Women's Business Initiative International

WORTH

The 2022 Annual Report
Women's Business Initiative International (WBII)

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Letter from the President, Charlene Lambert

Dear members, volunteers, partners, and the WBII community,

What does 'Worth' - our chosen theme for 2022 - mean to you? The dictionary offers us a number of examples, including 'value', 'deserving', and 'fair equivalent', and the meaning is unique for each of us.

Over the course of 2022, the WBII explored the many facets of this richly rewarding annual theme, in particular as they relate to international women small business owners. This led us to community event topics such as: 'Pricing with Clarity, Confidence and Integrity' with Beth Farris; 'Believe in Yourself & Own Your Worth' with Sophie Charlotte; and 'What's worth your attention in the last quarter of this year?' with Anna Molnár.

As we climbed out of the depths of a global pandemic in 2022, including from all of its repercussions, the theme of Worth was also particularly significant to us in more personal ways. We were so pleased that we could begin meeting together in-person again but decided to keep a few events online so that members and participants who lived farther away could continue to connect with our community. We had barely breathed a sigh of relief when a deadly war in Ukraine started, making us acutely aware of the worth of our peaceful democratic lifestyle and the need to support those who are being threatened. After all that we had been through, the theme of 'Worth' helped us to mindfully return to the basics, and reflect on what we ultimately truly valued, both from business and personal perspectives.

In addition, 2022 was also the year that we diligently examined what Worth meant to the WBII as an organisation. A Dutch foundation that has been in existence for over 17 years, we have witnessed over the years the hundreds of women who have become members or benefitted from our many activities. We recognised how worthwhile it was to help the WBII to continue to flourish, but the question was, how to safeguard it in the longer term? The study commissioned by the WBII and conducted by our longtime member Dr. Sinead Hewson (TpBEO) explored how to 'Future Proof' the WBII. The results showed among other things that we needed to focus on our volunteers. They are the key to our continuation, and we had to make sure that they were pleased with what they were doing and recognise and reward them for their work. This business model emphasizing the volunteers' enthusiastic contributions would support the vitality of the WBII in the longer term so that we could help to ensure that the community will continue to be there for women looking to start a business in the future.

My first and own personal understanding of the meaning of 'Worth' is inextricably linked to my childhood. I recall a delicate cobalt blue bottle of perfume on my parent's dresser with the label 'Je reviens' - 'I will return' - from the French perfume company named 'Worth'. I learned that this was a special gift that my father had given to my mother (his fiancée) before he left for the war. Little did he know how appropriate his gift would be, because he barely survived, and was gone for nearly 5-years. During this time, my mother carefully guarded her precious gift until he returned, and they were married. I learned quite young that some things are worth waiting for!

As we look back over the last 17 years, nurturing the WBII has been tremendously worthwhile for us. In 2022, we also recognized how important it was to examine how to further maintain our organisation to

make sure that it endures. We are thrilled, and at the same time humbled, that year after year, and even through these challenging periods, we have been able to move forward. We are following in Founder Suzy Ogé's footsteps and are proud to be recognized as a leading volunteer-led entrepreneurial support network for international women in The Netherlands. We wish to extend our sincerest and warmest thanks to all of our board, members, partners, sponsors, and community - and a huge special thanks to our many volunteers - for their continued support. Together with all of you, we will continue to thrive!

Warmest regards,

Charlene Lambert
President
Women's Business Initiative International (WBII)

What is the WBII?

The Women's Business Initiative International (WBII) is a community of women business owners sharing knowledge and experience. We empower our members to achieve their business goals through three channels: Community Building; Masterminds and Peer Support; Events and Social Activities.

Our regular monthly events are a great opportunity to connect as well as increase knowledge around key topics relevant to both beginners and seasoned business owners. This monthly women entrepreneurs event is open to both members and non-members.

The WBII is based in The Hague but includes members from around the Netherlands. We offer both in-person and online women business events.

The WBII is a women-only association with an inclusive definition of women.

Each member brings her unique expertise to the table, and together the synergy contributes to a dynamic association. We are women supporting and learning from each other.

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

The WBII 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 also placed in the 'spotlight' every month and introduces herself and her business in a 10-minute presentation.

Our bi-annual English-language **Start Your Own Business (SYOB) Seminars** are excellent opportunities for anyone who is considering setting up a business in the Netherlands. Whether they are exiting an organisation, considering working as a freelancer, or want to develop a new business idea, the seminars help them to gather a variety of information on topics relevant to starting up a business and get started. This information can also help participants to decide if entrepreneurship is something for them. These events are open to everyone (including men).

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. Members have access to a private members-only **Facebook Group** to exchange information and experiences. In addition, **Mastermind Groups** meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas and information.

Events and Activities

The WBII regularly offers a variety of opportunities for members to meet, exchange ideas, and improve their professional skills.

In addition to our regular monthly events with a speaker, we usually organise a **Lunch** in February, and a **Festive Lunch/Dinner** in December. 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. **'Member Borrels' (drinks and snacks)** are also organised for members on a regular basis.

In 2022, we continued the **Skill Share Open Forum** events where members and the wider community could network with each other on a topic of mutual interest.

In 2022 we were able to enjoy more in-person meetings and continued to offer our regular monthly events with a combination of both in-person and virtual events.

Community Outreach

WBII realises the importance of being part of the regional small business ecosystem, and regularly reaches out to Dutch, European, and international contacts for mutual collaboration. In 2022, we were also actively involved in, and/or a member of a number of groups and organisations.

- **ACCESS** – Based in The Hague, the WBII is proud to partner with ACCESS, an international community network who can answer any questions about moving to, living in, and leaving the Netherlands. ACCESS has been helping internationals for more than 35 years, free of charge.

- **NVR - Nederlands Vrouwenraad (Dutch Women's Council)**
  Founded in 1898 by the Dutch suffragettes, the Dutch Women's Council strives for equal rights and full participation of women in all areas. The NVR brings the voice of Dutch women into the policy development and evaluation, so that policy measures, legislation and regulations have no direct or indirect adverse effects on the position of women in the Netherlands, and ideally strengthen it. Subjects that are put on the agenda by the NVR therefore acquire more weight than when member organisations do this separately.

- **WEP - European Women Entrepreneurship Platform**
  Based in Brussels, WEP is a registered international non-governmental organisation supporting, representing, and advocating on behalf of European women entrepreneurs to European institutions.

- **THIC (The Hague International Centre)**
  THIC offers information and guidance about living and working in The Hague region, including taking care of formalities such as municipal registration, citizen service number (BSN), issuance of residence permits. The WBII is a trusted partner of THIC and is called upon to participate in events they organise for new residents.

- **ImpactCity**
  ImpactCity-The Hague is a regionally-funded centre, offering a wide range of opportunities and services to entrepreneurs and to other impact-makers. WBII contacted ImpactCity to explore, as members of the regional entrepreneurship network, how we can support each other. We anticipate more collaboration in the future, for example, in information sharing, introducing members to each other, and participating in events such as the IMPACT Fest.

- **EZVN – (Ethnic Businesswomen in the Netherlands)**
  The EZVN was founded in 2004 in Rotterdam, the purpose being to support Black women entrepreneurs and professionals, and those with different cultural backgrounds, to connect with the broader Dutch business world. Women of colour often have difficulty breaking into the business world as entrepreneurs, in managerial positions, and as supervisors. A key barrier is the lack of good networks. The WBII reached out to this organisation and anticipates further collaboration in the future.

The WBII Board in 2022

The WBII was fortunate to have an active Board, with members supporting the organisation in many different ways. All Board positions are on a volunteer basis, and all Board members are also 'working' members, i.e. they have a responsibility for a specific project.

In the first half of 2022, our Board members included:

Charlene Lambert	*President*
Dymphna Elsink	*Vice President* and *Office Manager*
Lisa Hall	*Treasurer*
Natalie Carstens	*Secretary*
Moran Greenwald	
Darina Veen	
Nira Satguru	
Jane Pocock	
Akanksha Menon	

The **Management Board**, consisting of Charlene, Dymphna, Lisa, Natalie and Moran, were responsible for the day-to-day running of the association. This smaller Management Board met formally on a monthly basis and were in regular contact with each other in the interim periods.

In accordance with the WBII management review and report conducted by Dr. Sinead Hewson (see below), changes were required to bring the WBII Board in accordance with new Dutch Statutes. It was necessary to simplify and strengthen the Board into a single unit, and because of this, the Board membership was re-examined. In the second half of 2022, the Board was dissolved. The smaller Management Board formed the new Board and was given the task of managing the foundation. This also involved ensuring that all Board members were registered at the Chamber of Commerce.

Around the same time that this was happening, Nira Satguru retired and stepped down from the Board. Nira's participation had been a special help to the WBII during a difficult time of transition a number of years ago. We showed our appreciation to her at a borrel offered in her honour. In addition, the WBII thanked Akanksha Menon, Jane Pocock and Darina Veen for their valuable participation over the past years.

Special thanks to Nira Satguru

Nira Satguru has been a WBII Board member since 2015, the year that she joined the WBII. Nira supported the organisation in many ways, including her delicious Sri Lankan dinners which she provided on a volunteer basis at the Start Your Own Business seminars held at the Webster Leiden Campus. She was also always ready to help WBII members, and guided a number of women with their businesses, often informally, and she always made time for helping starters.

Nira is also our role model for market research. She did an amazing job of researching the viability for her business idea, turning over every stone, visiting locations, speaking with professionals and financial institutions in several countries. In the end, she decided that the business model was not the way to go, a decision made just months prior to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Lastly, we would probably not be here today were it not for Nira's generous financial support to WBII a number of years ago which helped to ensure the longer-term viability of our organisation. After more than 17 years, WBII is being recognized as a pillar in the women entrepreneurship community. Thank you ever so much Nira for all that you did and continue to do for WBII!

Shopping bag produced by Nira for an International Women's Day gift

Thank you to our Members

As a non-profit foundation, WBII exists by and for our members, and we are laser focused on supporting them first and foremost, and at all times. When Suzy Ogé founded the WBII, 17 years ago, little did she know that, over the years, the organisation would become such a valuable part of so many women's lives. Huge thanks goes out to all WBII members for participating in activities, for sharing ideas in the Facebook group, for their testimonials and recommendations, and so much more. The list of members is available in the appendix.

Special thanks to our Volunteers

It's been said that women are good organisers, and a number of members have made special efforts to support the WBII over the past year, in a wide variety of ways. Many of our volunteers step up and take action with minimal guidance - they simply realise that a job needs to be done and do it. The WBII would not be able to function, let alone prosper, without them, and the organisation is grateful for all that they have done, and continue to do. Volunteering at the WBII also often allows our members to use our platform to raise their profile, resulting in meaningful and rewarding results for both our members and the WBII organisation.

Akanksha Menon	
Alexandra Arshanksaya	Arshanskaya.com
Allyson Kukel	Rooted in Calm
Anna Molnár	Blossom Empowering Events
Beth Farris	Beth Farris Consulting
Caroline Orthlieb	Caroline Orthlieb Tax & Business consulting
Charlene Lambert	AIM to Grow
Cigdem Guven	Crocusfield
Darina Veen	Feng Shui Design
Deborah Valentine	ACCESS
Dymphna Elsink	Jouw Assistant
Enara Parra	RootsandCook
Jane Pocock	Write it Right
Julia Close	Be Extraordinary Coaching
Lisa Hall	Lemonberry
Moran Greenwald	Data for a Change
Natalie Carstens	Natalie Carstens Photographer
Nira Satguru	TASTE
Sinead Hewson	TpEBO
Teresa Moynihan	Moynihan Consulting
Ugne Marchionno	Aim to Wow
Vinita Salomé	Vinita Salomé Photography

Thank you to our Sponsors and Partners

A number of organisations 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 wholeheartedly thank the following organisations and individuals:

- **Carlton Ambassador Hotel** - for so professionally hosting our networking meetings in their beautiful meeting rooms, restaurant, and patio;
- **TpEBO** - Sinead Hewson, for guiding the board, and with our Start Your Own Business seminars;
- **ZJHT Risk & Insurance Specialists** and Inge Zweerts de Jong for their ongoing support;
- **Webster University** Leiden Campus, for their collaboration and use of their excellent meeting facilities for our Start Your Own Business seminars.

Programme of Events in 2022

Virtual events have shown their worth. A combination of both in-person and virtual events were held in 2022. All our regular monthly events focused on this year's chosen theme of 'Worth'. Vice-President Dymphna Elsink was our lively moderator at many of the events.

Month	Type	Topic/Title	Speaker/Location
January 27	**Networking Event (ONLINE)**	Transform Your Relationship With Your Clients	Vassia Sarantopoulou (www.Anti-lonliness.com) Planned in-person event moved online due to Government Covid guidelines.
February 17	Skill Share Open Forum (ONLINE)	Making Difficult Decisions	Teresa Moynihan (www.MoynihanConsulting.nl) Online
February 22	Member Only Event (ONLINE)	The Future of WBII	Meeting facilitated by Sinead Hewson with WBII Board and members (www.TpBEO.nl) Online
February 24	**Networking Lunch (IN-PERSON)**	Lunch at Sushi Morikawa	Sushi Morikawa
March 24	**Networking Event (IN-PERSON)**	Pricing with Clarity, Confidence and Integrity	Beth Farris (www.beth-farris.com) Carlton Ambassador Hotel
April 6	Training Seminar (IN-PERSON)	Start Your Own Business in the Netherlands	Sinead Hewson Caroline Orthlieb Nira Satguru Beth Farris (www.beth-farris.com) Charlene Lambert (www.aimtogrow.org) Other speakers from Webster Leiden Webster University Leiden
April 21	**Networking Event (ONLINE)**	Tidy up your mind for better focus & productivity	Zeyda Broers (www.theschoolofjoy.nl) Online
May 17	Skill Share Open Forum (ONLINE)	Instagram Stories	Natalie Carstens (www.nataliecarstens.com) Enara Parra (https://rootsandcook.com) Anna Molnár

			(www.blossomempoweringevents.nl) Online
May 19	Member Only Event (IN-PERSON)	Welcome New Volunteers	Hosted by the Board Carlton Ambassador Hotel
May 19	**Networking Event (IN-PERSON)**	Profit First	Sandra Boekhoudt www.wealthywisewomen.com Carlton Ambassador Hotel
June 17	Members' Borrel (IN-PERSON)	Members' Borrel	WBII Office, Lange Voorhout
June 23	Deep Dive Open Forum (ONLINE)	Referrals and Testimonials	Lisa Hall (www.lemonberry.com) Online
August 25	**Networking Event (ONLINE)**	Believe in Yourself & Own Your Worth	Sophie Charlotte (www.lifecoachsophie.com) Online
August 29	Members' Borrel (IN-PERSON)	Members' Borrel & Farewell Event for Nira Satguru	Tabasco Hapjesbar, Theresiastraat
September 8	Member Only Event (ONLINE)	Q&A: Thinking of joining a Mastermind Group?	Led by Natalie Carstens www.nataliecarstens.com) and Dymphna Elsink (www.jouwassistent.nl) Online
September 22	**Networking Event (IN-PERSON)**	What's worth your attention in the last quarter of this year?	Anna Molnár (www.blossomempoweringevents.nl) Carlton Ambassador Hotel
October 20	Skill Share Open Forum (IN-PERSON)	Instagram Stories	Natalie Carstens (www.nataliecarstens.com) Enara Parra (https://rootsandcook.com) Anna Molnár (www.blossomempoweringevents.nl) Chique-o-latte, Lange Voorhout

October 27	**Networking Event (ONLINE)**	Using Social Media to Pivot your Business	Chikumo Fiseko (www.chikumofiseko.com) Online
November 9	Training Seminar (IN-PERSON)	Start Your Own Business in the Netherlands	Sinead Hewson Caroline Orthlieb Nira Satguru Beth Farris (www.beth-farris.com) Charlene Lambert (www.aimtogrow.org) Other speakers from Webster Leiden Webster University Leiden
November 24	Member Only Event (IN-PERSON)	Board Membership Q&A	Carlton Ambassador Hotel
November 24	**Networking Event (IN-PERSON)**	Pivoting	Sinead Hewson (www.tpebo.com) Carlton Ambassador Hotel
December 8	**Festive Dinner (IN-PERSON)**	Festive Dinner	Humphrey's Scheveningen

Skill Share and Deep Dive Open Forums

As we moved our meetings online during the Covid-19 period, we wanted to do more for our members and followers, hence we introduced: Skill Share and Deep Dive Open Forums. The Open Forum meetings have been well received and have become a permanent fixture on our programme. They are open to anyone and are free of charge.

The Skill Share Open Forums are an easy going one hour of asking questions and sharing knowledge about a certain topic. Sometimes we invite experts to bring their knowledge to the table and sometimes we just run it ourselves sharing our own knowledge.

In 2022, our Skill Share topics were: Making Difficult Decisions with our member expert, Teresa Moynihan, and Instagram Stories with the WBII Instagram team: Natalie Carstens, Enara Parra and Anna Molnár.

The Instagram Stories Skill Share was so popular that we followed up with a very successful in-person Skill Share event with hands-on practical experience and guidance. Attendees left feeling more confident about using Instagram for business and a bonus was that several attendees were excited about signing up for the monthly Instagram Takeover on the WBII account where a member is granted access for one day to share a behind-the-scenes view of their life and business. This usually takes place on the day of our regular monthly events.

The Deep Dive Open Forum is meant to literally dive into a topic, to discuss and share opinions with one another.

We hosted one Deep Dive Open Forum in 2022 which was on the topic of Referrals and Testimonials with member expert, Lisa Hall.

Office Management

Our office continues to be expertly managed by Board Members: Dymphna Elsink (Vice-President), Lisa Hall (Treasurer), and Natalie Carstens (Secretary), and supported by Deborah Valentine who looks after our email and checks our bank account.

Thanks to the events and membership system on our website which is managed by Natalie and Dymphna, many administrative tasks have been simplified and/or automated. Pre- and post- monthly event correspondence is manually sent out by Natalie. Deborah follows up with members when expected actions that are prompted by automated emails are not taken. Contacting members directly has proven worthwhile.

Thanks to the whole team, we have become more efficient and professional over the years, and we plan to continue this into the future.

Financial considerations

We started the year on a strong note having pivoted to online events during 2020 and continuing to hold as many events as possible. With the decrease in office costs during 2021, and the increase in members, our financial resources looked bright for 2022.

We decided to invest a portion of our budget on re-evaluating the WBII's impact and needs post-Covid by hiring Sinead Hewson to facilitate managing the expectations of the Board and our members, as well as to guide us through the changes that arise from such analysis.

We also wanted to thank all our volunteers for their contributions throughout the pandemic by sharing an experience together full of fun and laughter. This surprise evening on the Hoftrammm, a local feature in The Hague, showed guests our thanks and acknowledgment of their worth for their continual support.

Nonetheless, our bank balance at the end of 2022 was of a similar level as at the beginning of the year thanks to the myriad of events organised and produced by the volunteers of the WBII.

Time to Recalibrate: A Study to Renew the WBII and Focus on the Longer-Term

In 2022, the WBII Board agreed that it was important to examine the current situation with regard to the Foundation, in order to ensure that it continued to respond to the needs of our members in the longer term. This was a particularly important consideration as we came out of the Covid-19 period, when all of the activities had been hosted online. We also needed to address changes in the Dutch statutory requirements affecting non-governmental organisations.

Over a six month period, Dr. Sinead Hewson of TpEBO was invited to conduct the research and report back to the Board. She interviewed and consulted with WBII members and examined the WBII's purpose, mission, values, member services and corporate governance. Since receiving her recommendations, we have started the process of putting the recommendations into action.

Statutory requirements

A Board member or a trustee of a charity is an umbrella term for the group of people who ultimately exercise control over and are legally responsible for the management of a foundation such as WBII. People acting in this capacity have always had associated legal obligations.

In the Netherlands, organisations such as WBII were required to register on the Dutch UBO register at the Chamber of Commerce (Ultimate Beneficiary Owner - KvK) by 27 March 2022. This was one of the new requirements that the WBII Board acted on in 2022.

All members of the new Board of the WBII are also registered with the Chamber of Commerce.

Brand Identity and House Style

Throughout 2022, we have managed to create a lot of beautiful graphic design work for WBII, to be used in different platforms of our community including the website and social media. We believe that we have achieved our own strong brand identity in recent years that resonates with our members and followers.

We continued to create original drawings to promote each monthly networking event and adapt the playful, eye-catching illustrations to several platforms for brand consistency.

Together with the COMMS team, we have also upgraded WBII promotional materials including a new tagline that represents our mission and vision in a clear way.

We have used these words to describe WBII: A community for women business owners, sharing knowledge and experience, emphasising that we help you to connect, support and grow your business.

We found the words ‘connect, support and grow’ ‘quite impactful as these are the main reasons why our members join our community!

A brand-new bookmark has been printed for distribution at events and fairs, and a roll-up banner printed on eco-friendly paper with a wooden structure has also been made to improve our visual identity.

Whether we are designing festive cards to send to our members or creating other graphic items for potential members, we have given priority to sustainable design and are conscious about the environment by using natural materials.

We are looking forward to continually creating and improving WBII’s brand image, together with our magnificent team of volunteers.

Eco-friendly roll-up banner design

Bookmarks (front and back)

Step 4 of greater worth
Profit First
Step 6 of greater worth
Believe in Yourself & Own Your Worth
FOCUS
CLARITY
OWN YOUR WORTH
Step 9 of greater worth
Pivoting
PIVOT
wbi
festive
DINNER

theWISE
Opportunities
Letting curiosity lead the way
Pack your patience this summer
patience
The Power of the Pivot

Using OUR WORTH to make an IMPACT
We wish everyone a loving holiday.
There is no single person on this planet that's worth more than the other. Know your worth.
HOLLY HOLM
American mixed martial artist
Women's Business Initiative International

Website

Our website continues to inform our community and new visitors about the WBII. Visitors can also browse our popular member directory to discover what our members offer. Both members and guests can register for our events with ease.

Registering as a new member is an easy and immediate process. Members have control over their directory listings with the ability to update their details, add photos and videos, and create member-to-member offers through their own self-managed account. Members can also add their own events to our calendar (with the ability to self-manage event registrations) thereby giving them exposure to a wider audience.

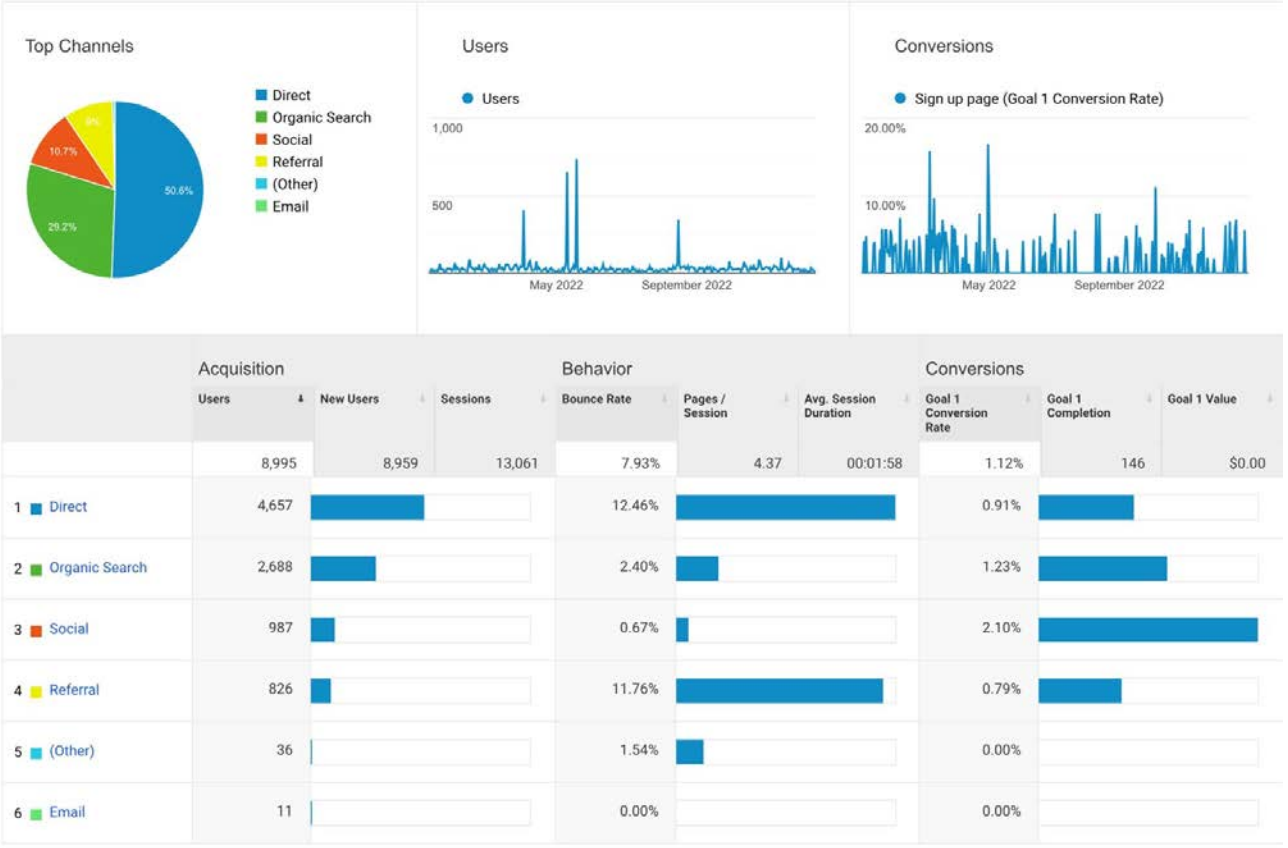
The ability to configure web pages exclusively for member-only viewing enables us to expand our Member Downloads and Resources area. Members have access to a growing collection of our monthly event speaker presentations as video replays.

We added a second income stream to bring more awareness to our community by creating personalised Dopper bottles to sell on our website.

Looking at our website statistics, we can see that our top referrers are Facebook and Instagram.

The Website Team

Lisa Hall, Natalie Carstens, Moran Greenwald and Cigdem Guven



	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions		
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal 1 Conversion Rate	Goal 1 Completion	Goal 1 Value
	8,995	8,959	13,061	7.93%	4.37	00:01:58	1.12%	146	$0.00
1 Direct	4,657			12.46%			0.91%		
2 Organic Search	2,688			2.40%			1.23%		
3 Social	987			0.67%			2.10%		
4 Referral	826			11.76%			0.79%		
5 (Other)	36			1.54%			0.00%		
6 Email	11			0.00%			0.00%		

Communications

Manager: Moran Greenwald

The 'Mighty Comms Team' is made up of several smaller teams, managed by Moran Greenwald.

Responsibilities include: the WBII website, The WISE newsletter, and the WBII social media channels (Facebook Group, Facebook Page, Instagram, and LinkedIn).

We are using a variety of tools to stay in touch and communicate with our audiences:

Slack:	for everyday communication and work
Google Drive:	for storage of documents, images and templates
Canva:	for creating images and templates
Buffer:	for planning and scheduling posts for social media
Mailerlite:	for our mailing list

The team email (managed by Moran Greenwald) is **comms@womensbusinessinitiative.net**

The WISE Newsletter

The best way to find out what's happening in the WBII community is through our newsletter: The WISE (Women Inspiring Successful Entrepreneurship). The WISE is sent twice a month to keep the community updated on all our activities and opportunities for growth.

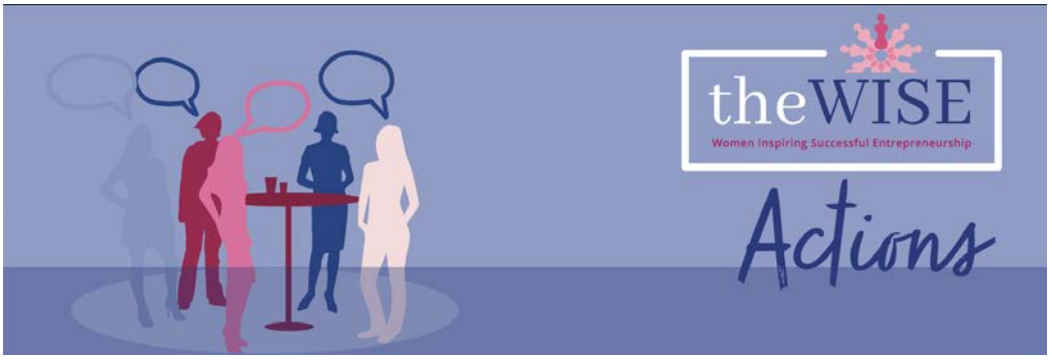
The WISE Actions email is sent on the second Tuesday of the month. The WISE Opportunities email is sent on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

We currently have over 1300 subscribers. The number of subscribers who open the newsletter is between 43-44% per month and with a click rate of 3-5%.

Jane Pocock holds an advisory role and proofreads the newsletters before they are sent out.

The WISE Actions Team

Beth Farris and Julia Close



For the Actions newsletter in 2022, we added the popular "5 TIPS" series and evolved "Charlene's Bubble" into a quarterly News RoundUp.

The WISE Opportunities Team

Cigdem Guven, Allyson Kukel and Lisa Hall

In 2022, we continued to produce the Opportunities monthly newsletter with our core team, consisting of Cigdem Guven (Crocusfield Creative), Lisa Hall (Lemonberry), and Allyson Kukel (Rooted In Calm).

We start this newsletter with an introduction copy put beautifully in writing by Allyson. She is usually inspired by what is happening around us that month in the world of women and business, or the topic discussed at our monthly networking event.

We give place to a few of our member's announcements and a Q&A that helps our readers get to know our members in depth. We promote the monthly events taking place at WBII while mentioning briefly other outsider events happening in our near surroundings. We also feature new members recently joining our community, giving them a chance to be introduced to our existing members.

The plan is to continue to make our newsletter a joy to read and to make it even more engaging!

Social Media

The Comms Team is using Buffer to plan and schedule the WBII social media posts. We have a library of image templates, captions and stock images for recurring posts and event-specific posts which means that almost all social media posts can be managed by one person. Due to the visual nature of Instagram, this is managed separately by our Instagram Team.

Members-Only Facebook Group

Ugne Marchionno and Nancy Mayer

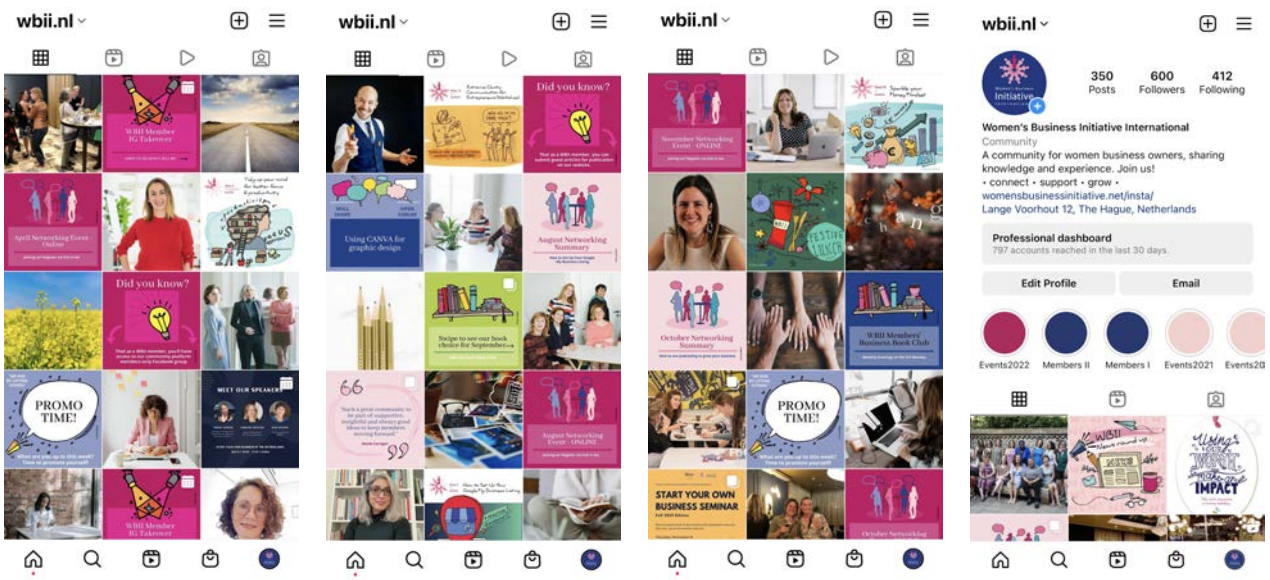
Nancy joined Ugne in the summer, together they take the lead with our members-only Facebook group.

Engagement (comments and reactions) in the group is growing with regular prompts and discussion topics and it is becoming an active, engaged and supportive (online) community for WBII members.

Instagram

The Instagram Team

Natalie Carstens, Enara Parra and Anna Molnár



The WBII Instagram account is managed by Natalie Carstens, Enara Parra and Anna Molnár. The Instagram Team meets monthly to plan and schedule content in line with the annual programme of events.

Whilst posts are scheduled in advance using Buffer, the team are also frequently active on the account engaging with users and sharing community and member's content in Stories.

In December of 2021, the team successfully introduced 'Member Takeovers' on Instagram Stories whereby a member of WBII takes control of the account for a day and can share behind the scenes of their work day in the lead up to the monthly networking event. It's a fun and engaging way of reaching a wider audience!

In 2022, the following members participated in the Member Takeovers:

Enara Parra, Vinita Salome, Ugne Marchionno, Moran Greenwald, Allyson Kukel, Petra Fisher, and Maud Janssen.

Mastermind and Niche Focus Groups

Mastermind groups offer a place to give and receive support, gain new perspectives, and stay accountable so you can accelerate your business success. Both starters and experienced business owners benefit from participating in a Mastermind group.

The initiation and formation of new Mastermind groups is coordinated by Teresa Moynihan.

In 2022, there were four Mastermind groups:

- WBII Coaching Group
- Eclipse Mastermind
- Mastermind 2020
- The Athena's

Mastermind Group 1: WBII Coaching group

Anita Paalvast	Akido@Work
Teresa Moynihan	Career Transition Consultant, Coach and Trainer
Annette Nilsson	aLive-Lifecoaching, supporting people in transition and challenging times
Manuela Damant	Women's Leadership Coach
Doville Corrigan	Coaching, Leadership development and training
Julia Close	Be Extraordinary Coaching
Zeyda Broers	Accountability, Time Management and Structure Coach

Mastermind Group 2: Eclipse Mastermind

Dymphna Elsink	Jouw Assistene - Jouw Dagvoorzitster
Nancy Mayer	Voice teacher. Singer. Voice training for singers and speakers
Natalie Carstens	Documentary family photographer specialising in birth, maternity and newborn
Ugne Marchionno	Digital strategy and growth mentor for wellness entrepreneurs
Lisa Hall	Business branding, art direction, web development and graphic design

Mastermind Group 3: Mastermind 2020

Anna Molnár	Italianist and Business Coach for women entrepreneurs who love to read
Audrey Dickinson	Nutritional Therapist
Jane Pocock	English language editor and translator (Dutch to English)
Lamprini Kiosk	Psychologist, and Neurofeedback therapist
Darina Veen	Feng Shui consultant

Mastermind Group 4: The Athena's

Cigdem Guven	Creative Graphic Designer
Enara Parra	Passionate Foodie & honest food advocate
Garcia Stans	Financial Guru
Vinita Salomé	Capturing life via photography
Sandra Delgado Quist	Homeopath & Energy Medicine Practitioner

Business Book Club

All WBII members are welcome to join the Book Club, and only members attend meetings. Members discuss books related to both business and personal development. It's not essential to join every meeting, and members join when the book choice is one they would like to read.

There are 7 members in our Book Club WhatsApp group. One meeting was organised in 2022. The Book Club was dormant for the remainder of 2022.

Start Your Own Business (SYOB) Seminars

Start Your Own Business seminars organised by WBII in collaboration with Webster University Leiden Campus

2022 was the 11th year that WBII organised its English-language 'Start Your Own Business' seminars (SYOB) for internationals in the Netherlands.

In addition, 2022 marked the 4th consecutive year that the WBII and Webster University Leiden campus have joined forces to host these SYOB seminars, which are held annually in April and November, and are open to men and women from the international community, as well as Webster students.

The importance of these seminars for internationals cannot be overlooked. For those who are looking for work but cannot find a job because they do not speak Dutch, the seminars can be a beacon of hope. Participants can learn first of all if starting a business is right for them, and if so, what to consider when getting started so that they can earn a living and participate in Dutch society.

The 2022 events were held from 18:00-21:30 on 6 April and 9 November in the historic premises of Webster Leiden Campus.

The April seminar was held online (with the core seminar team together at Webster) due to the Dutch government's Covid-19 restrictions which were in place when the event organisation began.

The November seminar was in-person. The November seminar was also registered as an official event with the Global Entrepreneurship Week, a worldwide platform supporting small business startups. The seminars were opened by Dr. Yang Fan, Head of the Webster Leiden Business & Management Department, and moderated by WBII President Charlene Lambert.

The following WBII members were speakers at one seminar:

- WBII Board Member Nira Satguru (speaking on the Entrepreneurial Mindset at the April seminar);
- Garcia Stans (Financial Management for Small Businesses at the November seminar).

The following WBII members were speakers at both April and November seminars:

- Sinead Hewson (Starting a Business in the Netherlands and Differences with other Countries)
- Caroline Orthlieb (Legal, Administrative, and Tax considerations)
- Beth Farris (Setting Yourself up for Success - The importance of focus)
- Charlene Lambert (Moderator).

All of our speakers enthusiastically shared their professional knowledge and experience with the participants on a volunteer basis.

Collaboration between Webster Leiden and WBII helps to raise the profile of SYOB, and the students' project management support is vital to a successful event each time. The events are organised by a team which includes representatives of Webster and WBII.

In 2022, Webster Leiden Business Club President Ali Shaigin, MBA student, was the Webster Project Manager. Akanksha Menon was the WBII project manager, and responsible for event registration, social media and evaluation. Many others work behind the scenes on other aspects of the event, and their support is greatly appreciated. Participants were also invited to a one-hour on-line follow-up session organised by Sinead Hewson about one-week after SYOB to discuss additional questions and concerns.

WBII is very pleased to continue this collaboration on these seminars with Webster, in support of the international community.

Participation in Fairs

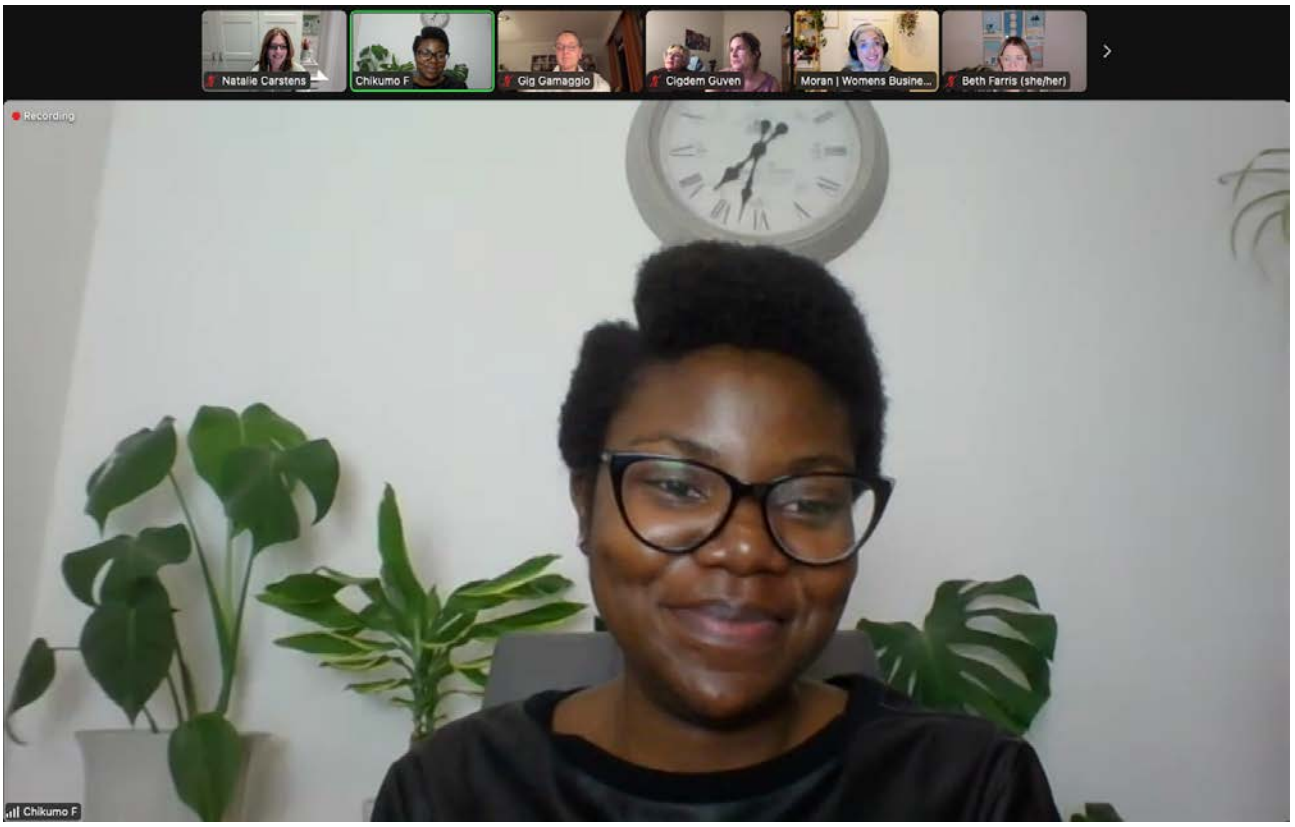
On 6 November, WBII participated at the 'Feel at Home Fair' at the British School in Voorschoten, which turned out to be a very successful in-person event for WBII. After 2 years of the 'Corona break' – during which time only online fairs were held - we particularly enjoyed getting back to an in-person event.

Our enthusiastic team of volunteers, consisted of: Teresa Moynihan (Moynihan Consulting), Ugne Marchionno (Aim to WOW), Gabriela Trützschler (Studio Copernicus), Darina Veen (Feng Shui Design), Lisa Hall (Lemonberry), and Moran Greenwald (Data for a Change). The volunteers represented WBII, and also could use the opportunity to promote their own businesses.

During the morning program of the 'Feel at Home Fair', Darina Veen made a short presentation in the form of an interview about WBII which took place on the main stage. The audience was composed of the fair visitors. This turned out to be an excellent way to inform the visitors about our organisation, as many people came afterwards to visit our stand.

Of those who visited, about 35 email addresses were collected. This type of event is a good way to inform the international community about the WBII, and we estimate that 3 or 4 new members joined as a result of this event alone.

Once someone learns about our organisation, for example at the Fair, and gets on our mailing list, they begin receiving the WBII newsletter. They will then look at the website, possibly attend a WBII event, and follow us on Facebook and Instagram. Within a few weeks, they become a member.



Advocacy and Outreach

The WBII members actively continue to build our networks and connect with other professionals. New research on inclusive entrepreneurship has also helped us to prepare the way ahead.

The Missing Entrepreneurs

Finding meaningful ways to connect with the regional entrepreneurial community can only serve to support all small businesses, including WBII members. Even though WBII members may not own technological start-ups, the services they provide can support the startup innovation community. For example, many starters need basic services such as a website, business coaching and tax advice, which are some of the many services provided by our members. Through our focus on supporting internationals, the WBII also offers Dutch SMEs an avenue to internationalise their businesses.

In this regard, WBII has been in touch with Professor Erik Stam of the University of Utrecht, who was researching the topic of inclusive entrepreneurship for the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. According to his research, the Dutch economy was suffering because it lacks women, migrants/internationals and youth entrepreneurs, and the Dutch government was interested in supporting these 'missing entrepreneurs'. We also learned that the WBII ticks two of the three boxes in the missing entrepreneurs target groups, namely, internationals/migrants and women.

Regional networks

The importance of focusing on strong regional entrepreneurial networks (as opposed to, for example, national ones) also becomes clearer. Our immediate contacts in our own region are the best place to start

when building one's networks. As a member of the Dutch entrepreneurship ecosystem with a focus on women, communication in English, and a volunteer-driven organisation, we have to try even more to reach out and connect in order to gain the full benefits of our networks, and for all of our members.

The WBII met with WorldStartup, a business incubation centre in The Hague offering support to changemakers all over the world to help them to create communities and grow their businesses to foster a positive impact on society and nature. WorldStartup is aware of the importance of inclusive entrepreneurship and invited WBII to get involved in the annual IMPACTFest, an event held in November in The Hague to encourage sustainable development and innovation in the regional entrepreneurship community.

IMPACT Fest

Held on 15 November, The Hague's ImpactCity business incubation hub brought together innovators, investors, policy makers, entrepreneurs, and other impact makers from around the world at the Fokker Terminal. It is the largest impact festival of its kind in Europe and has been sold out for three years in a row (over 1000 participants). The theme of the 2022 edition of ImpactFest was about working on creating the future of impact around four important topics, namely: food transition, energy transition, circular economic transition, and climate adaptation.

During the all-day event, two WBII members, namely Audrey Dickinson (Nourish & Flourish) and Charlene Lambert (AIM to Grow), organised two 'Food Transition Roundabouts' round table discussion sessions on the topic of 'Real Food' and it's importance for our sustainable future. WBII membership information and resources were also distributed at that time. A third member, Aleyda Santos (TERRA Foundation) also organised two Roundabout sessions for TERRA on the topic of reforestation and sustainable land management. Another member, Anna Molnár (Blossom Empowering Events), was there to meet with and encourage a group of start-ups who were pitching their business idea. Prior to the IMPACT Fest, she had coached them on the preparation of their business model canvas and wanted to be there to support them. Other WBII members, who are also creative entrepreneurs from all walks of life, were present, learning and making business connections with other participants. Opportunities for informative discussions with interesting contacts and finding answers to the important problems faced by our society were accelerated by participating in IMPACT Fest.

Outreach

In November we received a 'cold call' email from a group of women entrepreneurs in another part of the Netherlands who were reaching out to us for advice. Their message opened with following message:

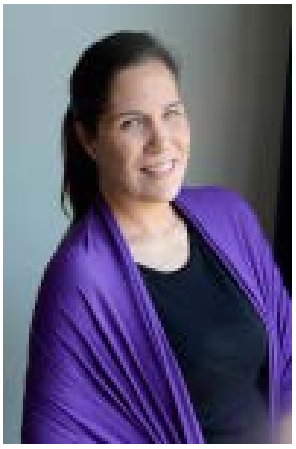
'Hello, (Your) group is inspirational. You seem to empower women to reach their true potential and I really respect that.

She continued: *"I am the founder of the only English-speaking social and professional network for women in the East of the Netherlands. We are looking to formalise ourselves as a not-for-profit but I am getting lost in the options and rules. Would it be at all possible to schedule a 30 minute zoom call for some advice? I really appreciate that you are busy, but I admire your network and we strive to be something similar. Until now, everything has been done voluntarily initially by myself and my co-founder, and now with a group of 8 women. We are not short on ideas or passion, and we survived the last 2 years! But the next step forward*

has me going in circles. As someone whom may come to for help, I am trying to practise my own advice and reaching out to ask for help myself."

As a follow-up to this message, WBII had a very pleasant zoom call with representatives of this group, which lasted much longer than 30-minutes! We congratulated them on coming this far and assured them that they were on the right track. At WBII we are all volunteers, and thanks to our recent management study, we would be placing much more emphasis on recognising and thanking our volunteers. We are still in touch with this group and plan to meet in person. We want to continue to connect with and share our experience with them and others.

Member Testimonials



"From the first event I attended before joining as a member, I knew WBII was exactly what I was looking for. Being relatively new to the Netherlands and having had just registered my business, I was still adjusting to both the new country and entrepreneurship. At WBII I met like-minded women from different backgrounds, nationalities and experiences and immediately felt welcomed and supported. I'm grateful to have discovered them and I am looking forward growing together with and supporting our community."

Claudia de Lange, Pilates with Claudia
www.pilateswithclaudia.nl

"Joining the WBII was one of the best decisions I've made for my professional development. The organisation offers excellent networking opportunities, educational resources, and a supportive community of like-minded women entrepreneurs. I've gained valuable insights and made valuable connections through my membership, and I highly recommend it to any woman looking to advance her business career."

Irena Nača, Irena Nača Portraiture
www.irenanacaportraiture.com

"Coming back to our country after 20 years abroad and being new to the Hague I decided to become a member of WBII after hearing positive stories from an existing member. I have not regretted it ever since! Since the first meeting I have enjoyed the company and support of this wonderful and inspiring women's group. Great talks from experts in different fields to learn from, lots of positivity and a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers."

Maud Janssen, www.houseofcolour.com

"WBII provides a wonderfully supportive environment for international women in business. As a new expat in the Netherlands, I found a community of like minded women eager to help me grow my business. I have been able to make friends as well as professional connections among WBII members.There is a lot of experience and knowledge in this group of women and they are generously sharing their insight. The events address many relevant business topics and there is something for everybody's needs. I highly recommend WBII to women of all ages, cultures and professions."

Martha Helliesen M.K. Ph.D., www.inter-x-connected.com

"Being a member of WBII provides me a sense of belonging. This international community of like-minded women brought me the chance to expand my services, raise awareness about my brand and work together with other international business owners. I truly recommend joining this diverse group!"

Sinziana Ionescu, www.sinzianaionescu.com

List of members

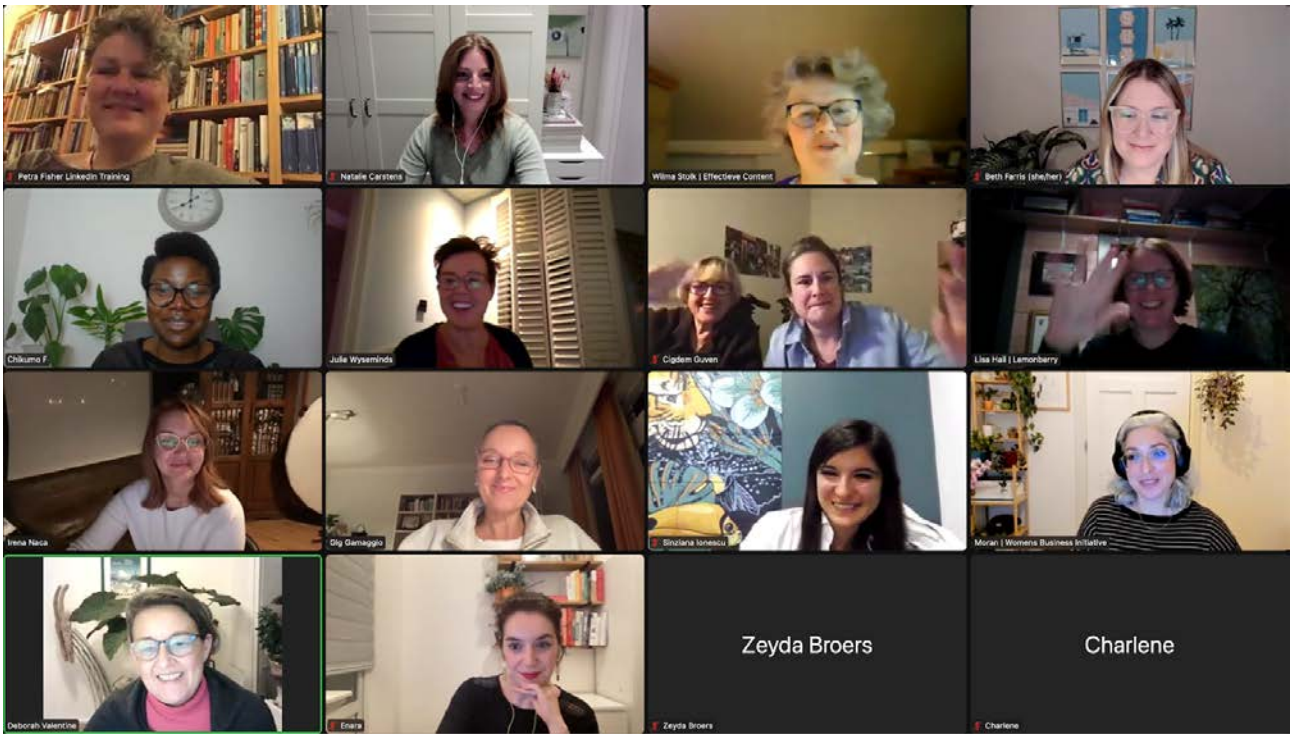
The following were members of WBII during part or all of the year 2022:

Name	Company
Aleyda Santos	TERRA Foundation
Allyson Kukel	Rooted in Calm
Anacia Weiskittel	Degas International Dance Academy
Anastasiia Shcherbakova	How Might We BV
Anita Paalvast	Aikido@Work
Anja Vlaardingerbroek	
Anna Molnár	Blossom Empowering Events
Annette Flottmann-Nilsson	aLive-Lifecoaching
Beata Grablevska Imans	
Beatrice Betley	Larossa BV - Music Production & Audio Engineering
Becky Makous	Experience Healing Love
Beth Farris	Beth Farris Consulting
Bianca Wijnstekers-Handy	Tupelo Translations
Bieneke Braat	Bit Legal
Caroline Orthlieb	Caroline Orthlieb Business and Tax Consultancy
Charlene Lambert	AIM to Grow
Cigdem Guven	Crocusfield
Claudia de Lange	Pilates with Claudia
Claudia Preziosi	Claudia Preziosi Consultancy
Colleen Reichrath-Smith	CJS Career Consulting
Dantee Choi	DANTEESTYLE
Darina Veen-Kassova	Feng Shui Design
Deborah Valentine	ACCESS
Dolor Cortez	None yet
Dymphna Elsink	Jouw Assistente - Jouw Dagvoorzitster
Emma Robson	Media Wise
Enara Parra	RootsandCook
Esther Velzen	Maximaal Makelaars
Gabriele Trützschler	Studio Copernicus
Garcia Stans	Sparkle Your business
Inge Zweerts de Jong	ZJHT BV
Irena Naca	Irena Naca - Newborn and family portraiture
Jacqueline Alders	Ik gids u door Den Haag
Jane Pocock	Write it Right
Jet Sichterman	Embracing Horizons
Julie Jones	Julie Jones Advanced Skincare
Julie Kennedy	The Kennedy Connection
Julie Perkins	Wyseminds
Katherine Fortier	
Kirsty Hunter	Teen Vitality
Lamprini Kiosse	Lifekey
Lenny	My Full Essence
Lianne de Vries	Mevrouw de Vries
Lisa Hall	Lemonberry
Manuela Damant	Azkua
Maria Barciela	Across South America
Marjolein van der Kruk	Be Your Own Best Friend Forever

Martha Helliesen	inter-x-connected
Maud Janssen	House of Colour Maud Janssen
Moran Greenwald	Data for a Change
Nancy Mayer	Nancy Mayer, Voice Lessons
Natalie Carstens	Natalie Carstens Photographer
Nira Satguru	
Petra Fisher	Petra Fisher Consulting
Samar Siala	Samar Siala Your Career Calrity Coach
Sandra Vukkink-Bos	Life Support Coaching
Sara Desiati	
Selina White	
Shifa Ibrahim	SI Consulting
Sinead Hewson	TpEBO
Sinziana Ionescu	Sinziana Ionescu Coaching
Suzy Ogé	The Dendrite Group
Tara Gooding	YourEnglish
Teresa Moynihan	Moynihan Consulting
Ugne Marchionno	Aim to WOW
Vinita Salomé	Vinita Salomé Photography
Zeyda Broers	The School of Joy
Zhen Jun Chang	ZJ Means Business
Zuzana Bubalova	Zuzana Bubalova

Colofon

Charlene Lambert – Editor-in-Chief
Lisa Hall – Images and text
Natalie Carstens – Proofreader, images and text
Contributions from: Dymphna Elsink, Moran Greenwald, Cigdem Guven, Darina Veen, Teresa Moynihan, Lisa Hall, Deborah Valentine



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