching
Dymphna Elsink	Jouw Assistente
Ebere Akadiri	Ataro Global Food Services
Elisa Amarante	Elisa Amarante
Elize Burgess	Learning Plus
Emma England	England Lifestyle Management Services
Esra Colastica	Results X Factor
Esther Velzen	Maximaal Makelaars
Frida Robben	Robben Consulting
Haydee Dijkstal	ICL Media Review
Hélène Girard	Hélène Girard Business Services
Inge Zweerts de Jong	ZJHT BV

Irene Lansen	ScheerSanders Advocaten
Isabelle Barth	Studio Langues & Mobilité
Jane Pocock	Write it Right
Jennifer Pfister	Leiden University College The Hague
Jennifer van Dijk	Van Dijk Accounting
Jet Sichterman	Expat Child Psychology
Julie Jones	Essence Therapeutics
Julie Kennedy	Kennedy Personal Coaching & Consultancy
Karen Shaw	Karen Shaw
Karine-Kayitesi Ponting	Karine Kayitesi (brand of "My Acupuncture Practice")
Katharina Andrés	
Katherine Fortier	Child and Educational Psychologist
Lamprini Kiosse	Biometrisch Centrum
Li Chen	Chinaturel Health & Wellbeing
Lianne de Vries	Mevrouw de Vries
Lisa Hall	Lemonberry
Louise Ibbs	Louise Ibbs Consultancy
Lucy Bosscher	ASPIRE Pilates
Manuela Damant	Manuela Damant
Maram Hattar	
Marjoleine Havik	CulturesConnect
Martine Sollie	De Fotograficus
Michelle Baird	Global Virtual Assistant Solutions
Monika de Waal	Unique Sources
Nancy Mayer	Nancy Mayer, Voice Lessons
Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre	Optirisk Solutions
Natalie Carstens	Natalie Carstens | The Birth Photographer
Nicola Wreford-Howard	Wreford-howard Consulting
Nira Satguru	Future Of Learning Home/Centre
Orsolya Fabian	Lexyca
Ria van Doorn	Feminie Success
Silvy Fehring	Her Global Success
Sinead Hewson	TpEBO
Sophie Bonavero	Clever Clogs
Susan Tredenick	
Suzy Ogé	Etcetera Consulting
Teresa Moynihan	Moynihan Consulting
Ute Limacher-Riebold	Ute's Expat Lounge
Vassia Sarantopoulou	The Anti-Loneliness Project
Vinita Salome	Vinita Salome Photography
Yolande Jimenez-Koekenbier	Art in Colour
Yvonne Lammers	CLASC

APPENDIX IV

Members of the Advisory Board

Our Advisory Board is an essential link to the business community, and provides strategic direction and suggestions to the Board on special topics. The experience and invaluable expertise they bring has already infused the WBII with new energy and direction and we are grateful for their support.

Suzy Ogé – Founder of
The Women's Business Initiative International

Toon Buddingh – Renowned Cluster Innovation Guru

Inge Zweerts de Jong – ZJHT Risk and Insurance Specialists BV

Charlene Lambert – mlmc International Marketing

Sinéad Hewson – TpEBO

APPENDIX IV

Members of the Executive Board:

Charlene Lambert – Chairwomen

Dymphna Elsink - Vice Chairwoman

Lisa Hall – Treasurer

Nira Satguru – Executive Board Member

Emma England – Executive Board Member

Suzy Ogé – Executive Board Member

For further information please contact:
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