



ASIA PACIFIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA FONDATION ASIE PACIFIQUE DU CANADA

Backgrounder:

**Canada's First Women-Only Business Mission to South Korea
Building Women's Partnerships in the Care Economy**

February 27-29, 2020

The Asia Pacific Foundation (APF) of Canada is pleased to announce that it will lead, with strong support from the private and public sectors, Canada's first women-only business mission to the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 27-29 February 2020. Following the success of the first women-only business mission to Japan in April 2019, APF Canada will continue to help women entrepreneurs in Canada to diversify and expand trade opportunities into other Asian markets.

WHERE: Seoul and Jeju-do (TBC), South Korea

WHY: Gender equality is a priority of South Korean President Moon Jae-In and Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, both self-described feminist leaders.

Canada has long enjoyed positive relations with South Korea. The bilateral relationship continues to develop as South Korea becomes an increasingly important economic partner and a like-minded ally in multilateral fora. The Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement, which entered into force on January 1, 2015, is Canada's first and only bilateral free trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region.

As trading nations, Canada and South Korea support trade liberalization and share membership in many multilateral economic organizations, including the G-20, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Both countries also share similar views on many multilateral and global issues, including strengthening of the multilateral trading system, UN Security Council reform, human rights, and nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

WHAT: The three-day mission will be hosted in venues of partner organizations to be named in Seoul and Jeju-do (TBC). Events will include business-to-business matching and networking opportunities, industry site visits, and bilateral discussions of women's economic advancement strategies featuring high-level business and thought leaders from Canada and South Korea.

FOCUS: "Caring Societies"

The mission theme focuses on promoting women entrepreneurs in STEM sectors, which provide services, products, and solutions for the care economy supporting the care and lifestyles of

children, people with disabilities, and the elderly. Bilateral opportunities in care can be broadly defined to include, but are not limited to, innovations in health care, education, leisure, and other personal care products and services that promote healthy living solutions, such as food, cosmetics, and entertainment – all of which contribute to nurturing and supporting present and future populations.

The key objectives of the mission are 1) to mutually showcase innovations in South Korean and Canadian care technologies, such as information and communications technologies (ICT), robotics, artificial intelligence (A.I.), biotechnology, supply chain solutions, and other products for homecare and improving the quality of life for care givers and care recipients; 2) to provide bilateral networking opportunities for Canadian women in business with counterparts in South Korea; and 3) to provide an opportunity to share insights and best practices on addressing the growing needs of advanced economies facing demographic challenges through tech innovations, market solutions, and public policy.

WHO: This exciting mission will recruit a delegation of 20 women entrepreneurs (owners, founders, CEOs or those leading Canadian SMEs) looking to grow their businesses with partners in South Korea. The delegation will also include an additional group of up to 10 thought leaders from Canada, women leaders in industry, government, and academia. Companies in science, technology, engineering, and other sectors that are traditionally under-represented by women will be prioritized for the mission.

South Korean guests of the mission events will comprise networks of women thought and business leaders and entrepreneurs.

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