

Leaning In & GATHERING MOMENTUM

Creatively | Collaboratively | Confidently

Lourdes Still, Masagana Flower Farm & Studio

2025–2026
Annual Report





“Across Manitoba, women+ entrepreneurs are building businesses, creating jobs, and strengthening their communities [...] and WeMB is privileged to walk alongside them. That work is not incidental to Manitoba's economy. It is central to it.”

Bonnie Chwartacki, Chair of the Board

225

businesses were created, maintained, or expanded

2,889

business advisory services were delivered

Message from the Chair of the Board

As I reflect on my time as Chair, I am filled with pride for what this organization represents and deep gratitude for the community that makes it possible. Across Manitoba, women+ entrepreneurs are building businesses, creating jobs, and strengthening their communities every day, and WeMB is privileged to walk alongside them. That work is not incidental to Manitoba's economy. It is central to it.

The 2025–2026 year has been remarkable for several defining aspects. We journeyed through a leadership transition, embraced internal reflection as we launched into a new strategic planning process, leveraged our strengths to build momentum, and identified exciting new opportunities for WeMB.

Throughout the year, our board and team were also called upon to demonstrate resilience, and they did so with dedication and grace. In December, an important new chapter began when we welcomed Jackie Hunt as our new Chief Executive Officer. We are excited about the vision, experience, and enthusiasm Jackie brings to WeMB as we continue to build on our strong foundation. I have every confidence in the future she is helping to shape.

This has also been a year of milestones worth celebrating. The renewal of our PrairiesCan funding reaffirmed the trust placed in WeMB to deliver for Manitoba's entrepreneurs. Our WeTech Loans partnership with North Forge opened new doors for women-led technology businesses. And our national Strength in Community Workshops program, funded through ISED, continued to connect women+ entrepreneurs to each other and to the resources they need—support that ripples far beyond individual businesses and into the communities they call home.

None of this would be possible without the incredible people behind WeMB. I extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board Directors for their leadership and commitment, and to the talented WeMB team whose passion, innovation, and dedication make a meaningful difference every day. In addition, I'd like to acknowledge four outstanding board members stepping down this year. Manmeet Bahad, Desiree Katz, Thao Lam, and Tamara Pound each brought tremendous dedication, insight, and heart to this work. Their contributions to WeMB will be felt long after their tenure, and we are deeply grateful.

To the women+ entrepreneurs we are privileged to serve: you are the reason this organization exists. Your resilience, creativity, and determination inspire us every day.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Chwartacki
Chair of the Board

Message from the CEO

Every day in Manitoba, women+ entrepreneurs are starting businesses, growing existing ones, and creating opportunities in their communities. WeMB's role is to make sure they do not have to do it alone.

Stepping into an organization with more than thirty years of history has been both humbling and inspiring. There is a legacy here, a body of relationships, trust, and impact built over decades, and I do not take that lightly. I also came in knowing that the best way to honour that legacy is to continue building upon it, not simply preserving it. The women+ entrepreneurs we serve today have needs that are evolving, and WeMB needs to evolve with them.

WeMB is for every self-identifying woman+ entrepreneur in Manitoba. Whatever your background, your community, or your story, you belong here and this organization is built for you.

That commitment is shaping the work we do today and the future we are building. A new strategic plan will guide us through 2029, built around supporting women+ entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey, not just the first one. We have strengthened our team and structure, and we are listening to communities across all six regions of Manitoba this summer through our provincial listening tour. What we hear will shape what we build. As a member of the WEOC (Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada) network, we are also part of a national conversation about the future of women's entrepreneurship support in Canada, and we are deepening relationships with government at both the federal and provincial levels to make sure Manitoba's voice is heard.

None of that happens without the right people. The WeMB team is knowledgeable, deeply committed, and genuinely connected to the entrepreneurs they serve. I came into this role while still learning, and I continue to learn from them. What I know already is that this team is exceptional and this mission is worth it.

The opportunity in front of us is significant. When women+ entrepreneurs succeed, Manitoba succeeds. WeMB has been part of that story for more than thirty years, and the best of what this organization can be is still ahead. We are building toward it, and we are glad you are with us on the journey.

Jackie Hunt
Chief Executive Officer



1,145

participants attended 72 training events

101.5

full-time equivalent jobs were created or maintained through regular lending streams

“WeMB is for every self-identifying woman+ entrepreneur in Manitoba. Whatever your background, your community, or your story, you belong here and this organization is built for you.”

Jackie Hunt, Chief Executive Officer



Anna Hunter, Long Way Homestead

ToGetHer Stronger...Together

KEY PERFORMANCE & STRATEGIC TARGETS

Building on the momentum of our previous strategic plan, WeMB continued to deliver strong results in 2025-2026, exceeding many key performance indicators and funder expectations. Throughout the year, we strengthened programs, enhanced client experiences, and expanded opportunities for women+ entrepreneurs across Manitoba.

More than achieving targets, FY26 was a year of building capacity, strengthening connections, and laying the foundation for WeMB's next chapter of impact.

STRATEGIC PLANNING & FUTURE DIRECTION

This year marked the beginning of WeMB's next strategic planning process, providing an opportunity to reflect, listen, and define a clear path forward. Through stakeholder engagement, client feedback, and collaboration, we explored how entrepreneurship is evolving across Manitoba and how WeMB can continue to meet the changing needs of women+ entrepreneurs.

The insights gathered will shape our priorities, services, and strategic direction for years to come, ensuring WeMB remains a trusted and relevant resource for entrepreneurs at every stage of business.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

In December 2025, WeMB welcomed Jackie Hunt as Chief Executive Officer, beginning an exciting new chapter in the organization's history. Leadership transitions provide an opportunity to honour past accomplishments while embracing fresh perspectives, new ideas, and future possibilities.

Throughout the transition, WeMB remained focused on delivering exceptional service to clients and maintaining strong relationships with partners, funders, and stakeholders. The organization benefited from the dedication of its staff and board, whose commitment ensured continuity, stability, and momentum during this important period of change. We look forward to the leadership, vision, and energy Jackie brings as WeMB continues to grow its impact across Manitoba.

PRAIRIESCAN FUNDING RENEWAL

One of the year's most significant milestones—implementation timed for April 1, 2026—was the renewal of WeMB's funding agreement with PrairiesCan. This renewed investment reflects the confidence placed in WeMB's ability to support women+ entrepreneurs and recognizes the important role entrepreneurship plays in strengthening Manitoba's economy and communities.

The renewed funding commitment provides stability for the organization while ensuring entrepreneurs will continue to have access to business advising, training, financing, and networking opportunities. It also allows WeMB to continue exploring innovative ways to serve entrepreneurs while building the programs and services that have helped thousands of businesses start, grow, and succeed.

DIVERSITY, DELIVERY, & NATIONAL IMPACT

Our ISED-funded Strength in Community Workshops (SCW) program continued to demonstrate the power of connection, creating opportunities for women+ entrepreneurs to build relationships, strengthen confidence, and expand their professional networks. Through workshops, peer learning, and collaborative discussions, 184 women+ entrepreneurs from five provinces came together to share experiences, develop new skills, and build lasting connections.

SCW supported entrepreneurs at every stage of business ownership, from launching new ventures (43 participants) to sustaining and growing established businesses (84 participants). Delivered in partnership with six ecosystem partners, the program also expanded access to support for entrepreneurs in rural, remote, and underserved communities. These efforts resulted in a 97.2% participant satisfaction rate, reinforcing the value of accessible, community-driven programming that helps entrepreneurs thrive.

EXPANDING RURAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Entrepreneurs live and work in every corner of Manitoba, and this year WeMB strengthened its commitment to reaching communities beyond Winnipeg. Through expanded regional outreach efforts including a luncheon collaboration with the Steinbach Chamber of Commerce *Feeding Our Community to Fuel a Thriving Future*, elevated participation in local events, community partnerships, and the launch of the Listening Tour initiative, WeMB increased opportunities to connect directly with entrepreneurs where they live and do business.

These conversations provided valuable insight into the unique challenges and opportunities facing Manitoba entrepreneurs and will help shape future programs, services, and resources. This work also increases awareness of the support available to entrepreneurs who may not yet be connected to the broader business ecosystem.

INNOVATION & ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration remains essential to building a strong and connected entrepreneurial ecosystem. Throughout the year, WeMB strengthened partnerships with organizations that share a commitment to support business growth, innovation, and economic development across Manitoba.

Programs such as WeTech Loans (in partnership with North Forge) and WeGreen Loans (in partnership with RBC and Efficiency Manitoba) expanded access to capital, specialized support, and sustainable business solutions for women+ entrepreneurs. These collaborations allow WeMB to extend its reach, leverage collective expertise, and create new pathways for entrepreneurs to start, grow, and sustain their businesses. As entrepreneurship continues to evolve, partnerships will remain key to delivering meaningful impact.



“I so appreciated the breakout sessions and some of the one-on-one conversations that led to revelations and confessions. What a great way to learn; what a great opportunity to grow.”

Strength in Community Workshop Participant

◀ Kelly Penuita, DecoChic Interiors and Alison Griffith, Studio 48 North

VISIBILITY & BRAND AWARENESS

In FY26 WeMB continued to invest in increasing awareness of its programs, services, and the entrepreneurs it serves. Through strategic storytelling, enhanced marketing efforts, client spotlights, media opportunities, and expanded social media engagement, WeMB worked to ensure more entrepreneurs across Manitoba were aware of the resources available to support their business journey.

By sharing client successes, highlighting entrepreneurial experiences, and celebrating the impact of women+ entrepreneurs in communities across the province, WeMB strengthened its visibility and connection with both existing and prospective clients. These efforts help build stronger relationships, increase awareness of available support, and encourage more entrepreneurs to access the tools and resources they need to succeed.

CLIENT-CENTRED SERVICE DELIVERY

At the heart of everything WeMB does is a commitment to providing practical, accessible, and responsive support to entrepreneurs. Throughout the year, staff refined processes, enhanced resources, and strengthened collaboration to improve the overall client experience.

Through business advising, lending services, training opportunities, and referrals to ecosystem partners, WeMB continues to meet entrepreneurs where they are and provide support tailored to their goals.

As WeMB looks ahead, we remain committed to expanding our reach, strengthening partnerships, increasing awareness of our services, and continuing to champion women+ entrepreneurs across Manitoba.

Katherine Cordova,
Pianist & YouTube Creator



“It was a workshop I went in thinking this could be alright, can't hurt to learn something new. But the kindness of the people attending the workshop made it that much better. I felt comfortable sharing my experiences and the facilitator did an excellent job at encouraging conversations and allowing us to speak openly within the group and during the breakout rooms. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!”

Strength in Community Workshop Participant



(Left-Right) Miranda Koshman, Alanna Keefe, and Shaily Nag
WeMB Comms Team attending *She Grows Manitoba* event

71% of our loan portfolio was Winnipeg-based and

29% constituted rural businesses, as of March 31, 2026.

29% of our portfolio was comprised of Startup loans

51% were Expansion loans, and

20% of our lending clients either paid out their loans or experienced business windup.

35% of our loan portfolio was comprised of female/male partnerships and corporations.

45% of our loan portfolio was made up of repeat lending clients.

\$1,345,363 was leveraged from a variety of sources for our regular stream loans.

\$1,332,317

in regular stream loans was disbursed to 15 self-identifying women-led or partnered businesses. In addition, another 10 loans were developed and approved through the WEOC lending stream.

Our loan client age demographic for 2025-26 was as follows:

4% Gen Zers

58% Millennials

20% Gen Xers

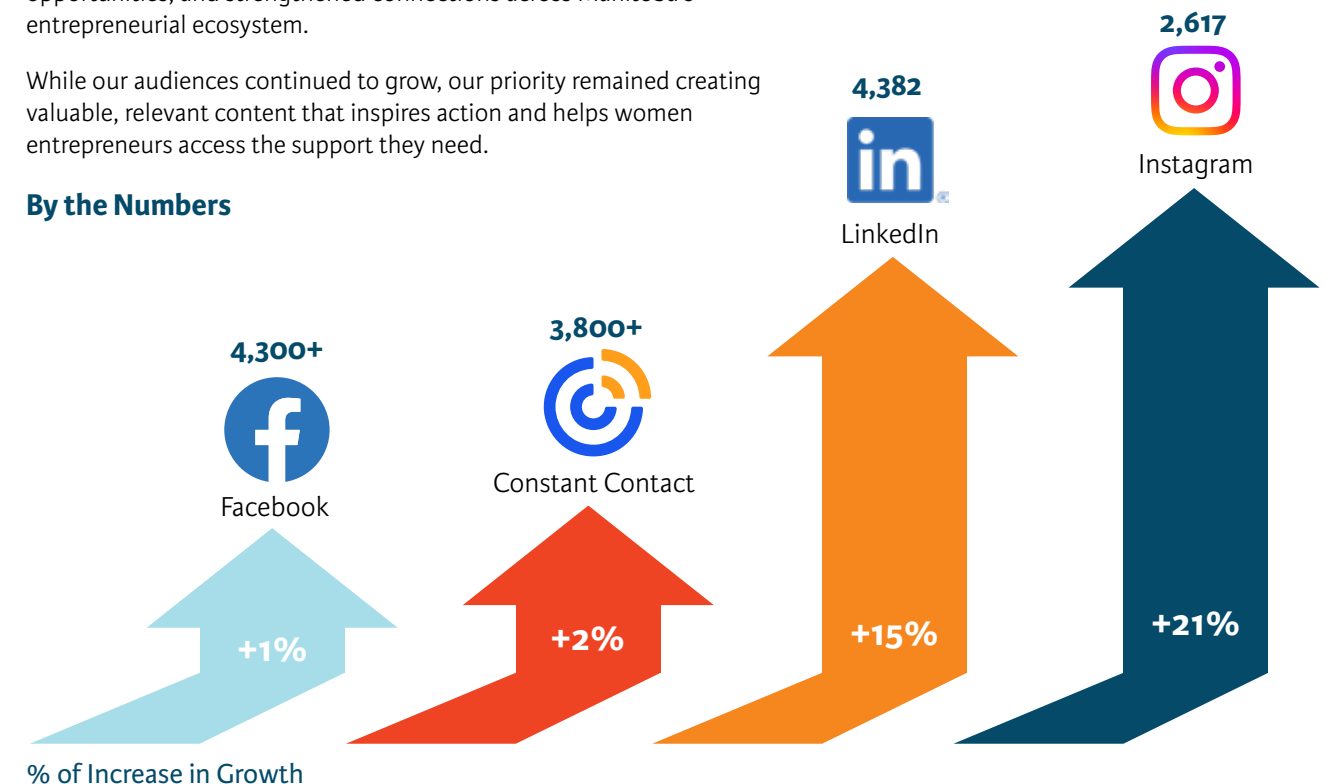
18% Baby Boomers

Connecting Manitoba's Women+ Entrepreneurs

In FY26, WeMB focused on meeting entrepreneurs where they are—online. Through social media, our website, and our biweekly newsletter, we delivered resources, celebrated client successes, promoted learning opportunities, and strengthened connections across Manitoba's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

While our audiences continued to grow, our priority remained creating valuable, relevant content that inspires action and helps women entrepreneurs access the support they need.

By the Numbers



Newsletter

The WeMB newsletter is more than an email—it's a connection point for Manitoba's entrepreneurial community. Published biweekly, it delivers relevant resources, funding opportunities, events, and inspiring client stories directly to over 3,803 subscribers. With open rates consistently above 56%, the newsletter continues to outperform industry benchmarks and serve as a trusted source of information for entrepreneurs across the province.



“WeMB’s guidance, the ability for us to access funds, and their support was just fantastic! WeMB isn’t just a lender or advisor—they’re partners. They believed in our vision and helped us bring it to life in a big way.”

Karolina Dressler, Brightling Childcare Academy

2025-2026 BOARD of DIRECTORS



BONNIE CHWARTACKI
Chair (St. Andrews)



LEANNE JONES
Vice-Chair (Winnipeg) Start June 2025



RICHARD AVILA
Treasurer (Winnipeg)



MANMEET BAHAD
Member (Winnipeg) until June 2026



KIMBERLY DUF AJ
Member (Winnipeg) start June 2025



JENNA HNATISHIN
Member (Winnipeg) start June 2025



DESIREE KATZ
Member (Winnipeg) until June 2026



THAO LAM
Member (Winnipeg) until June 2026



TAMARA POUND
Member (Winnipeg) until September 2025



ELISABETH SAFTIUK
Member (Winnipeg)



JACKIE HUNT
CEO (ex-officio, non-voting) start December 2025

2025-2026 WeMB STAFF



JACKIE HUNT
CEO (start December 2025)



LISA BOYSON
Loans & HR Administrator



JOYCE BURNEAU
Stakeholder & Workplace Experience Manager



KATERYNA HAPONOVA
Client & Data Administrator



YVETTE HAWKES
Business Advisor (until May 2026)



ALANNA KEEFE
Managing Director & Privacy Officer



MIRANDA KOSHMAN
Communications & Marketing Coordinator
(start March 2026)



COLLEEN KREBS
Director of Business Solutions



KELSEY MARCOTTE
Digital & Content Marketing Specialist
(until January 2026)



SHAILY NAG
Partner & Client Administrator



HEATHER STEPHENS
Loans Manager



CHRISTINE VORRATH
Business Advisory Manager

Manitoba Women’s Enterprise Centre Inc.

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2026

	Operating Fund	Conditionally Repayable Loan Fund	RRRF Loan Fund	Non-Repayable Loan Fund	Total 2026	Total 2025
ASSETS						
Cash	\$ 226,340	3,852,674	-	657,222	4,736,236	3,524,638
Short term investments	-	1,287,430	-	-	1,287,430	2,278,970
Accounts receivable	65,951	934	-	100	66,985	34,124
GST recoverable	17,879	-	-	-	17,879	9,987
Prepaid expenses	13,592	-	-	-	13,592	14,047
Loan interest receivable	-	6,048	-	6,432	12,480	15,006
Due from Conditionally Repayable Loan Fund	259,735	-	-	-	-	-
Due from Non-Repayable Loan Fund	33,224	-	-	-	-	-
	616,721	5,147,086	-	663,754	6,134,602	5,876,772
LOANS RECEIVABLE	-	1,548,136	-	1,721,576	3,269,712	3,198,080
CAPITAL ASSETS	2,551	-	-	-	2,551	4,360
INTANGIBLE ASSETS	16,118	-	-	-	16,118	20,836
	\$ 635,390	6,695,222	-	2,385,330	9,422,983	9,100,048
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS						
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 263,975	-	-	-	263,975	54,870
Deferred revenue	580	-	-	-	580	23,414
Due to Operating Fund	-	259,735	-	33,224	-	-
	264,555	259,735	-	33,224	264,555	78,284
NET ASSETS						
Unrestricted	370,835	-	-	-	370,835	374,091
Externally restricted	-	6,435,487	-	2,352,106	8,787,593	8,647,673
	370,835	6,435,487	-	2,352,106	9,158,428	9,021,764
	\$ 635,390	6,695,222	-	2,385,330	9,422,983	9,100,048

Manitoba Women’s Enterprise Centre Inc.

Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31, 2026

	Operating Fund	Conditionally Repayable Loan Fund	RRRF Loan Fund	Non-Repayable Loan Fund	Total 2026	Total 2025
REVENUE						
PrairiesCan	\$ 975,000	-	-	-	975,000	975,000
PrairiesCan - RRRF Admin Fee	-	-	-	-	-	21,120
Loan interest	-	162,853	-	107,879	270,732	242,050
Bank interest, other	3,397	113,034	-	13,374	129,805	171,894
Credit losses recovered	-	86,371	-	-	86,371	6,371
Loan administration fees	13,736	-	-	-	13,736	15,068
Seminars, workshops, other events registration	28,474	-	-	-	28,474	106,168
Other income	36,667	3,149	-	-	39,816	49,515
Strength in Community Workshop	398,419	-	-	-	398,419	647,342
Provincial government funding	17,281	-	-	-	17,281	58,851
	\$ 1,472,974	365,407	-	121,253	1,959,634	2,293,379
EXPENSES						
Client and business services	65,456	-	-	-	65,456	106,542
Loans administration	6,541	50,581	-	18,281	75,403	146,420
Operations	286,747	-	-	-	286,747	220,608
Strength in Community Workshops	398,419	-	-	-	398,419	647,342
Wages and benefits	996,945	-	-	-	996,945	1,022,031
	\$ 1,754,108	50,581	-	18,281	1,822,970	2,142,943
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES						
	\$ (281,134)	314,826		102,972	136,664	150,436

Helping Manitoba Women+ Entrepreneurs Thrive!

For more than 30 years, WeMB has empowered self-identifying women+ entrepreneurs across Manitoba by providing access to business advising, financing, learning opportunities, and meaningful connections. From early start or purchase, through scale-up and expansion, we are committed to helping entrepreneurs build confidence, overcome barriers, and grow sustainable businesses that strengthen communities across the province.

WeMB is proud to be a Loan Fund Partner affiliated with the Women’s Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC), assisting clients to access an additional \$50,000 over and above WeMB’s \$150,000. Committed to the growth of women’s entrepreneurship, WEOC works with women’s enterprise support organizations, like WeMB, across the country to champion innovation, broaden expertise, and enhance collaboration.



“This was a fantastic workshop! It gave me a framework to move through business planning that I didn't have before. I appreciate the printed materials and knowing I can access help later if I need it. I feel a lot more supported now.”

Business Plan Workshop Participant



Jackie Wild,
Tito Boy Restaurant

Partnership

ToGetHer Stronger

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Throughout FY26, WeMB partnered with organizations across Manitoba and Canada to expand opportunities for women+ entrepreneurs through education, financing, mentorship, networking, and business support services.

Together, these partnerships help us strengthen Manitoba's entrepreneurial ecosystem, increase access to resources, and create meaningful connections that empower entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey. We are grateful to our corporate and ecosystem partners for their continued support and shared commitment to advancing women's entrepreneurship.

Corporate Partners



Ecosystem Partners



36,500+

ADVISORY SESSIONS
DELIVERED SINCE 1994.

Every number represents a dream
pursued, a risk taken, a lesson
learned, and a business built.

Together, we're building a
stronger Manitoba.



\$37M+

LOANS
APPROVED



23,000+

ENTREPRENEURS
SUPPORTED



43,000+

TRAINING
PARTICIPANTS



200+

COMMUNITIES
REACHED



4,129

JOBS
CREATED



COUNTLESS

LIVES
CHANGED



Realizing potential. Building success.

LET'S STAY CONNECTED



wemb.ca



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learn more!



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