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**\$1 Million of Capital in 100 Days:
Canadian collective launches #WomenRAISE campaign for gender
equality in business and investment**

Just 5 percent of tech entrepreneurs are women. Less than 4 percent of all venture capital goes to women founders. Women collectively hold more than \$3.2 trillion in total assets in Canada and the US—and are beginning to use them.

Launched by The RAISE Collective, the #WomenRAISE campaign elevates female entrepreneurs and changes the story of what a CEO and investor looks like.

Vancouver, BC—A collective of female founders, entrepreneurs and investors are calling on Canadians to increase diversity in business by launching #WomenRAISE: a 100-day challenge to raise \$1 million in capital for seven female-led companies, running from March 27 to July 4.

The #WomenRAISE initiative includes key investor meetings with select female-led startups currently seeking investment; multiple events to connect female founders and investors; and encouraging Canadians to support women-run businesses they know of using the hashtag #WomenRAISE. The campaign ends with a celebratory event in early July to mark this first extensive push to advance gender parity in investments.

“Canada’s economy is stronger when it truly reflects our population. We’re asking all Canadians—especially other women—to support the growth of dynamic, female-led companies through #womenRAISE. Diversity in business is imperative to economic success—locally and globally. By investing or supporting early stage businesses run by women, we can not only benefit equality but our country’s economy,” explained Katrina Carroll-Foster, Co-Founder of [The RAISE Collective](#), the organization behind the initiative. The group works to provide easier access to capital for women entrepreneurs, and to engage more women in investing in early stage and growing companies.

They are needed. Canada’s business landscape is full of disparity. 90 percent of all-male investment teams exclusively fund ventures with all-male founding teams¹. This is despite evidence that female-founded companies outperform their male peers’ by 63 percent in terms of creating value for their investors².

¹ Stats Canada, 2016

² First Round Ventures, 2017

³ [McKinsey](#), 2017

This is—in part—why just 5 percent of Canadian tech firms have a female founder. And, while those founders have the education and expertise to start a company, Harvard research suggests they are less likely to know *how* to become an entrepreneur, or raise capital. Women are outside of established venture capital networks, with less access to funding than their male counterparts.

Increasing this access supports not just individual, entrepreneurial women. McKinsey estimates that Canada could add as much as \$150-billion in GDP growth in the next 10 years by advancing women's equality³.

“Women control more than \$1.1 trillion in financial wealth in Canada and the States. #WomenRAISE encourages all of us to support visionary business leaders by investing in them. The result? More opportunities for future generations of women in business,” explained Jill Earthy, Co-Founder of The RAISE Collective.

The businesses that are spotlighted during #WomenRAISE are part of RAISE Collective's WeRAISE cohort—a collaborative program for women-led ventures currently raising capital for their business.

Female entrepreneurs actively seeking investment in the group include: Angela Hamilton of [Quupe](#) (pronounced 'koop'), an online platform that allows for short-term rentals of items nearby; Sarah Morgan of [Nano-Lit](#), a Quantum Dot technology company at the cutting edge of sustainable industrial lighting; Sara Bartlett of [PARC Swimwear](#), creating quality swimwear for active women; and Erin Millar of [Discourse Media](#). Discourse Media and PARC are opening up access to investment for all qualified individuals starting at \$150. For details, [visit FrontFundr campaigns](#). Quupe and Nano-Lit can be found on [‘coming soon’](#).

The following businesses in the group are also starting to raise from a combination of debt and equity during #womenRAISE: Merideth Schutter of [PROtect](#) Smart Personal Safety, a pro-active personal safety app that utilizes a person's close circle for support; Samantha Simonton of [AMY](#), an AI and augmented reality interior design platform; Oana Papuc, Anna Heyd and Vivian McCormick of [Flax Sleep](#), a Canadian e-commerce startup delivering quality linen bedding at accessible prices; and Renée Safrata of [Vivo](#), an HR Tech company analyzing and solving workplace productivity issues.

Canadians interested in finding out more can do so at The [RAISE Collective](#). Female founders are encouraged to join the movement by sharing their experiences of entrepreneurship and capital raising with the #womenRAISE hashtag. Female investors are encouraged to join the RAISE Collective network, to support one of the ventures above, and to explore early-stage investment through other communities such as WEL, Female Funders and SheEO.

[About The RAISE Collective](#)

The RAISE Collective brings together a community of female investors and champions to

³ [McKinsey](#), 2017

grow and diversify the capital pool available to a broader range of female entrepreneurs. Doing this allows for more diverse innovation and technology in our economy. They connect female investors to other like-minded investors, trusted and tested resources, and to meaningful networking events. They also support female founders and entrepreneurs on their journey to capital by curating investment opportunities.

The RAISE Collective was founded by: **Jill Earth**, Chief Growth Officer of FrontFundr; **Katrina Carroll-Foster**, CEO of Kollektively; **Paulina Cameron**, Regional Director (BC, Alberta + Yukon), Futurpreneur Canada, author of *Canada 150 Women*; **Sana Kapadia**, Chief Impact Officer at Spring Activator; **Genevieve Pinto**, Partner, Renewal Funds; and **Lauren Robinson**, COO of Highline Beta.

Find them on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

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