WOMEN'S ACCESS TO FUNDING REIMAGINED

How do we responsibly accelerate micro business growth for early stage female founders?

The Gap in the Female Founder Journey.

The promising news is that in today's world, there are a plethora of funding options and accelerator programs available, from business loans, grants, to venture capital funding, family offices and angel investors.

This is true, even for female founders where last year, in Australia, less than 3% of funding went to all female-founded teams.

Unfortunately, this support is mostly available for businesses that are in the post seed funding stage. ***One of the biggest challenges a female entrepreneur faces is finding the right funding in the pre-seed, pre-revenue stage to kick start their business.*** Faced with limited funding options such as bootstrapping and borrowing from family and friends, getting access to non-dilutive funding is critical. Where there are funding and support in the very early stages, it is mostly not integrated and does not build an ongoing funding journey.

This gap represents a huge opportunity for both founders and the financial sector to support and responsibly accelerate micro business growth. This allows the potential for a feeder funnel for female entrepreneurs to be established. It also builds accreditation to de-risk investment for financial institutions and creates a sustainable pathway for female businesses to scale and grow their businesses.

A Non-Dilutive Partnership model makes good business sense

Current pre-accelerator programs are great but lack in market testing and are often dilutive in equity (where funding is offered).

This exciting partnership between Lift Women and Global Sisters reimagines pre-accelerator programs and boasts a number of benefits including reduced 'cost to serve' with essential business programming, It reduces risk of participant misalignment and builds strong validated businesses given multiple screening and validation points. This assures a flow of strong female lead businesses through the feeder funnel, providing investor ready businesses and volume.

Introducing The LiftHER Program – a distinctive Reward Crowdfunding Pre-Accelerator Program which centres around 'learning in action' and offers participants a real-world opportunity to test the strength of the product, helping refine the business model for a more confident launch and sustained success, in addition to getting non-dilutive funding.

> Crowdfunding has made a huge difference to my business & my self-belief...It has enabled me to get a warehouse for my business, which is very crucial. At the same time, we're employing another 3 employees. The business went from selling my first flower box which was $19 which was my first revenue. Now, it's more than $300k. It's so crazy to think about!

Cyana Doung,
Founder of Camie Fleur
Global Sister cohort - successfully Crowdfunded $15k on Lift Women platform

LiftHER Reward Crowdfunding Pre Accelerator Program

will support close to 200 early stage female entrepreneurs over 3 years to raise over $3m equity-free and debt-free funding to jumpstart their business

Overall, ***non-dilutive funding is a critical component of supporting female entrepreneurship and creating a more equitable and inclusive business landscape.*** By providing access to funding that does not require the sacrifice of ownership or profits, female entrepreneurs can maintain ownership and control of their business, provide greater financial stability, helping them more effectively launch and grow their businesses as well as driving economic growth and creating new opportunities for themselves and their communities.

The Sustainable Solution

Combining Global Sisters foundational educational program and the insight that women entrepreneurs are 300% more successful with reward crowdfunding post 3+ mentoring sessions, along with our common mission to provide more accessible and affordable funding pathways, our distinctive Pre-Accelerator program was born.

LiftHER is a unique program, designed to empower women entrepreneurs by providing hands-on experience in developing and refining their business ideas, creating compelling marketing strategies, building a loyal following, and optimising their business operations.

Program Summary

Starting with Global Sisters business and financial coaching, our 8-week program is a comprehensive evidence-based curriculum designed with personalised mentorship to provide founders with the tools, knowledge and support needed to be crowdfunding ready and to deliver a successful campaign.

Through the crowdfunding campaign, participants will learn how to test and validate their business model, attract customers, and establish a strong brand identity and awareness. This will enable them to build a solid foundation for their business, making them well-positioned for future growth and success.

Each participant will be matched with a Mentor and a Crowdfunding Buddy (successful crowdfunding founder). The program also provides opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs, mentors, and industry experts. This fosters collaboration and allows for the sharing of valuable insights and advice, creating a community of support that extends beyond the program's duration.

The program for the Global Sisters cohort is delivered via a mix of live online sessions and meet ups. Additionally, they can retail on the Global Sisters' market place which supports Australian women-led micro businesses & social enterprises to do good business.

Ongoing fellowship support includes regular power up sessions, mentorship, event meetups, and follow-on funding support and investors matching.

Program Impact & Outcomes

Crowdfunding is the smart way to get real time, in-market insights and learnings while also raising money. ***This program will identify and fund early-stage start-ups with global potential, establishing a validated feeder funnel, pathway and de-risking investment for the Financial sector.***

Over the course of 3 years, it will support almost 200 women entrepreneurs through the program and assist them in raising over $3.0m equity-free debt-free funding to validate their ideas and kick start their start-up journey.

3 Exciting Opportunities To Get Involved

Help support and accelerate micro business growth for early stage female founders to succeed and thrive whilst building business opportunities for your organisation

This Pre-Accelerator Program opens up unviable support for early stage, pre revenue female businesses which are outside investor radar and has limited funding options.

There are 3 different and exciting opportunities to participate in the LiftHER program, depending on your organisation's vertical and focus areas, all of which help fund almost 200 women over 3 years

1 Cost to Serve

This funding is required to ***cover the program and operational costs, covering a delivery team, event, marketing and promotion costs.***

Total cost over 3 years is $240k.

You may opt to sponsor the cohort yearly or provide value add or in kind support (mentor, guest speaker etc)

2 Reward Crowdfunding

Funding the project directly helps founder hit their funding goal as well as screens founder potential, validates business opportunity and ensures market readiness for success

Total funding over 3 years is $3.03M.

Options may include using this as a DEI sponsorship initiative, establish corporate events and getting your organisation to pledge for individual projects to support female led businesses via the Lift Women crowdfunding platform

3 Financial Inclusion

Offer crowdfunding dollar for dollar loans when a project has successfully reached their crowdfunding goal. Apart from being an economic contributor, this derisks founders and allows access to financial services.

Total funding over 3 years is $3.03M

Options may be to explore ways to use crowdfunding to build credit score rating or improve loan size and founder funding pathways given market and founder validation.

We can't wait to be on this journey with you and to empower women entrepreneurs to flourish.
For more information or to discuss potential opportunities, please reach out to Robyn Robertson, Financial Inclusion Lead at Global Sisters on robyn@globalsisters.org or Irene Tsang, Founder and CEO of Lift Women on irene@liftwomen.com

About the Partners:

Lift Women is a fin tech start-up that has been leveraging advanced technology to help women overcome traditional barriers to business and finance.

In just 18 months, Lift Women has raised over $200k of non-dilutive capital to support female entrepreneurs. It has assisted 500+ women to validate and strategise their business ideas and activated 1100 backers, serving over 200k communities and users around the world. Helping female founders to realise their business dreams with the much-needed initial capital, they have also facilitated 100+ employment opportunities across Australia.

GLOBAL SISTERS exist to make business possible for all women and to #Back Her Brilliance. Their purpose is to unlock women's potential, overcome challenges to enable them to be financially resilient and stand tall.

Since Global Sisters began, they have had great success, supporting over 5511 women and facilitated over $7.5m pro bono support for their sisters from corporates and businesses. They focus on 6 impact domains, including business acumen, financial resilience, enterprise, empowerment and influence through their work and programs to develop a road map towards long term economic security.