



SG-WEN OPINION POLL

The Singapore Women Entrepreneurs Network (SG-WEN) conducted an opinion poll in August 2025 among the Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and SG-WEN communities to enhance support among women entrepreneurs. The poll drew 62 responses across key industries.

Starting & Scaling the Business

The majority of businesses (88%) spent less than a year in the planning phase before their launch.



58% of the entrepreneurs delayed starting their business after the initial idea or intention.

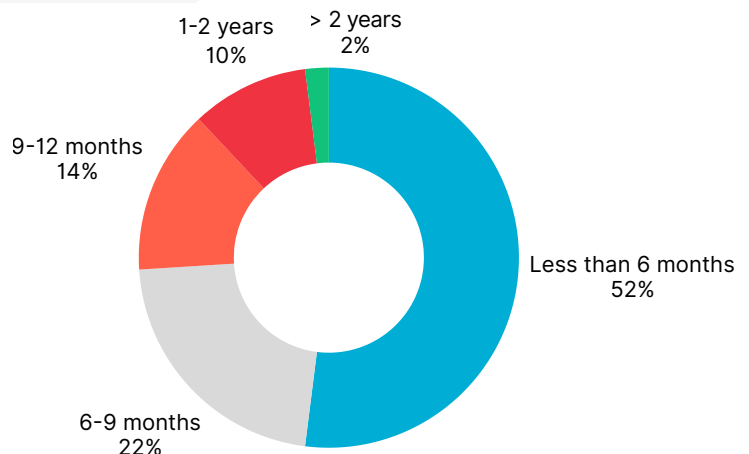
The lack of access to funding (22%) and the fear of failure (18%) were cited as the top factors contributing to this delay.



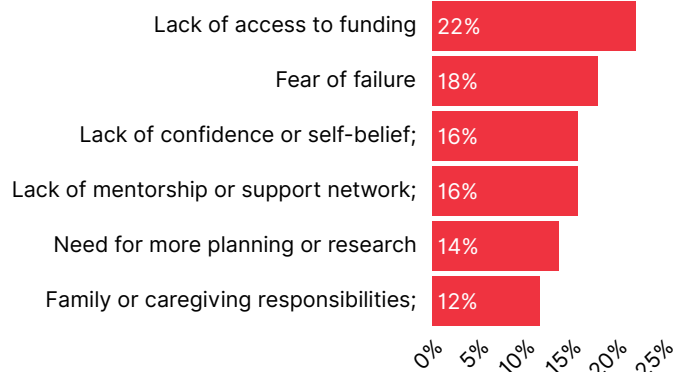
Beyond the initial launch, poor access to funding remains a persistent challenge for businesses looking to scale (36%).

Meanwhile, manpower challenges (39%), personal and family responsibilities (36%), and limited access to growth-stage mentorship or advisory (36%) are cited as further obstacles to scaling attempts.

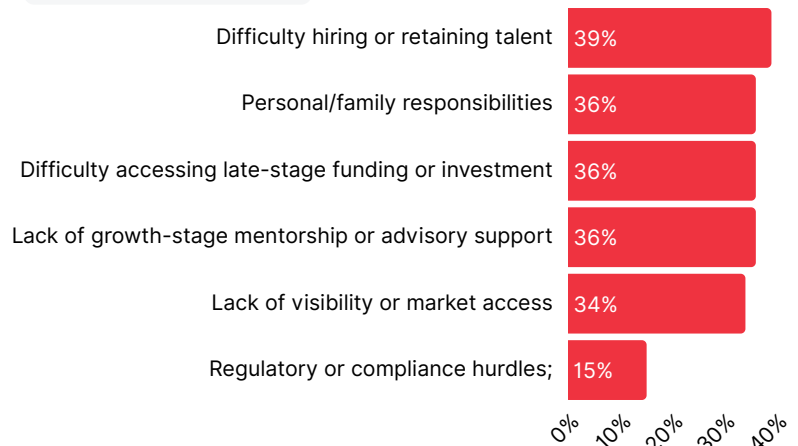
Planning phase



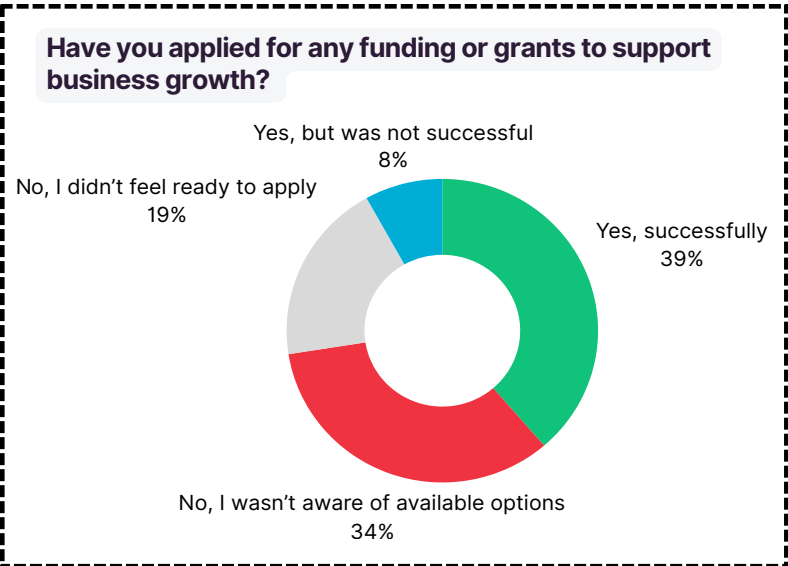
Reasons for the delay



Challenges to scaling



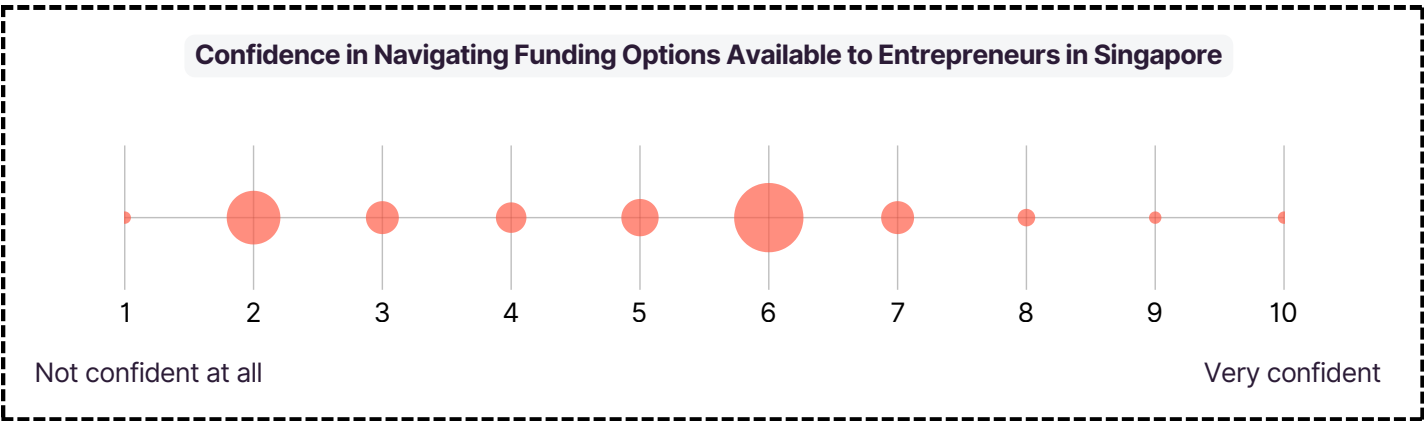
Navigating Existing Funding Opportunities



Despite the lack of access to funding and investment being cited as a key barrier to starting (22%) and scaling (36%) businesses, only less than half of businesses applied for funding and grants (47%).

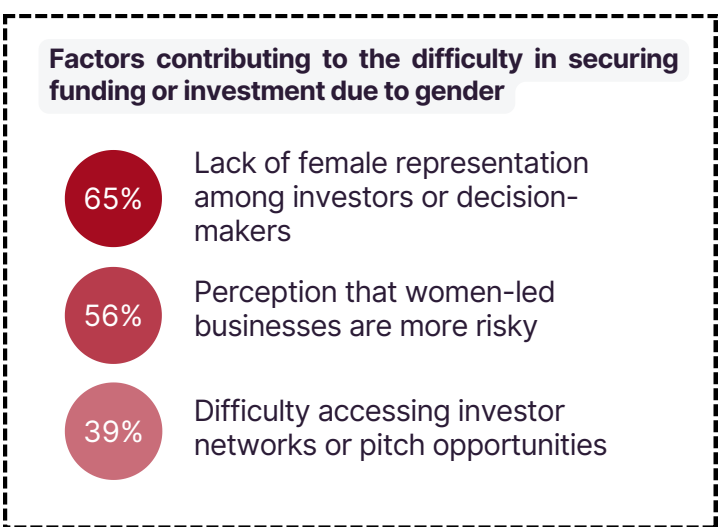
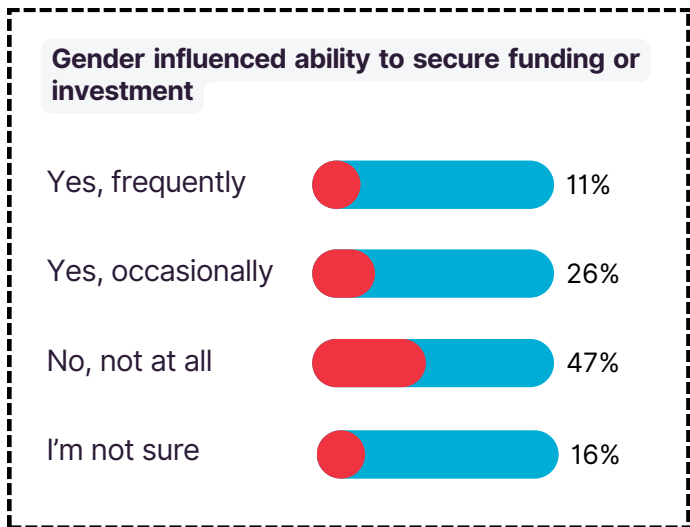
The perceived inaccessibility of available funding is largely owed to a lack of awareness of available options (34%), rather than unsuccessful applications (8%).

The fairly low rate of successful applications (39%) corresponds to the general lack of confidence in navigating available funding options.



Gender as a Barrier to Securing Funding and Investment

Regarding the difficulty in securing funding and investments, a sizeable proportion of businesses have found gender to be an influencing factor (37%). Specifically, the lack of female representation amongst investors or decision-makers (65%), as well as the perception that women-led businesses are more risky (56%) are the top two contributors to this experience.

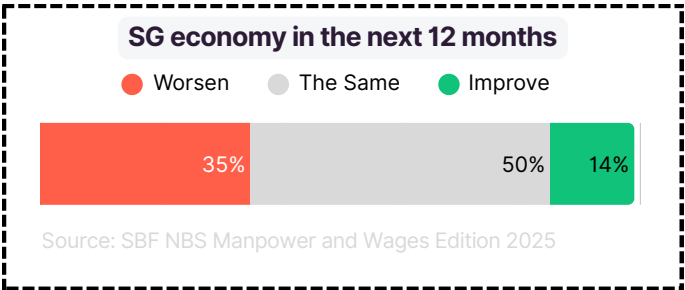


Future Challenges Threatening Singapore Businesses

Looking forward, women entrepreneurs cite economic uncertainty (37%) and rising operational costs (34%) as the biggest challenges they foresee in the near future.

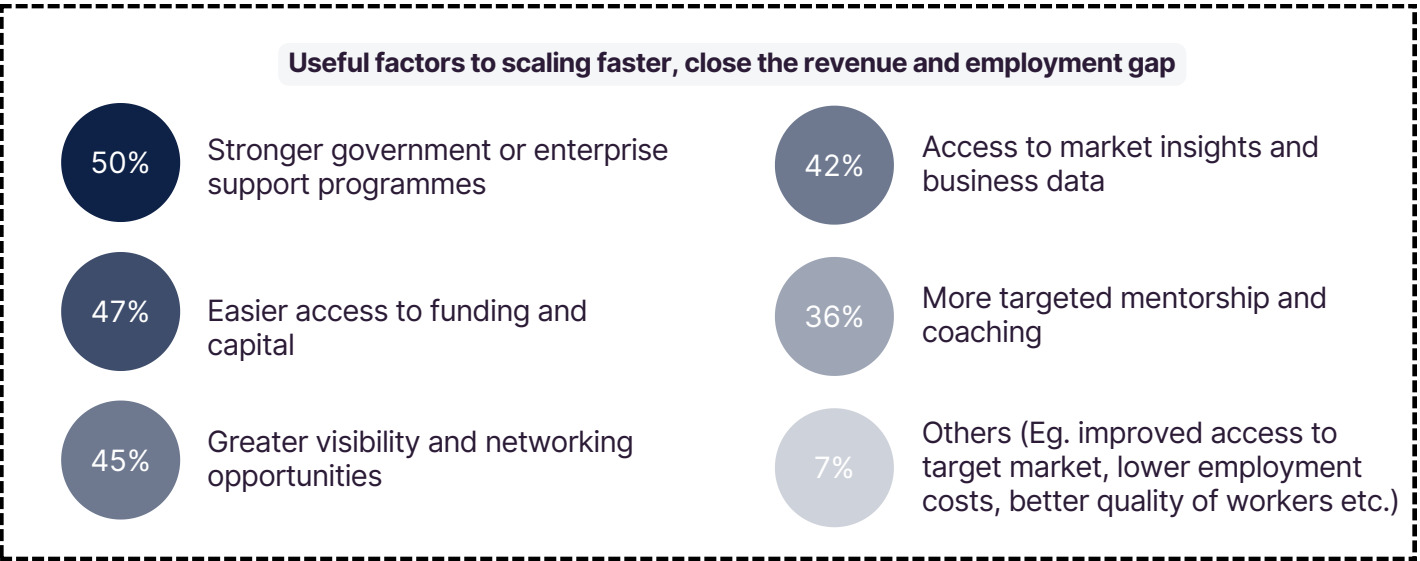


The cautious outlook amidst a more uncertain environment is also broadly shared by the wider business community. As reported in the recent release of the SBF NBS edition on Manpower and Wages, more businesses expect conditions to worsen (35%) than improve (14%) over the next 12 months.



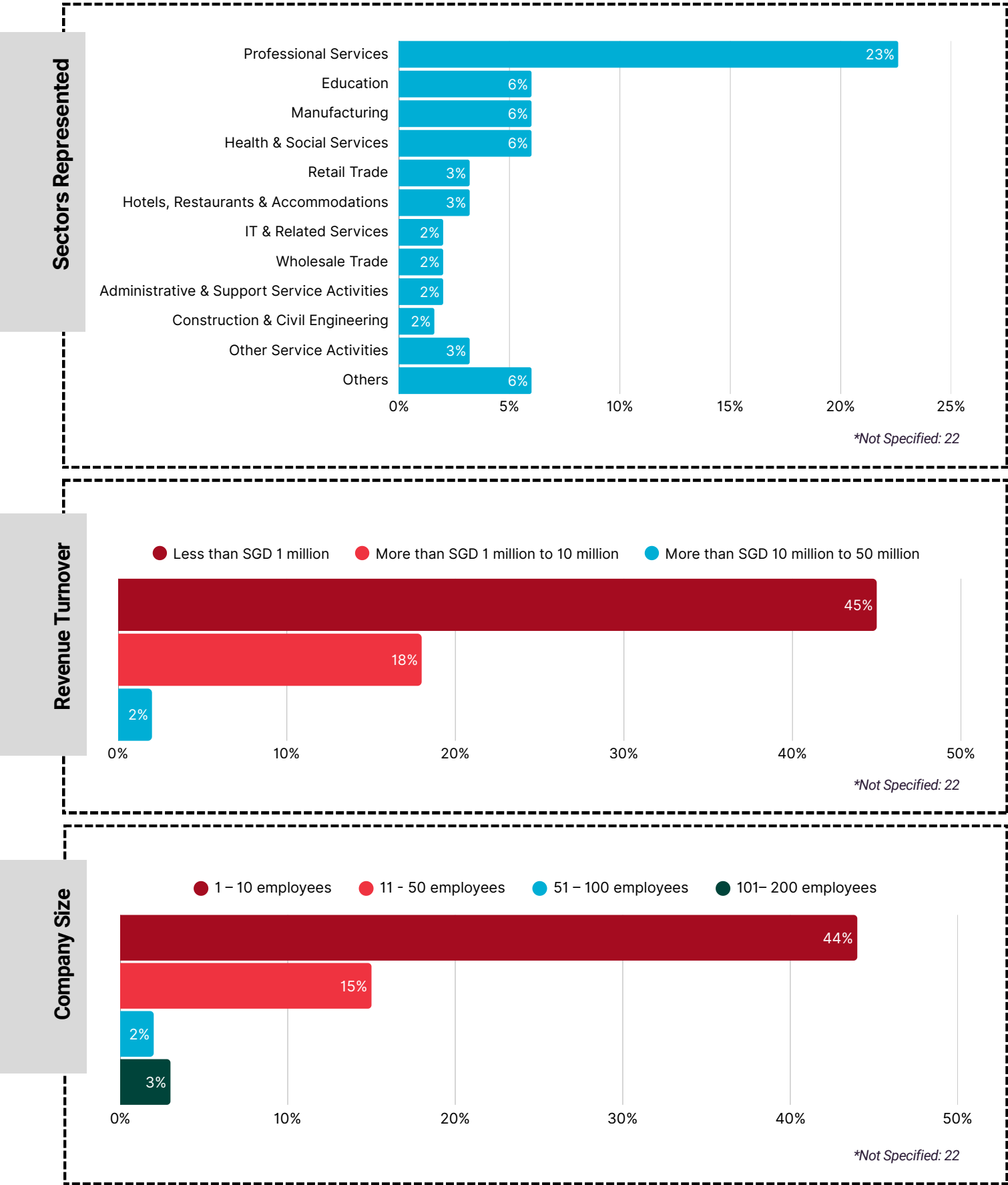
Support Required to Mitigate Foreseen Challenges

As such, businesses seek stronger government or enterprise support programmes (50%) and easier access to funding and capital (47%).



About SG-WEN OPINION POLL

Profile of Respondents



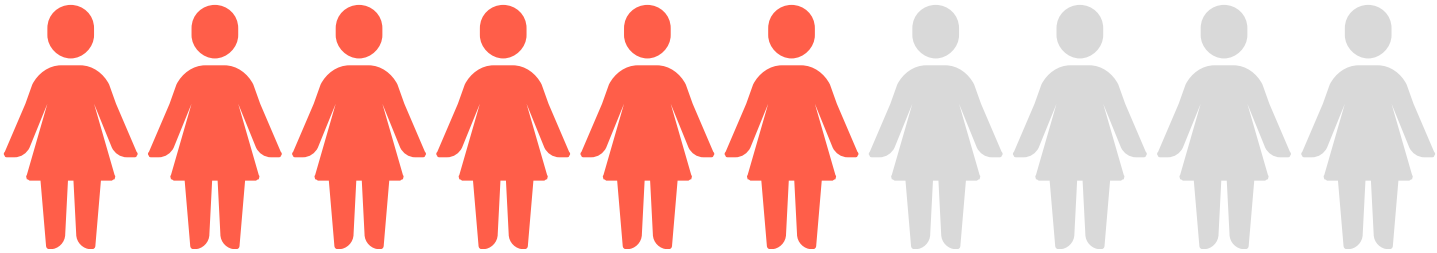
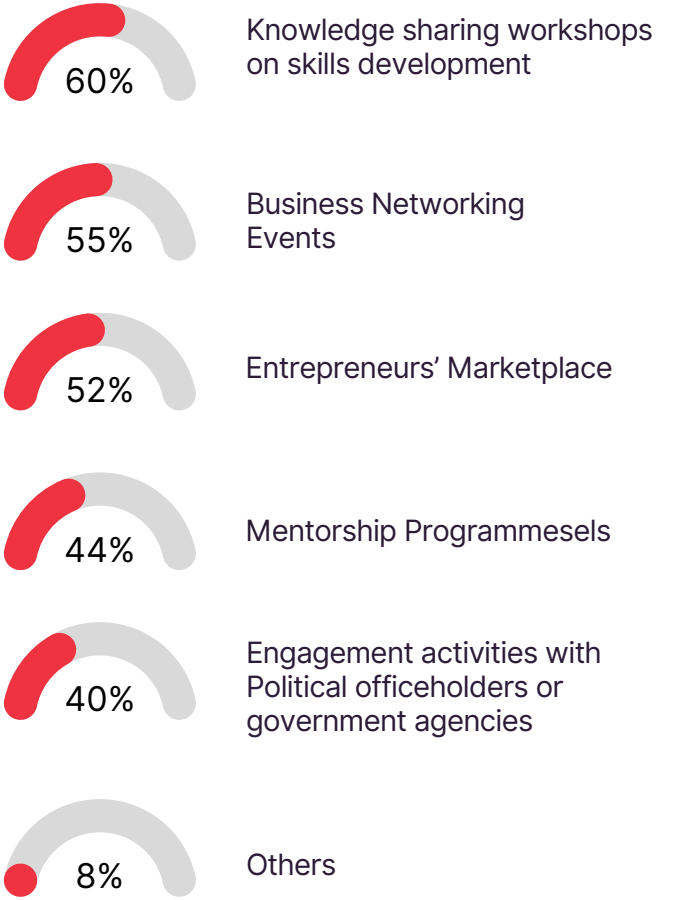
SG-WEN'S IMPACT

SG-WEN members have found the network to be a valuable platform in helping them expand their professional network (52%), access a supportive community (48%), and acquire new business knowledge or skills (42%). Moving forward, members indicated that they look forward to more knowledge sharing workshops on skills development, business networking events, and an Entrepreneurs' Marketplace.

How has SG-WEN benefitted you as a woman entrepreneur?



What activities should SG-WEN do more of in the future?



About SBF

Singapore Business Federation (SBF) is the apex business chamber with over 32,000 members across diverse industries. With a vision to advance Singapore towards a globally competitive and sustainable economy, SBF mobilises the business community to be future-ready and magnify transformation opportunities through policy advocacy, partnership platforms and capability programmes.

About Singapore Women Entrepreneurs Network

Launched on 21 September 2021, the Singapore Women Entrepreneurs Network (SG-WEN) is a network formed by SBF to coordinate the existing efforts of businesswomen within the community, and to serve as a platform to connect with other women-entrepreneurs associations in Asia-Pacific, particularly ASEAN.

Our vision is to be the preeminent network of women entrepreneurs in Singapore focused on helping them achieve the fullest potential in their businesses, for the benefit of the communities and economies they serve

Our mission is to provide a platform where Singapore women entrepreneurs and existing women business networks can unite and collaborate to influence culture and policy, and drive industry change in Singapore and Asia-Pacific, particularly ASEAN.

We will do this by advocating and promoting women business perspectives, facilitating knowledge sharing, fostering business partnerships and growth. We have been designated to be Singapore's representative at the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN), a network of national women entrepreneurs and business associations from the ASEAN member states. We are also an associate member of Singapore Council of Women's Organisations.

For more information, please visit the <https://www.sbf.org.sg/about-us/our-communities/business-networks/singapore-women-entrepreneurs-network>

Contact Information

SBF Research & Publishing
research@sbf.org.sg

