

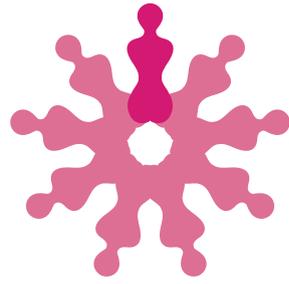
Women's Business  
**Initiative**  
International

ON THE WINGS OF CHANGE

THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017

WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBII)





Women's Business  
**Initiative**  
International

# ON THE WINGS OF CHANGE

2017 Annual Report of the  
Women's Business Initiative International (WBII)





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## LETTER FROM JULIE KENNEDY, PRESIDENT, WBII

Dear members and friends,

"Stagnation means regression. And new challenges are part of life." So began our invited guest speaker, Nenita La Rose, President of the Dutch Women's Council, at our December Festive Lunch. For the WBII, 2017 was not a year of stagnation, but on the contrary, a year of change, of adaptation, and re-thinking as we took on a new office manager and welcomed three new board members to replace three long-standing board members who were moving on.

At times the daily operations seemed to distract from the long term goals we endorse of supporting and empowering our members, yet with each dilemma comes indeed great opportunity and a chance for us to re-think our corporate structure. As I write, we are doing without a formal Office Manager to clearly define our needs, and thanks to the heroic efforts of **Lisa Hall (Lemonberry)** and **Dymphna Elsink (Jouw Assistentie)**, we are running efficiently and gaining valuable insights.

We are pleased that Lisa Hall has re-joined the board as Treasurer, her skills and insight in this regard are greatly appreciated. Lisa has the distinction of being the first former Board Member to return to the Board! We welcome also to the board: **Emma England (England Lifestyle Management Services)** to support Events, and **Susan Tredenick** to support Social Media. We are also delighted to welcome Fair Coordinator **Darina Veen-Kassova (Feng Shui Design)**. Board Member **Nira Satguru (Taste)** and Vice Chair **Charlene Lambert (mlmc)** continue on as longstanding Board Members, adding stability and ensuring the continuity and knowledge transfer for the WBII. Although she is living abroad, Founder **Suzy Oge** continues to be a Member of the Board.

In 2017, we also broadened our mission statement. **We are not only a dynamic association of international business women** networking to learn, grow, succeed, collaborate, support and motivate around: our monthly networking events, our hands-on mastermind groups, fair visibility, professional development workshops, boosting each other on LinkedIn, sharing on our private FB page, collaborating and supporting each other. **But we are also in parallel, the first port of call for all internationals – including men and women -- in The Hague and the region** thinking of starting a business, for whom we run our Start Your Own Business and Professional Development seminars.

In order to get to know our members better, we introduced an **"Open House"** morning at our office on the second Tuesday of the month. This has proven to be successful, and a number of our members have taken the time to stop by, have coffee, and discuss topics of interest.

## WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBII)

As 2017, closes we would like to thank several Board Members who have supported the WBII over the past year, and who are now stepping down in order to have more time to invest in their own businesses. These include: **Lucy Bosscher (ASPIRE Pilates)** for all her work on branding; **Vassia Sarantopoulou (The Anti-Lonliness Project)**, who put in a lot of effort to further develop and run our Social Media; and **Sophie Bonavero (Clever Clogs)**, who stepped in on Finance, and helped on events, including the Festive Lunch, and sponsorships.

As 2017 closes on a year of change for WBII, it is useful to reflect on what the renowned Cultural Anthropologist Margaret Mead once said:

***Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have.***

Together and with our members, the WBII may not be changing the world, but we hope to be a beacon of light for those in the international community, in and around The Hague, who may need or want to start and run their own businesses, and in their own ways, earn a meaningful living for themselves and their families, and participate in and contribute to Dutch society.

With kind regards,



Julie Kennedy



## WHO WE ARE:

Based in The Hague, The WBII is a **network of international and Dutch women entrepreneurs striving to succeed.**

The WBII is a one-stop-shop for women running or wanting to start a business, providing information, training, support and motivation and the networks needed to succeed. Since its establishment in 2006 as a Dutch foundation, over 600 women entrepreneurs from all walks of life, and from over 40 countries, have actively participated in, and benefited from this initiative, generating incomes, creating jobs and, for many, translating their passion into business. All women who are interested in starting their own business are welcome to join.

## WHAT WE DO

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

### 1. Learning and Development

- The WBII runs an effective programme of **Professional Development Workshops**. These hands-on workshops are designed to provide in-depth knowledge on a particular business issue. Topics range from finance and marketing to social media and presentation skills. The sessions last 2 hours and are held at the World Trade Centre in The Hague. Past topics include: Powerful Pitching, Taxation for Small Businesses, Financial Business Planning and managing your WordPress website. These events are open to everyone (men and women).
- **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.

## 2. 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.

## 3. Events and Activities

The WBII regularly offers a wide variety of opportunities for members to meet, exchange ideas, and improve their professional skills. On top of the regular networking events, we celebrate **International Women's Day** in March through empowering workshops and a wide variety of speakers, 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 'Ondernemersplein' in The Hague, generating business contacts and leads.

## 4. Community outreach

WBII reaches out into the Dutch and international communities, and is actively involved in a number of organizations. These include:

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



## THANK YOU TO OFFICE MANAGER LILIANA, AND INTERIM OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Thank you to Liliana Gonzalez, WBII Office Manager in 2017! It was a pleasure to have Liliana's friendly support over the past year. Liliana had a passion for women's entrepreneurship, which helped her to think along with the Board, and she did her work in a way that showed her commitment. Liliana has moved out of the country, and her role has been handed over to Lisa Hall and Dymphna Elsink as an interim office management solution until a new Office Manager is hired.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS PROFILE

### **Emma England - Board Member (England Lifestyle Management Services)**



Emma is British, has been in the Netherlands since 2004, and after a variety of jobs and careers in academia, administration, and adult education she decided to take the logical step and combine the elements of her experiences that she loves the most and work for herself. She works as a Personal Assistant for creative and busy people.

*"After just one networking event I knew that the WBII was for me, so at my second networking event I volunteered to join the board. The women are incredibly supportive, non-judgmental, helpful, and creative. They listen and encourage each other and welcome new people with warmth and humour. It was an absolute no-brainer to volunteer so that I could give back to such a strong community, and do my best to help it develop in whatever way I can, while continuing to meet wonderful women."*

### **Lisa Hall – Treasurer (Lemonberry)**

Lisa is originally from the UK and after several international adventures in France, Spain and Andorra, she is now settled in The Hague since 2007.

Lisa has run her graphic design business: Lemonberry for the last 15 years, and enjoys working with small businesses either developing their brand from the beginning and working on all media including website development, or helping businesses re-define their public image. Lisa is the former President of WBII.



## WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBII)

*"The WBII has been an inspiring and supportive community for me over the years and my business would not be what it is today without the energy, passion and enthusiasm that the WBII encourages in us all. To be able to support other women entrepreneurs along their journey is a privilege"*

### **Susan Tedenick - Board Member**



Susan is Australian, living in Holland since 2014. She is a Healthcare Consultant with extensive experience in Aged and Community Care. Being an expat has enabled her to explore other opportunities and work with one of her areas of passion, Arts and Health.

*"My reason for applying to join the WBII as a Board Member is to be able to work with and empower women, especially older or even in the aged care bracket, to be their best self. WBII is certainly a platform that enables this to happen"*

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### **Fair Committee**

#### **Darina Veen-Kassova (Feng Shui Design)**

My name is Darina Veen-Kassova, I am an interior designer according to the Feng Shui Philosophy the Art of Placement. I am offering training courses, workshops, presentations and I provide individual consulting that teaches you how to harmonize your home and office space in order to create more balance, harmony and wealth.



The environment can be supporting, uplifting and nourishing or stressing, unbalanced and depriving us from energy. That has a profound influence on our health and mood and our relationships.

Not only healthy eating, physical exercise and positive thinking are important for our well-being, but also the way we arrange our home environment and our office is equally important.

People can approach me with various personal questions. I teach and explain to my clients how to use and apply principles of balance and harmony of Feng Shui to change your home and improve your life.

# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS

## Sponsors

A big thank you to our sponsors without whom we would not operate.

**GMW Advocaten**, who has been a long-standing support has now moved on. We appreciate and are grateful for their funding over the past years.

Friend sponsors include: **ZJHT, TpEBO, Carlton Ambassador Hotel, Fotograficus, Jouv Assistente** and **Lemonberry**.

Partners include: **Webster University, Access** and **Anglo Info**. In 2018, we will be actively reaching out to additional sponsors.

In addition, we are forever grateful to the **World Trade Centre (WTC)** as ongoing partner providing us a location for our Start Your Own Business Workshops and Professional Development Workshops; and for 2017 to **The Marriott Hotel The Hague** that sponsored some of our International Women's Day costs.

## Volunteers

WBI is an organization by and for members. Without ongoing support from our member volunteers, we could not do our work and would not exist. The following is a list of the volunteers that we would like to thank who have been so generous with their time and support. There may be some that we have missed and we sincerely apologize if we have neglected to mention you.

- Alexandra Arshanskaya (Arshanskaya)
- Aleyda Santos (Jikiden reiki station)
- Anne Bybjerg Møller (Image & Style)
- Arwa Lokhandwala (Tulip Web Solutions)
- Caroline Orthlieb (Caroline Orthlieb)
- Christine Dahl (Dahl International Tax Law)
- Darina Veen-Kassova (Feng Shui Design)
- Deborah Valentine (a hand in The Hague)
- Dymphna Elsink (Jouv Assistente)
- Emma England (England Lifestyle Management Services)
- Lisa Hall (Lemonberry)
- Martine Sollie (De Fotograficus)
- Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre (Optirisk Solutions)

- Nira Satguru (Future Of Learning)
- Sinéad Hewson (TpEBO)
- Teresa Moynihan (Moynihan Consulting)
- Ute Limacher-Riebold (Ute's International Lounge)
- Vassia Sarantopoulou (The Anti-Loneliness Project)

## Branding - Message from retiring Board Member Lucy Bosscher

I had the privilege to serve on the Board of WBII during 2016-2017. My task was to focus on branding and identity of the organisation bringing it more in line with its evolving character and growing diversity of its members and their needs. Through focused discussion and deliberations, the Board has come to agreement to break away from the WBII as only a network identity and position the organisation with dual purposes:

1. English language network for women entrepreneurs .
2. Start Your Own Business Initiative - one counter providing all essential tools and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs.

To support these developments, we have redesigned certain elements of visual identity and have reverted to original colours – white and blue with minimal pink accents. Thus, we have created two new flyers and a new banner dedicated to the Start Your own Business initiative.

As part of The Board's effort to test new formats to attract new members, I have organised a lunch time networking event in February. It was a big success mainly because of the new central location as well as the timing. Many new people showed up and a few strongly expressed their interest in having the opportunity to meet fellow entrepreneurs at a more convenient time and location. Something the Board should perhaps consider in future.

Unfortunately, I had to resign my position after just one year. My own business grew and I needed to focus on its further development. Serving on the Board of such a dynamic organisation was a rewarding experience. The most gratifying part of it was to get to know fellow Board Members. I have a great deal of respect for the President and Vice President who breathe, live and think WBII. With such selfless dedication, the organisation has wonderful days ahead.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

### START YOUR OWN BUSINESS SEMINAR WORLD TRADE CENTRE THE HAGUE

The WBII normally organizes two Start Your Own Business (SYOB) seminars a year to support all members of the international community in the region – including men and women – who are considering starting their own businesses. In 2017, the decision was made to organize one seminar on November 16. Plans are already underway to organize 2 events in April and November, 2018. **Sinead Hewson (TpBEO)** initiated the SYOB seminars when the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce downsized several years ago, and no longer offered English-language seminars. Sinead remembered the difficulty she had when she moved to the Netherlands and tried to find information in English about starting her own business, but little information was available. **Natacha Villedieu Silvestre (Optirisk Solutions)** has taken over the organizational management of the SYOB from Sinead, and was responsible for the event in November, with Sinead continuing on as a speaker and consultant. In recognition of the WBII's increased role of the SYOB seminars, we intend to promote this at trade shows and events using a new banner which is being prepared and which focuses specifically on this programme.

Some 21 participants coming from wide variety of backgrounds attended the 5th and latest edition held from 6 – 10 p.m. at the World Trade Centre in The Hague. Participants included those who were thinking of starting a business, some who already had a business idea and wanted to check to see how best to proceed, and others who were just exploring the idea as an option for their future and wanted to get a better idea of what was involved. At least 5 different topics about the general differences between starting up a business in the Netherlands and in other locations were covered, including:

- The legal aspects;
- Financial considerations;
- The 'reality check' – is this something that I want to do and is this a viable business concept;
- Identifying all of the next steps to move the idea forward; and finally
- The importance of networking, and building up your network 'Dutch' style.

**Christine Dahl (Dahl International Tax Law)** – a recent SYOB participant who has successfully transitioned from paid employment to become an entrepreneur – shared her own experiences on how she was able to accomplish this. The World Trade Centre's Business Centre location was the perfect place to hold the event, with their variety of temporary office solutions and 'hot-desking' opportunities for starters.

Thanks to all of our speakers, including: **Sinead Hewson (TpEBO)**, **Marcel De Lijster (Down to earth Dutch)**, **Ute Limacher-Riebold (Ute's International Lounge)**, **Natacha Villedieu Silvestre**, **Michiel Heffels (Heffels Spiegelers Advocaten)**, **Charlene Lambert (mlmc)** and the many volunteers who did so much to organize and run this successful event.

WBII member and artist **Alexandra Arshanskaya (Arschanskaya)** drew a great live summary during the event of the main points, which says it all!



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Learning is a lifelong process. WBII supports members to move forward in their career by continuing to grow their skills with specially selected Professional Development Workshops (PDWs). Workshops are open to Members and Non-Members, women and men, with a special price for Members of the WBII. Class sizes are kept small to optimize the learning experience. The PDW Team: **Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre (Optirisk Solutions) and Teresa Moynihan (Moynihan Consulting)**.

### Workshops held in 2017

2 February	<b>PDW Wordpress Masterclass</b> , Lisa Hall
6 April	<b>Nailing that first impression with LinkedIn</b> , Petra Fisher
November 30	<b>Negotiation for Success</b> , with Jonathan Talbott

WBII has already scheduled a workshop to be held in February 2018 on the topic: **"Is Crowd funding the way to go?"** with Marije Lutgendorff.

#### MEMBER PRICE:

1 workshop: €45  
3 workshops: €120  
4 workshops: €150

#### GUEST PRICE:

1 workshop: €60  
3 workshops: €150  
4 workshops: €200



## OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

Since the 1st of October, Lisa Hall and Dymphna Elsink have been taking on the tasks of the Office Manager. These tasks are:

- Day to day finance > Lisa
- Overall finance, BTW, Spreadsheet, checking the accounts > Lisa
- Invoicing via Brightbook > Dymphna
- Membership, this includes everything that has to do with membership > Dymphna  
Email > Dymphna
- Registration Network event except SYOB and PDW > Dymphna
- Website (anything that needs to be uploaded, adjusted) > Lisa

Overall Dymphna's tasks take 2 to 5 hours a week, and Lisa's take a similar amount of time.

Lisa and Dymphna have agreed to take on these tasks until the end of April 2018.

For the future, Dymphna believes it is reasonable that the Office Manager needs at least 10 hours to complete all tasks (as stated above). This is still excluding the Back Office of events like SYOB & PDW and other tasks that the Board and support team now do themselves. The Board may instead consider hiring a part-time Office Manager or consider outsourcing it in the future.

## CONSULTING ARM

With over 11 years of experience, the WBII is now a recognized specialist in the field of women's entrepreneurship. As a result, opportunities exist for using this know-how to assist other women entrepreneurs.

In 2017, through contacts with the Dutch government, WBII was invited to develop a programme and receive a delegation of women entrepreneurs from Belarus. This delegation was to have come in December, however, their visit had to be postponed due to visa issues. The delegation is now being planned for January, 2018. Through these contacts, WBII can further professionalize our services, take advantage of peer learning, and make useful contacts with women entrepreneurs in other countries that may benefit our organization and members.

## REACHING OUT

It is important for an organization such as WBII to continually be reaching out to other networks, not only the organization, but mostly for our members. The following is a summary of some of the main organizations we have been in touch with.

### **ACCESS**

ACCESS continues to be a trusted partner, and regularly lists WBII events on its website. There have not been any active engagement opportunities, however the possibility exists for more involvement.

### **Haagse Brug**

The Haagse Brug is an arm of, and our link to the City of The Hague. They have generously helped us to connect with other organizations so as to be able to be more involved in the local community.

### **NVR**

The WBII is a member of the Dutch Women's Council (Nederlands Vrouwenraad). This prestigious organization, founded by the Dutch Suffragettes, will be celebrating its 120th anniversary in 2018. Through the NVR, the WBII wants to support women in Dutch society, expand our network for our members and our organization, and raise the profile of the WBII. Through our membership in the NVR, we have been introduced to other women's entrepreneurship organizations in the Netherlands with whom we can share information, and have been able to attract spokeswomen such as NVR President Nenita La Rose to speak to our members.

### **MKB**

WBII is a member of the MKB, which is the largest organization representing Small and Medium sized Businesses in the Netherlands. The members of The Hague branch of the MKB want to internationalize, and see the WBII as a possible network for this purpose. For the WBII, the MKB is also an interesting Dutch network for our own members. We have attended several events, and held discussions to explore ways of moving ahead. Through the discussions, we have decided to hold a number of smaller events for MKB and WBII members as an opportunity to get to know one another on a more personal level, and are considering holding some 'speed dating' events in 2018.

## WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBII)

To get to know their members better, President Julie Kennedy was invited to a wonderful lunch at Catch by Simonis in Scheveningen, with another 30 MKB members. Seated at tables for 8 made the laying of contacts fun and effortless, it was a wonderful and fruitful event.

### **WEP**

WBII is a member of the Women Entrepreneurship Platform, a Brussels' based international non-governmental organization representing, supporting, and advocating on behalf of women entrepreneurs across Europe at the EU level. Charlene Lambert, WBII Vice Chair, is also Secretary General of WEP. Through WEP, WBII has a better understanding of the potential for women's entrepreneurship, the specific needs of women entrepreneurs, and the ways that other countries are actively supporting them. WEP is in touch with women entrepreneurship organizations across Europe, and through the WEP membership, WBII may be able to be involved in European calls and programmes that may also benefit WBII and our members.

### **Vrouwen van Nu**

Through our membership in NVR, WBII met the Vrouwen van Nu. This Dutch national organization of 43,000 women members and WBII are exploring ways we can collaborate in the future. For example, some of their members may also like to try a WBII membership, attend some of our networking and professional development events, etc.

### **Soroptimisten**

Soroptimisten is an International Women's Service Club. In November, WBII Board Member Charlene Lambert was invited to talk to the Soroptimisten in Leiden about the WBII and the role of women entrepreneurs in Europe. This was an opportunity to raise their awareness of the potential contribution of women entrepreneurs, particularly international women for whom it may be difficult to find paid employment. The Netherlands' policy of treating everyone equal, which in and of itself appears to be good on the surface, does in fact little to support women's entrepreneurship, which is lagging far behind men (only ±30% of entrepreneurs are women). Because of this, the Netherlands is behind other countries in gaining the economic benefits of greater female entrepreneurship.

## THE WISE – WBII MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A huge thank you goes to **Deborah Valentine**, the editor of the WISE. During 2017 she worked hard at streamlining the process of content for the WISE – in part to share the tasks and ensure that those contributing their time to the production of the WISE could be done in the best possible way. One of the changes was the creation of a dedicated email address ([wbiinewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wbiinewsletter@gmail.com)) in order to receive content (for website & newsletter) so as to reduce the hours invested by the office manager in these tasks.

Over the course of the year, and especially since May/June, member engagement – in the provision of content – has decreased. While many members share content on their own FB pages, blogs, LinkedIn etc., this content is not always streaming towards the website & newsletter. This is unfortunate, as not everyone (clients as well as those who could spread the word) is on all the platforms being used. There is also the possibility to reinforce a message through crossover referrals.

The WISE is sent out to over 2000 addresses, and could be an added source of marketing collateral for our members. At all WBII networking events, newsletter deadlines and reminders are shared. A plan to issue regular reminders to members, about deadlines etc., will be implemented in 2018 to boost the content and use of the WISE.

## THE WBII COMMUNITY CALENDAR - NEW DOCUMENT TO REPLACE IT

For the past 6 years, the WBII has produced a community calendar. This calendar was distributed free of charge in the international community, and included many useful dates for school holidays, openings, etc. Now, due to environmental concerns and the need to reduce the use of paper, the WBII board decided not to produce a 2018 calendar, even though this was a source of funding for the organization.

The Board is currently examining other options, one of them being a blank notebook with adverts on cover and back and as inserts which would enable us to reach out to sponsors and have a timeless and useful medium to ensure visibility. This concept, which has the potential for at least 6-8 large advertisements, and numerous smaller ones, is still under discussion.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - IWD 2017

WBII always celebrates International Women's Day, as it is also the anniversary of our founding in 2006. In 2017, the IWD celebration was held at the Marriott Hotel The Hague under the theme: " Be bold for change". It included two workshops:

- **"Critical Thinking in Today's Workplace" by Dr. Giedre Vasiliauskaite:** knowledge and tools for wise and rapid decision-making in this highpaced world of ours.
- **"Change your Money mindset" by Marian Koek:** 90% of our success depends on our money mindset; do you know what is holding you back?

The workshops were followed by a festive reception, with sponsorship from Webster University. Our keynote speaker was Nava Hinrichs, Managing Director of The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, who delivered a warm, personal and tremendously inspiring speech.

The planning for 2018 has started. The event will be held March 8th and we are re-thinking the concept around a lunch and keynote speaker. This will allow those who cannot attend an evening event the opportunity to participate.



## SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

Board Member Vassia Sarantopoulou was responsible for the WBII Social Media. Please find below her report.

### Responsibilities and Tasks

- Provide information and resources to our followers (members and nonmembers)
  - Information about workshops, seminars, networking opportunities
  - Articles on entrepreneurship and building a startup
  - Information about members' benefits, both at a starter and an advanced level
  - Tools and opportunities for professional development and more visibility
  - Information about Mastermind Groups and members' support and accountability
- Co-ordinate social media campaign on different social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)
- Design and execute a Social Media Plan specifically for our workshops (Professional Development Workshops and Start Your Own Business) and our networking and festive events.
- Enhance visibility in other community platforms and foster the forming of partnerships with local or international organizations.
- Invite members to participate in the growth of the organization, by submitting articles and success stories, but also by volunteering and participating in our committees.

### The Statistics of our Growth

#### Facebook profile

Beginning of 2017 until end of 2017: 10% more followers (5% the last three months)

Now (end of November): 1438 followers (likes)

Total reach: 500 to 2500 people

#### Gender

91% women – 9% men

#### Age

22% 25-35 years old

33% 35-44 years old

24% 45-54 years old

7% 55-64 years old

## Country

65% Netherlands

35% other countries (USA, UK, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Australia, Italy, India, etc)

## Twitter profile

1655 followers

## LinkedIn profile

Beginning of 2017 until end of 2017: 55% more followers (10% the last two months)

Now (end of November): 199 followers

Page views: +370% the second semester

## Job Functions

Entrepreneurship: 25%

Education: 20%

Media and Communication: 14%

Community and Social Services: 11%

## Country

75% Netherlands

25% other countries (USA, UK, France, Spain)

## Regions

46% The Hague area, Netherlands

18% Amsterdam area, Netherlands

4% Utrecht area, Netherlands

4% Rotterdam area, Netherlands

2% London, UK

## Seniority

50% Senior level

21% Entry level

20% Owner

5% Manager

4% Partner

## Our Goals

- Invite more members to join & help more women entrepreneurs to grow
- Provide useful business tools to existing members plus visibility
- Create a dynamic network where everybody feels welcome and supported on their entrepreneurial journey.
- Make known to the community that WBII is an open platform where one can share, promote, advertise, learn, give and take.

The Women's Business Initiative International is an ongoing, dynamic organization. We learn, adjust, and continue with one and only purpose: to serve our members.

## FESTIVE LUNCH

The festive lunch held on December 7th 2017 at Plein 19 in The Hague was a huge success and counted **NVR (Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad) President Nenita La Rose as our Guest Speaker** (please refer to Nenita's inspirational talk about her bi-cultural upbringing included in the attachment of the Annual Report). The lunch included visitors who came all the way from Groningen (for the second time!) and who are interested in networking with and supporting WBII.



## MONTHLY NETWORKING EVENTS, AND THE FLOOR IS YOURS

We had another year of warm, inspiring networking events, with deepest thanks to all the speakers who donated their time to share their tips and knowledge. With few exceptions (December Festive Lunch, and February event), the Networking Events are held in the Carlton Ambassador Hotel in The Hague. We are grateful to the Carlton and their staff for their expertise and professional support in holding our networking events at their attractive and comfortable premises.

Themes covered this year:

January 26	Fiona Passantino	How to tell your story in 10 concrete actionable points
February 23	LUNCH The Kitchen	Free networking
March 23	Marian Koek	What does Buddhism have to do with it?
April 20	Yang Fan	Collaborate to compete: how to create partnerships for startups
May 18	Alison Hamilton-Rohe	There is no ICK in "sales"
June 22	Eelco Zweerts de Jong	Pensions for ZZPers
July	Summer Holiday	
August 24	Andy Clarks	The joy of podcasting
September 28	Cathy Delhante	"But I don't have time for that". Social Responsibility for Entrepreneurs
October 26	Vassia Sarantopoulou	It is lonely at the top
Nov. 23	Mary-Jo De Leeuw	Everything you always wanted to know (and ask) about hacks and cracks
December 7	LUNCH Plein XIX	Guest: NVR President

We also introduced "**The Floor is Yours**" component to the networking events, to enable members to make use of the brain power in the room. Members can introduce a topic or question that they have been struggling with or want to discuss with other women who may have encountered a similar issue.

## SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, BIJLMER PROJECT – BRACELETS

WBII supports the Bijlmer Bridge 2 Hope project, which is organized by Webster University, and aims to help women who have been victims of human trafficking. WBII sells bracelets, the profits of which go entirely to the Bijlmer project. The Bijlmer project is also the beneficiary of choice for a part of the proceeds of IWD.

## MASTERMIND GROUPS

The WBII Mastermind Group formula – where small groups meet on their own every 4-6 weeks to take concrete steps in their business and to discuss, advise and support each other – is a crucial element of WBII. A new coordinator is being sought, as Dymphna Elsink, the current coordinator (since mid- 2014), is currently handling the office management tasks on an interim basis. The coordinator should be someone who loves to connect with the members and help the groups get going. In 2017 WBII had 3 Mastermind Groups and new groups can be started at any time, where there is enough interest.

A Mastermind group is a meeting of highly motivated professionals who share a common goal and are looking to encourage and help each other improve. Since the beginning of WBII there have always been support groups. This phenomenon has grown into the format of Mastermind groups. The idea is that when people become a WBII member, they can become a member of a 'sub' group: a Mastermind group. Either an existing group adopts this new member or a set of new members organise a group themselves. Information is provided by the coordinator.

### **The current Mastermind groups are:**

#### **Mastermind Coaching Group** (new coaches can be introduced to this group)

##### **Members:**

Teresa Moynihan - contact person

Anita Paalvast

Manuela Damant

Annette Flottmann-Nilsson (has attended 2 meetings so far)

Dovile Corrigan (new member)

Teresa reports:

*"Our small, but powerful, coaching group is very much alive and kicking! We now have 4 members and a 5th member will join us for the first time at our next meeting on 19th January.*

*We still 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.*

*Our latest task is goal setting and accountability for 2018 and we are still meeting every 6 weeks at the V d Valk, Wassenaar."*

## Mastermind Group Eclipse

Anne Bybjerg  
Dymphna Elsink - contact person  
Lisa Hall  
Nancy Mayer

Meeting every 6 weeks.

## Mastermind group

Desiree Looten  
Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre  
Yolande Jimenez-Koekenbier  
Alexandra Lavrador  
Sharon Galor - contact person



## FAIRS

The WBII participates in a number of information and international/expat fairs in the Randstad to boost not only the organisation's visibility in the market, but also that of the members. By taking a stand at the fair, WBII can showcase what we are doing, provide a platform for members to display marketing collaterals, and make contact with potential clients.

Some of the fairs and events that the WBII regularly participates in include:

- Expatica "i am not a tourist" Expat Fair - Amsterdam
- Feel at Home in The Hague International Community Fair - The Hague
- International Family Fair - The Hague
- KvK Starters Day - Rotterdam
- Ondernemersplein 'Business in Clubs' - The Hague
- Rotterdam Expat Fair - Rotterdam
- Shell Outpost Information Fair - The Hague

Of these fairs, there are approximately 5 that the WBII usually attends between September and December. The Fair Coordinator, who in the 2nd half of 2017 was Darina Veen, organized our participation. The Coordinator liaises with the fair organisers, and groups of WBII volunteers to help on the stand. She is also responsible for ensuring that the WBII conveys a strong brand image via promotional material and the message put across by members. The Coordinator is in touch with the Board regarding the communication around every event on social media and the website. This type of voluntary position is highly valued by employers, and is also an opportunity to increase one's visibility within the entrepreneurial and international communities.

### **Two of the fairs that the WBII attended in 2017 include:**

**October 8th** WBII – The Expatica "**I am not a tourist Fair**" in Amsterdam.

This is a very important Fair for WBII; it was a successful day and there were many visitors to the WBII stand. Approximately 40-60 email addresses of women potentially interested either in WBII newsletter or membership or WBII seminars were collected. **Darina** had a team of 7 enthusiastic volunteers who helped out during the day. The only problem was transferring hand-written emails into an electronic version.

**21st November** – WBII participated in the expat fair **Outpost** in SHELL Headquarters, The Hague. Three volunteers – **Dymphna Elsink (Jouw Assistentie)**, **Anne Bybjerg Moller (Image & Style)** and **Ebere Akadiri (Ataro Global Food Services)** – represented WBII.

## MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT SYSTEM

In order to ensure that our Office Manager's limited time is spent in the best ways possible, in particular to support our members, WBII introduced a new Membership Payment System (incasso). Through this system, a member's annual fee is directly deducted once a year from their account. The system will be implemented as of January 1, 2018, and is seen as a great time saving tool for the Office Manager.

## BOARD STRATEGY AND BRAINSTORM

Sinead Hewson (TpBEO) has again supported the Board with her expert strategy and brainstorm session support. Through this session, the Board has self run committees concept is working well:

Committees include:

- Finance
- Members
- Events (monthly networking , Festive lunch, IWD)
- Social Media
- Fairs
- SYOB workshops are run by Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre who has taken on the task in a very professional way.
- Natacha also runs our Professional Development Workshops in collaboration with Teresa Moynihan
- New business and Sponsors, this will be our priority in 2018
- MKB – Alexandra Arshanskaya is the WBII contact for the MKB, in collaboration with Board Member Charlene Lambert. The two organizations are working together to support internationalization and community integration.

## MEMBERS' TESTIMONIALS

### Anne Bybjerg - Image & Style



*"Initially, joining the WBII, was about finding a group who could understand my needs and me as a business women and entrepreneur.*

*Being a part of WBII gave me affiliation, colleagues, collaborators, friends and last but not least more customers.*

*WBII has been a place for me to grow, learn and develop professionally and personally, a needed push in a supportive professional environment"*

### Ebere Akadari - Ataro Food

*"Being a member of WBII has helped me to meet and connect with fellow international business women who have inspired and supported me on my journey. As a member of WBII, I was able to promote my business, Ataro Food and Spices, to a larger audience. I also got valuable contacts and felt empowered by other female entrepreneurs, especially during the networking meetings and talks. WBII also helped to promote my business through their website, which provided me with the visibility I needed to succeed."*



### Caroline Orthlieb - Orthlieb



*"I joined WBII with a student membership. After completing my MBA, I had several jobs, but continued to be a Member, as I always had in the back of my mind to become an independent business consultant and tax administrator.*

*Seeing other women entrepreneurs as role models, my membership gave me the confidence to start my own business. The WBII network meetings provide professional support, knowledge and inspiration. The WBII has brought me business partners and contacts, customers and friendships."*

## APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF WBII MEMBERS IN 2017

### List of WBII Members [A-Z]:

Akkie Okma (Okma Advies)  
Alexandra Arshanskaya (Arshanskaya)  
Alexandra Lavrador (My Gym Den Haag)  
Aleyda Santos (Jikiden reiki station)  
Alexia Solomou  
Alison Day  
Allison Hamilton-Rohe  
Alma Imamovic-Ivanov  
Anat Ratzabi  
Anita Paalvast (Aikido@Work)  
Anja Straathof  
Anja Vreeburg (Flowently)  
Anne Bybjerg Møller (Image & Style)  
Annette Flottmann-Nilsson (aLive Life Coaching)  
Anouk Domínguez (Corpo Natura)  
Arwa Lokhandwala (Tulip Web Solutions)  
AvA Wehren  
Beatrice Betley (The Expat Weddingplanner)  
Bianca Wijnstekers-Handy (Tupelo Translations)  
Bieneke Braat (Legaltree IT Law)  
Brigitte Spiegelers  
Caroline Orthlieb  
Caroline van Mourik  
Ceci Wong (Chiropractie Noordzee)  
Charlene Lambert  
Charlotte Meindersma (Charlotte's Law & Fine Prints)  
Christine Dahl (Dahl International Tax Law)  
Chrisoula Papadopoulou  
Christina von Massow  
Clare Summerfield (Elliot Lloyd International)  
Colleen Reichrath-Smith (CJS Career Consulting)  
Darina Veen-Kassova (Feng Shui Design)  
Désirée Siemerink-Looten (Looten Advocatuur & Mediation)  
Deborah Valentine (a hand in The Hague)  
Dovile Corrigan (Dove Coaching)  
Dymphna Elsink (Jouw Assistentie)  
Dymphna Pafitis ("Made it Here" Studios)

## WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL (WBI)

Ebere Akadiri (Ataro Global Food Services)  
Elize Burgess (LearningPlus)  
Emma England (England Lifestyle Management Services)  
Esther van Heteren  
Haydee Dijkstal (ICL Media Review)  
Hélène Girard (Hélène Girard Business Services)  
Helen Kuyper (Creative Facilitator)  
Inge Zweerts de Jong (ZJHT Risk and Insurance Specialists BV)  
Ingrid van Boheemen  
Irene Lansen (ScheerSanders Advocaten)  
Isabelle Barth (Studio Langues & Mobilité)  
Jacinta Noonan  
Jane Pocock (Write it Right)  
Jennifer van Dijk (Van Dijk Accounting)  
Jet Sichterman (Expatriate Child Psychology)  
Jo Parfitt (Summertime Publishing)  
Joan Hoexum  
Joanne Rahusen (Joanne B. Rahusen, M.A. Psychotherapy & Counselling)  
Johanna Nesbitt (Open the Door)  
Julie Jones (Essence Therapeutics)  
Julie Kennedy (Kennedy Personal Coaching & Consultancy)  
Katharina Andrés (Katharina Andrés)  
Katherine Fortier (Child and Educational Psychologist)  
Lamprini Kiosse (Lifekey)  
Li Chen (Chinaturel Health & Wellbeing)  
Lianne de Vries (Mevrouw de Vries)  
Lisa Hall (Lemonberry)  
Louise Ibbs (Louise Ibbs Consultancy)  
Lucy Bosscher (ASPIRE Pilates)  
Mandie van der Meer  
Marga Feenstra  
Mariana De La Rosa  
Marie Vijendran  
Marisa Monteiro (Marisa Queirós Monteiro)  
Marjoleine Havik (CulturesConnect)  
Martha Mghendi-Fisher  
Martine Sollie (De Fotograficus)  
Maru Lizarraga (Badra Falak)  
Meenu Gupta Bansal (The Indian Cooking Class)  
Myra Colis  
Nancy Mayer (Voice Lessons)  
Natacha Villedieu-Silvestre (Optirisk Solutions)

Natalie Carstens (Natalie Carstens | The Birth Photographer)  
Natasha Bonnevalle (Present Change)  
Nicola Wreford-Howard (Wreford-Howard Consult)  
Nira Satguru (Future Of Learning)  
Outreach Egypt  
Queenie Verhoeven  
Sarah Hailé-Fida  
Sharon Galor  
Silyv Fehring (Her Global Success)  
Sinéad Hewson (TpEBO)  
Sophie Bonavero (Clever Clogs)  
Sue Lawrence (Sue Lawrence)  
Susan de Vriend  
Susan Tredenick  
Suzy Ogé (The Dendrite Group)  
Teresa Moynihan (Moynihan Consulting)  
Ute Limacher-Riebold (Ute's International Lounge)  
Vangie Kramers-Atienza (RAX-NL Trading & Promotion)  
Vassia Sarantopoulou (The Anti-Loneliness Project)  
Vinita Salomé (Vinita Salomé Photography)  
Yolande Jimenez-Koekenbier (Art in Colour)  
Yvonne Lammers (CLASC)

## APPENDIX II

### Speech of Nenita La Rose, President, Dutch Council of Women, on the occasion of the WBII lunch meeting, Thursday 7 December 2017

I am honoured to be here today at this wonderful lunch meeting hosted by Women's Business Initiative International. I was asked to tell you a bit about myself, the things I do, about women's entrepreneurship and about the things that drive me. Well I am afraid we can talk for days about all this but don't worry I am also looking forward to the lunch which is all about networking. And that is what we are here for.

WBII is about women's entrepreneurship. Being a zzp-er myself, I know that entrepreneurship can be a lonely journey with obstacles. On the one hand you are dealing with Personal obstacles: The entrepreneurship itself, the product, your market specialisation, your branding . Name it But there are also Institutional obstacles

which through the years have been clearly defined. That's why there are network organisations to tackle the limitations we meet. One of those limitations is the position of women. So being active as a women's entrepreneur in network organisations can be beneficial. It is a way to combine forces in order to support you, to tackle these limitations you encounter.

One of those network organisations is the Dutch Council of Women - 'Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad (NVR)'. The NVR is an umbrella organisation which was founded in 1898. At this moment the NVR has 55 member organizations and together they reach an estimated number of one million women. I am proud to be the president of this platform with this wide variety of women organisations. These women organisations, including WBII, have a lot of knowledge and experience on women's emancipation or in modern terms, gender equality. What we try to do at the Dutch Women's Council, is to connect our members as much as possible and to lobby on their behalf with politicians and policy makers. Because together you can achieve a lot more than dealing by yourself.

To me the power of networking is all about your personal strength and ambition. And if you want to succeed as a women's entrepreneur, it is also important to have the right people that surround you. But and more importantly, It is about your internal drive, your ambitions and your desire to achieve something meaningful to you. In the end it is your personal story and your authenticity that matters in the things you want to achieve.

We all have a story to tell, we all carry this suitcase filled with life experience. So as an appetizer, let me tell you about my personal story and the things and circumstances that have contributed to my personal strength. Stagnation means regression, I think. And new challenges are part of life. So, after eight intensive years of leading a great international organization (Child helpline International), I quit my job in 2015 for a period of reflection. And I fulfilled a resolution I made to myself: I completed the Legal Mediation study. By the end of 2016 I was ready for new action and was planning to start my own practice as a mediator-coach, as a zzp-er. And then the NVR came along and I made the choice to focus on this great organisation that needed guidance as well. So I started this job six months ago carrying with me my life experience that with empathy, perseverance and optimism you can move mountains.

Let me tell you briefly where I come from and what has made me the person I am today. I was born in a small wooden house of my grandparents in a working-class neighbourhood of Paramaribo, Suriname; at that time still a Dutch colony. My birth was not planned. My mother was a teenage mother and my father, a young ambitious teacher who with some family pressure, had to marry her before childbirth. On August 4, 1956, two minutes before midnight I saw the light of day. The exact

time and day were and still are points of discussion (My mom is still hesitant to assure me if it is August 4 or 5). The only clock in the house, according to my Grandma, ran somewhat behind but the midwife (an unqualified authority) maintained her decision. My pragmatic grandmother decided not to make a fuss of it because there were more important things in life. Such as the uncertain future of the young family.

My childhood years have been strongly influenced by my grandmother an energetic woman who knew how to tackle issues of life and who preferred to think in solutions instead of problems. Values that I attribute to myself to this day. She taught me to share, there is always enough she said, She taught me how to save money. With these values the basis for solidarity and selfreliance was laid. After a few years my father left the country to study in the Netherlands. By the time I was six years old my mother decided to take destiny into her own hands, to save her marriage and to travel after her husband. The three of us (I had a little brother by then )arrived unannounced, in the winter of 1962 by boat in the Netherlands. To my father's astonishment and surprise. So the first night we had to spend at the Salvation Army. My father was nowhere prepared. The seven years that followed were to me, as the eldest of three children by then, years of hard work and adjustment. I had to work hard at school. And with working and studying parents I also had to do my part in the household. In addition, it was extremely important for me to find my way into the Dutch culture.

By the end of 1969 our family re-migrated, back to Suriname. I was thirteen by then. There the integration process started again from scratch. As a "black Dutch" I had to adapt in a heartbeat to the Surinamese way of life. I did not remember much of my country of birth but knew everything about Dutch history and geography. High school in Paramaribo was more than an institute of knowledge to me. It was also a school of life. These years have shaped me to a large extent. In that period I was able to develop the social skills that are required to function in complex multi-cultural relationships. In 1974 being an eighteen year old teenager with a high school diploma I boarded the airplane. Going back to the Netherlands by myself to study. Back to familiar ground I thought, but still a huge step. Although a lot in Amsterdam was still recognizable, a lot had also changed dramatically. I was no longer one of the few overseas Dutch inhabitants. Together with me airplanes full of young and elderly arrived. They were all looking for a better life. In 1975, the colony Suriname became the independent Republic Suriname. I remained Dutch and my parents and family became Surinamese. Separated by nationality: to this day, a bizarre situation for many of us.

Today having four children and two grandchildren I can look back at how my husband and I have combined work and upbringing of four wonderful adults, I have travelled the world and as I said before I have learned that with empathy, perseverance and

optimism you can move mountains. Now again I am at the threshold of a new phase in my life. I have decided to go into local politics and run for city councillorship in Amsterdam. To be at the heart of decision-making. I managed to get on the list, number 5! In the end whatever you do: It's about the choices you make and about your ambition. Always listen to your inner self and never be afraid to face changes how scary the might be!

## 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



Julie Kennedy – President



Charlene Lambert – Vice Chairwomen



Lisa Hall – Treasurer



Nira Satguru – Executive Board Member



Emma England – Executive Board Member



Susan Tredenick – Executive Board Member



Suzy Ogé – Executive Board Member

Special thanks to Martine Sollie from De Fotograficus for photographing at our events in 2017 and for the photographs in this Annual Report!

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